Help from Socialist Nations to Vietnam: A Case Study of Romania's Economic Aid to Vietnam trom 1965 to 1975

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Abstract: The article concentrates on studying the issue of Romania's economic aid to Vietnam during the country's resistance war against the United States in the period from 1965 to 1975. To research the article's content, the authors use two primary research methods in historical science (the historical method and the logical method). In particular, the historical method allows the authors to "reconstruct" the overall image of Romania's economic aid activities to Vietnam from 1965 to 1975, based on exploiting various historical sources. The logical method assists the authors in making appropriate and compelling remarks and assessments, as well as identifying normative or substantive issues from historical events and phenomena related to this issue. Furthermore, the authors also employ multiple research methods, such as analysis, synthesis, systems, statistics, comparison, and so on, while processing documents as well as researching the contents of each specific problem. The article was completed on the basis of exploiting documentary sources at the National Archives of Romania, the Center for Diplomatic Archives at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, and the Wilson Center Digital Archive (USA), as well as some original documents and academic achievements of Vietnamese scholars. The research findings discussed in this article will make a certain contribution to studying the issue of support and assistance from socialist nations to Vietnam during the country's resistance war against the United States between 1965 and 1975.

Keywords: Romania's economic aid to Vietnam, financial assistance, diplomatic relations, international cooperation.

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Introduction

Romania established diplomatic relations with Vietnam on February 3, 1950. This event opened a new page in the history of interchange and collaboration between the two nations. As Vietnam and Romania officially had diplomatic representative offices in each country's capitals in 1956, aid operations and commercial collaboration between the two nations also began. Romania, like many other socialist countries in Eastern Europe at that time, participated in economic aid activities to support the Vietnamese people in their resistance war against America. This aid activity for Vietnam was desperately necessary, as it would help strengthen Vietnam's position in the national liberation revolution taking place in this country at that time.

Romania expressed a fairly constant and independent stance regarding economic aid to Vietnam from 1965 to 1975. The country's leaders affirmed the importance and responsibility of socialist nations, including Romania, for the aforementioned activities. This direction of action overlapped with the basic directions of Romanian foreign policy, evident since the 1960s: the development of relations with all socialist states (including China, with the help of which the Bucharest regime wanted to reduce dependence on the Soviet Union), and in addition the intensification of relations with developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America (grouped generically in the Third World) within the policy of combating imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism.

As a result, during this period, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) had several meetings, and Vietnam received significant support as a new member. In 1966, Nicolae Ceausescu, Romania's Communist Party representative, had a conversation with A. V. Basov, the Soviet Ambassador to Bucharest. In this discussion, the issue of economic aid to Vietnam was proactively mentioned by Nicolae Ceausescu. He emphasized the importance of this activity and stated that Romania would discuss the aforementioned matter with the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA)[1]. Additionally, Nicolae Ceausescu also added that Romania would form a delegation, led by Ion Gh. Maurer, to carry out this task, and the Soviet Union would be invited to participate[2]. Thus, when it came to the matter of providing economic aid to Vietnam, Romanian officials were constantly proactive and made an effort to establish consensus in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). At the same time, the representative of Romania also said that the deterioration of relations between the two countries, China and the Soviet Union, since the early 1960s had a detrimental influence on the implementation of aid activities for Vietnam. That's because the Soviet Union's relationship with China was the main focus of Moscow's attention in the Far East. After the emergence in the early 1960s of the Sino-Soviet split and Beijing's chalange to Moscow's claim to be the sole ideological leader in the Communist bloc, China intensified competition with the Soviet Union for influence over the developing countries of South-East Asia, including Indochina. While the context in which both countries set this competition was global, in of South-East Asia it had important regional repercusion.

