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Do Thi Thuy

The Prospects of Vietnam's Niche Diplomacy in the Era of National Advancement

Abstract. Niche diplomacy is a notable characteristic of the foreign policy of middle powers — states that have the capacity to play a prominent role on the international stage, but are not powerful enough to impose their will on others. Therefore, middle powers need to rely on their ability to identify and fill in "niche spaces" through diplomatic methods and skills, that is, choosing a few specific issues, institutions or areas to specialize in and orient them as important foundations in its foreign policy. Niche diplomacy also contributes to building national brand in international relations. As an emerging middle power with enhanced position and status, Vietnam in recent years has been quite proactive in promoting international cooperation and shaping initiatives in some aspects of niche diplomacy. This article analyzes and evaluates the reality and prospects for promoting Vietnam's middle power diplomacy in some niches such as international mediation and peacemaking, humanitarian diplomacy, environmental diplomacy and sustainable development, and science diplomacy. The study posits that for Vietnam, developing niche diplomacy will be an important factor contributing to the country's prosperity and development goals by 2030 and 2045 — the targets that Hanoi has set for the new era — the era of Vietnam's advancement.

Keywords: niche diplomacy, middle power, Vietnam's foreign policy, the era of national advancement

Author: Do Thi Thuy, Ph.D. (Politics), Associate Professor, Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam, Department of International Politics and Diplomacy, Hanoi.
ORCID: 0000-0002-3548-7678. E-mail: dothuy@dav.edu.vn

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До Тхи Тхюи

Перспективы нишевой дипломатии Вьетнама в эпоху национального развития

Аннотация. Нишевая дипломатия является характерной чертой внешней политики «средних держав» — государств, способных играть заметную роль на международной арене, но не обладающих достаточной мощью, чтобы навязывать свою волю другим. В связи с этим средним державам необходимо опираться на умение выявлять и занимать определенные «ниши» посредством дипломатических методов и навыков, то есть выбирать конкретные вопросы, институты или сферы для специализации и делать их важными опорами своей внешней политики. Нишевая дипломатия также способствует формированию национального бренда в системе международных отношений. Вьетнам, выступающий ныне в качестве развивающейся средней державы с укрепившимися позициями и статусом, в последние годы проявляет высокую активность в продвижении международного сотрудничества и выдвижении инициатив в рамках нишевой дипломатии. В статье анализируются и оцениваются текущее состояние и перспективы развития вьетнамской дипломатии средней державы в таких нишах, как международное посредничество и миротворчество, гуманитарная дипломатия, экологическая дипломатия и устойчивое развитие, а также научная дипломатия. В работе обосновывается тезис о том, что развитие нишевой дипломатии станет для Вьетнама важным фактором, способствующим процветанию страны и достижению целей развития, намеченных на 2030 и 2045 годы — рубежи, определенные Ханоем для новой эпохи, эпохи национального подъема.

Ключевые слова: нишевая дипломатия, средняя держава, внешняя политика Вьетнама, эпоха национального подъема

Автор: До Тхи Тхюи, канд. полит. наук, доцент, Дипломатическая академия Вьетнама, кафедра международной политики и дипломатии, г. Ханой.
ORCID: 0000-0002-3548-7678. E-mail: dothuy@dav.edu.vn

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Introduction

Currently, in the context of the widespread power shift taking place in the international arena, the agency of middle powers in international relations is further strengthened. Vietnam, an emerging middle power in the region, has recently been quite proactive in niche diplomacy, understood as "concentrating resources in specific issue areas best able to generate returns worth having, rather than trying to cover the field" [Evans, Grant 1995: 323]. This study posits that for Vietnam, developing niche diplomacy in such fields as humanitarian assistance, mediation, peacemaking, scientific diplomacy, etc. would contribute to the country's prosperity and development goals by

2030 and 2045 — the targets that Hanoi has set for the new era — the era of advancement of the Vietnamese nation.

The research proceeds as follows. First, a literature review on the concept and connotation of niche diplomacy of middle powers is provided. Second, the article analyzes and evaluates the reality and prospects for promoting Vietnam's middle power diplomacy in some niches such as international mediation and peacemaking, humanitarian diplomacy, environmental diplomacy and sustainable development, and science diplomacy. Finally, the study concludes by providing some insights as to how Vietnam could address the obstacles facing the conduct of its niche diplomacy and bring into play its potentials, thus contributing to realizing the country's development goals in the new era.

