

Article V

The Covid-19 Pandemic in Southeast Asia and the Role of Vietnam

Nguyen Van Son

Abstract

Appearing for the first time in China since the end of 2019, the Covid-19 Pandemic has been spreading globally and has a two-way impact on the whole world. As an area located adjacent to the outbreak, Southeast Asia has been significantly affected by the Covid-19 epidemic in all aspects of economy, politics - society and especially in human lives. After more than two years of dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic, Southeast Asia has witnessed new steps in the process of linking and cooperating to overcome the common challenges, in which the role of Vietnam has been highlighted. - an active and responsible member in setting up many timely and practical initiatives, contributing to helping Southeast Asian countries proactively adapt and control the Covid-19 epidemic. The article clarifies the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on Southeast Asia and Vietnam's role in the fight against covid-19 in this region.

Keywords: Covid-19 pandemic, Southeast Asia, impacts, Vietnam

1. The COVID-19 pandemic in Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia is a geographically adjacent area to China on both land and sea routes and has many exchange activities, so the risk of Covid-19 epidemic from China spilling over the border into the region is very high. As soon as China announced the first cases of Covid-19 in Wuhan city, Hunan province, the neighbouring countries, especially Southeast Asian countries, took many measures to prevent the entry of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. However, Southeast Asian countries were still quickly being penetrated by Covid-19 waves and became one of the hot spots for the Covid-19 pandemic. On January 13th, 2020, Southeast Asia recorded the first case of Covid-19 in Thailand, which was the first case outside China. More than two months later, on March 24th, 2020, Laos recorded its first Covid-19 cases, and this was also the time marking the milestone of the Covid-19 pandemic that hit all Southeast Asian countries. ¹

After being attacked by covid - 19, Southeast Asia has recorded many dangerous variants of this virus such as: Alpha, Beta, Mu, Delta, Omicron and most recently sub-variants BA.4 and BA.5 of Omicron... These variants have infected hundreds of millions of people and caused millions of deaths. According to the data from the Worldometer website, as of August 14th, 2022 (14:00 GMT), Southeast Asia had 33,803,707 Covid-19 infections, 354,300 deaths; in which, Vietnam was the country with the largest number of infections in Southeast Asia with 11,365,784 cases, second is Indonesia with 6,282,774 cases and

Cambodia is the country with the least number of infections with 137,236 cases. In terms of deaths, Indonesia is the country with the highest number of deaths from Covid-19 with 157,226 cases, followed by the Philippines with 61,036 cases, next followed by Vietnam with 43,098 cases and the country with the lowest number of deaths among them is Brunei with 225 cases.²

There are many causes leading to the outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic in Southeast Asia, but the main ones are: First, when the Covid-19 Pandemic broke out (at the end of 2019), the measures of epidemic prevention in the region were not unified and localized, and people were still subjective in disease prevention. In addition, the capacities of the health systems of these countries were limited and there was no vaccine for Covid-19. Therefore, the disease quickly penetrated and spread into the community. Second, in the phase of proactively adapting to the Covid-19 pandemic (mid-2021), Southeast Asian countries gradually controlled the epidemic thanks to the experience from the previous phase and the vaccination campaigns effectively extended to the entire population. Therefore, the countries in the region gradually eased epidemic prevention measures, gradually opened their economies, and moved to operate in a new normal state. But from the beginning of 2022 until now, most countries around the world in general and Southeast Asian countries in particular have taken action to open up their economies and set a new normal state. As a result, the number of Covid-19 infections in many countries sharply increased, such as Thailand and Vietnam, but generally the epidemic has been still under control and continues to be pushed back.

Covid 19 hot spots in Southeast Asia

In the context of the Covid-19 outbreak in Southeast Asia, some countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand ... and Vietnam have suffered very heavy consequences.

Thailand

On January 13th, 2020, the Thai Ministry of Health confirmed the first case of Covid-19 infection, a woman from Wuhan, China - the first case to appear outside of China.³ Since then, although Thailand has implemented many measures to prevent the entry of the Pandemic, the epidemic still complicatedly developed. In 2020, the number of new cases per day always remained below double digits. From the second half of December 2020, the number of new cases in this country has increased by triple digits, with 194 cases as of December 31st, 2020. In 2021, the situation began to have complicated developments, gradually to be out of control. In the first three months of 2021, the number of new cases in Thailand always remained below 500 cases/day. After a slight decrease on the first days of April, the number of new infections per day began to increase rapidly. From April 2021 to June 1st, 2021, the number of infections in Thailand always remained at 4-digit levels, peaking on May 17th, 2021, with 9,635 cases.⁴ From June

2nd, 2021 to December 26th, 2021, Thailand witnessed a strong explosion of new Covid-19 cases per day from four to five figures, peaking on August 13th, 2021, with 23,418 cases and the highest number of deaths per day was recorded on August 18th, 2021 with 312 cases.⁵

In 2022, after a period of time when the Covid-19 pandemic in Thailand was under control, by February 2022, the epidemic in Thailand tended to break out rapidly from 8,000 cases per day in January 2022 to nearly 20,000 cases on February 20th, 2022⁶ and peaked on April 2nd, 2022 with 28,029 cases.⁷ After peaking at over 28,000 new infections per day, the number of new infections in Thailand has continuously declined to the bottom at 1,967 cases on June 17th, 2022, now the number of new infections per day in Thailand is always maintained at about 2,000 cases/day (as of August 17th, 2022).⁸ Currently, according to statistics, as of August 19th, 2022, Thailand recorded a total of 4,628,200 cases and a total of 31,947 deaths.⁹

Indonesia

Compared to some other countries in Southeast Asia, the Covid-19 pandemic entered Indonesia quite late. On March 2nd, 2020, Indonesia announced the first two cases of Covid-19. The country witnessed a strong outbreak and spread of the disease from March 3rd, 2020 to November 11th, 2021 and became a hot spot in terms of Covid-19 pandemic. The number of new infections per day in Indonesia during this period always remained at four and five digits, peaking on July 15th, 2021 with 56,757 cases, the number of deaths peaked on July 27th, 2021 with 2,069 cases.¹⁰ In particular, on July 14th, 2021, Indonesia was the country that recorded the highest number of SARS-CoV-2 virus infections in the world with 47,899 cases, followed by Brazil (45,022 cases); Spain (43,960 cases); India (40,159 cases); UK (36,660 cases); Russia (24,702 cases)... On July 14th, 2021, Indonesia was recorded with the second highest number of deaths in the world: Brazil (1,527 cases); Indonesia (864 cases), Russia (780 cases), India (623 cases), Argentina (385 cases), the US (234 cases)¹¹

After about 2 months of fairly good control of the disease, from January 2022 to April 2022, Indonesia witnessed a new disease outbreak, the number of new infections per day accelerated rapidly, always at a high level. The number of new infections in Indonesia was 850 on January 14th, 2022; this number was 2,116 cases on January 20th, 2022; 7,010 cases on January 26th, 2022; 17,895 cases on February 2nd, 2022, and peaked on February 16th, 2022 with 64,718 cases. Although the number of new infections in Indonesia was very high, the number of daily deaths was quite low, always below 400 cases per day.¹²

Since July 2022 up to now (August 18th, 2022), the number of new infections in Indonesia has always been above 5,000 cases per day, peaking on July 27th, 2022, with 6,438 cases. Currently, Indonesia has 6,297,484 infections, 157,296 deaths (August 18th, 2022 - 07:08 GMT), ranking 19th in the world, 2nd in Southeast Asia in terms of infections and 9th in the world, 1st Southeast Asia in terms of deaths.¹³

