

Ted Osius: Thank you very much for this opportunity. I want to discuss with you the future of the U.S.-Vietnam relationship. In 1995, our two countries made a bold choice to strike out on a grand new journey together. And 20 years ago, as Ambassador Eikenberry mentioned, I had the privilege of serving in Vietnam as we took our very first steps along the path of the vibrant relationship that we have today.

And so I can testify first hand as to how far we have come. And last year marked a major milestone in our journey, when we celebrated 20 years of normalized diplomatic relations, and solidified our comprehensive partnership. Today, a record number of young people cross the oceans to study at each other's universities, and to explore each other's culture.

U.S. businesses are engaging more and more with Vietnam, and so is two-way trade, which was at about \$500 million when I first went to Vietnam 20 years ago, last year surpassed \$45 billion. The ties that we have today, I think it's fair to say were unimaginable 20 years ago when we first normalized relations.

And we have good reason to be proud of that progress. I think the future of our partnership is as bright as it's ever been. But the journey isn't over. We have a long distance still to cover.

The philosopher, those who speak Vietnamese, I'm going to address you first, the philosopher Lê Quý Đôn: *Phi nông bất ổn, Phi công bất phú, Phi thương bất hoạt, Phi trí bất hưng*: without farmers no stability, without industry no wealth, without traders no flexibility, without scholars no prosperity. He understood that society has to be built on a very broad foundation where all are engaged, and where all are able to lend their talents to bring about success. And I think that insight remains as true today as it ever was.

And so in that spirit, last May, President Obama and President Tran Dai Quang laid out in a joint statement an ambitious plan, a wide-ranging plan for how we could further strengthen our partnership. We set ourselves some very ambitious and comprehensive goals, ranging from removing barriers to trade, to improving security cooperation, to partnering on religious freedom, and to fostering people to people ties. And we pledged to look beyond the borders of our two nations, and work to tackle global challenges, such as climate change, illegal wildlife trafficking, and preventing pandemics.

And I think it's an important demonstration of our two country's mutual commitment to invest in a peaceful future that we took on such ambitious goals. And I am able to re-confirm that commitment. But I also recognize that a statement and statements are not nearly enough. It's great to set goals. It's essential to set goals.

That's the first step. Then comes the hard work of implementing those goals. And it's never easy, not in Vietnam, not in any country I've ever worked in; it's never easy to implement the goals that you set out. There are plenty of obstacles that will make it particularly tough to achieve some of those goals. But I'm convinced that we can translate every single one of those commitments into action.

Vietnam is one of the fastest growing economies in the region. In a very short time, Vietnam has risen to join the ranks of middle income countries, and built a thriving middle class, by first opening its markets to the outside world, second by allowing a fairly free exchange of ideas, at least on Facebook, and by third creating a young and entrepreneurial workforce. Everywhere I travel in Vietnam, and I've been to almost every province, I can see the dividends of this strategy.

Millions have been lifted out of poverty. There are young people who are really, really optimistic about their futures, and communities that have been made safe from disease and from climate change. In the joint statement I mentioned, we both committed to expanding and deepening our economic cooperation. And this is already happening. Between January and July this year, U.S. exports to Vietnam are up 44 percent.

Vietnam's exports to the United States are also up, putting the bilateral trade increase at 17 percent annually. And out of America's 50 largest export markets, only three show double-digit growth. And of these, Vietnam is the largest market.

So looking ahead on this economic engagement, the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement is the cornerstone of that effort. Full implementation of TPP would allow Vietnam to grow faster and move more of its people out of poverty and into the middle class. And it would reduce, very importantly-- and this really is fundamental for the Vietnamese, it would reduce Vietnam's dependence on any single market.

It would strengthen connections not just with the United States, but Vietnam's neighbors in the region, and with countries across the ocean. Also, we have to recognize that there are a lot of hard steps that Vietnam has to take before it can take full advantage of all these opportunities. It has begun taking steps to reform the system of state-owned enterprises. But there's still a long way to go.

It needs to create space for small and medium-sized enterprises so that they can compete within the Vietnamese economy, if that economy is to reach its potential. And Vietnam has to modernize its custom regimes. And foreign firms have to believe that their intellectual property will be protected if they go into business in Vietnam.

They need to know that fair labor practices will be universally enforced, and that their competitors will have to meet the same environmental standards that they do. They also need to understand that Vietnam's laws will be fairly, transparently and uniformly applied. And I'm happy to say that Vietnam is poised to make really significant progress in all of those areas. And the benefits have already begun to roll in.

Since we completed negotiation of the TPP, investors have stepped up. And Vietnam has seen a very significant increase in foreign direct investment, just because of that international housekeeping stamp of approval that TPP provided. American industry is optimistic about Vietnam.

When I traveled around the country last year with a number of my other investor ambassador colleagues, ambassadors to ASEAN countries, most of the questions came to me about Vietnam. People in the United States are quite interested in opportunities. And we benefit, the United States benefits, if we're partners with Vietnam with a thriving, sustainable economy.

Now, I talked about economics. But the future of the relationship really depends on deepening a partnership that goes beyond cultivating growth, and creating opportunities for business and trade. If we're going to create a truly comprehensive partnership, we also have to have greater opportunities for people to people exchanges.

And I'll quote a different philosopher this time, Mark Twain. Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness. And I think what he meant is nothing builds trust and eliminates misconceptions between peoples more than exploring each others culture first hand.

So it's my belief that no changes are more effective at eliminating prejudice and creating bonds between our peoples than investing in the education of our young people, and enabling them to go and see what other cultures are like. So I'm very excited.

We've already made a lot of progress in educational exchange, and gone from 800 students a year from Vietnam to the United States when I first came to Vietnam, to now 19,000 Vietnamese students in the United States. But we're not going to rest on our laurels. There are two big initiatives that we were able to launch with the President's visit last May.

One is bringing the Peace Corps to Vietnam. And the second is launching a new university called Fulbright University in Vietnam. So on the first, Peace Corps, when that opens officially, it will bring to Vietnam some of the best that America has to offer-- bright, energetic, dedicated volunteers who will be a great resource. They're native English speakers, of course. They'll be a great resource for Vietnam's very diligent students.

And then Fulbright University in Vietnam, which will be the first-ever nonprofit, American-style Vietnamese university, and that can demonstrate the value of academic freedom and a transdisciplinary approach. And as it will build on the successes of the Fulbright Academic Teaching Program, which has had a very transparent curriculum for all of its 20 years of existence, it's inevitable that it affects higher education at large within Vietnam, and change the way higher education is carried out in Vietnam.

