

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

INWARD POLITICAL PROCESSES AND FOREIGN POLICY

DOI: 10.54631/VS.2022.62-96208

A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP OF THE RF AND THE SRV: THE ACHIEVED RESULT OR A PERSPECTIVE TARGET?

I.V. Britov¹

Abstract. The author of the article makes an attempt of the conceptual consideration of a comprehensive strategic partnership, a poorly investigated kind of international relations, so far. It is mentioned that different countries, as well as official documents and research-works discuss the features of this status of international relations differently. General theoretical conclusions are applied to the concrete object of the research, i.e., to current Russia-Vietnam relations. The conclusion is that the level of their development does not fully correspond to the content of the term “comprehensive strategic partnership”. It is emphasized that such a situation interferes with the efficient development of cooperation. The current confrontation of the West with the Russian Federation against the background of the developments in Ukraine affects Russia-Vietnam relations.

Keywords: comprehensive strategic partnership, Russia, Vietnam, international relationships, the concept of rectification of names.

For citation: Britov, I.V. (2022). A Comprehensive Strategic Partnership of the RF and the SRV: The Achieved Result or a Perspective Target? *Russian Journal of Vietnamese Studies*, 6 (2): 4–17.

Received: January 11, 2022

Received in revised form: April 4, 2022

Accepted: May 25, 2022

Introduction

This year celebrates the tenth anniversary of the establishment of relations of a comprehensive strategic partnership (CSP) between Russia and Vietnam. At the end of 2021 during the visit of the SRV President to the RF, as the final outcome of the negotiations of V.V. Putin and Nguyen Xuan Phuc there

¹Britov Igor V., Senior Lecturer, the National Research University Higher School of Economics. ORCID: 0000-0002-7298-856X. E-mail: igorviet@mail.ru

was adopted Joint Statement on the Vision of the Development of Relations of a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the two countries up to 2030 [Sovmestnoe zayavlenie: 30.11.2021].

Over the last ten years expert community has not given a definite answer to the question of how much Russia-Vietnam relations correspond to the content of the CSP concept. Neither diplomatic documents nor research works in Russia, Vietnam and other countries formulate clear-cut criteria for the definition of this level of relations. It is correctly stated that this concept is vague [Zheglova 2014: 115].

Vietnam belongs to the countries of Confucian civilization. Therefore, it is noteworthy that the problem of “the concept” is connected with that of rectification of names in Confucianism. This concept states that to improve oneself and to govern it is necessary to build concepts correctly. Confucius said that if a name does not correspond to the essence, the word contradicts the deed, and if the word contradicts the deed, the deeds will not succeed [Confucius 2013: 159]. This statement is as relevant nowadays. Also, it can be fairly applied to the concept of CSP.

The author has investigated the approaches of official structures and academic community of different countries to the issue of CSP, generalized different standpoints and attempted to introduce this concept all-embracingly and substantively. In Russia theoretical aspects of CSP have been discussed in the works by Yu.G. Zheglova [2014], A.A. Krylov [2020], A. Al'mukanova [13.12.2015]. Theoretical conclusions have been applied to the concrete research object, i.e., to current Russia-Vietnam relations. The base of the research-work are such methods as proceeding from private to general, consistency, the unity of external influence and internal conditions.

Documents of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the RF and the SRV being compared, Vietnamese ones give more clear-cut and detailed definition of CSP concept [Triển khai: 12.12.2021]. In Russia the issue of CSP with Vietnam has been indirectly broached in numerous research-works on Russian-Vietnamese cooperation. This theme has been discussed methodically and minutely in articles by D.Sc. (History) E.A. Kanaev[2019], Ph.D. (History) E.V. Kobelev [2020]. The economic aspect of CSP has been exposed in detail in one of the articles by D.Sc. (Economics) V.M. Mazyrin [2020]. In their works on this issue Vietnamese researchers mostly lean for support on the official conception of a three-pronged task which CSP relations ought to solve [Định Công Tuấn: 01.08.2013].

Relevance and importance of the given research are determined with the necessity of the objective assessment of the current development level of relations between the RF and the SRV. This could allow henceforth to avoid some possible errors and build the relations in accordance with real possibilities of the two countries taking into consideration the existing problems. The additional importance to the research is attached with the current international situation intensifying the confrontation between the RF and the West connected with the developments in Ukraine. It is important to assess not the momentary problems but to understand how this situation may influence the long-term perspectives of the CSP relations development of Russia and Vietnam.

