



## APEC Highlight, Statement at PM Meeting, Meet The USA Conference

### FEATURES



#### **USTR notifies Congress of intent to open negotiations to modernize NAFTA**

USTR Robert Lighthizer notified Congress of plans to renegotiate NAFTA..

In a letter to Congress, Ambassador Lighthizer expresses the Trump Administration's commitment to concluding the negotiations with timely and substantive results for U.S. consumers, businesses, farmers, ranchers, and workers. These goals will be pursued consistent with U.S. priorities and the negotiating objectives established by Congress in the Bipartisan Congressional Trade Priorities and Accountability Act of 2015 (TPA). Negotiations will begin no earlier than August 16, 2017.



#### **AmCham Statement at Meeting with Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc**

made by AmCham Chairman, Jonathan Moreno on May 17.

"The American business community is proud of our contributions to the development of Vietnam's economy. Trade between our two countries passed \$52 billion last year, up 16 percent year-over-year. We are confident that the upward growth trend of trade and investment relations between the US and Vietnam will continue, and can strengthen.

A new US President took office recently, and while we regret that the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement has stalled, AmCham believes there are new paths forward to increase trade and investment between the US and Vietnam."



#### **Walmart Reports 63% Rise in Online Sales**

Walmart has always excelled at selling products in its cavernous stores. It appears to be getting its head around selling online, too.

On Thursday, the company said e-commerce sales had grown 63 percent in the United States in the latest quarter. The unexpected leap offered the strongest evidence yet that Walmart, the country's largest retailer, is making headway in its effort to be as prominent online as it is across the American landscape.



#### **Government to focus on reducing costs of doing business**

At the dialogue between the government and private sector companies, representatives of government agencies have answered complaints and made promises of the things they are going to do in the near future to support the development of the private sector. Immediately after the conference, Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc signed Directive 20 on adjusting the practice of inspecting and examining companies. Below are quotes from the PM and government agencies.



#### **People, businesses key to APEC's present success: President**

President Tran Dai Quang attributed the success of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) to keeping people and businesses at the centre of development, at a dialogue about the APEC's future.



## PM kicks off private sector talks

The national-level dialogue of Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc and the business community, entitled "Walking in step with businesses," has kicked off. The PM promised to help enterprises tackle their woes.



## APEC urged to pioneer in trade, investment liberalisation

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum needs to hold aloft the flag of trade and investment liberalisation despite the fact that there remained scepticism about globalisation and protectionism has arisen in several member economies.



## Government walking in step with businesses

New policies will soon be announced by the Vietnamese government to provide more support for domestic and foreign businesses in Vietnam.



## APEC highlights co-operation

The Asia-Pacific region has always been a focus of Vietnam's foreign policy, Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister Pham Binh Minh said yesterday at the opening session of the 24th Pacific Economic Co-operation Council (PECC) in Hanoi.



## APEC to set up labour mobility framework

The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) economies will establish a common framework to manage the issue of labour mobility in the region, said Trần Việt Thái, Director of the Vietnam APEC Study Centre under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



## Wind projects offer promising future

With growing innovation in the sector, experts and investors note that wind power projects in Vietnam will be feasible with an 8-9 US cent per kWh feed-in-tariff.



## Jun 7 Meet the USA Southern VN Conference: How to Continue Growth in US-VN Trade Relations

***Thanks to Sponsors:* Coca-Cola, Microsoft, Vietnam Waste Solutions, Bamboo Capital, Baker & McKenzie, Long Hau Corporation, DiCentral, Pfizer, Victoria Healthcare**

This is a sideline event of APEC 2017 organized by The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the U.S. Embassy, the U.S. Consulate, and AmCham Vietnam in HCMC, on June 07, 2017 at the InterContinental Saigon, from 8:00am to 11:30am, followed by a networking buffet lunch.

With participation from high level officials, Deputy Prime Minister Pham Binh Minh and US Ambassador Ted Osius, plus Ministries' officials and provincial leaders, the event will highlight the successful collaboration between entrepreneurs and provinces. In addition, participants will have a chance to one-on-one meeting with top leaders of 22 provinces. Click [HERE](#) for more details.



## Sep 22-24 AmCham Family Weekend at JW Marriott Phu Quoc

The JW Marriott Phu Quoc Emerald Bay Resort & Spa is a 5-star luxury, quirky style and an unparalleled location. Famed Architect Bill Bensley has designed the resort to pay homage to the fictional historic Lamarck University, with a whimsical ambiance that is utterly unique. All of its 244 rooms and suites are extraordinary in their individuality; most feature breathtaking views of the bay, and all offer plush bedding and free Wi-Fi.

Join AmCham members of both chapters, HCMC and Hanoi, friends and family to enjoy a two night weekend stay at JW Marriott Phu Quoc. More details and registration form will be sent to you shortly. **BOOK NOW!**



### May 24 Morning Briefing with Q&A: Visa Procedures for Business Travel to the U.S.

In response to a number of AmCham companies, AmCham has arranged this workshop to provide an update on U.S. visitor visa application procedures, visa renewal procedures, and procedures for group visits (incentive tours, etc.).