And I hope that these, Peace Corps and Fulbright University, will be among many ways that we expand educational exchanges in our two countries. English language training from Peace Corps and from nine other programs that we have in the United States in Vietnam from the United States will also help Vietnam respond to the demands for a more global and more skilled workforce than they have now. That educational exchange, and particularly English language teaching, will also help Vietnam as it becomes more prominent, plays more of a leadership role, in the U.N., APEC, ASEAN and the ASEAN Economic Community.

Now, Vietnam's leaders have suggested that the time has come for us to expand our partnership beyond bilateral cooperation to regional and global collaboration. And one of the ways we do that is through working through these international institutions. That's another way that we can build trust that actually ends up benefiting the bilateral relationship as well when we work together in these institutions.

And as President Obama reminded us when he visited in May, the international order upon which our international security depends is rooted in the rules and norms that are shared within these institutions. These multi-lateral fora such as the United Nations are also the critical avenues for dealing with some of the most pressing problems that we share, such as climate change, regional and global health challenges, and wildlife trafficking.

So we will continue to work together to bolster those institutions, and to make sure that they remain driving forces that address conflicts, especially conflict over sovereignty, between their members. And, obviously, I'm talking about South China Sea as one of the most prominent examples where we're working with Vietnam to deal with its challenges.

We also committed in our joint statement to strengthening defense cooperation, and to building trust between our men and women in uniform. And President Obama made, I think, a very courageous decision to fully lift the ban on lethal weapon sales, to allow Vietnam greater access to the tools it needs to ensure its security. We also agreed to expand our partnership and maritime security, and work together to deliver humanitarian aid in times of disaster.

Now, we've come a long way since we normalized relations in 1995. But reconciliation-- and here I'm including Vietnamese Americans who are very much influenced by what happened in the past-- that reconciliation remains incomplete. There are many, many people in this country who have very profoundly painful memories.

And these Americans have not necessarily chosen to engage in the new and increasingly integrated Vietnam that has emerged in recent years. Many have remained estranged. And that has divided the Vietnamese American community, largely along generational lines. And it's limited the potential of the bilateral relationship. But we here-- and I believe that we have an opportunity to change this dynamic. Increasingly, those who have suffered on both sides of the conflict have told us that the time has come to move beyond the divisions, to honor the memories of those who fell on both sides, and then to move forward in a spirit of respect and reconciliation.

And my mission is committed to supporting engagement by the diaspora community with the people and the leaders of Vietnam. And we're ready to support frank dialogue with the goal of facilitating an ongoing healing process. Such a process would require building trust on both sides, which is a difficult but necessary task, if we're to close a chapter of the past with honor and turn our focus fully to the future.

I believe that's the right thing to do. And it would provide tremendous benefits by reuniting families and friends, by increasing investment, by spurring tourism, and much more. And so

during my time here, I will be continuing that conversation with Vietnamese American communities in different parts of the country. And then I'll continue that conversation on my return to Vietnam.

Now, finally, and this is the last point, as we build our partnership in all the areas that I've mentioned, we also have to look at those issues, and discuss those issues, on which we have the most significant differences. As I have said to my friends in Vietnam, partners speak the truth to one another. And we share concerns, even when it may be difficult to do so.

We do this with all partners everywhere in the world, because we know that no country has found the perfect formula. And I certainly include the United States in this, because we have our own challenges, some of which we have overcome, but many with which we still struggle.

A few days ago, I spoke at the Ho Chi Minh Academy. It's a place where party cadres are trained. And I said this. Vietnam will achieve its greatest potential only when civil society can enjoy greater freedoms to peacefully organize, freely exchange views on the internet and social media, and participate in policymaking.

The United States doesn't seek to dictate terms or to impose our beliefs on any of our partners. And the fundamental principle that underlies the kind of rapprochement that we've had to date is mutual respect for sovereignty and for different political systems. But I have invited Vietnam's leaders, especially when seeking answers to difficult questions, to look to the United States as a resource.

The way we grew into the nation that we are today was by struggling with many of the challenges that we have, being honest about them. And I believe we can share some of the lessons that we've learned. So I think today, it's fair to say that we're at a defining moment in the U.S.-Vietnam relationship.

And with any such moment, we have a choice. We can choose to meet the expectations of those who doubt that it's possible to continue to progress, those who say that our aspirations are too great, our political will is too weak, or our mutual interest in deepening our bilateral relationship is too much a passing geopolitical convenience. We can take those ambitious goals I said we've set for ourselves.

And we can say, they're too difficult. Or we can put them off to another time and wait for them to be forgotten. We can fail. And we can say, that was inevitable.

Or we can choose to do better. We can choose to be statesmen. We can choose to confound the expectations of the cynics, and let our partnership between two countries that fought together not so long ago be an example for the world.

We can create bonds through open trade, through swift travel, through honest exchange. We can put in the work, and show that our two countries can, in the space of just one generation, use a shared and difficult history to develop friendship and collaboration. What I have said in the past to my friends in Vietnam, quoting Ambassador Pete Peterson, the first ambassador

of United States, is that in the U.S.-Vietnam relationship, nothing is impossible. Thank you very much.

Karl Eikenberry: So Ambassador, thank you very much. So now, we'll turn it open to the audience here for question and answer. We have a microphone.

So I'll direct the microphone to hands. If you would, when you stand up for your question, though, could you please give your name, and where you're from, what organization? So if I could, Ted, if you wanted to stand up here.

And if I could have the privilege of asking the first question. You talked about TPP. And we look at all the countries that are involved in TPP right now that went through the negotiations. And Vietnam stands out in a category of its own. So the Vietnamese, like all nations when they're considering TPP, they have set economic considerations. For Vietnam, those were maybe the most profound and challenging, all the restructuring that would be reformed, winners and losers.

And then, there's the security aspects of it. You talked a little bit about that, the need to diversify maybe a leaning away from a major power to the north, or trying to seek balance. I think we'd be very interested if you could talk a little bit about the politics that go on in this country. With these two cross-cutting issues, it would seem extraordinarily complex. How the that debate play out? How does the debate stand? And then, lastly, if the United States should not move forward with TPP, what would be the consequences for Vietnam's U.S. policies?

Osius: Thank you. Now, it's on. You can hear it. First of all, it was tough, as Ambassador Eikenberry said, it was difficult for the Vietnamese to do what we asked in TPP.