What is a comprehensive strategic partnership?

The method of analysis in scientific research allows to break a complicated phenomenon down into its component parts to cognize them as the elements of a complicated whole. This contributes to a deeper knowledge of the phenomenon under investigation.

Using this method, we will analyze every component element of the CSP concept (“partnership”, “strategic”, “comprehensive”) and then generalize the achieved results in order to get the integral picture of this phenomenon in current international relations.

“Partnership”

Partnership is a joint activity based on equal rights and duties and directed to the common goal [Sociologicheskij slovar': 05.01.2022].

The investigation of diplomatic documents and theoretical works of Russian and foreign experts in the field of foreign policy allowed to determine a number of conditions being the basis of the partnership building in the sphere of international relations.

The important condition is equal relationship

In the Soviet period the relations with Vietnam were characterized “fraternal”. In Vietnamese it means “the relations between a senior and a junior brother”. “A junior brother” meant Vietnam. This expression determining the nature of the relations between our countries left the political vocabulary long ago. They are free of ideology, either. The cooperation desires to orient to economic and political interests of the two countries. Current dynamic economic development and strengthening of international authority of Vietnam increase its weight and positions in its relations not only with Russia but also with the rest partner countries. At the same time only taking into account a relatively low level of bilateral trade it is possible to conclude that Moscow underestimates the SRV’s potential, and Hanoi is sceptic about material, financial and organizing possibilities of the RF, the more so, in the conditions of the current sanctions’ regime from the West.

A high degree of trust is required

A high degree of trust is usually declared in joint Russian-Vietnamese documents. However, in reality in the relations of the two countries there is a number of factors influencing the mutual economic and political trust.

The trust of the Vietnamese in the possibilities of their business in Russia was significantly undermined in the 1990s, when the Russian side could not perform the assumed obligations in the frameworks of the business collaboration with Vietnam. After the collapse of the USSR numerous enterprises did not integrate in the forming capitalist model of economy and became bankrupts. Most of them could not send Vietnamese workers to their homeland due to the shortage of finance. Dozen thousands of Vietnamese workers accommodating to the existing situation had to do illegal business. Sometimes they met serious problems both with local authorities and with criminal structures. Therefore, those “illegal” Vietnamese businessmen and their relations got a deeply rooted idea of Russia as the country with “wild” business conditions and they turned to other countries having successful business developments with them now².

² During fifteen years the author conducted the program on the Vietnamese community in Russia on the Voice of Russia. He studied this problem and regularly broadcasted it.

In recent years the Russian business has got a severe blow on its trust in its Vietnamese partners, the Vietnamese side having refused to carry out joint projects with the RF. This concerns projects in the fields of subway construction, cosmos, gas production, as well as projects of modernization of the oil refinery “Dung Quat”, the purchase of Russian aircraft “Superjet-100”. “Hanoi’s refusal in 2016, to construct the nuclear power plant “Ninh Thuan” was the most famous one: AO “Rosatom” had been preparing it for eight years and USD 10 billion was granted for the construction. This decision was motivated with doubtful economic and ecological reasons, but it is known that opting for Russia was directly torpedoed by Japan, the EU and the US” [Mazyrin 2020: 126].

As far as political trust is concerned, every side has its own matter for concern. For Vietnam, debating territories in the South China Sea with the PRC and fearing Chinese expansion, the chief complicating event in its dialogue with Russia is the rapprochement of Moscow and Beijing. Vietnam would rather hear a more concrete position of the RF on the territorial debate in the South China Sea than that being articulated now: “Russia stands for international relationships based on mutual respect which could never grow into military conflicts” [Lavrov: 25.09.2021].

The development of collaboration between Vietnam and the US, including the security sphere, in conditions of Washington’s pressure on Russia cannot help being a matter of concern of Russian leadership towards their Vietnamese colleagues. Representatives of the US administration address Russia with such words as “adversary”, “real challenge”, “threat”, “enemy”. In the like situation, it is difficult to have a full trust to the partner, who at the same time is a partner of the side being in the state of a tough confrontation with Russia.

