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Office of the Press Secretary
June 21, 2005

President Welcomes Vietnamese Prime Minister to the White House

The Oval Office

10:01 A.M. EDT

**VIDEO** Multimedia

President's Remarks

 [view](#)

PRESIDENT BUSH: There will be two opening statements this morning. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome. I want to thank you for the constructive visit we just had. We discussed a wide range of subjects. We discussed our economic relations. And I noted that the Vietnamese economy is growing quite substantially. We talked about our desire for Vietnam to join the WTO. We talked about security issues and a mutual desire to coordinate in the war on terror.



We talked about humanitarian issues. As the Prime Minister noted, the United States is supporting the fight against HIV/AIDS in Vietnam, and he gave me a report on the progress about our mutual desire to help those who suffer with HIV/AIDS. We signed a landmark agreement that will make it easier for people to worship freely in Vietnam.

And finally, I want to thank the Prime Minister for his government's willingness to continue to work on the -- on finding the remains of those who lost their lives in Vietnam. It's very comforting to many families here in America to understand that the government is providing information to help close a sad chapter in their lives.

And finally, the Prime Minister graciously invited me to Vietnam. I will be going in 2006. I'm looking forward to my trip. I'm also looking forward to the APEC Summit that Vietnam will be hosting.

Mr. Prime Minister, welcome.

PRIME MINISTER KHAI: (As translated.) Thank you very much Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen.

At the invitation of President George W. Bush, it gives me the great pleasure and honor as the first Vietnamese Prime Minister to pay an official visit to the United States. And this event, in itself, shows that Vietnam-U.S. relations have in fact entered a new stage of development. My visit to America this time coincides with the 10th anniversary of the establishment of our diplomatic relations.

During the talks that I had with Mr. President, Mr. President and I were pleased to note the significant developments in the two countries' relations, including the good progress made in addressing the various issues left over by the past, as well as the various steps to be taken to expand our relations in the future.

Mr. President and I also shared the view that proceeding from the interest of the two countries, and given the new developments in the region and the world, the two countries' relationship should be enhanced, and we should aim to build a friendly relationship, constructive partnership, a comprehensive cooperation on a long-term and stable basis, as well as on the basis of equality, mutual respect and benefits.

We believe that America can find in Vietnam a potential cooperation partner. We have a population of 80 million people, which means a huge market for American businesses. And these people are also very hard working, creative, and dynamic. And they are now working very hard to achieve the goal of building Vietnam into a strong country with wealthy people and a democratic and advanced society.



Vietnam is also actively integrating itself into the world economy, and wishes to be a friend and reliable partner of all countries in the international

community. I also highly appreciate Mr. President's strong support for Vietnam's early WTO accession, and we agreed that Vietnam's accession will be in the benefits of both countries and we agree to continue with our bilateral negotiations with the aim of concluding those very soon.

Mr. President and I also agreed that there remain differences between our two countries due to the different conditions that we have, the different histories and cultures. But we also agreed that we should work together through constructive dialogue based upon mutual respect to reduce those differences in order to improve our bilateral relations.

On international issues, Mr. President and I exchanged views on the recent developments in Asia and the Pacific, which we are both concerned about. And we also agreed on the needs to improve the effectiveness of APEC for which the 2006 APEC summit in Vietnam will be an important milestone.

I am also delighted that President Bush has accepted my invitation to visit Vietnam and to attend the 2006 APEC summit, and we also welcome your support for the organization of this summit.

I am fully confident that my visit to America this time will help uplift the relationship between our two countries to a new height. And may I finally wish America prosperity and happiness to her people.

I thank you, very much, for your time.

PRESIDENT BUSH: Thank you very much.

END 10:11 A.M. EDT

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