Niche diplomacy as a foreign policy tool for middle powers: potentials and limitations

Niche diplomacy is a notable trait of middlepowermanship. It involves a particular model of governance based on conceptual skills, technical leadership, and coalition-building to generate political momentum around a specific set of issues. Middle powers engage in niche diplomacy because they lack the necessary resources to conduct foreign policy in a global context or grand strategy. Therefore, to maximize their leverage and impact, middle powers need to make a choice among various policy priorities and/or geographic areas. Therefore, they have to invest resources in specific areas that can generate the greatest returns for themselves, thus allowing these states to "punch above weight" [Cooper 1997].

Middle powers exercise niche diplomacy by mobilizing intangible resources such as technical knowledge, diplomatic expertise, and professional skills. The success of middle powers in achieving these goals in the international arena depends on the deployment of soft power resources as well as the effectiveness of focusing these resources on a small number of specialized issues [Cox 1989: 828].

A key pillar of middlepowermanship is the engagement with global governance in specialized areas, where they can shape international agendas and contribute to the development of global governance capabilities, most clearly through multilateral platforms. Cooper [1997: 21] argues that middle powers have a unique role in providing intellectual and technical leadership in specialized areas, where they demonstrate a distinctive statecraft that emphasizes alliance building and cooperation. They also adopt, on a selective basis, catalyst and coordinating roles.

Middle powers increasingly loom large in major powers' strategic thinking. For example, Russian scholars have studied the role of middle powers in world affairs, e.g. Turkey [Guzaerov 2019], Hungary [Teremeckij 2023], and the "good citizens of the world majority" [Silaev 2024] (or the engagement with middle powers in conducting Russian foreign policy [Tsygankov 2018]. However, the literature on niche diplomacy remains modest.

Niche diplomacy also reveals inherent shortcomings. While niche diplomacy may enable middle powers to exert influence in specific policy areas, it rarely allows them to fundamentally alter the broader balance of power. Due to structural constraints, middle

powers lack the power necessary to ensure the implementation of their initiatives and brokered agreements or to sustain long-term institutional frameworks [Vu, Do 2019]. Often, the effectiveness of niche diplomacy depends on the favourable geopolitical environment and the support of major powers [Đỗ Thị Thủy 2021]. As such, the impact of niche diplomacy is volatile, subject to a middle power's material power and political commitments.

Vietnam's discourse on middle power status in the era of national advancement

For Vietnam, after nearly 40 years of Doi Moi, its national power and international standing have undergone profound developments. Some foreign and local scholars have increasingly seen Vietnam as an emerging middle power, judging from its increased national power, foreign policy behaviors, international standing, development aspiration, and self-identity (e.g. [Do 2022; Phan 2022; Le 2019; Vu 2022; Karim 2022]).

The Vietnamese leadership is also aware of Vietnam's rising status in the global system. As the Document of the 13th Congress of Vietnam's Communist Party affirms, "Our country has never had such fortune, potential, position and international prestige as it does today" [Văn kiện Đại hội... 2021]. The Party leadership holds the view that this is a period of important strategic opportunity, the final stage of the Vietnamese revolution to achieve the 100-year strategic goal under the leadership of the Party (in 2030), creating a solid premise to achieve the goal of 100 years of national founding (in 2045). Since August 2024, discourse on "the new era — the era of national advancement of the Vietnamese nation" has been promoted widely on Vietnamese politics.

Vietnam's enhanced power and its dynamic diplomatic practices have provided it with sufficient resources, leverage and experience to implement niche diplomacy. However, the world is in a period of epochal change, marked by rapid and fundamental transformations, presenting both unprecedented challenges and opportunities for Vietnam. On the one hand, evolving trends in the world e.g. globalization and the Fourth Industrial Revolution created great opportunities for Vietnam to combine its strength with the driving forces of the times to increase its power, position and influence in the international arena. On the other hand, Vietnam has been pulled back by the negative impacts of some current trends and movements such as heightened great power competition, deeper division and polarization of world order, evolving geopolitical conflicts, anti-/de-globalization movements and the trend of withdrawal from multilateralism, ongoing trade disputes etc. However, with the country's newfound status and its proactive international integration, Vietnam has a great potential to resolve challenges and turn challenges into opportunities. Along such line, niche diplomacy would serve as a new direction of Vietnam's foreign policy in the new era.