Complementarity of economies is necessary

Russia and Vietnam belong to the countries with the economies able to complement each other. Their economic complementarity is shown in the goods forming the RF and the SRV leading export group to various world’s countries. Russia delivers abroad fuel and energy products, ferrous and non-ferrous metals, cars and equipment, fertilizer. Electronic products, clothes, shoes, seafood, agricultural products prevail in the Vietnamese export. However, a serious barrier for the delivery of Russian goods to the Vietnamese market is the increased competitions of the third countries.

The perspective areas of cooperation may become cyber security, medical technologies, space exploration, i.e., those spheres where the RF has competitive advantages able to fill the interaction with the “exclusive” content [Kanaev 2020: 362–363].

The commensurate level of economic development of the partner countries is desirable

The assessment of economic development of this or that country takes into account a complex of factors, which determine economic growth, structural shifts in economy, improvement of the population’s living conditions. Below you see the comparative table showing the main macroeconomic indicators of Russia’s and Vietnam’s development in 2019, just before the period when the economies of the both countries experienced strong effect of COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 1. The main macroeconomic indicators of the SRV in 2019

Indicators of economic development		Russia	Vietnam
GDP volume, USD billion		1693	262
GDP growth rates per annum, %		1,3	7,02
Sectoral structure of economy	Service industry, % GDP	54,3	41,6
	Industry, % GDP -	26,5	34,5
	Agriculture, % GDP	3,9	14,0
Commodity turnover, USD billion		666,5 (surplus - 179)	558,6 (surplus – 9,6)
Unemployment rate, %		4,5	2,17
GDP per capita, USD		11 498	2 715
Life expectancy		73	73,6

Source: [GSO 2019:15.04.2022]; Makroekonomicheskie issledovaniya: 15.04.2022; Vneshnyaya trgovlya: 24.12.2021

In its scope Vietnamese economy significantly yields to Russian one. But Vietnam's economic model surpasses the Russian one in its efficiency and dynamics. The practice shows that the efficiency of economy (not its volume) is important for active international economic and trade exchanges. Besides, active transition to import substitution policy, the chief target of Russia's government in the current international situation, assumes the economic orientation to the internal market and a certain isolation from the outside world.

The availability of the solid legal framework for the collaboration

The bilateral contractual legal framework consists of more as 100 documents. At the end of 2021, during the visit of the SRV President Nguyen Xuan Phuc to Russia, 15 documents had been signed.

Mutual sympathy both of the Supreme Leaders and of the peoples of the partner countries must be of favorable influence

Subjective factors, including the attitude of the leadership of one country to the other country as a whole and to its leaders in particular, are of great importance. It can be supposed that Vladimir Putin has got a positive perception of Vietnam. He is a man of the Soviet era, and Vietnam was “a brother”, a heroic country which had won the US, our common ideological adversary, for Soviet people (Fig. 1).

As a whole, the Russians' attitude to Vietnam is assessed positively. The elder generation's good feelings to Vietnam were laid in the epoch of the Soviet-Vietnamese friendship. In recent years, the interest for Vietnam of the younger and middle generations was being formed due mostly to tourist trips to the country. Russian mass media are not eloquent on the SRV.



Fig.1. President of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin at the APEC summit in Vietnam, 2006.

An open source photo

Formerly positive attitude to Russia was expressed by the leadership of Vietnam, while most of the leaders had been educated in the Soviet Union. In the early 2000s nearly all the SRV top leadership consisted of the graduates from Soviet universities. Currently this resource is not so effective as before. Now, among the SRV top leaders only Nguyen Phu Trong, the General Secretary of the CC of the CPV learned in Russia. In Vietnam “there have emerged political forces, social strata, which are incited against the maintenance of the relations [with Russia]. Such is the result of changing elites, leaving of the leaders who had contacts with the RF and spoke Russian and the emergence of new leaders who were educated in the West” [Mazyrin 2021: 150].

Since the collapse of the USSR, the attitude of the Vietnamese to Russia has significantly changed. These changes have a negative vector due to a complex of causes. One of the most important causes is the shortage of information of Russia from Russia itself, and a rather broad dissemination of what has been written and thought of Russia in the West. For a long time, Western mass media have eagerly demonized our country (this campaign has increased with the special military operation in Ukraine), the anti-Russian rhetoric having found its place in the Vietnamese mass media.