And think about it. We, a capitalist country, were saying to the communists, here's what you need to do for workers' rights. We, the capitalists, are going to tell you how you want to address the question of workers' rights.

This was painful and humiliating. And yet, we were able to get commitments on labor, on independent trade unions, on protection of child labor, on prevention of forced labor, that were unthinkable if we hadn't had TPP. And the Vietnamese found this very difficult.

But they realized it was the price that they had to pay if they wanted to be part of the club. And they wanted to be part of the 12 nations that are part of TPP, first of all, for strategic reasons. They wanted to be able to diversify their trading arrangements, because they did not want to depend on one country alone for their economic future.

They did not want their economy to be owned lock, stock and barrel by their neighbor to the north. And so it was a strategic decision, one which will require an enormous amount of change within Vietnam's regulatory structure. An enormous number of legal changes will be required for them to be able to implement their TPP commitments.

And I think it was a courageous decision. It all stemmed from a decision made by the party that they were going to embark on a policy of comprehensive international integration, that their future was best served if they were more integrated with the international community, and if they had more options strategically. So they went all out for ASEAN Economic Community.

They went all out, years ago, to be part of the WTO. And those changes have been good for Vietnam. In fact, before that, they made a big decision to have a bilateral trade agreement with us. That was also a very wise decision for Vietnam, and a difficult decision at the time.

The politics are such that when the Party Congress got together in January, they made two really big decisions. One, to defend Vietnam's sovereignty in the South China Sea, and two, to continue on this policy of comprehensive international integration, particularly economic. Both of those big decisions are ones that lead Vietnam to a closer relationship with us, the United States.

And there were people within the system who are more comfortable with their fraternal relations with China, more comfortable with the longstanding relationship with Russia, and our very worried about what a relationship with the United States might mean, and are worried about American reliability. Are we a reliable partner? Will we be there for the long haul?

So the politics have not been set aside. But the fundamental decision to pursue comprehensive international immigration, I think, will not be reversed. I think that that's the course that they have embarked on. And they're going continue on that on that course.

And then I wanted to just quickly come back to this. But I want to quickly touch on bicycle policy, because you asked about that earlier. And there's a woman in this room what is the reason I embarked on bicycle diplomacy. Ambassador Kathy Stephens went twice-- at least I know twice-- up and down the Korean Peninsula. And it was hugely successful in terms of energizing the Korean people.

And Koreans responded so positively to a friendly American ambassador riding on a bicycle, rather than in a limo behind the tinted glass, but being right there and talking to people. Ambassador Stevens speaks beautiful Korean. That was also a first. We've never had an ambassador before who spoke fluent Korean.

I speak Vietnamese. It's a comparative advantage that I exploit mercilessly all the time. And so I will go to the most remote parts of the country.

And I will think, they're going to remember I'm the bicycle ambassador. No, they might know that. That will probably be the second thing they would know. But the first thing they know, you're that Ambassador that speaks Vietnamese.

I've heard about you. You speak Vietnamese. And so the fact that I do makes it easy to do something like bicycle diplomacy, because we will stop in a village, we will stop at a roadside stand.

And I'll talk to people. And they will tell me what they're thinking about. And we now have 400,000 Facebook followers on our various pages.

And there are 70,000 on my page. And they think that they're my personal friend, because they write all these messages in Vietnamese. And they all expect a response.

And I read that page every day. I read as much as I can. I do get help, because I can't respond to every single person. So I do get help. But I read a lot of the comments that we get. And it's instant feedback. I can see what's working, and what doesn't work.

So I think that's part of bicycle diplomacy too, is not just being out there and spreading our messages, or showing that we're friendly, which we are. But it's also an opportunity to listen, to get instant feedback on what's working and what's not working. And I think it's absolutely invaluable.

Eikenberry: That's great, Ted. I tried bicycle diplomacy when I was the Ambassador in Afghanistan. It's a little different. Please, and we have a microphone too. Right behind you there.

Audience: Good afternoon, Ambassador. Thank you so much for being here today. My name is [Inaudible]. And I'm a senior here at Stanford majoring in international relations. I'm actually looking into applying for a Fulbright to Vietnam for the next year. And so I was really interested by what you had to say about reconciliation, in particular. I know that a lot of cluster munitions were dropped by the United States, especially in Laos and Cambodia, during the Vietnam War. Yet, the United States has not signed on to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Do you see the potential for issue linkage in this area, about potential step that the United States could take with respect to cluster munitions, and how that might play a role in the reconciliation process between the United States and Vietnam?

Osius: Well, first of all, during the Vietnam War-- what we call the Vietnam War, what they call the American War-- 10 times more munitions were dropped on that little country than on of all of Europe during World War II. So there were provinces, like Quang Tri province, that were really blanketed by cluster munitions.

And we've spent now 15 years cleaning up unexploded ordnance in Quang Tri province. And by the year 2020, or at latest 2022, Quang Tri province will be impact-free. That means no more farmers will be plowing their fields and lose a limb, or kids will pick up cluster bombs and be blinded. That won't happen any more in Quang Tri Province.

That does not mean that the country is free of unexploded ordnance, nor does it mean Quang Tri is free. It just means that it will be impact-free, because the munitions will be so deep that

they're not going to any more harm children, or farmers, or anybody else. So we've made a lot of progress in this area. The United States has invested, I think, \$110 million.

And now, we're spending about \$15 million a year to clean up unexploded ordnance. And I think that is essential. I think dealing honestly with our past is absolutely essential, if we're to have a different kind of future. So in addition to cleaning up unexploded ordnance, we have been cleaning up dioxin, better known as Agent Orange.

And in the Da Nang Airport, or near the Da Nang Airport, we've cleaned up the second worst hotspot. And the worst, the biggest toxic waste ever to be cleaned up in history, we're halfway done. And we'll be completely finished by 2018 cleaning that up.

We still won't be completely done. The very biggest hot spot is in a place called Bien Hoa. And it's going to cost a lot of money to clean it up.

When President Obama came in May, he promised that the United States would partner with Vietnam. He didn't put a price tag on it. That's still my problem.

But we've promised to partner. We've already begun the discussions that will lead towards the clean up of the Bien Hoa Airport. And that will be the last of the big hotspots that will be cleaned up free of dioxin.

And we've been honest in our accounting for those who are missing on both sides. We've done the fullest possible accounting on the American side. And we've been helping Vietnam do the fullest accounting that it can do on the Vietnamese side of those who were missing from the war.