Vietnam's niche diplomacy: reality and prospects

Due to Vietnam's limited financial and human resources (currently at a lower-middle level), Vietnam has identified a number of areas to invest so as to build the brand of its "niche diplomacy". The niche areas prioritized by Hanoi are those in which

Vietnam: (i) has close and intimate interests, needs to be prioritized for promotion, (ii) has strengths and experience thereby enhancing Vietnam's role and position, and (iii) align with the country's priorities and available resources [Đỗ Thị Thủy 2021]. Accordingly, these might include maritime security (promoting the international order based on rules, UNCLOS, COC, ocean waste issues, sustainable exploitation, etc.); human security (humanitarian diplomacy, resolving the consequences of bombs and mines in Southeast Asia, women and children in conflict), the impact of climate change and water security (Mekong); inclusive development model, sustainable growth towards innovation, science and technology development (combating plastic waste, digital transformation, taking advantage of the 4.0 industrial revolution, narrowing the development gap), gender equality and women's empowerment, humanitarian diplomacy, mediation and reconciliation, etc. to propose initiatives to gather forces at multilateral forums. In addition, Vietnam has strengthened its stance on many important issues such as supporting denuclearization, new-generation free trade agreements, and promoting the building of a rules-based regional and international order [Do 2023].

The following section analyzes some potential areas that Vietnam has recently focused on so as to promote its niche diplomacy, namely international mediation and peacemaking diplomacy, humanitarian diplomacy, environmental diplomacy and sustainable development, and science diplomacy.

International mediation and peacemaking diplomacy

Vietnam has identified mediation-conciliation as a priority goal in its multilateral diplomacy and is believed to have the advantages and conditions to assume this role, contributing to enhancing the country's international position and national image in the new era [Vu, Do 2019].

The role of mediation and conciliation was first mentioned in the Directive 25 of the Secretariat of the Central Party Committee, issued on August 8, 2018, on promoting and elevating multilateral diplomacy to 2030. Accordingly, Vietnam strives to gradually play a *core, leading, conciliatory role* in multilateral forums and organizations of strategic importance to the country, in accordance with its capabilities and specific conditions.

Promoting common interests and widely accepted values such as peace, stability, and development, Vietnam has been increasingly confident in playing the role of a mediator, hosting a number of cooperation processes such as the US — North Korea Summit in February 2019 in Hanoi. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Pham Binh Minh's visit to North Korea on the eve of the Trump — Kim Summit can be seen as an effort to help create the most favourable environment for dialogue and peace between the United States and North Korea [Khánh Lynh 2019].

At the multilateral level, Vietnam has proactively participated in the United Nations peacekeeping force since 2014, conflict resolution, post-conflict reconstruction as well as development and climate change issues. In 2020, as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, Vietnam demonstrated its capacity to chair international conferences, propose numerous initiatives at the Security Council, focusing on compliance with the United Nations Charter, cooperation between the United Nations and ASEAN, promoting ASEAN's centrality in the regional

architecture as well as peacemaking efforts for evolving conflicts in the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, etc. As the ASEAN Chair in 2020, and the only ASEAN member presented at the United Nations Security Council at that time, Vietnam managed to skillfully handle sensitive issues to maintain ASEAN's unity and solidarity such as playing "a bridging role between international and regional efforts" in the Myanmar issue [Việt Đức 2021]. In 2020, in its dual capacity as Chair of ASEAN and a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, Vietnam has played a bridging role connecting a number of similar agendas of the Security Council and ASEAN.

In addition, Vietnam has tried to connect ASEAN's partners into multilateral cooperation frameworks centered on ASEAN. During Vietnam's 2020 ASEAN Chairmanship, Vietnam successfully worked with other Asian countries to finalize the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), as well as promote regional cooperation in the Mekong sub-region and stability in the South China Sea. It has also tried to forge negotiations on a Code of Conduct between ASEAN and China in the South China Sea [Do 2022].

More recently, during a meeting with world leaders on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in September 2024, General Secretary To Lam expressed concern about the Russia — Ukraine conflict, called for an end to the conflict, restoration of peace, protection of security and safety of people and essential infrastructure, and emphasized that Vietnam welcomes and supports international mediation efforts to seek a lasting peaceful solution to the conflict, with the participation of all relevant parties, in accordance with international law and the United Nations Charter. The General Secretary also emphasized that when the conflict ends, Vietnam is ready to join the international community in supporting the reconstruction effort in Ukraine [Hoài Nam 2024]. In early 2026, Vietnam became a founding member of the US-led Board of Peace with the aim to promote a sustainable peaceful solution to the Israel — Palestine conflict in the Gaza Strip.

