



APEC Meetings, FDI higher in Jan; Environment protection tax

FEATURES



APEC senior officials' meeting crucial to boost regional connectivity

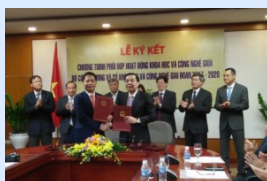
The first APEC Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM 1) in 2017 holds a significant meaning in reasserting APEC's determination to boost cooperation for growth and connectivity in the Asian-Pacific region.

Foreign Ministry's Spokesperson Le Hai Binh was speaking at a regular press conference in Hanoi on February 9 to inform reporters about Vietnam's external activities in the coming time.



January 2017 FDI higher year-on-year

Foreign direct investment (FDI) into Viet Nam reached US\$1.42 billion from the beginning of the year until January 20, according to data from the General Statistic Office. The amount exceeded FDI during the same period in 2016 by 6.6 per cent. During this time, Viet Nam attracted 175 newly-approved projects with total registered capital up to \$1.24 billion, up by 37.8 per cent in terms of project number and 23 per cent in terms of capital compared with the same period last year.



MoST & MoIT agree to science and technology cooperation

The Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) and the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MoIT) have signed a cooperative program on science and technology coordination between the two ministries in the 2017-2020 period.

Recognizing its important role, the industry and trade sector has already applied science and technology to its industrialization, modernization and sustainable development efforts.



PwC: Vietnam is set among star performers

By 2050, six of the seven largest economies in the world could be emerging markets. This is according to the latest report from the PwC economists on the theme of the World in 2050: The long view: how will the global economic order change by 2050?

Vietnam could be the world's fastest growing large economy in 2050, rising to 20th in the global GDP rankings by that date, the report stated.



Environmental protection tax hike hurts firms

The Finance Ministry (MoF)'s proposal to almost triple the environmental protection tax on oil and gas consumption would reduce businesses' competitiveness against foreign firms, according to the Việt Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI). VCCI sent their comments on draft amendments and supplements to the environmental protection law to the ministry expressing concerns on the proposed tax hike.



The case for renewable energy

With innovations making renewable energies more affordable than ever, it forces the question - are old technologies like coal actually cost-effective when you correct for all factors? Policy change, reforms, and public education could open the doors to the private investment needed to make the change to sustainable energy sources. John Rockhold, head of the Vietnam Business Forum's Power and Energy Working Group and executive director of ABBO Investment Consultancy & Engineering JSC, shared his opinion on the country's future energy plans.

Events, Meetings, Special Offers



"BE MY VALENTINE" - Your Valentine deserves special treats

Valentine's Day is around the corner. So who will be your Valentine this year?

Keep your Valentine in mind and express how much they mean to you by experiencing "Be My Valentine" special deal at PJ's Coffee:

- A beautiful rose for Gentlemen to give to your Valentine
- A pair of Frozen Hot Chocolate drinks
- A pair of Valentine Tiramisu to share

PJ's Coffee "Be My Valentine" special deal is only VND150,000 and valid from 10/2 - 15/2/2017 at PJ's Coffee Vincom Dong Khoi and PJ's Coffee Sala, Dist. 2, HCMC



Let's Treat Your Love Sweetly and Luxurily at Hotel Equatorial HCM

Treat your loved one to a very special Valentines Buffet with luxurious dishes to truly celebrate! Couples dining at our events can enjoy romantic music by our violin artist from your very own love themed table. Each couple will also receive a chocolate gift.



Advanced Purchase Promotion to North America from HCM City

Korean Air, is one of the world's top 20 airlines and carried more than 24 million passengers in 2015. Korean Air operates over 460 flights per day to 132 cities in 46 countries on six continents with a fleet of 174 aircraft including ten A380s. With its modern aircraft and over 20,000 professional employees, Korean Air offers customers convenience and comfort. Korean Air's award-winning offerings of Korean and international meals and state-of-the-art inflight entertainment system provide passengers with a memorable inflight experience.



Emeritus Institute Of Management

EMERITUS offer management education programs in collaboration with three top ranked business schools: MIT Sloan, Columbia Business School & Tuck At Dartmouth.

Using technology and curriculum innovation, EMERITUS opens the door for working professionals across the globe to have access to a top-tier business schools. Our programs will help them to acquire the skills needed, transform themselves and accelerate their career.

"We believe great leaders make the world a better place. Our purpose is to make you a better leader".



