



**REMARKS BY  
H.E. TRUONG TAN SANG  
PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC  
OF VIET NAM  
AT THE STATE BANQUET  
HOSTED BY HIS MAJESTY EMPEROR AKIHITO**

*Your Majesties the Emperor and the Empress,  
Ladies and gentlemen,*

First and foremost, I would like to thank Your Majesty the Emperor for the kind words reserved for me, my wife and my delegation.

I have had the honor to visit your country on a number of occasions. Each and every visit left within me profound impressions of a beautiful country with a long-established and diverse culture and of a hardworking, talented and creative people who have accomplished astonishing economic, scientific and technological miracles that are admired worldwide. Three years has passed since my last visit to Japan in June 2011, right after the tsunami disaster. This time, I was deeply moved by the phenomenal achievements of the Government and people of Japan in the recovery and reconstruction efforts. This visit of ours occurs just as spring draws near and cherry flowers are about to blossom across Japan. The Vietnamese people believe that spring marks the beginning of a good year and all its blessings. That is why I am most certain that the Japanese people, under the care of Your Majesty the Emperor and with their willpower, talents, wisdom and vitality, will continue to make great achievements for an ever more prosperous Japan.

*Your majesties,  
Ladies and gentlemen,*

Viet Nam and Japan have successfully celebrated our 40 years of diplomatic relations. Yet looking into history, we can see that the ties between our countries date back a much longer span of time. Records have shown that over 1000 years ago, as early as the 8th Century, a Vietnamese monk named Buttetsu (Phat Triet) had come to Japan and attended the Eye-opening Ceremony of the Buddha Statue in the Todaiji Pagoda in Nara. Nearly 400 years ago, Japanese merchant ships had crossed the sea to Viet Nam for trading. Their marks remain today in the ancient city of Hoi An, such as the Japanese bridge and the Japanese cemetery. The marriage between a Vietnamese princess and Sotaro Araki, a Japanese merchant, has been celebrated until nowadays in the Nagasaki Kunchi Festival. The series "Partner", a joint-production of the two countries' TV stations aired in 2013, deeply moved a large Vietnamese and Japanese audience with the storyline about the friendship between Vietnamese patriot Phan Boi Chau and the Japanese Doctor Asaba Sakitaro in the early 20th Century.

It is evident that despite geographical distance, cultural similarities and the resonance of compassion between our people were the lasting elements that

forge the depth of relations between Viet Nam and Japan, hence the solid foundation for our countries to overcome all geographical barrier and test of time to become not only strategic partners but also true friends.

On the basis of the excellent relations between our countries and to meet the genuine expectations of our people, during this visit, I am discussing with Japanese leaders major directions to take the Viet Nam-Japan relations, which are already at an all-time height, to an even higher, more comprehensive and meaningful level.

*Your Majesties,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

The government and people of Viet Nam always treasure the meaningful assistance of Japanese people during our struggle for national liberation and reunification in the last Century. This was evidenced in such movements as antiwar demonstration, raising of fund, medicine, clothes, stationery, etc. Nowadays, Japan has been and continues to be a leading partner and a trusted companion of Viet Nam during our effort for industrialization, modernization, national construction and development.

On this occasion, on behalf of the State and people of Viet Nam, I would like to extend my most sincere thanks to Your Majesties the Emperor and the Empress, the Royal Family and you all present here for the warm sentiment, the deep interest and the valuable assistance given to Viet Nam and our people.

In tonight's friendly ambiance and with the conviction in the prosperity of Japan, of Viet Nam and of the Viet Nam-Japan relations, I would like to invite you all to raise your glasses and join me in a toast:

To the health of Your Majesties the Emperor and the Empress,

To the prosperity of Japan and the happiness of its people,

To the ever-growing friendship and cooperation between Viet Nam and Japan,

To the health of you all present here today,

Thank you.