In short, Vietnam's diplomatic imprints of international mediation and peacemaking are characterized by perseverance, consistency, and respect for normative values in behavior such as peace, dialogue, and equality, together with determination when necessary as well as a willingness to fight to protect legitimate interests.

Humanitarian diplomacy

Deploying humanitarian diplomacy is a testament to the fact that Vietnam has increasingly positioned itself as "a responsible member of the international community". In fact, in recent times, Vietnam has made meaningful contributions, acting as a catalyst to promote cooperation and dialogue between countries and groups of countries to promote a balanced and progressive approach to the protection and promotion of human rights around the world, especially in protecting vulnerable groups and ensuring human rights in response to emerging global issues such as migration, refugees, and climate change.

Vietnam has actively participated in international humanitarian relief efforts. It is a frequent provider of food and other assistance to Cuba and North Korea and a recent proactive supporter of people affected by humanitarian crises around the world such as

those in the Gaza Strip, Ukraine, and Myanmar. Specifically, Vietnam has provided humanitarian aid to help ease the situation in Rakhine State since the political upheaval in Myanmar in February 2021. Hanoi provided aid to the Myanmar Government with 100,000 USD for humanitarian activities, reconstruction and development of Rakhine State. Vietnam also sent 76 military personnel to Turkey to support the recovery from the earthquake in February 2023 and 80 officers and professional soldiers to Myanmar to support the recovery from the earthquake in March 2025. In addition, Vietnam, through the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Vietnam Red Cross, provided humanitarian assistance valued US$ 500,000 to the people of Ukraine. Vietnam supports humanitarian activities of the United Nations, countries and international partners for people affected by the conflicts in Ukraine. In that spirit and in response to the United Nations' call, Vietnam decided to contribute 500,000 USD, including 100,000 USD for the Emergency Response Fund (CERF); 100,000 USD for the World Health Organization (WHO); 100,000 USD for UNICEF and 200,000 USD through the Vietnam Red Cross to the Ukrainian Red Cross, to address humanitarian issues and support for the Ukrainian people [Nhã Chi 2022]. Amidst the unfolding humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip in 2023, Vietnam pledged to contribute US$500,000 to support Palestinian people via the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) [Việt Nam đóng góp... 2023]. In July 2025, Hanoi announced an additional US$350,000 assistance for Palestine at the Fourth Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development (CEAPAD) as part of the joint regional effort to share the difficulties with the Palestinian people and facilitate the Palestinian reconstruction process [Việt Nam hỗ trợ... 2025].

Environmental diplomacy and sustainable development

Environmental diplomacy and sustainable development have emerged as another important "niche" for Vietnam's diplomatic activities in recent years. As a country forecasted to be greatly affected by the impacts of climate change, green growth and sustainable development are among Vietnam's current priorities. Despite being a developing country that only entered the industrialization process three decades ago, Vietnam has played an active role in the global fight against climate change.

At the United Nations COP-26 Summit in November 2021, Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh called for fairness and justice in climate change adaptation and securing financial resources and technology transfer to a green economy. In addition, at this Summit, Vietnam committed to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 (while China only aims to do so by 2060 and India is 2070). To achieve this goal, Vietnam will participate in global initiatives on forest protection, promote the transition to renewable energy, as well as support local communities to adapt to climate change and methane reduction.

Vietnam also raised concerns about plastic pollution and other issues such as climate change, biodiversity, water security, etc. At the United Nations Human Rights Council, Vietnam along with Bangladesh and the Philippines formed a core group to highlight the importance of climate change in human rights issues. In addition, Vietnam, together with Ecuador, Germany, Ghana co-hosted the Ministerial

Conference on Plastic Pollution and Ocean waste at the WTO headquarters in early September 2021. In December 2022, Vietnam was the third country, after South Africa and Indonesia, to announce the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) Statement with the International Partnership Group (IPG). Accordingly, the partners committed to supporting Vietnam with 15.5 billion USD for energy transition, helping to ensure a prosperous future for the people, economic growth, self-reliance and energy security of Vietnam, and concurrently contributing to the global fight against climate change.