Philippines

On January 30th, 2020, the Philippines announced the first case of infection and on February 2nd, 2020, the government of this country announced the first death (this was the first death from Covid-19 outside of China). In 2020, the Philippines was one of the countries in Southeast Asia that controlled the disease quite well. However, from the end of May 2020, the epidemic situation in this country began to become complicated, the number of infections increased rapidly and always remained over 1000 infections per day. From July 2020 to September 2020, the highest number of infections in the Philippines was always at 3,000-6,000 cases per day, peaking on August 10th, 2020, with 6,871 cases.¹⁴

In 2021, after a period of time, the number of infections in the Philippines always remained at the threshold of 2,000 cases per day, but from February 2021 to December 2021, the number of infections increased sharply to over 5,000 cases per day, and the strongest outbreak was from July 2021 to December 2021, peaking on December 11th, 2021 with 26,208 cases. On October 30th, 2021, the Philippines recorded the highest number of deaths with 423 cases¹⁵ since the pandemic appeared. From January 2022 to March 2022, the disease continued to have the strongest outbreak in the Philippines. On January 1st, 2022, the Philippines recorded 3,462 cases, and the number increased to 10,727 cases on January 5th, 2022, peaking on January 15th, 2022 with 38,868 cases. After about 3 months, the epidemic in the Philippines was well controlled with very few infections per day, sometimes zero. But since June 2022, the disease began to show signs of outbreak again, the number of new infections per day increased rapidly from over 500 cases per day to 2,000-4,000 cases. Currently, according to statistics as of August 19th, 2022, the Philippines recorded a total of 3,844,708 cases (ranked 38th in the world, 5th in Southeast Asia) and a total of 61,221 deaths.¹⁶

Malaysia

On January 25th, 2020, Malaysia confirmed the first 3 cases of Covid-19 infection in the country.¹⁷ To prevent the spread of the new disease, on January 27th, 2020, Malaysia closed all visa facilities for Chinese nationals in Wuhan and the surrounding areas of Hubei province, China, conducted self-measurement at border gates, airports... Therefore, in the first 9 months of 2020, Malaysia has quite well controlled the epidemic situation in this country. However, from October 2020, the situation of the Covid-19 Pandemic in Malaysia began to become complicated, gradually to be out of control.

In the period from October 2020 to April 2021: Malaysia has witnessed an outbreak of the Covid-19 disease. The most complicated development of the disease was in January-February 2020, the number of daily infections in Malaysia was always around 2,000-5,000 cases, peaking on January 29th, 2021 with 5,725 cases.¹⁸ From April 2021 to December 2021, Malaysia had a high number of new cases per day, mostly over 6,000 cases per day. The peak of the epidemic was from July 2021 to October 2021 with the number of new cases always over 7,000 cases, peaking on August 26th, 2021 with 24,599 cases. Along with that, the number of deaths from Covid-19 in Malaysia during this

period was also the highest (mainly concentrated in this period), peaking on September 11th, 2021 with 592 cases.¹⁹ In the period from January 2022- May 2022, the situation of the Covid-19 Pandemic in Malaysia continued to have complicated developments, the number of new infections per day increased rapidly, mostly 9,000 cases per day, peaking on March 5th, 2022 with 33,406 cases. After that, the disease in Malaysia showed signs of decreasing, reaching the bottom on May 3rd, 2022 with 922 cases.²⁰ Since May 2022 up to now (August 19th, 2022), Malaysia has gradually been able to control the disease. The number of infections per day is much lower than in the previous period, always less than 5000 cases per day. As of August 19th, 2022, Malaysia has 4,749,000 cases of Covid-19 (ranked 27th in the world, third in Southeast Asia) with 36,124 deaths.²¹

Singapore

Although Singapore has been proactive in fighting against the epidemic since the early days, the country has also faced the outbreaks of the Covid-19 Pandemic since 2020 until now. Specifically, from April 2020 to June 2020, the number of new infections in Singapore was always high compared to other countries in the region in the range of 300-1,000 cases per day, peaking on April 20th, 2020 with 1426 cases.²²

From September 2021 to December 2021, Singapore witnessed a new outbreak of the epidemic after more than 1 year under control, the number of new infections was always in the range of 500 - 3,500 cases (only on October 27th, 2021, the number of infections had a sudden increase with 5,324 cases.²³ Since January 2022 until now, Singapore has recorded a strong outbreak of the disease with the number of infections always reaching over 3,000 cases per day. The pandemic outbreak was the strongest from February 2022 to March 2022 with the number of infections always above 7,000 cases per day, peaking on February 22nd, 2022 with 26,032 cases. However, the number of deaths was quite low, always under 22 cases. As of August 19th, 2022, Singapore recorded a total of 1,809,251 infections (ranked 47 in the world, 6 in Southeast Asia) with 1,572 deaths.²⁴

Vietnam

Vietnam is a country with a long border with China, with more than 1,000 km of land border and nearly 400 km at sea. Therefore, the risk of Covid-19 spreading from China to Vietnam is very high. Therefore, as soon as China announced the first cases of covid-19 infection, Vietnam took the initiative to take many measures to prevent the epidemic. In the first phase, Vietnam's anti-epidemic work was very successful, being recognized as a model against the Covid-19 Pandemic by other countries around the world. Accordingly, in the period from January 23rd, 2020 to July 24th, 2020, Vietnam only recorded 415 infections (106 domestic cases, 309 imported cases).²⁵ From July 25th, 2020 to January 27th, 2021, Vietnam recorded 1,136 infections (554 domestic cases, 582 imported cases).²⁶ And in the period from January 28th, 2021 to April 26th, 2021, Vietnam recorded 1,301 infections (910 domestic cases, 391 imported cases).²⁷ Thus, in the year of 2020 and the first half of 2021, the anti-epidemic work in Vietnam was very successful. However, since July 2021, the situation of the Covid-19 pandemic in Vietnam has had

complicated developments due to the appearance of new strains such as Delta, Omicron.... From July 2021 to October 2021, Vietnam also became a hot spot for epidemics in Southeast Asia with the number of new infections per day always in the range of 6,000 - 24,000 cases per day, peaking on August 26th, 2021 with 26,527 cases. During this period, Vietnam also recorded the highest number of deaths, always staying in triple digits, peaking on August 31st, 2021 with 440 deaths.²⁸

In the period from October 2021 to February 2022, Vietnam continued the period of complicated outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic. The number of new infections per day was always in the range of 10,000 - 26,000 cases, especially on December 30th, 2021, which reached up to 31,526 cases.²⁹ From February 2022 to May 2022, the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in Vietnam was the strongest ever due to the infection of the Omicron variant. The number of new infections per day increased dramatically, mostly over 20,000 cases per day. Especially from February 25th, 2022 to March 27th, 2022, the number of new infections per day in Vietnam was always from 100,000 to 200,000 cases per day, peaking on March 11th, 2022 with 225,964 cases. However, because Vietnam has stepped up the vaccination campaign, despite the high number of infections, the number of deaths in Vietnam in a day still only fluctuated at about 60-120 cases.³⁰ Since July 2022 up to now, the Covid-19 pandemic in Vietnam has shown signs of resurgence due to the appearance of new variants of Omicron namely BA.4, BA.5, BA.2.75. The number of new infections per day in Vietnam is always over 1,000 cases.³¹ Since the Covid-19 pandemic entered Vietnam from January 23rd, 2020 to August 19th, 2022, Vietnam has recorded 11,376,571 infections (ranked 13th in the world, 1st in the Southeast Asia) with 43,103 deaths.³²

In addition to the above hot spots, other countries in Southeast Asia have also been heavily affected by the covid-19 pandemic: Myanmar with 19,437 deaths out of the total of 614,541 cases; Brunei with 225 deaths out of 215,283 cases; Laos with 757 deaths out of 213,072 cases; Cambodia with 3,056 deaths out of 137,377 cases.³³

Thus, Southeast Asia is one of the hot spots for covid - 19. Besides the countries that are recognized as role models in fighting against the Covid Pandemic, such as Laos, Brunei, etc., many countries in the region have also been seriously suffered from the Covid-19 epidemic, such as Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam.