“Comprehensive”

Comprehensive partnership means that it is:

Multidimensional/thorough

Russian-Vietnamese interaction touched numerous fields. However, the level and the intensity of the relations in different fields differ greatly. The leading directions are political and military-technical spheres. Trade and economic cooperation does not correspond to the existing potential of the two countries. Only the interaction in the sphere of energy can serve a positive example. Such Russian industrial giants like “Zarubezhneft” and “Gazprom” implement contracts with the Vietnamese corporation “Petrovietnam” on oil delivery and production, as well as on joint gas production. A new track of cooperation are the agreements on fighting COVID-19 pandemic.

Other fields of interaction including technologies, education, science, culture, mass media develop irregularly and fragmentarily.

Multiscale

Only political and military-technical spheres can be called multiscale. Other spheres of cooperation are not just small, but scanty. To understand this, it is sufficient to compare Russian-Vietnamese commodity turnover and the trade volume of the SRV with the PRC and the US.

Table 2. The commodity turnover of the SRV with the RF, the PRC and the US in 2020

The SRV commodity turnover with	Indicator, USD billion
RF	4,85
PRC	133,1
US	90,8

Source: [Báo cáo 2021: 85, 117, 121]

In 2020 Vietnam's share in Russia's foreign trade turnover was 0,998% [Vneshnyaya trgovlya: 24.12.2021].

In the conditions of sanction pressure on Russia the interaction with Vietnam is exposed to attack, first of all that in trade-economic, military-technical and tourist spheres. Difficulties for the cooperation in these fields are connected with the problems of mutual settlements, rise in price of freight and insurance of vehicles, logistic service, purchasing equipment in the third countries for joint Russian-Vietnamese projects. Usually, the consequences of any crisis are overcome, and adapted to, which takes certain time, usually lengthy. This is evidenced by the weak growth in trade between the Russian Federation and Vietnam in 2021 (by 13%) compared to the previous year (USD 5.5 billion) and its sharp decline in 2022, which was caused not only by the COVID-19 pandemic [Việt Nam giảm: 18.04.2022].

Russia's new international situation can become a stimulus for the increase of cooperation with Vietnam, a friendly country of the RF. The Russian leadership is going to re-orient its foreign trade policy to such states.

Multilevel

From the very beginning of this century the RF and the SRV have established an elaborate system of active political contacts at the highest level, a solid base for political cooperation. Being the RF President, V. Putin visited Vietnam four times (2001, 2006, 2013, 2017).

But intensive Russian-Vietnamese political interaction at the state level could not become a locomotive for activating cooperation at the rest levels. There are some positive examples, but so far there are no direct close contacts between business circles, representatives of academic, educational and creative associations of our countries. In recent years there has been established relationships between new twin regions, as a whole, the interregional cooperation is irregular and sometimes formal. Friendship Societies and other public organizations (various unions of the Vietnamese in Russia) have no finance to develop broad activities in the frame-works of "public diplomacy" (Fig. 2). As far as private trips are concerned, the increasing tourist stream of the Russian to Vietnam (over 600 thousand in 2019) and the Vietnamese to Russia was brought to nought in 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic.



Fig. 2. The Russian Society for Friendship with Vietnam seeks to intensify its activities: a meeting of Vietnamese students with cosmonaut S.K. Krikalev, 2022. *Photo: Hoang Hoa*

“Strategic”

Strategy is important to achieve common general goals. In international relations strategic partnership means:

The mutual interest to achieve strategic goals of internal development and the solution of prior tasks in foreign policy

Establishing CSP relations, the RF and the SRV follow mostly political motives, not economic ones.

Vietnam’s political elites understand well that “Russia being a great world and Asian power with its military potential, and as a constant member of the UN Security Council was and still is a significant factor of maintenance of peace and stability in the region. It can and must perform an important role in establishing future security system in the Asia-Pacific Region. Particularly in South East Asia” [Kobelev 2020: 27]. Russia’s opportunities and importance in this process will mostly be determined with the exodus of the RF and the West confrontation at the Ukrainian conflict background.