Feb 17 IP in Vietnam and ASEAN Post-TPP

In a TPP-less world, what will happen with intellectual property standard-setting in Vietnam and ASEAN? Will the higher standards being adopted by Brunei, Malaysia, and Singapore in the absence of outright TPP obligations continue to impact attitudes about the importance of enhanced IP protection and enforcement in the region and incentivize other ASEAN member states to up their own game? Will Vietnam follow suite? If so, what are the motivations for pursuing stronger IP protection and enforcement? The speaker will review recent discussions and planned legislative developments in the IP space in ASEAN and address the concerns of IP stakeholders in a rapidly evolving environment.



Feb 22 AmCham Palooza Party at Windsor Plaza Hotel

AmCham will continue its series of monthly informal networking events at the coolest and latest nightspots in Ho Chi Minh City. The monthly Palooza Party is a platform to develop new friendships, networking opportunities and information exchange. Come and join us for a night of casual networking, meet other professionals, bring your business cards!



Feb 23 Workshop "Engage and Manage Millennial Talent with HR Technology", from 8am - 2pm @Lotte Legend Saigon Hotel

NVM Group, the top HR and payroll services provider & **Ramco**, the worldwide leading HCM Technology Solutions Provider, cordially invite CEO & HR Professionals to this exclusive event. This will be a closed room interactive session with by-invite. We assure you that your time will be well spent gathering insights on how the paradigm is getting redefined. Registration: [click here](#).



Feb 24 HR Committee Breakfast Meeting: Employment and labor law update for 2017

We would like to invite you to a meeting hosted by the HR Committee of AmCham on "Employment and labor law update for 2017". 2017 will be a year of significant change in the field of labor and employment law. In late 2016, a draft of the revised Labor Code was released which proposes to make fundamental changes to the employer-employee relationship. Some notable revisions include increasing or removing the annual cap on overtime hours, expanding regulations prohibiting discrimination and sexual harassment, expanding the grounds upon which an employer may terminate an employee, allowing multiple independent trade unions within an enterprise and granting employers with further rights to discipline employees.



Mar 7 in HCMC, Mar 9 in Hanoi: "Effective Internal Audit Planning for Banks in Vietnam" Workshop

You are warmly invited to join us for PwC Academy Vietnam's upcoming "Effective Internal Audit Planning for Banks in Vietnam" Workshop in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. This one-day workshop is aimed at giving internal auditors of Vietnamese banks the ability to apply risk-based internal auditing principles to audit assignments and to develop an annual internal audit plan based on the outcome of risk assessment. The workshop will be facilitated by top Risk Assurance experts at PwC Vietnam.



Mar 9 Walmart Women Owned Business Supplier Selection

The event will contribute to your understanding of the requirements for companies to join Walmart's global supply chains, and help to increase the number of Vietnam companies that integrate into the global economy, and join global value chains. After a Walmart briefing, there will be face-to-face business appointments with Walmart's representatives.

We're looking to source all type of products from any qualified suppliers whether you're women owned business or not.



Mar 27-28 Asia Pacific Business Outlook

Now in its 30th year, Asia/Pacific Business Outlook (APBO) is North America's premier event for business leaders who want to expand their trade and investment in the Asia/Pacific region. The USC Marshall School of Business and the U.S. Department of Commerce have been working together on APBO since 1988 to help exporters and investors take advantage of tremendous opportunities and overcome challenges in the constant changing economies of Asia. ...

2017 AmCham Discount Program

The AmCham Discount Program is a mutually beneficial opportunity for both Discount Partners and AmCham Members who are representatives of companies doing business and living in Vietnam.

By offering AmCham Members special discounts on services or products, Discount Partners can enjoy marketing opportunities through listing freely and/or placing an advertisement on the [Discount Handbook](#) & [Online](#).



JOIN US: Become a Member of AmCham Vietnam - HCMC

***NEW OFFER:** Application fee will be waived for companies having a D-U-N-S® number.

Expand your business by joining us! We currently have almost 500 organizations represented by 1,000 representatives. They are multinational firms, small and medium enterprises and entrepreneurs. **Benefits include:** Networking, Information-Sharing, Advocacy and Problem Solving, visibility and Corporate Exposure.

Contact [Ms. Sam Hoang](#) for joining or additional information on membership.



Marketing Opportunities with AmCham HCMC

AmCham HCMC offers many opportunities to market your company's products and services to AmCham members, the business community and the general public. Our services include:

- Event Sponsorship
- Event Management Support
- Network (Advertise) on www.amchamvietnam.com: 720K views/yr; 360K visitors/yr (avg. 60K / 30K views/visitors per month) and **11.2K twitter followers**, 9.5K facebook fans (and 60K+ views/month) 5.7k LinkedIn followers.
- Announcement in Weekly Email: 4.8k AmCham company representatives and subscribers.