2. The impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Southeast Asia

After more than two years of outbreak, the Covid-19 Pandemic has impacted all aspects of the social life of Southeast Asian countries in both positive and negative directions.

First, damage to human health and life

Southeast Asia is the region to record the first Covid-19 case outside of China. The emergence of new strains has made the prevention of the Covid-19 pandemic in the ASEAN region difficult over the past two years, leaving serious consequences on people's health and lives.

As of August 14th, 2022 (14:00 GMT), Southeast Asia has 33,803,707 cases of Covid-19 with 354,300 deaths (the population of Southeast Asia is 682,571,296 million – September 2nd, 2022.³⁴ Thus, after more than 02 years of being hit by the Covid-19 Pandemic, Southeast Asia had nearly 5% of the population infected with covid-19, 0.05% of the population died from Covid-19 and the mortality rate caused by Covid-19 is about 1.05%. Besides, the consequences on people's health are very serious in the post-Covid-19 infection period. Many research results showed that 33%-76% of patients may experience post-covid-19 symptoms lasting at least 6 months after infection, 20% of patients have to be re-hospitalized.³⁵

Second, the Covid-19 pandemic caused the decline of the economies of the ASEAN region

Southeast Asia consists of 10 developing economies. Before the Covid-19 pandemic appeared, these economies were still suffering from the negative effects of the economic crisis since 2008, the US-China trade war and the rise of trade protectionism. However, in general, the economies of ASEAN countries have gradually recovered and always achieved the positive growth: Cambodia: 2017 – 6.84%, 2018 – 7.47%, 2019 – 7.05%³⁶; Thailand: 2017 – 4.18%, 2018 – 4.19%, 2019 – 2.27%³⁷; Indonesia: 2017 – 5.07%, 2018 – 5.17%, 2019 – 5.02%³⁸; Malaysia: 2017 – 5.81%, 2018 – 4.77%, 2019 – 4.30%³⁹; Philippines: 2017 – 6.93%, 2018 – 6.34%, 2019 – 6.12%⁴⁰; Singapore: 2017 – 4.52%, 2018 – 3.50%, 2019 – 1.35%⁴¹; Vietnam: 2017 – 6.81%, 2018 – 7.08%, 2019 – 7.02%.⁴²

The economies of Southeast Asia have two main strengths for development, which are the sources of raw materials and abundant, cheap labor. However, most economies in Southeast Asia are highly dependent on international markets. In the early months of 2020, when the epidemic has not widely spread, the anti-epidemic measures have not impacted much on the economies. As a result, factories and enterprises still had raw materials for production, and all kinds of services were still operating in areas where the epidemic had not yet occurred, so the economic activities in Southeast Asia were still going smoothly. However, after the Covid-19 Pandemic rapidly and globally broke out, it forced countries around the world to apply strict epidemic control measures. As a result, the global economic and trade activities were disrupted. Southeast Asia has seen a significant drop in economic growth. Specifically:

Indonesia, regarded as the largest economy in Southeast Asia, has witnessed a significant economic contraction of -2.07% for the whole of 2020 after more than two decades of positive growth (since the Asian economic - financial crisis in 1998 with a negative growth rate of about 13%),⁴³ compared to a rather high growth rate of 5.02% in 2019. Even this figure was - 5.3% in the second quarter of 2020, 3.5% in the third quarter⁴⁴ and -2.19% in the fourth quarter.⁴⁵ By 2021, because the supportive policies have gradually taken effect and the Covid-19 pandemic was gradually under control, Indonesia has achieved a growth rate of +3.69%.⁴⁶

Besides Indonesia, other economies in this region all recorded negative double-digit growth in the second quarter of 2020: -17.1% for Malaysia, -16.5% for the

Philippines, -13.2 % for Singapore, and -12.2% for Thailand”.⁴⁷ With this negative growth, the economies in Southeast Asia witnessed the sharpest decline since the financial and monetary crisis in the region in 1997-1998. That shows the terrible impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on the stable and sustainable development of economies in the world in general and the economies of Southeast Asian countries in particular. Considering the whole year of 2020, the Philippines had the largest negative growth in Southeast Asia with - 9.57%,⁴⁸ followed by Thailand with - 6.09%,⁴⁹ Malaysia with - 5.59%,⁵⁰ Singapore with - 5.39%.⁵¹

However, while most economies in Southeast Asia see a deep contraction in 2020, Vietnam has emerged as a bright spot both in the region and around the world. Thanks to the early drastic and remote prevention measures of the Government of Vietnam along with the consensus of the people, Vietnam has well controlled the pandemic and the economy has maintained a positive growth rate, reaching 2.91%.⁵²

By 2021, a strong recovery has been seen in the economies in Southeast Asia. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Singapore achieved the largest growth rate in Southeast Asia this year with 7.2%, followed by the Philippines with 5.6%, Indonesia with 3.69 %, Malaysia with 3.1%, Vietnam with 2.58%, and Thailand is the country with the lowest growth rate among the 6 largest economies in Southeast Asia with 1.6%.⁵³ Even the Philippines, which suffered a big decline in Southeast Asia in 2020, has witnessed the strongest growth since 1997 up to now, with 11.8% in the second quarter of 2021.⁵⁴ Similar to the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore had impressive growth figures in the second quarter of 2021 with 16.1% and 15.2% respectively.⁵⁵

Third, the Covid-19 pandemic caused job losses and increased poverty in Southeast Asia

Along with the negative economic impacts, the Covid-19 Pandemic has exacerbated the unemployment and increased the poverty rates in Southeast Asian countries that were already worsened by the previous economic downturn. According to an ADB report, young workers aged 15-24, who make up less than 15% of the workforce in Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, account for 45% of all jobs lost at the peaking of the epidemic in 2020. In Thailand, women account for 60% of total job losses, including 90% in manufacturing, about 90% of Vietnam workers who lost their jobs stopped looking for new jobs. This figure was 60% in Indonesia and 40% in Malaysia in the second quarter of 2020.⁵⁶ The Covid-19 pandemic “has pushed 4.7 million people in Southeast Asia into extreme poverty in 2021 when 9.3 million people have lost their jobs”.⁵⁷ Although the economies are in the recovery period, reaching a growth rate of about 5.1% in 2022 as the Covid-19 Pandemic has gradually been controlled, the situation of reduced incomes and workers belonging to the target group of women, young workers and the elderly face a higher risk of unemployment than other groups of workers. This is an inevitable consequence of the closure of factories, enterprises, service establishments, etc. to fight against the epidemic. In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic also disrupted the global supply chain, making businesses in the

shortage of raw materials for production, leading to closure or even bankruptcy. As a result, many workers became unemployed, exacerbating the inequality in society, increasing poverty rates and widening the gap between rich and poor in Southeast Asian countries.