In addition, Romania also believed that providing economic assistance to Vietnam was essential to preserving and developing the cordial bilateral ties between the two countries. The Romanian and Vietnamese authorities met diplomatically on October 21, 1966. At this meeting, Nguyen Duy Trinh, the representative of Vietnam, emphasized the role of the Communist Party of Romania in assisting the Vietnamese people. He said that Romania's creation of conditions to help the Vietnamese people fight against the US invasion further strengthens the friendly relationship between the governments and people of the two nations[3]. On this occasion, Nicolae Ceausescu also stated that he desired to bring socialist nations together, particularly with the Soviet Union[4], in order to better coordinate assistance actions for Vietnam. Then, in 1969, Vietnam and Romania came to an agreement wherein Romania committed to continue providing Vietnam militarily and financially for at least another three years, until 1970. Both parties also brought up and discussed the possibility of expanding aid[5]. In 1972, Nicolae Ceausescu affirmed in Hanoi that one of the key steps in successfully establishing socialism in both countries was to increase assistance and expand aid to Vietnam and mutual support for each other[6].

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1. CMEA was established in January 1949 under an agreement to represent Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Mongolia, Cuba, and Vietnam. Then four nations—Czechoslovakia, Mongolia, Cuba, and Vietnam—joined as socialist countries outside Europe. At the time, Vietnam was the newest member of the Council, receiving great backing from other members. See Hoang Hai, *Relations between Vietnam and Eastern Europe* (Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995), 85.

2. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 150/1966, Regarding the visit to the Soviet Union by the delegation of the Party and Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam f. 10.

3. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 150/1966, Regarding the visit to the Soviet Union by the delegation of the Party and Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, f. 10.

4. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 150/1966, Minutes of the meeting at the Central Committee of the Romanian Communist Party with the delegation of the Vietnamese Workers' Party, November 21, 1966, f. 4.

5. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 107/1969, Notes from the conversation between Comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu and Mr. Nguyen Dang Hanh, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, on the occasion of submitting the letter of recognition, f. 4.

6. MAE, The problem 220, The year1972, The country Vietnam, Dossier 2532, Bilateral relations between Romania and Vietnam, telegram no. 037231, June 15, 1972, f. 2.

He also emphasized the Romanian's consistent stance in favor of the Vietnamese people's fight for justice against the US invasion[7].

In actuality, from 1965 to 1975, the economic help that Romania gave to Vietnam was carried out in the following aspects: financial aid, weapons, goods, and infrastructure construction support for North Vietnam, and financial aid for the Embassy of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam in Bucharest.

Financial aid and goods for North Vietnam

On August 18, 1957, President Ho Chi Minh conducted an official visit to Romania, discussing issues pertaining to the two countries' diplomatic ties. The President of Vietnam expressed gratitude to Romania for its wholehearted support of the Vietnamese people. President Ho Chi Minh emphasized the extreme importance of Romania's economic aid to Vietnam in strengthening its military force[8] in the resistance war against the United States. This was also the event that laid the foundation for Romania's financial aid and goods activities for North Vietnam in the following period.

In fact, since 1965, when the United States increased military operations in the South and increased bombing in North Vietnam, Romania's aid actions to North Vietnam have been substantially strengthened. The government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in Northern Vietnam was progressively requesting assistance from socialist allies in order to bolster its economic potential in addition to domestic operations. Romania had cooperated with other socialist nations to enhance financial support as well as a wide range of goods, including equipment, war vehicles, food, medicine, and so on. In 1966, at the meeting between Nicolae Ceausescu and Hoang Tu[9], Ceausescu declared that Romania had supported the Vietnamese people's struggle from the start and thought the Vietnamese people would win[10]. This statement demonstrates Romania's firm stance on the issue of economic aid to Vietnam. This point of view was reinforced during the discussion between Ambassador Nguyen Dang Hanh[11] and Nicolae Ceausescu on September 26, 1970. At this conference[12], Nicolae Ceausescu addressed his country's economic and military assistance to Vietnam in 1970[13]. Additionally, a document preserved at the National Archives of Romania also reveals that in 1970, Pham Van Dong wrote to Gheorghe Maure about economic relations between the two nations. It explicitly states that Vietnam desired to receive the Romanian government's delegation to discuss and analyze possible aspects of cooperation in the coming years, specifically the possibility of expanding Romania's aid to Vietnam. Accordingly, a Romanian delegation would come to Vietnam in October 1970, and a cooperation agreement would be signed by both parties in 1971.

