



## Research Article

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# The Declaration of Independence (1945) of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and its Role in the Struggle for Independence of the People Worldwide

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## Abstract

*In the journey of fighting for the independence of people around the world, the Vietnamese people courageously stood up and fought against the invasion of the colonial French, which lasted more than 80 years, to regain independence for the nation through the general uprising in August 1945. On September 2, 1945, at Ba Dinh Square in Hanoi, in front of tens of thousands of compatriots nationwide, on behalf of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, President Ho Chi Minh read the Declaration of Independence, giving birth to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. With core values about national rights and human rights, the Declaration of Independence is the crystallization of the highest of these values for humanity and contains contemporary significance and a profound strategic vision. Using historical methods, comparative methods, and analytical methods, the article focuses on solving four issues: (1) clarify the historical context of the Declaration; (2) clarify the basic content of the Declaration of Independence; (3) evaluate and affirm the meaning and value of the Declaration in the process of fighting for the independence of people around the world; and (4) draw some conclusions about the research problems.*

**Keywords:** Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh, declaration, Government, people

## 1. Introduction

Following the success of the August Revolution of 1945 in Vietnam, on September 2, 1945, on behalf of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, President Ho Chi Minh read the Declaration of Independence. This declaration signified the birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, declaring legally to all Vietnamese and international people that a new Vietnam was born. This event has made a great impact and resonated with the world. It attracted the attention and understanding of many nations, the press, the media, and international public opinion at the time. The victory of the August Revolution in Vietnam had a great influence, spreading to the national liberation struggle movement in colonial and dependent countries around the world.

The victory of the August Revolution in Vietnam in 1945 spread its influence beyond national borders, serving as a major spiritual motivator and inspiration for the peoples of other colonized

countries to rise up and fight for freedom. Professor and Historian L. Esmonson of Cornell University (USA) stated that the August Revolution in Vietnam had a significant global impact on national liberation movements around the world in the latter part of the twentieth century. The August Revolution in Vietnam is historically significant because it liberated individuals and emancipated an oppressed nation. On a global scale, it served as a paradigm and impetus for many other countries to rise up, depose colonial rulers, and recapture their governments. French colonial territories, particularly those in Indochina and Africa, carried out their revolutionary efforts following the exact trajectory of the Vietnamese revolution. (Thang, 2015).

## 2. Literature Review

Discussing this event, Compel, a Jamaican professor, acknowledged: "The Vietnamese Revolution of 1945 had a huge impact on the history of the struggle for independence of the French colonial countries at that time, in which there are many African countries. When the revolution in Vietnam was successful, it was also time for African countries such as Cameroon, Algeria, Tanzania, etc. to prepare for revolutions. Thanks to the lessons from Vietnam, they had valuable experience, making the success of the revolutions in French colonial countries in Africa" (Vietnam in the twentieth century, 2008). A Mongolian professor, Dashtsevel, emphasized: "The August Revolution created conditions for the Vietnamese people to master the country, achieving great achievements in the cause of protecting the homeland and building the country. The August Revolution also has important significance for the national liberation and democracy movement in Asian countries and around the world" (Vietnam in the twentieth century, 2008). Hodgkis when researching the August Revolution and the birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, also affirmed: "The most important event in world history since the Russian October Revolution! It was the first revolution that succeeded in overthrowing the colonial government" (Hodgkis, 1975). Professor Natalichio reviewed, "With only 5,000 party members, the Communist Party led the Vietnamese people to successfully conduct the August Revolution, expelling the French and Japanese colonialists. In addition, on September 2, 1945, President Ho Chi Minh read the Declaration of Independence at historic Ba Dinh Square, affirming the birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam." (What did the international press say about the August Revolution, 2018). Tuero (2018) remarked that the August Revolution had ended 80 years of French colonial rule, abolished feudalism, and reaffirmed the independence of the Vietnamese people. This was also a fatal blow to colonialism, opening the door to the national liberation movement worldwide. (What did the international press say about the August Revolution, 2018).