Fourth, the Covid-19 pandemic caused a health crisis in Southeast Asia

The Covid-19 pandemic also witnessed the most serious health crisis in modern human history on a global scale, including Southeast Asia. That is a serious shortage of medical supplies, drugs for treatment and special treatment, and medical staff for the fight against the epidemic. At the same time, the Covid-19 Pandemic has exposed the weakness of grassroots health systems in many Southeast Asian countries. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, the health systems in many countries were always in a state of overloading, the medical teams had to work around the clock.

Thus, the Covid-19 pandemic has had very negative impacts on the socio-economic life of Southeast Asian countries. The negative effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic are long-lasting and take time to be overcome. It is these serious consequences that have forced Southeast Asian countries to consider the Covid-19 pandemic a common challenge that needs to be solved together.

Positive impact

Besides the negative effects, the Covid-19 pandemic also has certain positive aspects:

First, contribute to promoting the application of modern technology from the industrial revolution 4.0 to adapt to new circumstances

The context in which the countries tightened travel activities and even closed all the entries to control the epidemic has brought many negative impacts to the economy, but at the same time it created the favourable conditions for electronic transaction methods and online shopping to develop strongly. Websites, some e-commerce platforms such as Shopee, Lazada, Sendo, Amazon, Ebay, and Taobao ... have contributed to changing people's traditional shopping habits. According to a recent announcement by Lazada - the leading e-commerce platform in Southeast Asia, up to 52% of sellers in Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia and Singapore have achieved high revenue growth in the first half of 2021".⁵⁸ It has been proved that the development of e-commerce is an important driver for Southeast Asian economies to withstand the severe impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Covid-19 pandemic has also contributed to speeding up the application of the achievements of the industrial revolution 4.0 into real life and production of mankind. Many jobs will be replaced by robots and automation. In particular, the Covid-19 pandemic has also promoted the process of building and perfecting e-government in Southeast Asian countries. Vietnam is one of the countries that has made great efforts in building and perfecting e-government. "On June 3rd, 2020, the Prime Minister issued Decision No. 749/QĐ-TTg approving the National Digital Transformation Program to 2025, with the orientation to 2030; Decision No. 942/QĐ-TTg dated June 15th, 2021

approving the e-Government development strategy towards digital government in the period of 2021 - 2025, with the orientation to 2030.”⁵⁹

Second, the Covid-19 pandemic has made Southeast Asian countries to be more aware of the solidarity and cooperation in solving common challenges.

The Covid-19 pandemic has threatened the survival, the stable economic development and the prosperity of all mankind. This is a common challenge, and no country can solve it on its own, but it is necessary to join hands to fight and repel the epidemic. Southeast Asia is a regional organization operating on the principle of consensus. Therefore, Southeast Asia has a very important and decisive role in calling for member countries to join hands and unite to repel the covid-19 epidemic, build a new normal state, and work together to develop the prosperity for the whole region. In fact, when the pandemic broke out throughout Southeast Asia, each member country was acutely aware of the value of intra-regional solidarity. Therefore, Southeast Asia has promoted the responsibility of each member to unite and join hands to repel this dangerous pandemic through specific action plans that have been set out.

In general, the Covid-19 pandemic is the most dangerous non-traditional security challenge today, threatening the survival of humanity, causing enormous negative impacts on socio-economic life of Southeast Asian countries. However, the Covid-19 pandemic is also a condition and an opportunity for Southeast Asian countries to restructure their economies, streamline the production chains, etc., thereby serving as a launching pad for the countries to prosper in the future.

3. Vietnam's contributions to repelling the Covid-19 Pandemic in Southeast Asia

Since the beginning of 2020, after being hit by the Covid-19 Pandemic in Southeast Asia, countries in the region have had to fight against waves of disease outbreaks, many initiatives and actions have been actively implemented by Southeast Asian countries to overcome this common challenge. In that context, Vietnam has contributed many initiatives to join Southeast Asian countries in responding to the epidemic in each phase of the pandemic.

As the chairman of ASEAN in 2020, Vietnam has made many practical contributions that are highly appreciated by countries in the region and the international community. On February 14th, 2020, when the first cases of infection appeared in Southeast Asia, on the basis of exchanges with Southeast Asian member countries, the Prime Minister of Vietnam at that time, Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, had “*the Statement of the ASEAN Chairman on ASEAN's response to the Covid-19 Pandemic*”. This statement expressed the concern of Southeast Asian countries about the Covid-19 Pandemic and considered it one of the most serious challenges to the development of member countries. At the same time, the Declaration also affirmed the determination of Southeast Asian countries to unite and proactively adapt to the epidemic. This was considered one of the first political efforts of the Southeast Asian community in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, a premise for the cooperation in the next phase.

Also, as the ASEAN Chairman in 2020, at the ASEAN Special Summit on Response to the Covid-19 epidemic taking place online on April 14th, 2020, Vietnam proposed two initiatives, which are to establish "*ASEAN's Covid-19 Response Fund*" and "*ASEAN's Emergency Medical Supplies Reserve*" with the aim of creating an official mechanism for countries in the region to help each other fight against the epidemic. These two initiatives have received strong supports, with the highest political determination of ASEAN members, and were put into operation at the 37th ASEAN Summit (November 2020).⁶⁰ ASEAN's Covid-19 response fund has attracted more than 20.8 million USD, contributed by ASEAN countries and partners of ASEAN. ASEAN has planned to use 10.5 million USD from the Fund to buy vaccines (through UNICEF and the COVAX mechanism) to support the people of member countries in equal proportions.⁶¹

The ASEAN Special Summit on Response to the COVID-19 Epidemic "highly appreciated the measures taken by ASEAN member states and the timely efforts of the health cooperation channel and other specialized agencies of ASEAN to coordinate with ASEAN partners and the international community in preventing, detecting, controlling and responding to the spread of COVID-19; solving the serious, multifaceted challenges of the epidemic".⁶²

After the ASEAN Special Summit on Covid-19 taken place on the afternoon of April 14th, 2020 under the chairmanship of former Vietnamese Prime Minister, Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, the ASEAN+3 Special Summit on response to the COVID-19 epidemic took place with the participation of the Director General of the World Health Organization as a guest. "ASEAN+3 countries are committed to being willing to share experiences, policies, therapies, epidemiological and clinical studies, support the supply of medical equipment and supplies, and promote the cooperation in researching, producing vaccines and medicines to treat COVID-19".⁶³ In addition, leaders of Southeast Asian countries also affirmed that the lessons learned from China, Japan and South Korea in controlling and preventing the spread and outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic are very useful when the fight against epidemics of Southeast Asian countries still has many difficulties and challenges. Therefore, along with minimizing the negative socio-economic impacts caused by the COVID-19 epidemic, building a plan to recover the country after the epidemic also needs to be immediately implemented.

In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic having a negative impact on Southeast Asia, Vietnam's successful implementation of the ASEAN Special Summit and the ASEAN+3 Special Summit on disease response COVID-19 in April 2020 was very timely and of great significance, reflecting Vietnam's active and proactive role as the chairman of ASEAN. On the other hand, these events also contributed to raising the spirit of solidarity, cohesion and proactive adaptation of Southeast Asian countries in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. These two conferences marked a turning point in efforts to combat the Covid-19 Pandemic in Southeast Asia.

