

Abstract

The U.S.-Vietnam relations can be traced back into the Vietnam War era as a proxy between U.S. and USSR in Cold War. U.S. which on side of South Vietnam was fighting Viet Cong armies of North Vietnam that backed by USSR with its communist ideology. However, U.S. had to admit Vietnam War and implement the policy of “Vietnamization.” It was a policy to withdraw all U.S. armies and change to total Vietnamese armies on U.S. side. South Vietnam was fell to North government and as the result, Vietnam implemented communist ideology in its politics until today.

Since then, U.S. cut all diplomatic relations with Vietnam and implemented embargo including on military. The diplomatic relations was opened again in 1995 under Bill Clinton administration after view shifting of Vietnam-American on domestic politics. However, the embargo on military was lifted on 2014. The lifting was on the same moment with China’s harsh move on South China Sea dispute and the plan of Vietnam to diversify its military capability which highly relied on Russia as former partner on Cold War.

It could be said that U.S. is taking advantage at the moment. As military superpower, re-open trade on military could strengthen U.S. influence in Vietnam. Also, it could be as the move on opening new market to Vietnam on arms sector. Any reasons taken by U.S. it had to be counted by the people under Obama administration who has any interest that need to be channeled through foreign policy.

Keywords: U.S., Vietnam, military, bureaucratic politics