Vietnam can become one of the chief partners of Russia in its Pivot to Asia strategy. To tell the truth, now the RF is mostly orienting towards China. Vietnam is the only country of South East Asia having the closest relations with Russia. Therefore, Vietnam is considered to be a bridge for developing the RF cooperation with ASEAN.

The coincidence of views on crucial international issues

Usually, Russia and Vietnam have common views on different issues of international and regional scope in the international scene [Кобелев 2020: 21]. However, there is a lot of international topics where the views either do not coincide or disagree.

It is important that Vietnam was among 34 countries which on March 3, 2022 abstained from voting the UN General Assembly resolution on Ukraine. The document contains the appeal to Russia to put an end to the special military operation in Ukraine. On April 7, 2022, Vietnam voted against the temporary suspension of the RF participation in the UN Human Rights Council. However, this does not

mean that the SRV supports the RF in this conflict. Vietnam's official position is to remain neutral on this issue [Malajziya i V'etnam: 22.03.2022].

The two sides differ in their views on a number of important international and regional problems, in particular, on the perspective of the development of the Asia-Pacific region in the context of contesting megaprojects, i.e., "One Belt One Road" strategy and the "Indo-Pacific" initiative. Russia willingly supported the Chinese "One Belt One Road" project, but Vietnam perceived it with a certain degree of fear. This project can challenge the security in the South East Region and ASEAN unity. The idea of Indo-Pacific region promoted by the US, mostly directed to the containment of the PRC, serves the interests of Vietnam, accounting the importance of the South China Sea problem for it. At the same time this idea is contrary to the RF interests in China³.

Also, Russia raises questions on Vietnam's position on such relatively new alliances as Quad and AUKUS in the Asia-Pacific region.

The two sides differ in their assessment of the globalization process, too. Vietnam's leadership always emphasizes its desire to participate in this process, and to draw dividends out of it. But now Russia often states negative consequences of the globalization. The most revealing evidence is its discontent with the membership in the WTO.

Stability

Bilateral relations must endure negative influence of the third countries and amortize the influence of negative tendencies in the development of the international situation. However, Russian-Vietnamese interaction, first of all, economic interaction, has been mostly complicated due to the sanction of the West to Russia. For a long time, Vietnam has not opposed the sanctions, and "consequently has become their hostage to the extent that its companies had to restrict their cooperation with Russian partners subject to sanctions and could not fulfil their obligations" [Mazyrin 2020: 116]. But Vietnam does not support the sanctions against Russia due to the current events in Ukraine [Malajziya i V'etnam: 22.03.2022].

At the same time, the Chinese position on regional issues also negatively influences Russia-Vietnam relations. In particular, not to irritate China, Vietnam's government constrained work on the disputed gas shelf departments in the south of Vietnam. Therefore, the Russian companies which participated in the joint projects with the Vietnamese partners in this region had to leave [Mazyrin 2020: 125].

Intensive political dialogue at the top and high levels

It has already been noted that since 2012, when strategic partnership of the RF and the SRV acquired the status of comprehensive, the intensive political dialogue at the top and high levels has been maintained.

³ See in detail [Kanaev 2019: 157].

Table 3. Mutual visits of the RF and SRV leaders

Year	Visits to Vietnam	Visits to Russia
2012	Prime minister D. Medvedev; Chairwoman of the Federation Council V. Matvienko	President Truong Tan Sang
2013	President V. Putin	Prime minister Nguyen Tan Dung; Chairman of the National Assembly Nguyen Sinh Hung
2014	Chairman of the State Duma S. Naryshkin	General secretary of the CC CPV Nguyen Phu Trong
2015	Prime minister D. Medvedev	President Truong Tan Sang
2016		Prime minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc
2017	President V. Putin took part in the APEC summit in Vietnam, conducted talks with president Tran Dai Quang; Chairwoman of the Federation Council V. Matvienko	President Tran Dai Quang; Chairwoman of the National Assembly Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan took part in the Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in the RF
2018	Prime minister D. Medvedev; Chairman of the State Duma V. Volodin	General secretary of the CC CPV Nguyen Phu Trong
2019		Prime minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc; Chairwoman of the National Assembly Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan
2021	Secretary of the Security Council N. Patrushev	President Nguyen Xuan Phuc

Made up by the author

However, the attempts of Moscow and Hanoi to revive the development of the bilateral relations with the efforts “from above” were no tangible success [Kanaev 2020: 357].