### May 24 AmCham Palooza Party at Sofitel Saigon Plaza

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!



### 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 175 aircraft including ten A380s. The airline is a founding member of the Sky Team airline alliance, which together with its 20 members, offers its 665 million annual passengers a worldwide system of more than 17,343 daily flights covering 1,062 destinations in 177 countries.



### Cargill initiates construction of first grain warehouse in Vietnam

Cargill and business partner Saigon International Terminals Vietnam (SITV) broke ground for Cargill's first grain and oilseeds warehousing facility in Vietnam on 20 February 2017. The 80,000 MT facility will be critical to support the growth of Cargill Agriculture Supply Chain business in Vietnam. Scheduled for completion in 12 months, the warehousing facility will ensure that our growing list of customers have a competitive advantage thanks to quicker access and delivery, more competitive pricing and lower operational risks. Key CASC customers in Vietnam are animal feed producers and integrated fish processors as well as food and beverage manufacturers and flour millers. The main products we supply are soy bean meal, wheat and sugar as well as corn, copra meal and canola meal.



### Two new English programs for teens with attractive offers

This June, RMIT Vietnam will launch 2 brand new English programs for teens: Teen Explorers and Summer Explorers, with the latest textbook "Impact" from National Geographic Learning, an innovative online learning system and 15 free soft-skills workshops. A free placement test is on offer for students with scholarship opportunities (25-50%), an early-bird discount of 10% tuition fee for students enrolling by May 31, and an extra 10% reduction for Amcham members. Kindly register [HERE](#).



### July 1 23rd Annual AmCham U.S. Independence Day Celebration & Family Picnic

Join AmCham members, friends and family to enjoy a celebration of our traditional American holiday and cultural event that is celebrated all across the USA, in big cities and small towns. We are hoping to welcome over 1,000 people to the celebration for a great late morning/early afternoon of Fun, Food and Drinks, Live Music, Games and Great Prizes. Ticket price includes - A delicious "American Fare" Barbecue, Pizza, Cakes, Ice Cream ... and much more. ALSO included is unlimited, Beer, Wine, Pepsi & Coke Products, Coffees. PLUS...Live Bands performing throughout the afternoon and a terrific "Kids Corner" with fun activities, face painting and bouncy castles.





## JOIN US: Become a Member of AmCham Vietnam - HCMC

\*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](http://www.amchamvietnam.com): 720K views/yr; 360K visitors/yr (avg. 60K / 30K views/visitors per month) and **11.5K twitter followers**, 9.8K 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



## AmCham HCMC's New Executive Director, John Rockhold

Effective May 15, 2017, Mr. Herb Cochran will shift his responsibility from Executive Director to Senior Director of Trade Facilitation and Special Projects. In this new role, Herb will focus his efforts and energy toward the continued development of the Vietnam Trade Facilitation Alliance (VTFA).

In the meantime, the Board of Governors have selected Mr. John Rockhold to serve as Interim Executive Director. John Rockhold is currently a member of the AmCham HCMC Board Executive Committee as Secretary.



## Welcome new elected AmCham HCMC's Board of Governor, Michael Hoe-Knudsen

Michael Hoe-Knudsen is Regional General Manager of InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) Vietnam/ Cambodia & General Manager of InterContinental Saigon Hotel & Residences since August 2016. IHG is one of the largest hotel operators in Vietnam with 7 open properties including Hanoi/ Da Nang/ Nha Trang & Ho Chi Minh City. IHG is also in the process of opening a new project in Phu Quoc and bringing the Holiday Inn brand to Vietnam with the 2018 opening of Holiday Inn Saigon Airport. Michael is responsible for the overall leadership, direction, operation and performance of the hotels while supporting development efforts to grow IHG's presence in Vietnam.



## Update on U.S. - Vietnam Economics, Trade and Investment Policy Programs and Agreement

On May 15, 2017 (Monday), AmCham Vietnam has successful event to update U.S. and Vietnam Economics, Trade and Investment Policy Programs and Agreement at Sheraton Hotel, Ho Chi Minh City. The event receives about 70 participants included AmCham members and guests. The event welcomes Ms. Diane Farrell, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Asia, U.S. Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration as the key speaker. Beside the updating the latest information on economics, trade and investment policy program and agreement between U.S and Vietnam, Ms. Farrell joins our panel discussions which focus on the key advocacy issues for 2017 in Energy and Health Groups.



## Lighthizer to hold talks with Congress on NAFTA, visit Vietnam for APEC talks

Robert Lighthizer will meet with congressional committees to discuss the administration's negotiating objectives for NAFTA and travel to Vietnam for the two-day APEC trade ministers meeting. One of Lighthizer's first orders of business will be to consult Congress on the administration's plans to renegotiate Nafta, which Trump called a "disaster" during the election campaign. His confirmation clears a hurdle before the U.S. can start 90 days of consultations preceding Nafta talks. Trump has threatened to withdraw from the agreement with Mexico and Canada if he doesn't think discussions are going his way.