Meanwhile, Song wrote: "After the October Revolution in Russia and the August Revolution in Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh's Declaration of Independence had profound historical significance. For the first time, the Vietnamese people, with their own strengths, established the Communist Party government. Moreover, as a small and vulnerable country, without any significant external help, Vietnamese people had broken the chains of slavery of one of the world's most powerful colonial empires for nearly a century, establishing the Democratic Republic of Vietnam - the first people's democratic state in Southeast Asia" (Song, 2020).

The content of the Declaration of Independence (DI) of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam drafted by Ho Chi Minh the Leader has been posted on foreign websites<sup>1</sup> and mentioned in some research like (Thang, 2020). Those articles and research just mainly summarized the Declaration without the in-depth context, content, meaning, and value.

From all of the above, this article aims at clarifying the following issues: (1) the context of the birth of the Declaration; (2) the content analysis; and (3) the value and meaning of the Declaration

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<sup>1</sup> Websites: The city university of New York; Indian University; Endofempire.asia; Oxford University Press; The New Yorker; Michigan State university; St, Thomas University -Fredericton; Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung

for Vietnam and the world in the flow of the movement to fight for the national independence of peoples around the world; thereby, emphasizing the necessity, scientific, and profound practical significance of the DI, especially when placed in the current context of the volatile, multidimensional, and complex international relations of the world.

### 3. Methodology

This study uses historical methods, logical methods, comparative methods, and analytical methods to process the data. These are the main and indispensable methods for researching historical issues. Specifically, the historical method helps the author “restore” the full picture of closely related historical events, phenomena, and characters that led to the birth of the Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1945. The comparison method and listing method help the author have the most accurate perception and assessment of the content, value, and era significance of this Declaration of Independence. The analytical method helps the author review, evaluate, and draw out the nature, laws, or trends in the movement and development of historical events and phenomena at that time and their impact on the policymaking of the authorities in Indochina.

### 4. Results and Discussion

#### 4.1 Historical context of the writing the Declaration of Independence

15 years after its establishment, along with persistent preparation of all forces, in the fall of 1945, the Indochina Communist Party<sup>2</sup>, headed by leader Nguyen Ai Quoc, led the entire people to rise up to seize power. In Vietnam, the General Uprising (the August Revolution) broke out and quickly triumphed as World War II came to an end. By May 1945, the Soviet army had decisively defeated the Nazis in Europe, leading to their unconditional surrender. In August 1945, in Asia, the Soviet army launched a powerful offensive, overcoming over one million elite Japanese Kwantung troops in Manchuria. Consequently, the Japanese government surrendered unconditionally to the Soviet Union and the Allied countries. Domestically, the situation was chaotic: the French colonialists had fled following the Japanese coup d'état in March 1945; the Japanese fascists surrendered to the Allies on August 15, 1945; and the Tran Trong Kim government was in disarray. Meanwhile, the armies of the imperialist countries, operating under the guise of the Allies, were preparing to enter Indochina to disarm the Japanese forces. This created a unique, revolutionary opportunity. Therefore, the challenge of seizing power became a sprint race against the Allies. The Party, the Viet Minh Front, and the Vietnamese people could not afford any delay; they had to act swiftly to seize opportunities, mitigate risks, and ensure the revolution's success. Faced with this urgent and favorable situation, the Communist Party promptly decided to launch a general uprising.

“On August 12, 1945, the Provisional Committee of the Liberated Zone ordered an uprising. On August 13, 1945, the Party Central Committee and Viet Minh General Headquarters established the National Uprising Committee. At 11 p.m. that same day, the National Uprising Committee issued **Military Order No.1**, calling for a general uprising across the country. On August 14 and 15, the Party's National Conference convened in Tan Trao and resolved to launch a general uprising to seize power from the Japanese fascists before the Allied troops entered Indochina. The conference also addressed domestic and foreign affairs issues to be implemented post-liberation. Following the Party's National Conference, the National Congress met in Tan Trao (Tuyen Quang, Vietnam) on August 16, 1945. The Congress approved the Party's decision to initiate a general uprising, adopted ten major policies of the Viet Minh, and established the Vietnam National Liberation Committee

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<sup>2</sup> Now is *The Communist Party of Vietnam*

chaired by Ho Chi Minh” (Ngoc, 2005). Under the leadership of the Party and the Viet Minh Front, people across the country, both urban and rural, joined the uprising with a resolute will, symbolized by the sentiment, “Even if we have to burn the entire Truong Son range, we must persevere in our determination to gain independence.” (Giap, 2011).