In-depth interaction in the sphere of defense and security

The military-technical direction is one of the RF and the SRV cooperation spheres which has successfully developed for many years. The current Russian-Vietnamese interaction was fastened in the 1960/70s with the strong attachment of Vietnam military forces to the Soviet military technique. Now the share of Russian armament in the SRV defense system amount to 75 % [Kobeleev 2020: 22]. Russia grants Vietnam a broad spectrum of armament and military technique, such as ships, aircraft, tanks, surface-to-air missile systems. By 2017 Russia had completed the deliveries of six submarines of Kilo type to Vietnam. That order was the largest in value and the most important one in the current interaction of the two countries in the sphere of defense. Vietnam simplified the procedure of entry into the Vietnamese port Cam Ranh for Russian battleships. The parties periodically conduct joint military exercises at sea and army games to train interaction (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3. The Vietnamese team is a traditional participant in the International Army Games initiated by the Russian Ministry of Defense. *An open source photo*

A significant contribution into the development of military-technical cooperation is the activity of Vietnam-Russia Tropical Centre; one of its research directions is tropical material science. However, Russia has reduced its finance and personnel participation in this Centre.

It is noteworthy that the SRV desires to diversify its contacts in the defense sphere, ensuring military supplies also from other countries. First of all, they are Israel, South Korea, the Netherlands, Japan and the US.

Besides, Russia “cannot fulfil functions of security, as it used to be in the era of the USSR. Its interests in the region are limited” [Kashin 2020: 74].

Large joint projects of strategic cooperation

Today such a project is considered to be but “Vietsovpetro”, a joint Russian-Vietnamese enterprise for oil and gas exploration, established in the era of the USSR (1981). During many years, it has brought incomes to the budgets of the two countries. During its exploitation the enterprise produced about 240 mln tons of oil [Mezhgosudarstvennye otnosheniya: 30.11.2021].

Unfortunately, now there are no new large-scale projects of strategic importance. The construction of the nuclear power plant promised great hopes. But the Vietnamese side, as has been said above, spoilt the achieved agreements.

Long-term sustainability

The treaty on the base of friendly relationships adopted by the RF and the SRV in 1994 has a conditionally determined term: it will be valid until one of the sides warns about its rejection. Currently Russian and Vietnamese sides are establishing their CSP relations with the far perspective up to 2030, like in the Statement adopted on the results of the negotiations of presidents V. Putin and Nguyen Xuan Phuc at the end of November, 2021. The supplies of military techniques for Vietnam count for a long perspective. Also, there are long-term agreements in the field of economic cooperation. “Vietsovpetro”

participants have concluded inter-governmental agreement on prolongation of this joint enterprise's duration till 2030.

Conclusion

The analysis shows that the Russian-Vietnamese CSP possesses fully but some necessary elements. Most components are present partially; some are absent.

When addressing the Vietnamese approach to the CSP issue, it is mostly utilitarian. The official documents of the SRV MFA which expose the CSP content, usually mention that they must contribute to the three chief tasks, i.e., security insurance, economic prosperity, and strengthening Vietnam's positions in the international scene [Đinh Công Tuấn: 01.08.2013]. In the context of this Vietnamese statement Russia-Vietnam relations do not rise to the level of the CSP, either.

However, while considering the CSP, it is necessary to remember the three important aspects.

Firstly, the presence of the whole complex of the CSP elements, mentioned above, is not necessary. Any country, being flexible and selective, varies the CSP principles with different partners basing itself on concrete conditions. But in "the menu" of the CSP components there are some basic ones; in their absence it is impossible to acknowledge this relation type. They are such as equality of the relations, a high degree of the partners' trust, sustainable and multidimensional interaction, the coincidence of strategic interests, implementation of joint long-term projects. It has already been mentioned that not all these factors are fully present in the Russian-Vietnamese cooperation. That is why some professionals in international relations have reason to question the reality of the CSP status in Russia-Vietnam relations. "The codification of the relations in the terms of comprehensive strategic partnership misleads Moscow and Hanoi about the real conditions of their relations, compensating not quite convincing results with a striking figure of speech" [Kanaev 2019: 157].