I think that the only way you can really move on is if you're honest about the past. So I feel like those areas where we have collaborated, those areas that used to be so contentious in the relationship-- 20 years ago when I went as a young officer, I wasn't allowed to say the words Agent Orange, wasn't allowed to talk about it. I couldn't ever discuss dioxin with my counterparts. It was so sensitive. And now, we're cleaning it up.

And people will say, well, we haven't dealt with all of the effects of Agent Orange. That's correct. We haven't dealt with all of the people who may have been affected by Agent Orange. But we've been as honest as we can about cleaning it up, and about providing assistance to persons with disabilities, regardless of cause. So I would say both countries are struggling to be as honest as possible about our very difficult past. And I think those are absolutely essential steps.

And it's made a really big difference. Today, whether it's north or south, or young or old, 92 percent of Vietnamese consider the United States their country's best friend. That's amazing, if you think about it was not that long ago that the war ended. 92 percent consider us their best friend.

So that means there's a really big opportunity, I think, to continue to be honest about the past so that we can forge the kind of future I tried to describe in my opening remarks, a future where we really are powerful partners, and where our partnership is profound, and it cuts across many, many, many areas. So I hope that's a helpful answer.

Audience: Hi, my name is [Inaudible]. I'm a senior here at Stanford. Thanks again for being here.

You touched in your remarks briefly on expanding people to people ties and tourism. Previously, the tourist visa for American citizens to go to Vietnam was \$25. Recently, it was announced that the fee would increase to \$135 for a multi-entry visa. What explains the sudden increase in the tourist prices? Because this seems that policy might deter some Americans from visiting Vietnam.

Osius: Thanks. First of all, the top-level policy that we have is open aperture. It's better for our relationship if there are more students going back and forth, more tourists, more investors. That's good.

And so we're pursuing direct flights between the two countries. That will make it a lot easier for people to travel back and forth. I know. I just got off a very, very long trip via Tokyo this time.

But it always takes forever to get there, because you can't go directly. And when we opened direct flights between the United States and India and that changed their relationship. That, almost more than anything, expanded our ability to engage.

So when I arrived in Vietnam almost two years ago now, the business community was up in arms. We can only get three-month single entry visas. It's a real detriment.

It really makes it harder for us to do business, because those of us who live here, are working here, we always have to go out of the country every 90 days. It's expensive. It's a deterrent. And, legally, at a certain point, I was bound to behave in a reciprocal fashion. I was going to have to cut off all long-term visas for Vietnamese who wanted to come to the United States. And so I told the government, you have until July 15-- I think that was the day that [Inaudible] was to arrive in the United States. I said, you have until July 15.

You can give us one-year multiple entry visas. I won't impose these new restrictions on Vietnamese. I won't cut back your visas to three-month visas, because that really wouldn't be a good way to start your general secretary's visit to the United States with that announcement. That will not be happy.

No one will be happy about that. And it's completely against our purpose of opening up the aperture, and having more people go back and forth. So there was hemming and hawing. And at 11:59 p.m. on July 14, we got the answer, yes, we'll give one-year multiple entry visas to Americans. And so everyone was very, very happy. And at the end of last month, I got a notice that said, and so we're not giving the three-month visas anymore.

That was never part of the agreement to cut back on the cheaper visas. To eliminate the cheaper visas so that people can have the longer term visas was never part of the agreement. And to be very honest, it was a misunderstanding.

There were people in the Vietnamese government who read our agreement as saying, only one-year multiple entry visas. And we have gone back, and said, that was not what we agreed upon. You're harming your ability to attract tourists, in particular.

If everybody has to pay the \$135, you're going to make it much harder for people who just want to come once and visit. They'll go to Thailand instead. It's much cheaper. They'll go to Laos or Cambodia. They won't go to Vietnam.

So they've gone back. And they're now starting work on it. And I think we're going to get a solution where both visas are possible.

But even better than that, early next year, the Vietnamese plan to start issuing e-visas. That will be a much more transparent process, more efficient. All the money will go to the Vietnamese government, rather than to middlemen who are making some of those visas as expensive as \$220, I'm told.

And so it's going to save a lot of people a lot of money. There will be less room for corruption, less room for inefficiencies. And people will get their visas faster.

So I think our big goal is going to be met. But there are some bumps along the way. And we're having to work them out. So that was an unintended consequence of, I think, a very good policy, was what has happened now. And I think that's a temporary aberration.

Audience: Ambassador, my name is Tan. And I'm in the private sector in Palo Alto. You mentioned earlier the Fulbright University. There has been a report that Vietnam demanded that all the students attending the university has to take a course, or courses, on Marxism. And I wonder whether they still demand that. And is that condition precedent for Fulbright University to move forward?

Osius: We're negotiating something right now, which we call the special mechanism, under which Fulbright University will operate. We already have been issued a license. But we need to spell out in advance what the terms are.

Before I can ask people to give millions, and millions, and millions of dollars to establish FUV, we need to have this agreement nailed down. And what we have said is absolutely essential is academic freedom. The university has to be able to choose its own faculty. And the faculty have to be able to choose their own curricula.

Otherwise, it's not an American-style education. Now, you have pointed to one of the most sensitive parts of that negotiation. The Vietnamese government says, you have to teach Marxism, Leninism, and Ho Chi Minh thought. And so we've struggled with that.

My view-- and this is an independent university. My view does not prevail. But I'm going to tell you what my view is anyway.

My view is that as long as that is taught in the context of political theory in general, I don't see a problem. When I studied social studies at Harvard many years ago, Marxism was one of the things that we studied. We studied Weber. We studied Marx. We studied Durkheim, Adam Smith, of course.

I don't see a problem with Marxism, and Leninism, and Ho Chi Minh thought being taught as part of a political theory course. It just can't be taught as the only theory, because then it's not American style education anymore. But teaching Vietnamese students-- it will be a Vietnamese university, not an American University-- teaching Vietnamese students a very important strain of thinking that's very significant in their own history, I have no problem with that whatsoever. But that's me speaking as me, because it will be the Fulbright University of Vietnam, its faculty, the board that oversees it, who will make that decision, and not the U.S. government. It truly is going to be independent of us, and independent of the Vietnamese government when it's set up.

Audience: Thank you very much. Marsha van de Berg, I'm a fellow here at Stanford. I wondered if you might return to TPP for a moment, and to the extent that you can, give us a sense for what the Vietnamese leadership who you deal with, are saying in response to the tenor of the presidential campaign, and the possibility that TPP does not get ratified by the U.S. Congress.