On April 16—17, 2025, Vietnam for the first time hosted the Partnership for Green Growth and the Global Goals (P4G) Summit of which Vietnam is one of the seven founding members and an official partner. The P4G Summit in Hanoi with the theme "Sustainable green transformation, people-centered" attracted the participation of about 1,000 delegates from more than 40 countries, international organizations, investment funds, research institutes and enterprises. Vietnam's hosting of the P4G Summit is in line with the country's internal development needs in the coming time, which is rapid, green and sustainable growth and joining hands with other countries and partners to build a peaceful, safe, equal, prosperous and climate-resilient world [Gia Thành 2025].

On environmental and climate change issues, Vietnam has built a consistent image of a country that respects common rules and normative values. For example, on the Mekong issue, as a downstream country, Vietnam has expressed its stance on upholding the principles of ensuring water security and fair, reasonable and sustainable development goals based on good practices and international law, while respecting the legitimate development interests of other countries in the basin. Vietnam has also actively included development issues in the Mekong sub-region in ASEAN's agenda by convening the ASEAN Forum on Convergence of Mekong sub-regional cooperation with ASEAN goals in July 2020, urging ASEAN to strengthen its role and centrality in the Mekong sub-region, and to align with ASEAN's goals of community building and sustainable development [Hoang 2020: 7].

Regarding the South China Sea issue, Vietnam persistently and resolutely defends sovereignty and principles, but is willing to demonstrate goodwill to cooperate to handle common challenges, in the spirit of respecting international law, including UNCLOS 1982, actively participating in the implementation and development of a code of conduct, supporting the protection of "common interests" such as environment, fish resources, security, safety and freedom of navigation. In line with the country's Strategy for sustainable development of the marine economy until 2030, vision 2045 and its commitments under the UN Convention on Biological diversity, Vietnam announced its plan to expand and establish new marine protected areas, fisheries resource protection areas, and restore marine ecosystems by 2030, to ensure that the area of marine and coastal protected areas reaches 6 % of the natural area of Vietnam's sea [Phấn đấu đến 2030... 2024]. At the third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC-3) in France in June 2025, Vietnam became one of the first countries to approve the Agreement on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (widely known as the High Seas Treaty). During the event, Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh further declared Vietnam's registration of 15 voluntary commitments related to ocean and marine governance [Khanh An 2025].

Science and technology diplomacy

The Fourth Industrial Revolution opens up a new opportunity for developing countries in narrowing the development gap with developed ones. Vietnam is considered having relatively good adaptability to the Fourth Industrial Revolution thanks to its proactive creation of a technology development environment with high-quality human resources in the technology industry. Many sectors such as e-commerce, tourism, information technology, finance-banking, education, healthcare, e-government will benefit from this revolution if Vietnam has the right development strategy. Especially, Vietnam's extensive integration into the world economy, with its participation in many new-generation free trade agreements, such as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), the European Union — Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA), among others, facilitates technology transfer and robust participation in the global value chain, thereby accelerating Vietnam's domestic innovation and transformation of its economic growth model as well as increasing labor productivity and business competitiveness. It is forecasted that by 2030, the Fourth Industrial Revolution could boost Vietnam's economic growth by USD 28.5 to 62.1 billion, equivalent to 7 % — 16 % of its GDP [Nguyễn Tuấn Anh 2022].

The Fourth Industrial Revolution is not without challenges, particularly the evolving polarization in terms of technology among major powers and the threat of being further left behind. Resolution No. 57-NQ/TW dated December 22, 2024 of the Politburo has directed drastic institutional improvements so that Vietnam can make breakthroughs in science and technology development and innovation and leapfrog into the new wave of knowledge economy, artificial intelligence, and frontier technology in order to realize development goals in the era of national development. The goal is that Vietnam by 2030 will be among the top 50 countries in the world and ranked third in ASEAN in terms of e-government, digital government, and digital economy [Thống nhất nhận thức... 2025].