Secondly, it is necessary to consider CSP not in the concrete moment of the relations' development but in the long-term perspective. "Whatever is the general situation in the partners' relations at the given historical space of time, strategic partnership in any forms and in any sphere remains the "alternativeless" way to conduct their affairs". [Zheglova 2014: 118]. It is the very standpoint to approach current complications in Russia-Vietnam relations (first of all in trade and economic ones) in connection with strict sanctions of the West against Russia.

Thirdly, there is no common approach to the question what the essence of the CSP is: the result? or the goal? As far as Russia-Vietnam relations are concerned, officially a CSP is considered like a movement in time, a process of development. Therefore, it is necessary to determine the format to achieve the results. In particular, addressing the RF and the SRV Presidents' Statement on viewing CSP up to 2030, one can conclude that the sides attach greater importance to intensions, but not to the achieved results. Formally, it is shown in the proportions of the text on results and goals, which is 1:5. This reveals the CSP stimulating function [Krylov 2020: 65]. Research works usually define CSP as the result of the process: first, it is necessary to achieve the result, and only then to certify the status corresponding to the result. I.e., the CSP identifying function is emphasized.

Currently the content of the concept "comprehensive strategic partnership" has not been thoroughly interpreted yet. Various countries differ in their interpretations of it. Often the statements of

official diplomatic documents do not meet the conclusions of scientific expert association. The CSP issue requires further conceptual study.

As for Russia-Vietnam relations, their development level does not fully meet the CSP features enumerated in the article. The current confrontation of the West and Russia creates additional difficulties for the development of Russia-Vietnam relations. The CSP concept is used due to the desire to stimulate cooperation, which to a certain extent hampers its efficient development, because it excludes the real assessment of the state and perspectives of the relations.

References

Al'mukanova, A. (2015) Ponyatie «strategicheskoe partnerstvo» v mezhdunarodnyh otnosheniyah [The concept of "strategic partnership" in international relations]. December 13. URL: <https://clck.ru/eqBo5> (In Russian)

Báo cáo xuất nhập khẩu Việt Nam – 2020 (2021). Hà Nội: Nxb. Công Thương.

Confucius (2013). *Suzhdeniya i besedy* [The Confucian Analects]. M.: Centrpoligraf. 284 c. (In Russian)

Đinh Công Tuấn. *Vài nét về quan hệ đối tác chiến lược* [About the strategic partnership]. 01.08.2013. URL: <https://clck.ru/agHgp> (In Vietnamese)

GSO. Infographic socio-economic situation 2019. Retrieved on 15.04.2022 from URL: <https://cutt.us/SNkF1>

Kanaev, E.A. (2019) Vseob"emlyushchee strategicheskoe partnerstvo RF i SRV: vzglyad iz Rossii [Comprehensive strategic partnership between the RF and the SRV: a view from Russia]. *Rossiia I ATR* [Russia and the Pacific], 1: 154–162. (In Russian)

Kanaev, E.A., Feinschmidt, R.I., Fedorenko, D.O. (2020) Perezagruzka rossijsko-v'etnamskih otnoshenij: napravleniya i faktory uspekha [Restarting Russia–Vietnam relations: main directions and factors of success], in: *Rossijsko-v'etnamskie otnosheniya segodnya: sfery sovpadeniya interesov* [Russia–Vietnam relationship: Convergence of bilateral interests]. M.: IFES RAS. S. 351–367. (In Russian)

Kashin, V.B. (2020) Voenno-tekhnicheskoe sotrudnichestvo RF i SRV na sovremennom etape [Military-technical cooperation between Russia and Vietnam at the present stage], in: *Rossijsko-v'etnamskie otnosheniya segodnya: sfery sovpadeniya interesov* [Russia–Vietnam relationship: Convergence of bilateral interests]. M.: IFES RAS. S. 72–86. (In Russian)

Kobeleev, E.V. (2020) V'etnam i politika povorota Rossii na Vostok [Vietnam and the Russian “pivot” to the East], in: *Rossijsko-v'etnamskie otnosheniya segodnya: sfery sovpadeniya interesov* [Russia–Vietnam relationship: Convergence of bilateral interests]. M.: IFES RAS. S. 17–28. (In Russian)