Osius: They're nervous about it. Everybody the world over has been watching our campaign with varying degrees of confusion, abhorrence, mistrust. And those who really went out on a limb during the TPP negotiations, find themselves out on that limb and wondering what's going to happen.

First, I'm going to tell you what I've been saying. And then I'll tell you what they've been saying back at me. What I've been saying is since 1870, the executive branch has negotiated 14 major trade agreements. And the Congress has ratified 14 major trade agreements. Our pattern has been, very often, that one administration will negotiate the agreement. And a subsequent administration will ratify the agreement. Now, this election may be an aberration.

It may be that we will truly have an administration that doesn't believe in trade at all. And then, I think we're going to have some real complications. But in the debate the other day, Hillary Clinton reminded everybody that while we maybe 5 percent of the world's population, there's another 95 percent out there with whom we need to trade if we want to continue to be strong and prosperous.

And so what I've argued to the Vietnamese is that our interests dictate that, at some point, we ratify TPP. It may not happen as fast as the president wants. The president wants it to happen this year. And he's working hard behind the scenes with congressional leadership to

try to get it setup so it could go through during a lame duck session. But it really depends on the outcome of the election, because there are many ways in which the election could be interpreted to say that neither party would go for TPP.

But I've got a few statistics that I think are important. In the United States, 65 percent of Americans see globalization is good. Seventy percent say trade is good for consumers. Fifty-nine percent say that international trade is good for the American economy. And 64 percent say that trade is good for their standard of living individually.

There's another example that I think is worth using-- Nike. They produce a lot of shoes in Vietnam. They hire 30,000 people in the United States.

Say a shoe at Foot Locker sells for \$100. Nike bought that shoe from a producer in Vietnam for about \$25. Nike sold it to Foot Locker for about \$50.

So that means \$25, a quarter of it, goes to Nike, its personnel, its designers. 50% of it goes to the retailer, or the advertiser, or the mall in which the shoe is sold. That means \$75 out of \$100 goes to Americans, supports American jobs. \$25 out of 100 supports jobs in Vietnam. That's not such a bad deal.

So I think that, eventually-- and this is what I keep telling the Vietnamese-- eventually reason will prevail. And we're going to go ahead with this. Our interests, our future, is in Asia. And if we retreat from this, can if the rhetoric of the campaign means that we never get to the point of ratifying this agreement, we will be forgoing tremendous economic benefit. The Peterson Institute says \$100 billion a year.

And we will be ceding our leadership role in Asia. We will be saying, okay, we're not going to write the rules. Somebody else write the rules. And guess what? Somebody else will write the rules. And we won't like them. So the damage will be very considerable for the United States of not ratifying TPP. When it comes to U.S.-Vietnam relationship alone, I'm happy to say we didn't put every single egg in that basket.

When I gave those opening remarks, I talked about a lot of areas where we're building progress. The Vietnamese, ironically, are already benefiting from TPP. The FDI is already flowing in. And because they took the brave step of joining the highest standard trade agreement ever to be negotiated, businesses are looking at them anew.

And those who feel they're too overexposed in China or elsewhere are looking at Vietnam. There won't be jobs moving from the United States to Vietnam. There will be jobs moving around in other parts of the world ending up in Vietnam.

So the Vietnamese want it to happen. It will make a huge difference to them economically. It also is the one piece of leverage we have when it comes to human rights that really makes a difference.

And I mentioned the labor part of the deal, very, very significant. So they're looking, they're hoping, that we will do the right thing. They're expecting us to do the right thing. If we don't, it will be a setback. But I don't think it's a fatal blow.

Audience: Mr. Ambassador—

Eikenberry: Could you please give your name.

Audience: My name is Quang Nguyen. I am too old to be a student here. But I'm still young enough to be interested in your speech.

Regarding Vietnam-U.S. relations, I'd like to make a distinction between Vietnam people and the Vietnam government, same with U.S. people and the U.S. government. I don't think there has ever been issues between the Vietnam people and the American people, and even the American government.

You already said so. Ninety two percent of the people in Vietnam have a very favorable view of the U.S. Second, we have witnessed the trip of President Obama in Vietnam. I would say he's the most popular world leader ever to visit Vietnam.

So there's never been an issue between the Vietnam people and the government of the U.S., as well as the American people. If the Vietnamese government would follow the Vietnamese people, I think they'd be out of business in no time. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

Osius: Thank you. Let me just add one thing to what you said about President Obama's visit. I was with President Clinton when he visited Vietnam in the year 2000. And I was in the motorcade with him. And I remember riding through the streets of former Saigon, now Ho Chi Minh City, and looking out.

And everywhere I looked, there were people six deep on these long roads that we took to get to various places, at least six people deep everywhere. And I was so impressed. This year riding with President Obama from [Inaudible] Airport to the Central District, everywhere I looked it was 30 people deep. There were a million people on the streets of Ho Chi Minh City. Red, white and blue was everywhere. It was astonishing. The president showed respect to Vietnam's people, because he interviewed young entrepreneurs.

And he showed a Vietnam whose young people are innovative, and entrepreneurial, and smart as all get out. He met with another group of young people, about 800, and took questions freely, something that Vietnam's leaders don't tend to do. But he took questions from young people about every topic.

And a woman sang-- she rapped for him. And that's not the Vietnam that most Americans think about. And it's not the Vietnam that most people around the world think about. They think of this communist dictatorship. And they don't think about the innovation or the energy of its young people. But I think President Obama was able to highlight that.

And it was kind of a wake up call for many of Vietnam's leaders. They would have preferred that meetings just be between President Obama and the leadership, not so much exposure to the people. But then in the end, even Vietnam's leaders thought that his words when he spoke were respectful, respected 1,000 years of Vietnam's history, didn't just focus on the last 20 years, but a thousand years of Vietnam's history.

And they liked it that he showed respect to Vietnam's culture, whether it was eating bun cha in a cafe sitting on a plastic stool with Anthony Bourdain, or whether he visited a temple. He went to the [Inaudible]. He showed respect for Vietnam's culture.

And that made a big impression on the leadership as well. So I agree with everything you said about the differences between the government and the people. But President Obama has adopted a policy that we support different forms of government.

We tried in the '60s and '70s to change Vietnam's form of government. We all know how that ended. And so that's not what we're doing anymore. And so the fact that he was able to say that, basically underneath that is we're not going to overthrow you.