Also, as the ASEAN Chairmanship in 2000, Vietnam and other countries in the region actively built forums for dialogues, experience sharing and cooperation between countries in Southeast Asia and partners such as: China, Japan, New Zealand, Australia, the European Union (EU), the United States... Thanks to that, Southeast Asian countries have received the attention and effective support of other partners inside and outside the Asia-Pacific region. In particular, Southeast Asian countries have successfully organized 02 ASEAN Summits 36 and 37 with many different focus contents in this year; however, the countries in Southeast Asia all emphasized the discussion to come up with measures and coordination initiatives to effectively respond to the Covid-19 Pandemic, such as: Establishing an ASEAN Fund to respond to COVID-19; Building ASEAN regional stockpile of medical supplies; Developing ASEAN Standard Procedures for Responding to Public Health Emergencies; and Developing ASEAN Post-COVID-19 Recovery Plan.⁶⁴ The goal is to support people and businesses to soon overcome the consequences of the epidemic and stabilize socio-economic life in the countries; in which, the economic recovery efforts of Southeast Asian countries focus on three main phases: reopening, recovery and self-reliance.

As the ASEAN chairman in 2020, Vietnam soon convened the ASEAN Coordinating Council Meeting, proposed the establishment and meeting of the Interdisciplinary Working Group (at Deputy Minister Level) of the ASEAN Coordinating Council on responding to the public health emergency; Strategic Framework of ASEAN Health Emergencies, ASEAN Health Center to respond to emerging public health emergencies and epidemics.⁶⁵

2020 is the year when Vietnam strongly marked its role as the ASEAN Chairman. Under the leadership of Vietnam, Southeast Asian countries have further consolidated the great solidarity bloc, built closer ties, and enhanced the spirit of self-reliance to proactively adapt to common security challenges, one of which firstly is the Covid-19 Pandemic. It is also necessary to affirm that the successes achieved in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic in Southeast Asia are also the sharing, consensus and efforts of member countries along with the leading role of Vietnam.

In 2021, the Covid-19 pandemic in Southeast Asia continued complicatedly developments. In that context, as the chairman of ASEAN, Brunei has launched the slogan "We care, We prepare, We prosper". This slogan shows the determination of Southeast Asian countries in controlling, responding and adapting to the Covid-19 pandemic. The goal is to adapt quickly for post-pandemic economic recovery and focus on implementing COVID-19 prevention initiatives and programs that have been unanimously adopted by Southeast Asian countries since 2020. Vietnam has coordinated with Brunei to promote ASEAN 2020 priorities on COVID-19 response and develop new action programs for Southeast Asian countries. As of June 2021, 28 initiatives have been completed, 73 have been considered, and 68 are in the process of being implemented.⁶⁶

At the 38th and 39th ASEAN Summits held at the end of October 2021, Vietnam and Southeast Asian countries agreed to adopt five strategies of the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF), including: Strengthen the health care system; enhance human security; maximize the potential of the intra-ASEAN market and widely integrate the economies; accelerate the comprehensive digital transformation; and move towards a sustainable and resilient future".⁶⁷ The conference emphasized that this is "the strategy of the whole bloc to get out of the COVID-19 pandemic". Along with that, the Framework Agreement on the ASEAN Travel Corridor was also approved to facilitate essential movement within the bloc, to both ensure the epidemic prevention regulations of each member country and create favorable conditions for economic recovery through the adoption of electronic vaccination certificates. The ASEAN Circular Economy Framework was also adopted by Vietnam and Southeast Asian countries to build a roadmap towards ambitious long-term goals of effective resources, economic recovery and sustainable growth. ... Also during the 38th and 39th ASEAN Summits, Vietnam contributed US\$5 million to the ASEAN Medical Supplies Reserve in the form of medical supplies. At the same time, to support member countries to respond to the Covid-19 Pandemic, leaders of ASEAN countries have agreed to use 10.5 million USD from the ASEAN COVID-19 Response Fund to buy vaccines for member countries.⁶⁸

The efforts of Vietnam and Southeast Asian countries in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic are also reflected in dialogues and cooperative programs with partners inside and outside the Asia-Pacific region. The 38th and 39th ASEAN Summits are also an opportunity for the participating parties to prepare joint plans for the prospect of humanity facing pandemics similar to the Covid-19 Pandemic in the future. "At ASEAN meetings with partners such as China, Japan, South Korea, India, the US, Russia, etc., the leaders of the countries affirmed the importance of the relations with ASEAN. At the same time, these countries also affirmed their readiness to support and continue cooperating with ASEAN in response to the COVID-19 epidemic; especially the content on improving health capacity, self-reliance on vaccines and early recovery, socio-economic development, and restoring the traveling among countries under new normal conditions."⁶⁹

Entering 2022, following the achievements made in the years 2020 and 2021, Southeast Asian countries continue to implement the action plans outlined in the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework. With the theme "*ASEAN in action - Joining hands to respond to challenges*", Southeast Asian countries set the goal as priority to promote socio-economic recovery and development in the new normal state, and at the same time improve the quality of healthcare system and promote the solidarity among member countries.

On April 20th, 2022, during the meeting of the ASEAN Coordinating Council Working Group on Public Health Emergencies (ACCWG-PHE) and the ASEAN Joint Consultative Meeting (JCM), senior ASEAN officials suggested ASEAN health officials

continue discussing and soon agree on the establishment and the operation of the ASEAN Center on Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED). The mission of ACPHEED is to assist ASEAN and its members in building capacity for prevention, control and response to medical emergencies.

On May 13th - 16th, 2022, the 15th ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting took place in Indonesia, many topics were discussed at the Conference such as: Mutually recognizing COVID-19 vaccine certificates; Strengthening regional health systems and promoting post-COVID-19 recovery; Strengthening the health system to achieve Sustainable Universal Health Coverage and Health Security for a Sustainable Health System; Optimizing the mobilization of key resources of the health sector to respond to the public health crisis; Promoting Health for pandemic preparedness; Promoting the cooperation towards strengthening health systems to respond to public health emergencies.⁷⁰ In particular, on this occasion, the ASEAN Center of Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED) was officially established with three pillars, including *monitoring/detection, response, and risk management*, for the purpose of responding to extraordinary events and future pandemics. The ASEAN Center of Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases is expected to be located in three countries: Vietnam, Indonesia and Thailand.

In general, in response to the Covid-19 Pandemic, Southeast Asian countries have always shown a proactive and positive spirit to adapt to the epidemic. Many initiatives proposed by Vietnam and Southeast Asian countries have been put into practice and brought about positive results, making an important contribution to the common achievements in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic in the region. As the country holding the ASEAN chairmanship in 2020 - the first year Southeast Asian countries were affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic, also a pivotal year in the fight against the pandemic, Vietnam showed its proactive, active and creative role, contributing to helping Southeast Asian countries well implement the goals of disease control and adaptation. Southeast Asian countries have reached a high consensus on action plans, and coordinated mechanisms on the prevention of the Covid-19 pandemic have shown the solidarity and unity within the bloc. The actions of Vietnam and Southeast Asian countries during the anti-epidemic period not only marked the new steps in cooperation and stronger regional cohesion, but also strengthened the role and the central position of ASEAN in the process of shaping the structure of the Asia-Pacific region and the position of ASEAN in the international arena.