Krylov, A.A. (2020) Pravovye aspekty fenomena strategicheskogo partnerstva kak osoboj formy ekonomicheskikh otnoshenij mezhdru Rossijskoj Federaciej i drugimi gosudarstvami [Legal aspects of the phenomenon of strategic partnership as a special form of economic relations between Russian Federation and other countries]. *Yuridicheskie issledovaniya* [Legal Studies], 4: 62–72. (In Russian)

Lavrov: dogovorennosti o kodekse povedeniya v Yuzhno-Kitajskom more obespechat bezopasnost' [Lavrov: an agreement on Code of Conduct in the South China Sea would ensure security]. TASS, 25.09.2021. URL: <https://cutt.us/UPN98> (In Russian)

Makroekonomicheskie issledovaniya [Macroeconomic research]. Retrieved on 15.04.2022 from URL: <https://cutt.us/vTEil>

Malajziya i V'etnam vystupili protiv sankcij v otnoshenii RF [Malaysia, Vietnam oppose anti-Russian sanctions]. TASS, 22.03.2022. URL: <https://clck.ru/f4jeA> (In Russian)

Mazyrin, V.M. (2020) Sderzhki ekonomicheskogo sotrudnichestva mezhdru Rossiej i V'etnamom [What does restrain the economic cooperation between Russia and Vietnam], in: *Rossijsko-v'etnamskie otnosheniya segodnya: sfery sovpadeniya interesov* [Russia–Vietnam relationship: Convergence of bilateral interests]. M.: IFES RAS. S. 114–131. (In Russian)

Mazyrin, V.M. (2021) O sostoyanii rossijsko-v'etnamskogo strategicheskogo partnerstva [The state of the Russian-Vietnamese strategic partnership]. *V'etnamskie issledovaniya* [The Russian journal of Vietnamese studies], 5 (4): 148–161. (In Russian)

Mezhgosudarstvennye otnosheniya Rossii i V'etnama [Interstate relations between Russia and Vietnam]. RIA-Novosti, 30.11.2021. URL: <https://cutt.us/442oZ> (In Russian)

Sociologicheskij enciklopedicheskij slovar' [Sociological Encyclopedic Dictionary]. Retrieved on 05.01.2022 from URL: <https://cutt.us/Tpk3Q> (In Russian)

Sovmestnoe zayavlenie o videnii razvitiya otnoshenij vseob'emlyushchego strategicheskogo partnerstva mezhdru RV i SRV na period do 2030 g. [Following the talks, a joint statement was adopted reflecting a shared vision for developing the comprehensive strategic partnership between the Russian Federation and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam until 2030]. Sajt Prezidenta RF [Official Internet Resources of the President of Russia], 30.11.2020. URL: <https://cutt.us/ozeou> (In Russian)

Torgovlya mezhdru Rossiej i V'etnamom v 2021 g. [Trade between Russia and Vietnam in 2021]. Retrieved on 15.04.2022 from URL: <https://clck.ru/fAJ5x>

Triển khai quan hệ đối tác chiến lược, đối tác toàn diện của Việt Nam [Deploying strategic partnership, comprehensive partnership of Vietnam]. Bộ ngoại giao VN [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam]. Retrieved on 12.12.2021 from URL: <https://cutt.us/g8RQE> (In Vietnamese)

Việt Nam giảm gần 90% xuất khẩu sang Nga, Ukraine [Vietnam cut exports to Russia and Ukraine by almost 90%] // The Leader. 18.04.2022 URL: <https://inlnk.ru/Mj5KDB>

Vneshnyaya trgovlya Rossii [Russian foreign trade]. Retrieved on 24.12.2021 from URL: <https://cutt.us/qiwVX> (In Russian)

World's Best Countries To Invest In Or Do Business For 2020. Retrieved on 23.12.2021 from URL: <https://cutt.us/xhJVe>

Zheglova, Y.G. (2014). Strategicheskoe partnyorstvo kak format mezhgosudarstvennyh otnoshenij [Strategic partnership as a form of bilateral relations]. *Kontury global'nyh transformacij: politika, ekonomika, pravo* [Outlines of global transformations: politics, economics, law], 7(3): 115–122. (In Russian)