That is what has enabled us to build a partnership, and to build trust. And I think it enables us to keep propelling the kind of changes that would make for a much more-- a Vietnam where those young people, those energetic young people, are much more engaged and involved in their country's future than they are now.

Audience: Thank you, Mr. Ambassador. I just want to add one more thing. The popularity of the American people, with respect to the Vietnamese people, we must remember that that was not withstanding the huge propaganda machinery of the government in the last so many years against the United States. So they cannot fight that, because it is part of our culture, that we do not fight with the American people, never. I just wanted to make that point.

Osius: That's correct, thank you.

Eikenberry: Next question, please? Please, here.

Audience: Good afternoon, Mr. Ambassador, Lieutenant Grant Cassidy of the U.S. Navy. You mentioned in your remarks briefly about the kind of expanding, or I guess developing, defense cooperation relationship between the United States and Vietnam. Could you comment further on what the state of that is, and where you see it going here in the near future?

Osius: Thanks. The last defense minister, Mr. Tang, was someone who fought with us during the American War. I met his wife. She was a nurse on the battlefield.

Today's minister is someone who has now met with Americans three times. He's met with me twice. And yesterday, he met with Secretary of Defense Ash Carter for the first time. Those are the three Americans he's met in his life.

It's going to take a while for us to really know each other. And what I have been counseling our Department of Defense is, take it easy. Keep the long view in mind. We're going to build this step by step.

I say that. And, yet, in the last two years, we've made some really significant progress. Before the President's visit, the Ministry of Defense sent us two letters of requests for specific defense items that they wanted. That had never happened.

Never never gotten so far as to say, yeah, we actually want something from you. Before that, we had already built a relationship with the Coast Guard. And we were providing fast boats, metal sharks. They're fast patrol boats.

Now, we're going to be providing a much bigger ship. The relationship is building. We're doing more in training, especially training on peacekeeping, and on collaboration on humanitarian assistance in disaster relief, than we've ever done.

We have a number of exercises, engagements, at sea engagements, each year. One is now happening Da Na with the U.S.S *McCain*. So there have been a steady step up in our maritime collaboration. There's huge overhang of distrust that we have to deal with.

And there's another overhang. Russia has been providing the bulk of Vietnam's needs, addressing the bulk of their needs. Ninety-five percent of their weapons are purchased from Russia. And that relationship has been going on for a long time.

And the Russians do things that we don't do. There are under the table payments that the United States absolutely does not make. Procurement from us is clean. And it isn't from everybody else.

So there's a lot of things that we have to deal with as we build this collaboration. The Vietnamese recognize that in the South China Sea, they can't see what's going on. They don't have the means to tell exactly what's happening.

And before you can address the challenge, you have to know what the challenge is. And so they need boats, planes, radar, and a capability to pull out all that information together to know what's going on in the South China Sea. We're really good at that.

And they know that we're really good at that. And so they're doing a lot of training with us on how to incorporate different streams of information to be able to tell what's going on so that they can address it. So what is going to happen, I believe, is we'll do two steps forward, one step back, two steps forward, one step back, for a number of years before we get to a place where there's a real military partnership, a real security partnership. But now, the trajectory is good.

And I think it's useful for both countries. And important for us, in particular, to have powerful partnerships in Asia so that we don't have to do it all alone. And I would say India, Indonesia, and Vietnam is three powerful partnerships.

We're used to alliances. We're used to telling our allies what to do. We can't do that with our partners.

We can't do it with India, Indonesia or Vietnam. We're going to have to learn-- and this will change us. We'll have to learn to be good security partners.

Eikenberry: If I could just segue off that ambassador, so we're looking at partnerships. But Vietnam, from their perspective, it seems like they're looking at partnerships too, especially as they look at the South China Sea. So they have their relations with Japan, with Australia, with India. Can you talk a little bit about how it looks from Hanoi as they're developing their maritime and defense strategy?

Osius: For one thing, they refer to the partnership with us as by far and away their most active one. So they refer to that partnership as more active than the partnerships they have with China and Russia. But there's a lot going on with Japan, a lot going on with Korea, a lot going on with Australia.

We're pretty well ordained. From the Vietnamese perspective, they know they cannot deal with the sovereignty challenges alone. I think they would agree that there needs to be three different parts to their approach. They have to have a legal approach, such as the Philippines have when they took the case to the arbitral tribunal. They need a diplomatic approach, which largely means keeping ASEAN together, because ASEAN together is way stronger than each individual nation going to China on its own. And they need enhanced capabilities. For the diplomatic strategy to work, they need us, because we are better at bringing ASEAN together, and at helping ASEAN deal with the challenges in the South China Sea than ASEAN is alone. For the legal approach, it's helpful to have our advice. And they have asked for it. And we've provided it.

And for the capability challenge, they definitely need us. And so for every single part of their strategy, tight coordination with the United States is really important. And I think that's the reason we have this opportunity right now to build this powerful partnership, to get over the distrust that has existed, and to build something that will make a big difference to both nations. Is that helpful?

Audience: Thank you very much, Mr. Ambassador, Dan Sneider from Shorenstein APARC. I wonder if you could say anything about how the Vietnamese perceive the expansion of Chinese influence in Laos and Cambodia in particular, given the historic relationships and the complications of those relationships between those three countries, and how much they're worried about the degree to which the Chinese are exercising some degree of domination in those areas.

Osius: Thank you. I'm going to differentiate a little bit. Just for context, when Cambodia chaired ASEAN, they couldn't even issue joint statements because the Cambodians were so influenced by their Chinese friends the Chinese were able to break consensus within ASEAN on issues like the South China Sea.

With Laos, they've not been able to do that. China has tremendous influence in both countries. But I would say there's much more in Cambodia than in Laos. So with Laos, ASEAN have been able to stay together. The statements are kind of weak sometimes.

But the Chinese have not been able to break ASEAN unity by using the Laos chairmanship. And they've been trying every method they could. A huge amount of money has been flowing from China into Cambodia and into Laos.

But the Vietnamese are influential too. The Vietnamese are more influential than Laos than they are in Cambodia. And we have been working very closely with the Vietnamese on Laos strategy. We learned from them a great deal, because the Lao were there fraternal communist brothers for ages.

And so we have actually been able to learn a lot in our dialogues with the Vietnamese about how best to enhance our relationship with Laos. And this is, again, for historians it's kind of-- wow. But we have the Vietnamese encouraging us to have a better relationship with Laos, and encouraging the Lao to have a better relationship with the United States.