Conclusion

Through the current situation of fighting against the Covid-19 epidemic on a global scale for nearly 3 years, it can be affirmed that the Covid-19 pandemic is the most dangerous non-traditional security problem today, threatening the survival of human beings. The Covid-19 pandemic has left negative consequences in many aspects of economy, politics, society ..., which took many years for humanity in general and Southeast Asian countries in particular to overcome. In addition to the negative impacts on all aspects

of social life, the Covid-19 pandemic has shown an image of a cohesive, dynamic, flexible Southeast Asia that has proactively adapted to emergency situations. Among the successes achieved by Southeast Asian countries, there is a great contribution from Vietnam's practical and timely initiatives and actions, especially in the role of ASEAN chairman in 2020. Vietnam has demonstrated an active role, responsibility and creativity, contributing to promoting the spirit of solidarity and timely adaptation of Southeast Asian countries to the common challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic.

(**Nguyen Van Son** is a lecturer in the Institute of International Relations at Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics, VietNam. He is PhD. Student at University of Social Sciences and Humanities, VNU Hanoi.)

References

¹ Minh Khoi, "Lao recorded the first 02 cases of Covid-19," March 24th, 2020, <https://tuoitre.vn/lao-ghi-nhan-2-ca-benh-covid-19-dau-tien-20200324134011128.htm> (Date of access 28/02/2022).

² "COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC," 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/> (Date Accessed August 14th, 2022).

³ Tran Phuong, "Thailand discovered a strange pneumonia case similar to China," January 13th, 2020, <https://tuoitre.vn/thai-lan-phat-hien-ca-viem-phoi-la-giong-o-trung-quoc-20200109174317561.htm>. Accessed February 21st, 2022.

⁴ "Thailand," 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/thailand/#graph-deaths-daily> (Accessed August 19th, 2022).

⁵ Ngoc Quang - Thanh Huong, "The situation of COVID-19 epidemic in Thailand tends to be better," October 2nd, 2021, <https://ncov.vnnet.vn/tin-tuc/tinh-hinh-dich-benh-covid-19-tai-thai-lan-co-chieu-huong-kha-quan-hon/38d3176d-b1ff-4119-b0fe-3f919974db37> (Date accessed 21/02/2022).

⁶ Ngoc Quang, "Thailand asked all localities to step up epidemic prevention and control," February 21st, 2022, <https://www.vietnamplus.vn/thai-lan-yeu-cau-tat-ca-cac-dia-phuong-day-manh-phong-chong-dich/774035.vnp> (Date of access 22/02/2022).

⁷ "Thailand," 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/thailand/#graph-deaths-daily> (Accessed August 19th, 2022).

⁸ "Thailand," 2022,

<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/thailand/#graph-deaths-daily> (Accessed August 19th, 2022).

⁹ "Thailand," 2022,

<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/thailand/#graph-deaths-daily> (Accessed August 19th, 2022).

¹⁰ "Indonesia," 2022,

<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/indonesia/> (Date accessed August 18th, 2022).

¹¹ Hoai Ha, "Indonesia is the center of the world's COVID-19 epidemic," July 14th, 2021, <https://dangcongsan.vn/the-gioi/tin-tuc/indonesia-la-tam-dich-covid-19-cua-the-gioi-585337.html> (August 19th, 2022).

¹² "Indonesia," 2022,

<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/indonesia/> (Date accessed August 18th, 2022).

¹³ "Indonesia," 2022,

<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/indonesia/> (Date accessed August 18th, 2022).

¹⁴ "Philippines," 2022,

<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/philippines/> (Date accessed August 18th, 2022).

¹⁵ "Philippines," 2022,

<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/philippines/> (Date accessed August 18th, 2022).

¹⁶ "Philippines," 2022,

<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/philippines/> (Date accessed August 18th, 2022).

¹⁷ . "Coronavirus pneumonia epidemic: First cases in Malaysia," January 25th, 2020, <https://www.vietnamplus.vn/dich-viem-phoi-do-virus-corona-cac-ca-nhiem -dau-tien-tai-malaysia/620002.vnp> (Date of access 19/08/2022).

¹⁸ "Malaysia," 2022,

<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/malaysia/> (Date Accessed August 19th, 2022).

-
- ¹⁹ "Malaysia," 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/malaysia/> (Date Accessed August 19th, 2022).
- ²⁰ "Malaysia," 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/malaysia/> (Date Accessed August 19th, 2022).
- ²¹ "Malaysia," 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/malaysia/> (Date Accessed August 19th, 2022).
- ²² "Singapore," 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/singapore/> (Date Accessed August 19th, 2022).
- ²³ "Singapore," 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/singapore/> (Date Accessed August 19th, 2022).
- ²⁴ "Singapore," 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/singapore/> (Date Accessed August 19th, 2022).
- ²⁵ "Covid-19 situation in Vietnam," August 11th, 2022, https://moh.gov.vn/tin-tong-hop/-/asset_publisher/k206Q9qkZOqn/content/ban-tin-phong-chong-dich-now-11-8-cua-bo-y-te (Date of access 19/08/2022).
- ²⁶ "Covid-19 situation in Vietnam," August 11th, 2022, https://moh.gov.vn/tin-tong-hop/-/asset_publisher/k206Q9qkZOqn/content/ban-tin-phong-chong-dich-now-11-8-cua-bo-y-te (Date of access 19/08/2022).
- ²⁷ "Covid-19 situation in Vietnam," August 11th, 2022, https://moh.gov.vn/tin-tong-hop/-/asset_publisher/k206Q9qkZOqn/content/ban-tin-phong-chong-dich-now-11-8-cua-bo-y-te (Date of access 19/08/2022).
- ²⁸ "Vietnam," 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/vietnam/>. (Date accessed 19/08/2022).
- ²⁹ "Vietnam," 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/vietnam/>. (Date accessed 19/08/2022).
- ³⁰ "Vietnam," 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/vietnam/>. (Date accessed 19/08/2022).

-
- ³¹ "Vietnam," 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/vietnam/>. (Date accessed 19/08/2022).
- ³² "Vietnam," 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/country/vietnam/>. (Date accessed 19/08/2022).
- ³³ "COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC," 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/#countries> (Accessed August 19th, 2022).
- ³⁴ "Population of Southeast Asia," 2022, <https://danso.org/dong-nam-a/> (Date accessed September 2nd, 2022).
- ³⁵ Nhu Nguyet, "How to take care of your health after Covid-19," April 16th, 2022, <https://hcmussh.edu.vn/tin-tuc/cham-soc-suc-khoe-hau-covid-19> (Date accessed September 2nd, 2022).
- ³⁶ "Cambodia GDP," 2022, <https://solieutinhthe.com/gdp-cua-cambodia/> (Date Accessed March 15th, 2022).
- ³⁷ "Thailand GDP," 2022, <https://solieutinhthe.com/gdp-cua-thai-lan/> (Date Accessed March 15th, 2022).
- ³⁸ "Indonesia GDP," 2022, <https://solieutinhthe.com/gdp-cua-indonesia/> (Date accessed March 15th, 2022).
- ³⁹ "Malaysia GDP," 2022, <https://solieutinhthe.com/gdp-cua-malaysia/> (Date Accessed March 15th, 2022).
- ⁴⁰ "GDP of the Philippines," J2022, <https://solieutinhthe.com/gdp-cua-philippines/> (Date Accessed March 15th, 2022).
- ⁴¹ "GDP of Singapore," 2022, <https://solieutinhthe.com/gdp-cua-singapore/> (Date Accessed March 15th, 2022).
- ⁴² "Vietnam's GDP", 2022, <https://solieutinhthe.com/gdp-cua-viet-nam/> (Date accessed March 15th, 2022).
- ⁴³ "COVID slammed Indonesia's economy hard in 2020, data shows," February 5th, 2021, <https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2021/2/5/covid-slammed-indonesias-economy-hard-in-2020-data-show> (Date accessed March 16th, 2022).
- ⁴⁴ "Indonesia Economic Prospects, December 2020: Towards a Secure and Fast Recovery," December 17th, 2020, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/indonesia/publication/december-2020-indonesia-economic-prospects>, (Date accessed March 17th, 2022).