The General Uprising quickly won victory across the country within two weeks, from August 14 to 28, 1945. On the following days, August 19, August 23, and August 25, respectively, three major cities in the North, Central, and South of Vietnam, Hanoi, Hue, and Saigon, successfully rebelled. The quick victory of the General Uprising is the result of the correct and decisive leadership of the Party and leader Nguyen Ai Quoc when promptly recognizing and seizing the opportunity, together with the same mind, and joining forces of the entire nation.

Immediately after the successful uprising in Hanoi, Nguyen Ai Quoc and the Central Committee of the Indochina Communist Party quickly returned to Hanoi on August 25. Nguyen Ai Quoc and all members of Party Central Standing Committee met at house number 48, Hang Ngang Street<sup>3</sup>, to discuss and decide on the important works that must be urgently prepared and completed to hold the independence declaration ceremony. At a small table on the second floor of the house, Ho Chi Minh wrote the Declaration of Independence. All the urgent work that needs to be done for the day of September 2 is: stabilizing the political, social, and security order situation in Hanoi; promoting the reform of the National Liberation Committee into a Provisional Government for press agencies; preparing to erect the stage for the Declaration of Independence, etc. Among them was drafting the Declaration of Independence, directly undertaken by Ho Chi Minh. He began drafting the Declaration of Independence to be read on September 2, 1945, giving birth to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the first people’s democratic state in Southeast Asia. Vo Nguyen Giap depicted: “In a small, dimly lit room of a deep house, located in the middle of one of Hanoi’s 36 ancient streets, he sat at work, sometimes writing or typing. The family’s maids did not know that the old man had bright eyes, wore a silver-brown shirt that often left his chest unbuttoned, smoked cigarettes, or what he was doing sitting there. Whenever they came to ask if he needed anything, he would turn around, smile, and say a few words. Each time, he said there was no need for help. They did not even know that they were witnessing historic moments” (Giap, 2018).

After completing the draft, Nguyen Ai Quoc and Truong Chinh (the former General Secretary of the Dong Duong Communist Party) called Vo Nguyen Giap and a number of other comrades in the Party Standing Committee to the house at 48 Hang Ngang for a review and approval of the Declaration. Vo Nguyen Giap then described, “The moment of reading the draft Declaration to the Party Standing Committee members was his most refreshing moment, and then on his pale and gaunt face, everyone saw clearly that there was radiant joy” (Giap, 2018).

Thus, in just 4 days (from August 26 to August 29), despite being busy with work after the General Uprising, Ho Chi Minh completed the draft Declaration of Independence. On August 30, he issued the Declaration to seek opinions from comrades in the Central Standing Committee and also discussed it with American Intelligence Major L.A. Patti. Ho Chi Minh then edited and completed the Declaration and solemnly read it to the nation on September 2, 1945, at Hanoi’s historic Ba Dinh Square. The Declaration of Independence giving birth to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam is considered a national founding document, a legal document, and a special document of modern Vietnamese history crystallized from the practical activities and revolutionary leadership of Nguyen Ai Quoc - Ho Chi Minh. The Declaration is not only significant for the independence of the Vietnamese people but also for the opening of an era of independence and freedom for colonial and oppressed peoples around the world.