They're not saying the same thing about Cambodia, because that's been very frustrating. But they've urged us not to give up on Cambodia, and to keep doing as much as we can to maintain the parts of the relationship that work, and to sometimes-- just sometimes looking the other way when the Cambodians behave in a way that's particularly egregious. But we don't have the same set of tools that China has for dealing with Laos and Cambodia.

But our partnership with Vietnam is one of the tools that we have. And it's turned out to be a very, very useful one. But ASEAN is in a lot of different places when it comes to the South China Sea. The claimants are more or less on one script, although the Philippines seems to be headed in a very peculiar direction at the moment.

But the rest of the ASEAN claimants tend to be pretty united. And I've been following ASEAN for more than 20 years. What's really interesting to me is that an organization that used to be absolutely driven by the Indonesians-- Indonesia is half of ASEAN's economy, half of its population.

And it's always been it's the natural leader. Especially when they had people like [Inaudible] in charge, Indonesia was a very powerful leader of ASEAN. Well, Indonesia is very internally focused.

Thailand is-- it's hard to describe what's happening in Thailand. But they're not able to play much of a leadership role in ASEAN. Cambodia and Laos are too small. And Singapore is way too small to play a really big leadership role in ASEAN.

The Philippines is headed in its own direction. Who does that leave, in terms of providing leadership in ASEAN? And when even I use the word leadership within ASEAN with regard to the Vietnamese, they say, oh, no, no, no, no, don't say that. We're proactive.

But I'm telling you, they're leaders. They're providing the strategic leadership for ASEAN. In a vacuum. And they're doing it very effectively.

And they do it mostly behind the scenes. That's how they operate. But it's very effective. And ASEAN is important to us. ASEAN is 600 million people-- a fast growing middle class. It's huge market for us, strategically significant-- very important for us. Vietnam is right smack in the center with a 3,000 kilometer coastline on the South China Sea.

Audience: Mr. Ambassador, thank you for your leadership and your participation today. My name is Joe Consella. I'm a retired Stanford grad. I'm a retired Navy captain. And I'm a Vietnam veteran.

And my question to you is, if you could define and maybe clarify the policy that you see toward the islands in the South China Sea, the Paracels and Spratlys? And what do you think the outcome is going to be of the territorial disputes?

Osius: I can't tell you what the outcome is going to be. I really don't know. I know that the Chinese have a pretty determined strategy. They see the South China Sea as their lake. The reason they drew the nine-dot line around most of the South China Sea is they really saw it as akin to the Caribbean during the Monroe Doctrine.

Now, during the Monroe Doctrine, we wanted to keep outside powers, or European powers, outside of the Caribbean. But there wasn't a whole lot going on in the Caribbean at the time. So it didn't make a huge difference that globally we did this.

The South China Sea is the place where half of the world's seaborne cargo passes every year, 50 percent. A huge amount of oil passes through the South China Sea. And the United States has stood for freedom on the sea lanes for 240 years.

There are a lot of things in our policy that change. But that's been really consistent. And since there have been planes, we've stood for freedom of air passage as well.

So the United States considers that, the freedom of passage, to be a vital interest-- one that we will defend. We don't consider the various claims to the Paracels or the Spratlys to be our business. Vietnam and China are arguing over the Paracels. Five nations are arguing over the Spratlys.

What we do consider very, very important, even though we don't take a position on who should get which rock or which island, we consider it very important the method by which it's resolved, because if the international order is to continue, is to flourish, issues like that have to be resolved peacefully, and in accordance with international law. And they can't be resolved by a big country eating up the territory of smaller countries.

That's too big an interruption to international order for the United States to acquiesce. So how the issues are resolved is where we have taken our stance, the method that they're used.

The question I'm often asked in Vietnam is, will we go to war with China over a particular island?

And I don't think the answer is yes. I don't think we're prepared to go and fight for a particular island in the Spratlys. But would we take action in order to continue to maintain free passage through seaways? We always have.

Throughout our history, we have taken action to allow free passage through sea-lanes. So that's what we've been focused on, is that free passage issue. We think that the best way that we can preserve peace and stability in the South China Sea is through having these powerful partnerships that I mentioned, working with countries in the region on a diplomatic track, on a legal track, and on a capacity building track so that the China strategy to own that lane becomes just too expensive, too costly, to maintain.

And I actually think we're seeing a little bit of progress. The Philippines won its case. And the Chinese have behaved differently since the Philippines won that case. It was a blow to China. But I think their strategy has not changed fundamentally yet. So I think we still have a lot more work to do.

There are two China experts right here. I'm a little bit frightened if I say anything about China in front of these two-- three of you.

Audience: I'm [Inaudible]. I'm from the Australian National University in Canberra. I'm visiting Stanford this week. Would you be able to comment on some of the differences of view within the Communist Party of Vietnam, as well as within the government, and maybe even with the broader society, that's beginning to emerge? The differences of view toward China, versus towards the United States, is it possible as you try to analyze various factions and power centers within Vietnam, is it possible to say, well, they lean that way, they lean this way? And how do you then try to navigate that?

Osius: The last Politburo sort of ceased to exist this April. The defining moment for the previous Politburo was the beginning of December of 2014, when they had kind of a deadline, after which they couldn't say anything about the Philippines case. They had to file a statement.

And there was a huge debate within the Politburo. If we file this statement, the Chinese are going to be furious, because we'll be acknowledging the jurisdiction of the arbitral tribunal over the Philippine China case. And on December 5th, they went ahead.

They took that fateful step, and filed a statement, which didn't say too much. But it definitely acknowledged the jurisdiction of the court. And that enraged the Chinese.

And there were a lot of members of the Politburo that felt, this is going to be the end. This is going to be terrible for our relations with China. And, in fact, it wasn't.

If anything, it made the Chinese show a little more respect. So the divisions that existed within the Politburo to that day, at that point evaporated, because the argument that Prime Minister [Inaudible] had made, you have to do this, had succeeded. And everybody saw it as a success.

Now, there's a new Politburo since April, 19 members. And it's kind of like studying the Kremlin. We don't know exactly who is where on what issue.

But I can tell you that people would like to say, okay, well there's a faction that favors the United States. And there's a faction that favors China. And it's way more complicated than that.

There are one or two members within the Politburo who are very, very happy with relations with China, one or two out of 19. And I would say the vast majority of the Politburo believes that Vietnam's future depends on this comprehensive international integration. We're at the head of the list when it comes to comprehensive international integration.

