

The New Roles of Military

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Presentation by Major General Ph. D. Nguyen Ngoc Thanh
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**Your Excellency Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of the National Defence Academy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, I would like to express my respectful greeting to the Chairman and all delegates, I hope the 5th ARF Meeting of the Heads of Defense Universities / Colleges / Institutions will be of great success.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Sir, President Shinkai Masakatsu of the NIDS of Japan for your invitation.

And now I would like to give a briefing on “The new roles of Military” from our perspective.

Excellencies,

It is essential for every country, at any time, to have a device to defense its state mechanism and interests, in other words, Army is always regarded as a violent instrument to preserve its state.

It would be clear that the power of each nation is shown in many aspects, among them is military power. Army is considered a key force, which directly creates the national strength.

In order to have a powerful army, every state should pay much attention to build its armed forces with reasonable quantity, high quality and modern weapons as well as developing human resources, promoting morale, managing troops with strict and consistent discipline.

Moreover functions and missions of armed forces are complemented and modified according to the situation’s requirements.

In the early years of the 21st century, when the scientific – technological revolution is developing rapidly, internationalisation and globalisation is taking place in width as well as in depth.

Military posture and roles of armed forces have a new development in some aspects, that is to preserve the world peace, to carry out civilian economic projects (in some countries), struggle against drug smuggling, overcome and reduce consequences of the natural and environment disasters etc...

The Vietnam People's Army was established on 22nd December 1944. Since then its functions have been defined as "Forces of combat, production, and business". Over the past historic periods, Vietnam People's Army has successfully conducted assigned tasks, contributing to the national liberation and reunification as well as to firmly preserve independence and sovereignty territorial integrity of Vietnam.

Nowadays Vietnam is in peace, so the vital missions are to develop the country's economy. Therefore, the production and business functions of the Army have a very important position and so far have gained a new development in terms of content and methods as well.

Being "forces of production", Vietnam People's Army has actively taken part in the national economic development. The military is always the pioneer forces to reclaim areas, which have harsh natural conditions and have difficulties in economic production. The military has also participated in developing agricultural areas, as well as industrial processing zones. Moreover, lots of our defense factories are manufacturing consumer products. Those activities have contributed to stabilising and raising the living standard and morale of the people and the armed forces.

As "forces of business", the Vietnam People's Army regularly participates in supporting activities, such as disaster relief – including search and rescue for accident victims, precautions against and responding to storms, floods, fires, explosions, etc.... The Army also helps local administration and people to reduce and wipe out poverty and illiteracy, conducts compulsory primary schooling for the people in rural, mountainous and remote areas.

Being "combat forces", in the peace-time, Vietnam People's Army carries out effective training for constant combat readiness to defend the country, preserve independence, sovereignty and national territory, maintain peaceful environment, give external and internal opportunities for the cause of construction, economic and social development. In the international relationship, Vietnam implements common principles as follows: respect to national independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-interference into internal affairs of other countries, and non-use of force or threat to use force;

equality and mutual benefits; solution to all conflicts and disputes through peaceful negotiations.

The State of Vietnam objects to using its armed forces either to join any military alliance or interfere in internal affairs of other countries.

In the present international circumstances, beside the trend of peace and co-operation, the world still confronts with threats of armed conflicts due to various causes. Those make the Vietnam armed forces be aware of and ready to cope with external aggressive threats as well as internal hostile elements.

Formidable development of modern weapons with high technology has created a new development in the military posture and made it different from the previous wars.

Therefore, in order to successfully implement its roles, Vietnam People's Army in co-ordination with the whole Vietnamese people and other forces are determined to maintain its security in all fields, resist all aggressive and subversive riots who hatch up the threaten the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Vietnam.

In order to be able to perform missions and functions of the military, objectives of organising and developing VPA as well as other armies in the world are to enhance the quality of the military in terms of power, rapid mobility, high capability of combat as well as of reacting to any complicated contingencies. Main forces needing to be trained are commanding and staff officers of all levels. Therefore, institutions of the VPA have played a vital role in education and training missions and in upgrading as well as promoting the quality of the military officers to meet demands in the new period. Meanwhile, we have extended multilateral relationship and mutual understanding with people and military of other countries in the region and in the world, contributing to the maintenance of peace and long-term co-operation.

Thank you very much for your attention.