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<sup>3</sup> the house of the patriotic bourgeois family of Mr. Trinh Van Bo and Mrs. Hoang Thi Minh Ho

#### 4.2 *The main contents of the Declaration of Independence*

##### 4.2.1 *Affirming the rights of every country, every nation, and every person in the world throughout the Declaration of Independence.*

The Declaration of Independence begins with the famous quotes from the 1776 American Declaration of Independence and the 1791 Declaration of Human and Civil Rights of the French Revolution, saying that “All people are created equal. The Creator gave them rights that no one can violate; Among those rights, there are the right to life, the right to freedom and the right to pursue happiness” and “People are born free and have equal rights and must always be free and have equal rights respectively” (Ho Chi Minh, 2011). All of those things above are sacred, legitimate and inviolable. The Declaration also affirms, “Broadly speaking, that sentence means all peoples in the world are created equal; every nation has the right to life, the right to happiness, and the right to freedom” (Ho Chi Minh, 2011). This is definitely an obvious truth - a truth that no one can deny. Ho Chi Minh’s creative quotation demonstrated an era’s thorough vision and a development of progressive thinking about the freedom and independence of each individual and nation.

If the declarations of the United States and France simply mentioned human rights as a necessity of creation, then President Ho Chi Minh, with his ingenious intelligence and practical experience of the Vietnamese revolution, has creatively developed and presented an undeniable proposition about the right to independence of all peoples. Ho Chi Minh “extrapolated” from the rights of the individual to the rights of the nation, in which the rights of each individual human being are intertwined and inseparable from the rights of the nation. National rights and human rights have a dialectical and mutual relationship. He raised human rights to national rights, from individual rights to the rights of all oppressed peoples in the world. An independent nation is a prerequisite to ensuring the implementation of human rights, and conversely, implementing human rights well means promoting noble values and the true meaning of national independence. Sibata once assessed, “The famous contribution of Ho Chi Minh is that he developed human rights into national rights” (Sibata, 1971). That is the great contribution of President Ho Chi Minh, demonstrating his great enthusiasm for the Vietnamese people and people around the world.

With dialectical thinking and sharp reasoning, Ho Chi Minh proved that human rights and the rights of people are natural and that each person and all people enjoy them. Thus, the invasion of Vietnam by the French colonialists and the American imperialists later went against that natural truth, against the freedom, equality, and fraternity that they themselves had eloquently proclaimed.

##### 4.2.2 *The Declaration affirms Vietnam’s rights to freedom and independence, declaring to the world that Vietnam is now independent and has the iron determination to protect the independence and freedom of the nation*

With rich evidence, true historical and logical generalizations, and rigorous reasoning, the Declaration is also a sharp denunciation that the French colonialists took advantage of the flag of freedom, equality, and fraternity to invade the country, strategizing and oppressing the Vietnamese people for more than 80 years in the fields of politics, economics, and cultural life. These actions are completely contrary to humanity and justice. However, when the Japanese fascists entered Indochina (September 1940), the French colonialists quickly surrendered, causing the Vietnamese people to suffer “one neck, two shackles.” This pushed Vietnamese people into extreme situations, such as nearly two million Vietnamese starving to death, more prisons than schools, brutally suppressing uprisings, killing patriots, etc. In the Declaration of Independence, President Ho Chi Minh vehemently condemned the crimes committed by the French colonialists as being “completely contrary to humanity and justice.” He stated, “Politically, they denied our people any freedom or democracy... They established more prisons than schools. They brutally killed those who loved their country and race, quelling uprisings with pools of blood. Economically, they exploited workers and

farmers to the core. They seized land, mines, and raw materials, imposing hundreds of unreasonable taxes, thereby impoverishing our people, especially farmers and traders” (Ho Chi Minh, 2011).

Under the leadership of the Party and the Viet Minh Front, the Vietnamese people rose up to expel colonialists, feudalists, and imperialists, thereby regaining independence, freedom, and human rights. Consequently, human rights in Vietnam are not bestowed by any external entity but are the result of the protracted and arduous struggle of the Vietnamese people. This struggle culminated in “the French fleeing, the Japanese surrendering, and King Bao Dai abdicating. Our people dismantled nearly 100 years of colonial chains to establish an independent Vietnam. Furthermore, they overthrew the longstanding monarchy to found the Democratic Republic.” (Ho Chi Minh, 2011).