According to the e-Conomy SEA 2023 Report by Google and Temasek, Vietnam's digital economy is expected to reach 45 billion USD by 2025, with AI technology playing a major role in this growth [Đức Thiện 2025]. In addition, Vietnam needs to build a "brand" in the field of science and technology in general, data and AI in particular, to be able to compete fairly in the market, especially the international market. In this direction, Vietnam's hosting of the International Conference on "Artificial Intelligence and Semiconductors 2025" (AISC 2025, March 12—16, 2025) with the theme "Building the future: Connecting AI and global semiconductor technology" with the participation of more than 1,000 delegates including leaders and leading technology experts from the world from Google, NVIDIA, Meta, TSMC, Samsung, MediaTek, Tokyo Electron, Panasonic, Qorvo, Marvell... and technology corporations from Silicon Valley (USA) to promote international cooperation and scientific research combining AI and semiconductors has affirmed Vietnam's new role and position in the value chain of the global semiconductor and artificial intelligence industry. AISC 2025 is also the venue for the announcement of Vietnamese organizations officially joining the AI Alliance — a global alliance founded by IBM, Aitomatic Meta, AMD, Intel and leading academies, currently gathering more than 140

members from 25 countries, with the mission of promoting open innovation in AI development. Speaking at AISC 2025, Dr. Christopher Nguyen, founder of Aitomatic, commented, "The efforts of the Vietnamese Government in promoting AI and semiconductor development are showing the right direction, in line with the shifting trend of the global technology value chain... The AISC 2025 conference highlights the strong interest of the international community, affirming the appeal of Vietnam as a strategic destination in the high-tech field" [Tô Hà 2025].

With great momentum, science diplomacy can be a bright spot in Vietnam's niche diplomacy in the coming time. In 2024, the World Intellectual Property Organization Report ranked Vietnam 44th in the Global Innovation Index (GII), 4th in Southeast Asia. According to WIPO's assessment, Vietnam and India are lower-middle-income countries with impressive innovation results, ranking much higher than their per capita income [Hoàng Giang 2024].

At the multilateral level, one of the successful examples of Vietnam's science diplomacy is that in May 2023, the International Center for Interdisciplinary Science and Education (ICISE) in Quy Nhon, Viet Nam signed a strategic cooperation agreement with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) to promote science diplomacy. Accordingly, the two sides will coordinate to organize conferences and conduct scientific research with the goal of building a bridge between science and policy, bringing scientific knowledge into policy consultation. The first joint cooperation project was launched in September 2023, attracting more than 60 scientists and young parliamentarians from 18 countries [Hồng Hà 2023].

More recently, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Science and Technology have signed an agreement to foster coordination in promoting Vietnam's science diplomacy. Accordingly, Vietnam will effectively coordinate the implementation of signed cooperation agreements with strategic partners such as the United States, China, Japan, South Korea, Singapore and some EU countries... focusing on cooperation activities on research and development, technology transfer, training and human resource development. In addition, Vietnam will promote the establishment of new partnership frameworks on science, technology and innovation, making science and technology the focus of partnership frameworks with science hubs, focusing on biotechnology, energy, environment, artificial intelligence, advanced materials, semiconductors, quantum technology, robotics and automation.... Other pathways include mobilization of international resources, green financial resources, enhancing the participation of Vietnamese enterprises in the value chain of large global corporations as well as proactively fostering cooperation initiatives and shaping new legal frameworks on science, technology and innovation at multilateral mechanisms such as the United Nations, ASEAN, APEC, UNESCO, Mekong cooperation... [Nguyễn Minh Hằng 2025].

In short, with its focus and interests, science and technology would be a key pillar of Vietnam's niche diplomacy in the coming time. In so doing, Vietnam needs to promote scientific and technological cooperation with key partners, strengthen networking and coalition building, participate in shaping new regulations and laws at multilateral forums, lead a number of initiatives on science and technology, ethical issues in developing new technologies such as AI, quantum, etc.

Conclusion

Pursuing niche diplomacy requires many conditions such as resources, both material and ideational, choosing the right specialized issues, being supported by major countries, and forging domestic consensus. In particular, building capacity and resources is a necessary condition. Often middle powers need to have enough material capabilities to make other countries consider them important. Fully aware of this key problem, Vietnam has set the goals for national development by 2030 and 2045.

For Vietnam, developing niche diplomacy in a sustainable direction will be an important factor contributing to the country's prosperity and development in the future. However, compared to well-established middle powers, Vietnam's resources are still modest, while the complex geopolitical context has been exerting great impacts on the country. Therefore, to be able to implement niche diplomacy, Vietnam needs to continue to consolidate its sources of hard and soft power, actively monitor and quickly respond to the rapid and complex development trends of the world situation as well as learn from good practices of middle powers in global governance and promoting niche diplomacy, in order to limit negative impacts, while ensuring national interests and promoting the Vietnamese diplomatic brand in the world in the new era — the era of national advancement.

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