Meanwhile, on December 28, 1970, Romania received a note from the government of Northern Vietnam requesting Romanian economic aid for 1971[14]. In Romania, a commission[15] was established to analyze the request submitted by Vietnam. Accordingly, the assistance issue would be implemented in accordance with the 1970 methodology, which included the cost of transporting products as part of a non-refundable military aid program. According to Vietnam's proposal, the non-refundable aid amountwas around 9 million rubles[16]. In return, Vietnam agreed to provide Romania with permission to expand its apatite-

7. Ibid, f. 4.

8. Complete Works of Ho Chi Minh (2002), volume 8, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi], 2002, tr.474

9. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam's ambassador in Bucharest.

10. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 80/1966,Transcript of the conversation on the occasion of the reception of Comrade N. Ceaușescu by Ambassador R.D. Vietnam in Bucharest, Hoang Tu, June 3, 1966] f. 2.

11. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam's ambassador in Bucharest from1969-1972.

12. Nguyen Dang Hang submitted his credentials to Nicolae Ceausescu, President of Romania's State Council. On this occasion, representatives from both sides had a discussion on issues related to Vietnam.

13. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 105/1970, Notes on economic and military aid to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1971, f. 10.

14. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 105/1970, Notes on economic and military aid to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1971, f. 10.

15. Including the State Planning Commission, Ministry of Foreign Trade, Ministry of Armed Forces, Government Economic-Technical Cooperation Board, and central ministries and branches.

16. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 105/1970, Notes on economic and military aid to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1971, f. 2.

producing operations in its northern region as well as reap associated advantages through 1971[17].

In 1972, the two countries continued to foster aid-based economic cooperation activities. Gheorghe Macovescu, Romania's representative, discussed with Le Thanh Nghi the terms of an agreement concerning this matter. The signing occurred in Vietnam in January 1972[18]. Vasile Galiga reiterated in a statement dated April 18, 1972, his willingness to assist the government of the North Vietnamese in resisting the US invasion[19]. Specifically, in 1972, Romania consented to give Vietnam aid worth 3.7 million rupees[20].

On January 27, 1973, the Paris Agreement was signed. This event marked the fact that North Vietnam officially declaring the war to be over and proceeding to establish socialism. During a 1973 phone conversation with Romanian leaders, Pham Van Dong brought up Vietnam's challenges in solving people's living problems, particularly those related to economic recovery. The situation was disastrous because of the almost complete destruction of major cities like Hanoi and Hai Phong as well as villages, particularly in the vicinity of the 17th parallel, during the period when the United States utilized air power to undermine North Vietnam. At the same time, the transportation system was also seriously affected[21]. That fact required Vietnam to accomplish two things concurrently. Firstly, it was necessary to urgently restore the economy in the North and continue the work of defeating the government of the Republic of Vietnam in the South, completing the cause of unifying the country's territory. Therefore, after the Paris Agreement, Vietnam still needed help from Romania and other socialist countries. In return, Nicolae Ceauşescu affirmed that Romania would continue to cooperate and support the North Vietnamese government in economic aspects as well as other fields[22]. Document No. 01/06483, kept at the Center for Diplomatic Archives at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania, shows that economic relations between Romania and Vietnam continued to be vibrant, based on the Protocol and agreements signed in 1973 in Bucharest. These agreements obviously outlined cooperative activities between the two countries, such as Romania helping North Vietnam in the construction of Phu Ly city. To implement this plan, a delegation of Romanian specialists moved to Nam Dinh province in order to create a detailed plan for the development of Phu Ly city[23]. In addition, the 1973 meeting between Nicolae Ceaușescu and representatives of Hai Phong city (Vietnam) opened doors for potential collaboration in the area of the seaport economy[24].