On March 9, 1945, the Japanese fascists carried out a coup, overthrowing French colonial rule throughout Vietnam and Indochina. In the Declaration of Independence, leader Ho Chi Minh wrote: “When Japan surrendered to the Allies, the people of our country rose up to seize power, establishing the Democratic Republic of Vietnam” (Ho Chi Minh, 2011). President Ho therefore emphasized, “The truth is that our people took back Vietnam from the hands of the Japanese, not from the hands of the French” (Ho Chi Minh, 2011). This unequivocally affirms that Vietnam is no longer a French colony, freed from ties with France, abolishes all French privileges in Vietnam, and affirms that “all Vietnamese people, from top to bottom, are resolute in their hearts against the plots of the French colonialists” (Ho Chi Minh, 2011). Therefore, President Ho Chi Minh declared his intent to “completely break away from relations with France, abolish all treaties that France has signed with Vietnam, and abolish all French privileges in Vietnam” (Ho Chi Minh, 2011). He further emphasized that “allied countries have recognized the principles of national equality at the Tehran and San Francisco Conferences and cannot help but recognize the independence of the Vietnamese people” (Ho Chi Minh, 2011).

With simple, clear, but strong words, the Declaration of Independence affirms, “A nation has courageously resisted slavery for more than 80 years; a nation has courageously stood by its allies against fascism for several years. Now, that nation must be free! People must be independent” (Ho Chi Minh, 2011). The Declaration of Independence ends with the determination, “Vietnam has the right to enjoy freedom and independence and, in fact, has become a free and independent country. The entire Vietnamese people are determined to use all their spirit and force, their lives and property, to maintain that right to freedom and independence” (Ho Chi Minh, 2011). Vietnam’s historical reality has proven the legitimate interests and steely resolve of the Declaration of Independence, as well as the genius ability to predict and the timeless vision of Leader Nguyen Ai Quoc expressed in the Declaration of Independence.

## 5. Values and Meanings of the Declaration of Independence

5.1 *First, this is the most important historical document in modern Vietnamese History, drafted by leader Ho Chi Minh.*

The early declarations of independence can be found in the “god’s poem”<sup>4</sup> in the 11<sup>th</sup> century and “Binh Ngo Dai Cao”<sup>5</sup> in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, which are considered the first declarations of independence of the feudal dynasties of Vietnam against the invading forces of the North. Centuries later, President Ho directly drafted the Declaration of Independence and read it in front of tens of thousands of fellow citizens at Hanoi’s Ba Dinh Square, giving birth to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. A new democracy was born to overthrow the conservative, backward, and stagnant feudal regime. The Declaration of Independence declared to the whole world the natural and inviolable right to

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<sup>4</sup> “god’s poem” of the Ly Dynasty during the resistance war against the Song invaders in the 11<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>5</sup> “Binh Ngo Dai Cao” (The great proclamation upon the pacification of the Wu) drafted by Nguyen Trai in the 15<sup>th</sup> century

independence and freedom of Vietnam in particular and of the people of the world in general. The Declaration of Independence signals a new era. This is the era of national liberation from the oppression of colonialism on a worldwide scale, breaking the chains of colonialism. It, as well, is the era of oppressed and exploited peoples who regained the right to life, independence, and freedom, opening a new era for the Vietnamese people. The country then became independent and owned by its people.

The Declaration of Independence is the most important historical document in modern Vietnamese history. That is the result of 15 years of losses and sacrifices that the Indochina Communist Party has suffered and had to overcome countless difficulties and hardships to lead the masses to fight. That is also the result that was exchanged with the lives, blood, and bones of countless generations of officials, Communist Party members, and tens of thousands of resilient and heroic Vietnamese people.