-
- ⁴⁵ Dinh Anh - Huy Tien, *"Indonesia: Negative economic growth for 4 consecutive quarters,"* 05/05/2021, <https://www.vietnamplus.vn/indonesia-tang-truong-king-te-o-muc-am-trong-4-quy-lien-tiep/710657.vnp> (Date of access 16/03/2022).
- ⁴⁶ "Revealing the top big economies by GDP in Southeast Asia in 2021: Where does Vietnam rank?" February 22nd, 2022, https://aevcci.vn/tin-tuc-n9151/lo-dien-top-nen-king-te-lon-theo-gdp-o-dong-nam-a-nam-2021-viet-nam-dung-thu-may.htm?fbclid=IwAR0TE3zCwKpyxrWgXG5M5VV85i4LP6Q90r78hqOXWxtpsaD_ZUVbVreuQOU (Date accessed 17/03/2022).
- ⁴⁷ Dinh Anh, "ASEAN's leading economies grow negative in 2020," August 19, 2020, https://mof.gov.vn/webcenter/portal/btcvn/pages_r/1/tin-bo-tai-chinh?dDocName=MOFUCM180876 (Date accessed 20/03/2022).
- ⁴⁸ "GDP of the Philippines," 2022, <https://solieutinhte.com/gdp-crab-philippines/> (Date Accessed March 15th, 2022).
- ⁴⁹ "The GDP of Thailand," 2022, <https://solieutinhte.com/gdp-cua-thai-lan/> (Date Accessed March 15th, 2022).
- ⁵⁰ "GDP of Malaysia," 2022, <https://solieukinhhte.com/gdp-cua-malaysia/> (Date accessed 15/03/2022).
- ⁵¹ "GDP of Singapore," 2022, <https://solieutinhte.com/gdp-cua-singapore/> (Date Accessed March 15, 2022).
- ⁵² "Vietnam's GDP," 2022, <https://solieutinhte.com/gdp-cua-viet-nam/> (Date accessed March 15th, 2022).
- ⁵³ "Revealing the top big economies by GDP in Southeast Asia in 2021: Where does Vietnam rank?," February 22nd, 2022, https://aevcci.vn/tin-tuc-n9151/lo-dien-top-nen-king-te-lon-theo-gdp-o-dong-nam-a-nam-2021-viet-nam-dung-thu-may.htm?fbclid=IwAR0TE3zCwKpyxrWgXG5M5VV85i4LP6Q90r78hqOXWxtpsaD_ZUVbVreuQOU (Date accessed March 22nd, 2022).
- ⁵⁴ "Philippines economy grows at highest rate in more than 30 years," August 10, 2021, <https://www.vietnamplus.vn/king-te-philippines-tang-truong-cau-nhat-trong-hon-30-nam/732801.vnp> (Date of access 22/03/2022).
- ⁵⁵ "Only 1 month left until the end of 2021, looking back at the whole view of the ASEAN-6 growth," December 1st, 2021, <https://aevcci.vn/tin-tuc-n8819/chi-con-1-thang-la-het-nam-2021-nhin-lai-toan-can-h-tang-truong-asean6.htm#:~:text=GDP%20c%E1%BB%A7a%20Philippines%20t%C4%83ng%20v%20>

E1%

BB%9Bi,ph%C3%A1p%20phong%20t%E1%BB%8Fa%20ch%E1%BA%B7t%20h%C6%A1n (Date accessed 22/03/2022).

⁵⁶ H.Ha, "Southeast Asian youth and women in a spiral of unemployment because of Covid-19," December 17th, 2021, <https://dangcongsan.vn/the-gioi/tin-tuc/thanh-nien-va-phu-nu-dong-nam-a-trong-vong-turn-that-nghiep-en-covid-19-599978.html> (Date accessed 20/03/2022).

⁵⁷ Tran Quyen, "Nearly 5 million people in Southeast Asia fall into extreme poverty because of Covid-19," March 16th, 2022, <https://www.vietnamplus.vn/gan-5-trieu-nguoi-o-dong-nam-a-roi-vao-ngheo-doi-cung-cuc-vi-covid19/778443.vnp> (Date of access 20/03/2022).

⁵⁸ Minh Tra, "E-commerce "won the throne" during the Covid-19 pandemic," August 12th, 2021, <https://ncov.vnnet.vn/tin-tuc/thuong-mai-dien-tu-len-Ngoi-in-daily-dich-covid-19/7bdd8bff-5ca9-41d5-81b9-d206c35c4f4d> (Date accessed March 22nd, 2022).

⁵⁹ Ngoc Han, "Focus on removing important bottlenecks to develop e-government and digital government," April 26th, 2022, <https://moit.gov.vn/tin-tuc/hoat-dong/tap-trung-thao-go-nhung-diem-nghen-quan-trong-de-phat-trien-chinh-phu-dien-tuchinh-phu-so.html> (Date accessed September 2nd, 2022).

⁶⁰ Thu Phuong, "Enhancing ASEAN's central role and position in addressing challenges," April 23rd, 2021,

http://www.mod.gov.vn/wps/portal/!ut/p/b1/vZNj6MwEEZ_0QizhhwdVoNZGkwgXCK2JkASAsMS-

[PXN9EgjaG7LzNtn0r6XO9VSaZiKqLieZJVZTJU7T25_qpj4axC2xMPNAQirQKAWIZwWEYMcFgqpKL69MRSC2cZRI7XYdyYh2PxjHlImIR66CyVMfkWVzOd9GJeFXFcLHvNhlMtEnpQgypehX8egGm7xK4CpnjRVtNpapw_XTGPLUF7uJwlZzdAGF6Ly57TBci12fT4fSUYvN6HfJE-](http://www.mod.gov.vn/wps/portal/!ut/p/b1/vZNj6MwEEZ_0QizhhwdVoNZGkwgXCK2JkASAsMS-PXN9EgjaG7LzNtn0r6XO9VSaZiKqLieZJVZTJU7T25_qpj4axC2xMPNAQirQKAWIZwWEYMcFgqpKL69MRSC2cZRI7XYdyYh2PxjHlImIR66CyVMfkWVzOd9GJeFXFcLHvNhlMtEnpQgypehX8egGm7xK4CpnjRVtNpapw_XTGPLUF7uJwlZzdAGF6Ly57TBci12fT4fSUYvN6HfJE-)