In addition to the aforementioned matter, Romania extended several sorts of financial assistance to North Vietnam. Based on records maintained at the National Archives of Romania, it can be known that Romania gave Vietnam financial assistance totaling 194.68 million rubles between 1965 and 1975.

17. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 105/1970, The note requested non-refundable help for the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam to cover the expenditures of its embassy in Bucharest in 1971. f. 5

18. MAE, The problem 220, The year 1972, The country Vietnam, dosar 2532, Bilateral relations between Romania and Vietnam, telegram nr. 37.004 , f. 1.

19. MAE, The problem 220, The year 1972, Telegram no. 85.301, the day 26.04.1972, On April 18, 1972, the Government of the Socialist Republic of Romania issued a statement reflecting its constant support for the Communist Party of Romania's foreign policy of solidarity, as well as its unwavering support for the Vietnamese people's arduous struggle, f. 1

20. MAE, The problem 220, The year 1972, Telegram no. 037231, the day 15.06.1972, f. 10.

21. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 139/1973, Transcript of the reception of Comrade Nicolae Ceaușescu in the delegation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam Party and Government led by Comrade Pham Van Dong, Member of the Politburo of the Central Executive Committee of the Vietnam, f. 11.

22. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 106/1974, Notes about Romania and Vietnam's bilateral relations, f. 3.

23. Ibid, f. 4

24. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 253/1973, Notes on the stance of the Socialist Republic of Romania against the proposal of the Soviet Union regarding the coordination within the CAER of aid provided by socialist countries for the economic recovery of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam., ff. 6-7.

Year	Economic aid		Non-refundable military aid	Total value of aid
	Non-refundable aid	Conditional credit		
1965	1,5	0	1,8	3,3
1966	5	6	4,2	15,2
1967	17	0	14	31
1968	25	0	22,7	47,7
1969	13,8	0	12,9	26,7
1970	0	7,5	7,5	15
1971	0	2,5	7,77	10,27
1972	0	3,7	8,95	12,65
1973	0	5,8	6,69	12,76
1974	0	7,4	4,2	11,6
1975	0	4,5	4	8,5
Total	62,3	37,4	94,98	194,68

Table 1. Romania's financial aid to Vietnam in the from 1965 to 1975 (million rubles) [25]

The data table above indicates that Romania's financial assistance to North Vietnam during the 1965–1975 era was mostly provided in the areas of economy and military. As a result, Romania mostly supplied non-refundable economic help totaling 62.3 million rubles between 1965 and 1969. Between 1970 and 1975, Romania discontinued its non-refundable economic aid program and provided Vietnam with 31.4 million rubles in conditional credit aid. In the meantime, Romania consistently continued to provide the North with non-refundable military aid from 1965 to 1975, with a total aid value of up to 94.98 million rubles. If we consider the variation in the total value of aid (including economic and military aid) that Romania gave to Vietnam between 1965 and 1975, it can be seen that it increased sharply over the years in 1966, 1967, 1968, and 1969 and had an opposite trend after 1970. This is comprehensible given that from 1966 to 1969, the United States escalated the war in Vietnam, and Romania's financial aid operations rose considerably in an attempt to bolster Vietnam's military power[26].

Apart from financial aid, the Romanian government sent 43,149 tons of non-refundable products and equipment worth up to 93,286 million rubles over the ten-year period from 1965 to 1975 for the war effort. In particular, the volume of aid goods expanded dramatically between 1967 and 1969, when Romania supplied Northern Vietnam with almost 6,000 tons of goods each year. From 1970 to 1975, the amount of aid products annually, although not as high as in 1967, 1968, and 1969, was still maintained at extremely outstanding numbers, with no year falling below 2000 tons.

25. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 211/1975, The Joint Government Commission notes (the execution of the Commission's resolutions from its previous session as well as measures for developing economic cooperation and trade exchange between 1976 and 1980 were taken into consideration), f. 3.

26. The war caused by the Americans in Vietnam took place in 1954 after the Geneva Agreements. However, despite the failure of the "special war" strategy in 1963, the American authorities, together with the Republic of Vietnam government in South Vietnam, carried out a new war plan known as the "local war." In this war plan, the Saigon government and the Americans had various ambitions to escalate the level of war throughout the territory of Vietnam. In South Vietnam, the US dispatched expeditionary forces to directly participate in the war. In the North, the US utilized its air force to carry out bombing plans and bring war to the North. The 7th Fleet, which had the most powerful air force in the world, was considered to be invulnerable and frequently approached the coast of Vietnam, ferociously bombarding the country. Johnson and Nguyen Van Thieu executed a series of pincer moves based on two objectives. On the one hand, they would seek to crush the will to fight and eliminate Vietnam's patriotic forces in the South. On the other hand, they would employ air power to destroy North Vietnam's economic accomplishments and isolate patriotic forces in South Vietnam by destroying supply channels from the North to the South. From 1965 to 1969, the US and the Saigon government's new military operations caused numerous challenges for Ho Chi Minh's administration, resulting in significant economic and human life losses. That was the worst and most brutal period, demonstrating American military might and war strategies. As a result, the demand for aid packages from its diplomatic partners, communist nations, became even more pressing - Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, (2017), *History of Vietnam*, Volume 13, Social Sciences Publishing House, Hanoi, tr.19, 103.

Year	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975
Total	742	1 658	6 419	6 181	6 043	4 264	2 923	5 289	4 293	2 206	3 134

Table 2. Situation of Romania's commodity aid to Vietnam in the from 1965 to 1975 (tons)[27]

The following chart provides an easy-to-read representation of Romania's commodities aid position to Vietnam over time.

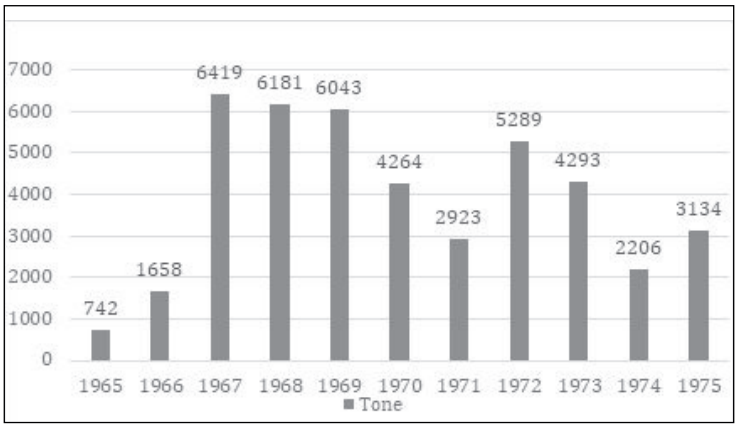


Figure 1: Chart demonstrating the condition of Romania's commodity aid to Vietnam from 1965 to 1975 (tons).

The goods that the Romanian government sent to North Vietnam between 1965 and 1975 were likewise very varied, ranging from 60 different types of goods, from weaponry, war equipment, medicine, and medical equipment to necessities for productivity and life, as the statistical table below will obviously demonstrate.