The Declaration of Independence has contemporary significance and a high theoretical value. It contains: (1) the truth of humanity and of the times; (2) the crimes of colonial invaders; (3) the weakness and obsolescence of the feudal colonial regime; (3) affirming the Vietnamese people's right to live in independence and freedom; (4) the role and legitimacy of the government and the state of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam; (5) the superiority of the people's democratic regime; and (6) the desire for nations to recognize the independence and sovereignty of Vietnam. The Declaration of Independence represents the will and wisdom of President Ho Chi Minh as well as the nation's tradition of struggle and desire for freedom. With the above meanings, the Declaration of Independence has lasting vitality in the development journey of the Vietnamese people, oppressed peoples, and progressive humanity in the world.

5.2 *Second, the Declaration of Independence is the result of the process of accumulating theory and practice during more than 30 years of activities to find a way to save the country and people of leader Nguyen Ai Quoc - Ho Chi Minh.*

General Vo Nguyen Giap, one of the people who witnessed the historic days of leader Ho Chi Minh drafting the Declaration of Independence and discussed the Declaration, recorded his feelings: "Twenty-six years ago, Ho Chi Minh went to the Versailles Peace Conference, raising urgent demands for democratic living for colonial people. Those fundamental needs were not even accepted by the imperialist countries in the slightest. He saw the truth: one cannot rely on the charity of capitalists. People who know can only rely on the struggle and the strength of their own people. At this moment, he has reaped the fruit of more than 80 years of struggle on behalf of the entire nation" (Giap, 2018).

The Declaration of Independence is the result of Nguyen Ai Quoc - Ho Chi Minh's three-decade journey to find a way to save the country and find a direction for the nation, demonstrating a smooth combination of revolutionary theory and revolutionary practice. network. That is the result of the decision made in 1911, when he decided to go abroad to find a way to save the country with burning determination: "freedom for my people, independence for my country - that's all I want, that's all I understand" (*Ho Chi Minh, 2006*). He, who traveled through many capitalists, imperialists, colonial and dependent countries on the continents of Asia, Europe, Africa, and America, had to work many jobs to live and function and witness firsthand the lives of working people on the lands where famous declarations of human rights, freedom, equality, fraternity, etc. came from. He realized many things, understood who were friends or foes and affirmed: Wanting to escape slavery, oppression, and exploitation, working people around the world must unite to fight against the common enemy.

When the Eight-Point Claim sent to the Versailles Conference in June 1919 was not accepted, Nguyen Ai Quoc understood that nations that wanted to be liberated could only rely on their own strengths. In July 1920, Nguyen Ai Quoc read Lenin's "First draft of theses on national and colonial issues," published in the newspaper *L'Humanité* (Humanitarian), the central agency of the French Socialist Party. From Lenin's works, Nguyen Ai Quoc found the way to save the country and the Vietnamese people. He came to Marxism-Leninism and completely believed in Lenin and the Third

Communist International. At the 1920 Tours Congress, Nguyen Ai Quoc voted in favor of establishing the French Communist Party, becoming one of the founders of the French Communist Party and a true international communist soldier. Since then, Nguyen Ai Quoc has actively participated in the struggle movements of oppressed colonial peoples, such as joining the Union of Colonial Peoples, writing many articles in the newspapers like *Les Misérables*, *Humanity*, etc., seeking how to spread Marxism-Leninism, bringing progressive books and newspapers to Vietnam, and actively making ideological, political, and organizational preparations for the establishment of the Communist Party of Vietnam. The Communist Party of Vietnam was born in February 1930, marking a great turning point and a fundamental shift in the Vietnamese revolution.

The August Revolution was successful, ending with the Declaration of Independence, which gave birth to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The Declaration is a smooth combination of revolutionary theories and revolutionary leadership practices by President Ho Chi Minh. It has both profound human values and contemporary significance and is the result of requests sent to the Versailles Conference, of the Viet Minh Program (written in 1941), and of the courage and resilience in every Vietnamese citizen. Everything is the accumulation and crystallization of will, observation of social life, and experience of practical activities combined with learning and absorbing revolutionary theories in life and the intelligence of Ho Chi Minh. The Declaration also expresses the desire of the Vietnamese people for independence and a free and democratic life.