AmCham Companies are offered 3 complimentary announcements a year.

- Print advertising in AmCham Membership Directory
- Print advertising in AmCham Membership Discount Handbook
- Advertising on AmCham Discount Online



AmCham Premium Membership Packages

The AmCham Premium Membership comes with a range of membership dues, which include events, advertising, and other exclusive benefits. One all-inclusive Premium Membership annual, semi-annual, or quarterly billing simplifies your company's administration efforts. Premium Membership Benefits include:

- Logo on "Premium Membership" banner on AmCham website homepage
- Logo on "Premium Membership" banner in Weekly Update Email
- Company profile on the "Premium Membership" page on AmCham website
- Corporate profile on screen during cocktail reception at Members' Nights
- Special recognition/Thank You Page in Membership Directory
- Special recognition at all business events' backdrop/banner
- Special recognition in all email signatures

For full information on benefits of each package, please click [HERE](#) or contact [Cindy Tran](#).



News and Issues

Vietnam to grant e-visas to citizens of 40 countries

beginning Feb 1, 2017. According to Decree 07/2017-NĐ-CP, 25 Jan 2017, procedures for applying and payment will be done online. It will take 3 days to process applications for an e-visa valid for 30 days. The visa does not require letters of guarantee or invitation. This could substantially boost international visitors and FDI. The regular one-year validity, multiple-entry visas will continue to be available to U.S. Citizens.





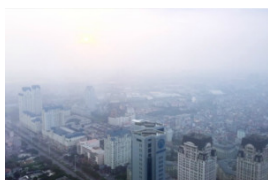
Trade Facilitation Agreement will go into effect when two more countries

ratify the agreement. 108 have ratified already, and it will go into effect when 110 countries have. When Vietnam implements all the provisions, TFA will lower trade costs in Vietnam by 20%, making a sharp improvement in Vietnam's global competitiveness.



Traceability programs improve food safety in HCM City

HCMC vice chairman Le Thanh Liem asserts that the traceability program for pork and vegetables is of paramount importance to ensure that local consumers can have clean foods, especially during the upcoming Lunar New Year when the food demand surges. Liem added that the program is not just about pork and vegetables, but other products in modern shopping



Air Quality Index provides daily updates

amid growing concerns that air pollution in Hanoi has been worsening and reached dangerous levels. Hanoi's air has been repeatedly ranked as "unhealthy" and at times "hazardous," which means everyone should avoid being outdoors



U.S. to withdraw from TPP; negotiate bilateral free trade agreements

On Jan 23, a Presidential Memorandum directed U.S. Trade Representative (Robert Lighthizer, nominated but not yet confirmed) to "withdraw the United States as a signatory to TPP." The Memo also directed USTR to "begin pursuing ... bilateral trade negotiations to promote American industry, protect American workers, and raise American wages." .



Public-private cooperation to develop Vietnam's tourism sector

Vietnam has not always done a good job of marketing itself as an international travel destination, but a recently launched tourism website is aiming to inspire tourists to visit the country. It may also point the way forward for a new model of the public sector leveraging off private sector expertise.



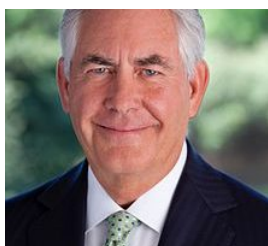
Sustainable Seafood

Nationally prominent chefs, fishermen, academics, and activists call on consumers to choose local species of fish when possible to protect the long-term vitality of harvested seafood and the well-being of the oceans. Some key numbers: 70 to 80% of global fish populations are not sustainably fished. 90% of seafood consumed in the U.S. is imported. 2% of that is inspected by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration..



U.S., Vietnam team up for food safety

The High Quality Việt Nam Products Business Association, the American Chamber of Commerce in Việt Nam and the Washington-based Global Food Safety Forum signed a memorandum of understanding on co-operation in food safety. The US imports 15% of its food, 20% of vegetables, 50% of fruit and 80% of seafood, according to the U.S. FDA, which has established an International Food Safety Capacity Building Plan to train foreign governments and food producers on U.S. requirements for food safety.



"I do not oppose TPP" - Secretary-designate Rex Tillerson

"I share some of (Trump's) views regarding whether the agreement that was negotiated serves all of America's interests best," he added during his lengthy confirmation hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. But he did not mention TPP in his opening statement.