But it's a much bigger list than us. It's ASEAN. It's China. It's Japan and Korea. It's Europe. And the forces that believe in this comprehensive international integration are way, way on the ascendant. And those who believe that they should stick with the comfortable relationship with China are in a small minority. When it comes to the Central Committee, which is the biggest governing body, about 300, the big body when it comes to every single policy, the vast majority, far and away, believe that comprehensive international integration is the way to go. And they know the opinion polls too. They know how much that the Vietnamese these people, like President Obama, appreciate the partnership with us. They're very aware. That's a political factor that they have to take into account in their decision-making.

Eikenberry: Ambassador, we're getting down in time. What I'd like to do is take one more question. I'd like to tack a question on to that. This gentleman was here at, I think, 6:00 o'clock this morning.

Audience: Hello, Mr. Ambassador, everyone. My name is Bill Creighton. I'm a member of Veterans for Peace. And I'm on the Executive Board of the Vietnam Chapter of Veterans for Peace. And I wanted to congratulate you and the embassy last year for throwing one of the rockiest afternoons at the pride festival on the outdoor music event. It was like this little mini Castro in the middle of Hanoi.

Family members were coming up. Parents were coming up to lend their support to their kids. There was one woman. Her name was Tao Nguyen.

If you're around next week, she's performing at the Sweetwater in Mill Valley. And I think it's a Sunday night. Go see her at Mill Valley. And I believe it was her mother who had been away for 40 years.

There was another woman who left Vietnam, one of the parents of the musicians left Vietnam 40 years ago, and came back for that event in support. It was a really big deal. It's a big deal.

Very briefly on the TPP-- last week, the assembly has decided to postpone what was thought to be a routine final ratification of TPP. In 2014 when I was in Vietnam, there was always Pro-TPP articles in it. And then I'd say a year ago, some questions about TPP came up. And then with the new election, you addressed the answers to some of this in the last few questions. But is there something going on in the halls of Hanoi where they're sort of stepping back to see what's going on?

Eikenberry: And Ambassador, if I could tack on to that, and say a final question-- we've talked about a lot-- you've talked about it a lot. But we haven't talked about the Mekong River.

And there's intense politics that are going on, and geopolitics between China Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam. Can you talk a little bit about that? Does the United States play a role in that game?

Osius: Thanks. First on Pride-- the president asked me when we were riding in, so are you here with your family? And I said, yes, sir. My husband is black. I'm white. And our children are brown. We're a typical American family.

And it's interesting that with that kind of configuration, how warmly the Vietnamese have welcomed us, right from leadership right on down. And every one of those pride festivals is packed to the gills. We had 5,000 people at Saigon's Pride March recently.

So it's a conservative country. The attitudes are changing slowly. But we have been embraced. Our [Inaudible] sort of family has been really, really warmly embraced.

On TPP and the National Assembly, they're watching what's happening in the United States. It's a tough decision for them to fully endorse TPP. And if they could put it off, they'd probably like to put it off.

And the indications that I'm getting now is that it may not get a vote in October. It may not get ratified by the National Assembly in October, which would be a setback for everybody. Vietnam actually has to act faster than we do, because they have so much legal change to enact if they're to be able to join TPP when it enters into force.

So what's happening over here is having an impact on what's happening over there, even though really everybody who's of significance in Vietnam's leadership supports TPP. The broad consensus is tremendously beneficial to Vietnam, provides the exogenous forces that will make reforms happen, because their political system is such that it's really hard to bring about the economic reforms they need to do. So they need those outside forces to make the reform possible, because then they can blame it on us.

Say, well we had to strengthen SOEs, and grow the private sector, because we're required to by those damned Americans. That's fine with us. And it's actually a very positive dynamic. And on the Mekong-- this has been a passion of mine for a long time. I did some bicycle diplomacy in other countries as well, and up and down the Mekong quite a bit. What's

happening on the Mekong, in brief, is there's 11 dams being built along the main stretch of the river.

And the U.S. administration created something called the Lower Mekong Initiative to provide a diplomatic framework for discussions to take place between the riparian countries. The downstream countries are in the most danger. Cambodia, where 60 percent of the people depend on fish for their protein, they could see all that dry up if the Tonle Sap stops reversing flow.

And the flow of the Mekong keeps shrinking. And so there's real danger of irreversible environmental damage. And in Vietnam's delta, it's just as bad.

That's the home of 70 percent of the population. But it's more than half of their rice and agricultural output. And the damage doesn't stop to Vietnam, because a huge amount of that rice is exported to Africa. So the food security implications are huge, of the fact that the waterless water is flowing from the Mekong. More salt water is flowing into the Mekong Delta, and making it possible to grow rice.

The implications for Vietnam are huge. A three-meter rise in water, which now appears increasingly likely within the next few decades, would inundate over half of the Mekong Delta, make it impossible to do anything in terms of agriculture. So we've been working with Vietnam scientists on a large amount of exchange about the effects of climate change, and the effects of less water flow on the Mekong on the delta, and what can be done.

And we have engaged universities. And University of California system has provided some fantastic expertise, because we know a lot about flood and drought in California. And we've been able to share a lot of those experiences with the University of Vietnam in Ho Chi Minh City, and with [Inaudible] University.

We have USAID projects both in the Mekong and the Red River Delta, where we're learning a lot. And we've been supporting a lot of research involving Vietnam's scientists through USAID. And we will continue to do so once we have Fulbright University in Vietnam. So we're very active both diplomatically and on the academic and research side, and on the assistance side, when it comes to the Mekong.

Eikenberry: Wonderful. Well, I'd like to give two applause-- first, for I learned over the course of an Army career that schedules just don't form from the skies, chairs don't march in conference rooms, and flyers don't go out on their own. I'd like to recognize Lisa Lee from the Southeast Asia Program, and Belinda Yeomans from the U.S.-Asia Security Initiative and Debbie Warren, who is not here right now.

Then, if I could come back to you, as well Ted of course, that the last time I was with Ted, I was with a larger group. And after Ted in Hanoi walked away after spending a generous hour and a half with us on a Sunday, the people that I was with for about the next week, all they had to say was, number one, they have so much more confidence in U.S. diplomacy, and number two, they have so much more admiration for our Foreign Service, the Department of State.

And I think Ted, we all agree, that when people walk out of here, that's what they'll also be saying. So thank you very much.