5.3 *Third, the Declaration of Independence is a document that was written in the shortest time but had a long preparation process.*

In terms of time, the Declaration of Independence was the fourth political declarations by Nguyen Ai Quoc - Ho Chi Minh. The first one, "The Request of the An Nam People," was based on Nguyen Ai Quoc's ideas and drafted by a group of Vietnamese patriots in France in 1919. When the request was completed, Nguyen Ai Quoc signed it on his behalf. Then, Nguyen Ai Quoc wrote "The verdict of the French colonial regime" (1925) based on most of his articles in the years 1921-1925, when he was spending over a year in the Soviet Union. The third work *Duong Kach Menh* (The Revolutionary Journey) (1927) was also completed based on Nguyen Ai Quoc's lectures for cadre training classes from 1925 to 1927. The political platform of February 1930 of the Communist Party of Vietnam Nam was completed within a month of the conference to unify Communist Party organizations in Indochina.

The Declaration of Independence was written when the Vietnamese nationwide general uprising to seize power was approaching its final victories. In the last days of Hanoi's August 1945, Nguyen Ai Quoc began writing the first lines of the Declaration of Independence to urgently declare to all his compatriots and the world the birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. At the same time, the Declaration aimed at affirming the host's status as Vietnam and welcoming the Allies to disarm the Japanese army. Although the historical circumstances were extremely special: short time, urgent requirements, cramped location, and the fact that he was under the secret identity of an old countryside man, etc. Ho Chi Minh completed the Declaration of Independence, and it soon became a symbol of ancient heroic literature, both nationally and internationally, as well as having both historical significance and profound era significance.

On August 19, the uprising broke out, and on August 25, Nguyen Ai Quoc and the Party Central Committee returned to Hanoi. Ho Chi Minh Minh began writing the Declaration from to August 28, 1945. For 3 days, with the strength, intelligence, and bravery of a revolutionary leader, he always guarded his heart for independence for the nation and for happiness and prosperity for the people. Having experienced revolutionary activities from East to West with the typewriter he used at the Viet Bac base, he finished writing the Declaration of Independence on August 30, the day King Bao Dai read the withdrawal decree. He stood before a large crowd of people at Ngo Mon (Meridian Gate), the Hue capital, and submitted his sword and seal to the Provisional Revolutionary Government.

On the morning of August 30, 1945, the Party Central Committee's Standing Committee met



under the chairmanship of General Secretary Truong Chinh and approved the draft Declaration of Independence that Nguyen Ai Quoc had just completed. On the afternoon of August 30, 1945, in the same attic where the Declaration of Independence was written, Ho Chi Minh welcomed Mr. L.A. Patti, the first representative of America in independent Vietnam. Very friendly and open, Ho Chi Minh read to the American guests the opening sentence of Vietnam's Declaration of Independence. The American friend was surprised and moved to discover the miracle and admiring power hidden behind Ho Chi Minh's simple, elegant style and the value of the Declaration.

The Declaration of Independence giving birth to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was completed in just a very short time, but it was the result of a whole long process of preparation, pondering, researching, and learning for decades of Nguyen Ai Quoc, Ho Chi Minh. Citing the contents of the American Declaration of Independence and the French Declaration of Human Rights and Civil Rights shows that Ho Chi Minh had researched and learned a long time ago. Quoting and using verbatim content from the two resulting Declarations of France and America to include in Vietnam's Declaration of Independence is a very special and unique thing, clearly showing Ho Chi Minh's intention. If we want to force America – the leading country in the capitalist world – and France – the country that once dominated Vietnam – to follow what their ancestors once declared.