## Nguyen Thien Nhan appointed HCMC Party Secretary

The Politburo on May 10 announced its decision to appoint Nguyen Thien Nhan, member of the Politburo and president of the Vietnam Fatherland Front Committee, as secretary of the HCMC Party Committee, replacing Dinh La Thang.



## Tough measures against officials for mismanagement

Tough measures have been and will be taken against officials for mismanagement, says General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong. Vietnam's Party chief Nguyen Phu Trong on Saturday said officials causing damage to the country will continue to be punished. Speaking at a town hall meeting in Hanoi's Ba Dinh District, Trong said there are also "other cases," without elaborating.



## Early wins matter for the US-Vietnam relationship

As US President Trump embarks on a broad set of engagements in Asia, the US-Vietnam relationship is primed for a win-win that advances mutual commercial and economic interests. In particular, upcoming engagements between Trump and Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc present an opportunity to advance shared strategic interests and create more jobs in both countries through increased US exports and investments to Vietnam.



## Development gap hinders linkages in APEC auto industry

A big development gap between APEC member economies is hindering the region's auto industry from transferring technology and promoting linkages, said an official of the Vietnamese Ministry of Industry and Trade (MoIT).



## Senate vote to confirm Lighthizer as USTR scheduled

MCCONNELL TEES UP LIGHTHIZER FOR NEXT WEEK: Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell closed out this week's [May 5, 2017] business by saying the chamber will take up the nomination of Robert Lighthizer to be U.S. trade representative when lawmakers return next week [May a8], improving the chances the veteran trade attorney will be confirmed in time for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation trade ministers meeting May 20-21 in Hanoi.



## APEC members work to boost partnership on science, technology

Representatives from Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) member economies gathered in Hà Nội on Thursday for the 10th APEC Policy Partnership on Science, Technology and Innovation (PPSTI-10) Meeting.



## APEC 2017: New Vision and Position of Viet Nam

The APEC Year 2017 is a significant opportunity to highlight the spirit and intellectual capacity of Viet Nam's foreign affairs, particularly the multi-lateral diplomacy, said Deputy PM, FM Pham Binh Minh in a recent article.



## Tra fish prices at 10-year high

Tra (pangasius) fish prices skyrocketed last month, reaching a 10-year high, but experts warn that export of this seafood product could be unstable this year.



## APEC meets to promote disabled employment

Delegates from APEC member economies gathered at a symposium in Hà Nội yesterday to seek ways to promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the region.



## Japan to support 11-nation TPP at Hanoi meetings in May

Trade ministers from 11 countries which agreed to join the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) will meet in Hanoi May 19 - 20, as moves to resurrect the trade deal gather pace. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe warned in November 2016 that without the world's largest economy the TPP "has no meaning". But Japan's position appears to have changed. Deputy Prime Minister Taro Aso gave a speech in New York confirming trade ministers from the other TPP countries would meet in May to discuss the deal, which he said offered more than bilateral trade negotiations. After the February meeting between Prime Minister Abe and President Trump, their joint statement referred to Japan "continuing to advance regional progress on the basis of existing initiatives". In other words, Mr Trump gave his blessing for Japan to try to keep TPP going.



## Australia, Trump, and TPP

The TPP itself is, in essence, a series of bilateral commitments under a plurilateral umbrella. Attached to it are a series of bilateral exchanges of letters between some of the members on specific commitments, perhaps a similar device could be used to "tweak" the TPP sufficiently to allow US ratification. Alternatively, in the absence of the TPP, there may be scope for the new US Administration to take a greater leadership role in APEC, an organisation which does important work in enhancing regional economic integration and removing behind-the-border barriers to trade. Importantly, APEC does this through promoting business linkages and voluntary means rather than imposing binding legal rules.



## Vietnam, U.S. renew high-level cooperation

President Trump will visit Vietnam for the November APEC Leaders meeting, in response to Vietnam President Tran Dai Quang's invitation, U.S. Secretary of State Tillerson and National Security Council (NSC) Advisor McMaster confirmed to Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Pham Binh Minh during his official visit to Washington on Apr 20-21. NSC Advisor McMaster also conveyed President Trump's invitation to Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc to visit the U.S.



## USDA Inspection of Siluriformes fish, including catfish, full enforcement from Sep 1, 2017

After an 18-month transition period, full enforcement of USDA inspection of siluriformes fish, including catfish will begin on Sep 1, 2017. According to some Vietnam news reports, "the change will have potentially disastrous consequences for Vietnam catfish producers, because while the FDA



does spot checks on a small sample of imports as they arrive, the USDA requires on-site inspections of production facilities. For countries like Vietnam, setting up an equivalent system could take years and effectively cripple the industry."

## 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.



## Weekly Updates Archive 2006 - 2016

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, opinions expressed by business and political leaders on race and investment issues, and 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.



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