[bJPjgQPDVDL_fSxrUuR0GQMqaDxDUA2_wrIASl_vIH6PfNbhPfCZ4t8QZ6eLG0SsePbI0sDbUactsPvQwmQoQkWAQ_v18kBrS3o1eGKbwKff8BjUAU3AFNpEoy37YNuyikFAG34wOKRXZtLQpp-7bn70ggOUcDOK-y-](http://www.mod.gov.vn/wps/portal/!ut/p/b1/vZNj6MwEEZ_0QizhhwdVoNZGkwgXCK2JkASAsMS-bJPjgQPDVDL_fSxrUuR0GQMqaDxDUA2_wrIASl_vIH6PfNbhPfCZ4t8QZ6eLG0SsePbI0sDbUactsPvQwmQoQkWAQ_v18kBrS3o1eGKbwKff8BjUAU3AFNpEoy37YNuyikFAG34wOKRXZtLQpp-7bn70ggOUcDOK-y-)

[A_ncDjfc_gZqjqwAZxOB954XZ0N88ofnvgQYVI9c23T7yEZ96LLdoVqB0vmRWcWUEYLpbD3VK01hFuqClqrsvjli_GZeG7I4H8rAXWKqP_hwa9Y5FCjM6iXmVY6t0norvTlyrZmQ0SWdll1EoDdMVwmQ64B5NHAKkExaxtWh5fijiGB6WcU6UwmvMGnOrtQkX655fAmfKck_kj-fTT8rW21tBPW6TiQVPX6M_t3gDLLD-vA!/dl4/d5/L2dBISEvZ0FBIS9nQSEh/](http://www.mod.gov.vn/wps/portal/!ut/p/b1/vZNj6MwEEZ_0QizhhwdVoNZGkwgXCK2JkASAsMS-A_ncDjfc_gZqjqwAZxOB954XZ0N88ofnvgQYVI9c23T7yEZ96LLdoVqB0vmRWcWUEYLpbD3VK01hFuqClqrsvjli_GZeG7I4H8rAXWKqP_hwa9Y5FCjM6iXmVY6t0norvTlyrZmQ0SWdll1EoDdMVwmQ64B5NHAKkExaxtWh5fijiGB6WcU6UwmvMGnOrtQkX655fAmfKck_kj-fTT8rW21tBPW6TiQVPX6M_t3gDLLD-vA!/dl4/d5/L2dBISEvZ0FBIS9nQSEh/)

(Date of access 22/04/2022).

⁶¹ Nguyen Quoc Dung, "ASEAN overcomes challenges, affirms community values in response to the Covid-19 pandemic," November 9th, 2021,

<http://tapchiquptd.vn/en/chuyen-luan-chi-dao/asean-vuot-len-thach-thuc-khang-dinh-gia-tri-cong-dong-trong-ung-pho-dai-dich-covid19/17907.html> (Date accessed 19/08/2022).

⁶² "Declaration of the ASEAN Special Summit on Response to COVID-19," April 14th, 2020, <https://baochinhphu.vn/tuyen-bo-hoi-nghi-cap-cao-dac-biet-asean-ve-ung-pho-dich-ben>

⁶³ "Declaration of the ASEAN+3 Special Summit on COVID-19 response," April 15th, 2020,

http://www.mod.gov.vn/wps/portal/!ut/p/b1/vZPJsQJAEEW_xQ8wKCbFJTMFyFQMUhuj1BaZLAVR4eub7njRu9dv0_0yVxlxM07eG5EMZnYMvpJnWZBHSa-k-TXj1d6QvUhSWBIIrAEA5LIYcDXIAZ9nMmYHhD2qQOc7Y03Hkxqk2g5OySby0MVn5R0a-gzbpCniurGPMUloOqCuvRVXExFsq_nBETtsNi3NHmXeJRQVI3pwlC5vcU3MEjW3MSE2KrUJcVCrpyhelsfLRGPIHFm715ciXMyH5vJOH4JOSwdc-8G-JasqWsHYBkFxTBFC2kmgT8jyQ-Q_BXxD5LFh_CnE4Jv4Ia7zBafZRTZG_rcGI9BfHTnouUHoxfrbe8zZVSEHtOS9nSDw9MaNawrQw wpOaZQostw03OsrIPpuoAr-N9D0LQNAO7ZF5M_bkP9mh86_B9oMLhp6mH8tdXMqaj186bJ2rlvXrU5HS9hdbBp4Rgkvlbra15LVF_RGMTmGtCv27bHQVXLn2R4Mm-nVUCQ9SHGknjSCu7srCNVPaeC0JWbfjCFPnICLiNPw-20wApw1UnjHuqiwingnFmseq8t4SOyer-unrUCCfpuezV1sHDIGgNa2_FcLfgPIu2P5hb-3RXkcT-ab5Y_AT9OvwI/dl4/d5/L2dBISEvZ0FBIS9nQSEh/ (Date of access 22/04/2022).

⁶⁴ Phuoc Sang, "ASEAN 2020: Deploying priorities in the context of the Covid-19 Pandemic," June 24th, 2020, <https://ncov.vnnet.vn/tin-tuc/asean-2020-trien-khai-information-in-boi-can-h-dai-dich-covid-19/0ba777b7-0899-4712-b577-46f10eda9dd6> (Date accessed 04/22/2022).

⁶⁵ Nguyen Minh Phong – Tran Minh Tri, "The ASEAN Chairmanship Year 2020: Imprints of efforts for cohesion and proactive adaptation," December 15th, 2020, <https://tapchinganhang.gov.vn/nam-chu-tich-asean-2020-dau-an-no-luc-gan-ket-va-chu-dong-thich-ung.htm> (Date of access 22/04/2022).

⁶⁶ Nhu Ngoc, "ASEAN strengthens cooperation to overcome challenges," August 1st, 2021, <https://nhandan.vn/thegioi/asean-tang-cuong-hop-tac-cung-vuot-qua-thach-thuc-657805/> (Date accessed 26/05/2022).

⁶⁷ "ASEAN Summit and Related Conferences: Community Promotion and Economic Recovery," November 1st, 2021,

https://mof.gov.vn/webcenter/portal/vclvcstc/pages_r/1/chi-tiet-tin?dDocName=MOFUCM212700 (Date accessed 25/05/2022).

⁶⁸ Bao Chau, “Vietnam contributes USD 5 million in medical supplies to ASEAN,” October 21st, 2021, [https://laodong.vn/thoi-su/viet-nam-dong-gop-5-trieu-usd -vat-tu-y-te-cho-asean-966082.lido](https://laodong.vn/thoi-su/viet-nam-dong-gop-5-trieu-usd-vat-tu-y-te-cho-asean-966082.lido) (Date accessed 26/05/2022).

⁶⁹ Tran Thanh Binh, “ASEAN affirms the spirit of community, proactively faces challenges,” October 28th, 2021, <https://www.vietnamplus.vn/asean-khang-dinh-tinh-than-cong-dong-chu-dong-doi-mat-thach-thuc/749580.vnp> (Date of access 27/05/2022).

⁷⁰ “Deputy Minister Tran Van Thuan attended the 15th ASEAN Health Ministers Meeting (AHMM15) and related meetings in Bali, Indonesia May 13-16, 2022,” May 15, 2022,

https://moh.gov.vn/tin-noi-bat/-/asset_publisher/3Yst7YhbK5j/content/thu-truong-tran-van-thuan-tham-du-hoi-nghi-bo-truong-y-te-asean-lan-thu-15-ahmm15-va-cac-hoi-hien-quan-tai-bali-indonesia-13-16-5-2022 (Date accessed May 28th, 2022).