Goods name	Unit	Quantity	Goods name	Unit	Quantity
Infantry guns	piece	103 931	Gun barrel	piece	20 000
12.7 mm pistol	piece	350	Gunlock	piece	205 000
Anti-tank weapons	piece	8 927	Slow ignition wire	meter	223 000
Mortar	piece	59	Cabin	piece	10 000
Grenade	bullet	300 000	Seat belt	meter	10 0000
120mm mortar shell	bullet	22 000	Maintenance department	ruble	870 000
TNT explosive	ton	1 050	Compass	piece	6 062
Submachine gun bullet	bullet	113 330 000	Radar accessory	ruble	257 000
Console recorder	piece	10	Lifting machine	piece	359
Phone	piece	200	Lorry	piece	160
Signal bullet	bullet	180 000	Ambulance	piece	175
Signal gun	piece	1 006	Universal service station	station	97
Phone line	meter	13 000	Tractor	piece	370
Thiết bị quân sự	piece	120 000	Tires and tubes	piece	5000
Fabric	square meter	517 00	Tent	piece	1 500
Nylon	square meter	1 400 000	Fabric	square meter	201 500
Leatherette	square meter	50 000	Wool blanket	piece	52 000
Parachute cord	meter	5 100 000	Steel hat	piece	54 000

27. Nguyen Van Quyen, "Studying the aid of the Socialist Republic of Romania to Vietnam in the resistance war against the US to preserve its independence, 1954–1975", *Military History Journal*, No. 11, 2005, pp. 38-41.

Asphalt floor	square meter	161 000	Canned food	ton	500
Cookies	ton	250	Pate	ton	470
Synthetic cake	ton	130	Butter	ton	150
Powdered milk	ton	600	Butter	ton	1150
Canned meat	ton	2238	Lard	ton	400
Canned fish	ton	100	Canned vegetables	ton	200
Hospital bed	piece	3000	Salt	piece	200
Medicine	ruble	1 779 000	Mine detector	piece	360
Parachute cord	roll	63	Signal gun	ton	400
Field sleeping bag	piece	550 00	5mm iron plate	piece	25 00
Dagger	piece	600 000	Steel wire cutting plier	piece	105 170
Oil injection	piece	505	Protective mask BBS-M04	piece	129 500

Table 3. Romania's aid products to Vietnam (1965-1975) [28]

Industrial development support for Northern Vietnam

The support in industrial development was one of the most admirable things the Romanian government did between 1965 and 1975 to support North Vietnam. The destructive war the Americans waged in North Vietnam in the early 1970s had dire repercussions. Thus, following the signing of the Paris Agreement (1973) and the withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Vietnam, in the context of the restoration of peace in North Vietnam, the provisional government had to take some urgent measures for economic recovery, particularly the construction and development of industrial facilities, in order to create motivation for the economic recovery and building socialism in Northern Vietnam while also moving forward with the country's national liberation and unification revolutions. To accomplish this, Northern Vietnamese officials had consistently sought collaboration and help from communist nations, notably Romania, a country with industrial growth experience and successes that Vietnam should study[29].

In an 1970 letter to Ion Gheorghe Maurer, Prime Minister Pham Van Dong invited a delegation of the Romanian government to visit the Democratic Republic of Vietnam amicably, in addition to discussing the matter of military and economic assistance[30]. During a visit in September 1970, the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam requested that Romania assist North Vietnam's industrial development. In September 1970, a plan to help North Vietnam in developing an apatite production industry was put into action in order to meet this requirement[31]. Given that Romania was making (spectacular) headways in the oil and gas industry, Vietnamese leaders requested Romania help North Vietnam in developing this field as part of the two countries' economic cooperation program in 1971[32]. The industrial development cooperation program between Vietnam and Romania reached a new level in 1973 when the two countries talked about a proposal to extract coal at the Khe Cham coal mine. As a result, Romania planned to dispatch a group of experts to northern Vietnam. Romanian specialists would debate and recommend ideas as well as essential machinery and equipment to support coal mining

28. Nguyen Van Quyen, "Studying the aid of the Socialist Republic of Romania to Vietnam in the resistance war against the US to preserve its independence, 1954–1975", Military History Journal, No. 11, 2005, pp. 38-41.

29. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 45/1971, Transcript of of the discussion during the visit to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam by the Party and Government Delegation of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Hanoi, June 17, 1971 f. 54.

30. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 105/1970, Notes on economic and military aid to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1971., f. 10.

31. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 105/1970, Notes on economic and military aid to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1971., f. 11, The document no. 0161.454/28.09.1970; SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier 106/1974, Romania and Vietnam's bilateral relations, f. 5.

32. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 45/1971, Transcript of of the discussion during the visit to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam by the Party and Government Delegation of the Socialist Republic of Romania, Hanoi, June 17, 1971, f. 45.

in Vietnam's Khe Cham coal mine, based on the report supplied by Vietnam and real survey data[33]. In fact, the support of Romanian experts played a significant role in the development of the mining industry in Northern Vietnam at that time. Another group of Romanian specialists was dispatched to Vietnam in 1973 as well. They briefly spoke with Tran Duy Hung[34] in Hanoi on matters pertaining to the establishment of industrial parks in some Northern Vietnamese areas. Tran Duy Hung had hoped that Romanian specialists would help build cement industries in Hai Phong and schools in Hanoi. A group of Romanian specialists met with the officials of Hai Phong, including Nguyen Duc Dam, Tran Thang, and Le Duc Thinh. The Romanian expert delegation also had a working session with Nghe An province. They discussed and sought solutions to help this province establish large-scale agricultural production based on the scientific and technological foundation that Romania had successfully applied. A Romanian expert delegation evaluated Nghe An and found that it contained one million hectares of forest with valuable timber that was in high demand worldwide and 100 kilometers of particularly fish-rich coastline. This area could produce 300 thousand tons of fish annually, along with fruits, coffee, and tea, if it had access to modern facilities. With almost 15,000 tons of oranges exported to Singapore and Hong Kong in 1973[35], this region needed technological assistance to boost production here.

Support for establishing diplomatic relations and financial aid for the Embassy of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam in Bucharest

Following the 1968 Tet Offensive and Uprising in South Vietnam, numerous new factors emerged in the war situation in Vietnam. Although there was little loss of force, the White House faced tremendous challenges as a result of the liberation army's extensive offensive. When the US media broadcast images of soldiers dying on Saigon's streets or at the US Embassy in flames, it sparked a powerful surge of anti-war sentiment among Americans. In an effort to placate the people, American officials consented to meet with all sides at the Paris negotiation table to talk about peace in Vietnam.

Each side participating in the Paris conference had its own ambitions. In essence, the Paris Conference was a heated diplomatic confrontation between the participants[36]. As a result, the diplomatic fight in Vietnam was fiercely contested alongside the armed conflict. The Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam established embassies in a number of communist nations, including Romania, in an effort to garner support for the proposals it brought to the Paris conference. This embassy represented the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam in Romania and was supported financially by the Socialist Republic of Romania[37]. In particular, Romania consented to pay 2,112,733 lei toward the overall cost of running the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam's Embassy in Bucharest starting on September 31, 1970. Of which 750,000 lei was the budget for 1970[38]. This amount included the costs of renting premises, salaries, and living expenses for Ambassador Nguyen Duc Van and all staff working in the Embassy.

After a year of operation, as living costs climbed, additional expenses arose, and that revenue source was also dependent on Romania's aid activities. Ambassador Nguyen Duc Van's 1970 report to the

33. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 106/1974, Rela□ii bilaterale româno – vietnameze/ Romania and Vietnam's bilateral relations, f. 5.

34. After returning to Hanoi on October 10, 1954, he was named mayor, aand was trusted to hold this position until June 1977.

35. MAE, The problem 220, the year 1974, the country R.D. Vietnam - R.S. Romania, Dossier 5400, The note on the visit to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam by the delegation of the People's Council of Bucharest from November 21 to 30, 1973, f. 4.

36. Participating in the Paris Agreement on restoring peace in Vietnam included 4 parties: the United States, the Republic of Vietnam, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam, Nguyen Thi Xuan Hoai, Pham Thi Hue, Tran Thi Vui, and Le Vi (2012). T*he Paris Agreement on Vietnam in 1973 through documents of the Saigon government*, National Political Publishing House, tr.55.

37. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 105/1970, The note requested non-refundable help for the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam to cover the expenditures of its embassy in Bucharest in 1971., f. 1.

38. SANIC, Fund CC al PCR, External Relations section, Dossier No 105/1970, The note requested non-refundable help for the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam to cover the expenditures of its embassy in Bucharest in 1971, f. 9.

Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs revealed that the Embassy of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam filed a new budget plan for the year 1971. In particular, a proposal to raise operational financing was made in order to support the work and activities of the leaders and personnel employed here.

No.	Budget	Value (lei)
1	Salary	423 000
2	Accommodation fee	213 000
3	Maintenance costs for the premises and 3 apartments	25 000
4	Inventory	323 550
5	Representation costs	70 000
6	Domestic tourism	12 250
7	Costs PTTT	50 000
8	Romanian press registration cost	8 000
9	Transportation vehicle maintenance cost	55 000
10	Stationery	12 000
11	Low value inventory cost	5 000
12	Insurance cost	11 600
13	Transportation cost	11 600
14	Total	1 220 000

Table 5: Draft budget in 1971 for the Embassy of the Republic of South Vietnam in the Socialist Republic of Romania[39]

The Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam's new ambassador, Lam Van Luu, stated during a meeting at the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1972 that he wished for Romania to support him in stopping the Republic of Vietnam's international diplomatic activities in South Vietnam. He also affirmed that the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam was the only organization representing the country's people and that it wished to establish diplomatic relations with many nations worldwide[40]. In addition, Ambassador Lam Van Luu also proposed that Romania help the Republic of South Vietnam's Provisional Revolutionary Government establish diplomatic relations with the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and other African nations, including the Republic of Zambia, the Central African Republic, the Republic of Zaire, and so on. In fact, the Romanian government's help in implementing the above proposal was of great significance, contributing to the victory of Vietnam in the difficult negotiations at the 1973 Paris conference.

Conclusion

Romania has established diplomatic relations with Vietnam since 1950, when Romania acknowledged the legality of Vietnam's independence on February 3, 1950. The formal visit by President Ho Chi Minh to Romania in 1957 marked the beginning of a new chapter in the two nations' relationship. From 1954 to 1975, Vietnam fought a resistance war against the US invasion, and Romania provided tremendous support to Vietnam, especially considerable economic aid. Since 1965, the US has officially dispatched soldiers to combat directly in Vietnam, bolstering "pacification efforts" in South Vietnam. At the same time, the United States and the Republic of Vietnam utilized their air and naval forces to push the conflict into Northern Vietnam. The United States' actions created many challenges for Vietnam. For this reason, Romania has increased its economic assistance to Vietnam since 1965.

During the period from 1965 to 1975, Romania provided aid to Vietnam in three main forms. First, Romania provided economic aid to North Vietnam, including credits and commodity packages.

39. Ibid

40. MAE, The problem 220, the year 1973, the country South Vietnam - R.S. Romania, dosar 4290, no. 02/0716, The diplomatic note of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam sent to the Socialist Republic of Romania on the establishment of diplomatic relations with a number of European and African nations, f. 1.

Second, Romania has supported North Vietnam in building industrial facilities. Third, Romania has provided financial resources to maintain the operations of the Embassy of the Provisional Revolutionary Government of the Republic of South Vietnam in Bucharest. Romania's aid activities to Vietnam are critical to the country's resistance war against the United States, including contributing to overcoming economic difficulties as well as diplomatic work leading up to the 1973 Paris Agreement. As a result, it can be concluded that Romania's aid actions to Vietnam from 1965 to 1975 contributed to strengthening the fighting power for the Vietnam resistance war against the US invasion. Therefore, the study's findings are very crucial. This article contributes to the reconstruction of a historical issue in the Vietnam War. Simultaneously, it provides scholars as well as those with an interest in the Vietnam War with a more thorough evaluation of Romania's assistance to Vietnam in protecting peace.

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