ExxonMobile-PetroVietnam sign Ca Voi Xanh natural gas deal

ExxonMobil signed two agreements January 13 relating to the Ca Voi Xanh (Blue Whale) gas project offshore Vietnam. The project could fuel at least four power plants shortly after scheduled first gas in 2023. "The Ca Voi Xanh field is located about 80 km offshore central Vietnam and is an important natural gas discovery in Vietnam that has the potential to fuel the country's economic growth." PVEP said the project could supply enough gas for power plants with total capacity of 3 GW and also allow expansion for the petrochemical or power sectors. It said total investment in the project chain could be \$10bn, contributing \$20bn to state coffers.



SCS [Bien Dong] Reserves and Resources - U.S. EIA

Energy Information Administration estimates the South China Sea contains approximately 11 billion barrels of oil and 190 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in proved and probable reserves. Conventional hydrocarbons mostly reside in undisputed territory. Undiscovered resources could be greater. In November 2012, the Chinese National Offshore Oil Company (CNOOC) estimated the area holds around 125 billion barrels of oil and 500 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in undiscovered resources, although independent studies have not confirmed this figure.



Jan 14 Ambassador Osius: Vietnam-U.S. Relations in 2017

Ambassador Osius will share highlights of the past year and the outlook for Vietnam-U.S. relations in 2017. Following the momentous events of 2016, including the Presidential Visit in May and the U.S. General Election in November, and looking forward to APEC 2017 in Vietnam, as well as the 50th anniversary of ASEAN, what can we expect about Vietnam-U.S. relations, especially trade and investment relations?



Seafood Import Monitoring Program Final Rule

to combat fish fraud and illegal fishing was issued on Dec 8, 2016. The rule requires that fish species most often passed off fraudulently or at risk of illegal fishing be tracked from their source of origin before they can be imported to the United States. It requires retention of supply chain data by the importer of record and extends an existing NMFS requirement to obtain an annually renewable International Fisheries Trade Permit (IFTP) to import the seafood and seafood products regulated under this rule.



New Congress will focus on domestic issues, Cabinet confirmations

Congressional Republicans plan quick action on several of their top priorities - most notably a measure to clear a path for the Affordable Care Act's repeal. Perhaps the first thing that will happen in the new Congress is the push for deregulation. Also up early: filling a long-vacant Supreme Court seat, which is sure to set off a pitched showdown, and starting confirmation hearings for Mr. Trump's cabinet nominees.



Vietnam to apply extensive area code changes in 2017

Area code changes in Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi, Dong Nai, Binh Duong, and a number of other provinces will take place on June 17, 2017. The new area codes will be applied for 59 cities and provinces in three phases, from February 11 to June 17, with steps taken to ensure the change will not confuse the public, the Ministry of Information and Communications announced. But there are other concerns, such as the need to reprint packaging or business cards once numbers are changed, costing quite a sum.



Launched in August 2006 to answer many questions about Vietnam's accession to the WTO, the Weekly Update Emails provide news updates, upcoming events, explanations of details of trade and investment agreements, developments in laws and regulations affecting the business environment in Vietnam. Click the link for to visit the archives and look back over the years. Links to more than 10,000 documents providing background on a wide variety of topics, from Vietnam's WTO Accession in 2006-2007, revision of the Labour Code in 2008-2012, to the TransPacific Partnership and WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement from 2013 and ongoing.



Prime Minister's Certificates of Merit awarded to AmCham Vietnam - HCMC

At AmCham's 20th Anniversary Celebration Dinner on September 18, 2014, Vice Chairman of HCMC People's Committee Le Thanh Liem handed the Prime Minister's Certificates of Merit to AmCham Vietnam - HCM City and to Mr. Herb Cochran, Executive Director for their excellent performance in supporting and promoting trade and investment in Ho Chi Minh City and Vietnam.

Diamond

Amway™
Global Leader in Health & Beauty

Coca-Cola®

pepsi®

Gold

Silver

intel®

Bronze

AIM **ANA UNITED** **RUSSIN & VECCHI** **SEAMOC INC.**

Corporate Partnership Sponsors

VIETNAM WASTE SOLUTIONS
Recycling & Waste Management

HYSTER
TRUONG PHAT J.V COMPANY

AmCham Vietnam | herb.cochran@amchamvietnam.com | <http://www.amchamvietnam.com>
New World Hotel Saigon #323
76 Le Lai Street, District 1
Ho Chi Minh City