The Declaration of Independence, completed in such a short time, demonstrated a leader's supernatural intelligence and timeless vision, as well as the portrait of a son with a passionate and painful love for his homeland. The pain of fighting for independence for the Fatherland and liberating the people. The Declaration is the result of an elaborate and meticulous preparation process, considering every sentence and every word, making sense, being both simple and easy to understand, and having the resolute, sharp, and very convincing dignity of a person who devoted his life to his country.

#### 5.4 *Fourth, the Declaration of Independence shows progress and further development in the rights of nations and human rights.*

The image of President Ho Chi Minh with a solemn, simple demeanor wearing faded khaki clothes standing on the stage, reading the Declaration of Independence on behalf of the Provisional Government, and declaring to the world the birth of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam has made a strong impression not only on the Vietnamese people but also on foreign politicians, researchers, and the media. American researchers then even studied to evaluate the Declaration of Independence of Vietnam in relation to the citing of the American Declaration of Independence.

Right in the opening statement of Vietnam's Declaration of Independence, Americans discovered the difference with the American Declaration. From that difference, they acknowledged and admired Ho Chi Minh's vision and intelligence. President Ho wrote and read the Declaration of Independence more than 30 years after his time living in New York and Boston, so Americans want to explain whether Ho Chi Minh quoted their Declaration from memory or verified it. This question was then answered when Lady Breston (a famous American) learned that Mr. Charles Fenn was the person who met and helped Uncle Ho while in Kunming. It was also Fenn, the person who Ho Chi Minh asked to verify, type, and send him back the exact wording in the American Declaration, when he sat down to write the Declaration of Independence.

With competence in language (English and French, etc.), a thorough understanding of Vietnamese, and in the style of a professional writer and journalist, Ho Chi Minh purposefully changed the quote to affirm the vision and purpose of Vietnamese people. Uncle Ho clearly distinguished the meaning of the word "men" (referring to men) and the word "people" (referring to everyone) to choose and use the word "people" in the Declaration. Next, the word "everyone" is replaced by the word "they" in the following quote. Ho Chi Minh's creative and flexible quotations, theories, and practical demonstrations have proven the progress of the Declaration. The Declaration affirms the right to equality between nations and classes. It also marks progress in thinking about human rights and has been proven in practice. The fact shows that American women did not have

the right to vote until 1915 (i.e., 139 years after the publication of the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America), but Vietnamese women were only three months later, on January 6, 1946, able to use their right to vote. That is a typical example of progress, values, human rights, and national rights in which the Declaration of Independence, drafted by Ho Chi Minh, differs from the Declarations of the US and France.

Regarding the rights of the nation, the American and French Declarations only mention the individual's right to life, the right to freedom, the right to pursue happiness, and equality of rights. In Vietnam's Declaration of Independence, Ho Chi Minh had a groundbreaking expansion of the relationship between the rights of the individual and the rights of the nation. He wrote, "Broadly speaking, that sentence means: all people in the world are born equal; all people have the right to life, the right to happiness, and the right to freedom" (Ho Chi Minh, 2011). Ho Chi Minh developed individual rights into national rights. These are his particularly outstanding contributions and are typical examples of the advancement of human rights and national rights. Ho Chi Minh's uniqueness, distinctiveness, and ability to flexibly use language have created the timeless and space-transcending value of the Declaration of Independence that was drafted in 1945.

5.5 *Fifth, the Declaration of Independence, written in a political style but simple and easy to understand in words, had a strong appeal.*

The Declaration of Independence was written and read in a context where over 90% of the Vietnamese population could not read or write. However, when listening, most people clearly understand their rights, responsibilities, and obligations and are excited and proud to be people of an independent country. From now on, they can control their destiny and their lives. That was the great and extremely important success of the Declaration of Independence, of Ho Chi Minh, and of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The unique and sharp features in President Ho's use of language were shown right from the beginning of the Declaration of Independence, with the phrase "My fellow citizens of the whole country" expressing an inclusive and widely spreading closeness. The phrase is also a summons that only the Vietnamese language can convey all the meaning that needs to be conveyed. On the other hand, the word "compatriots" also means being in the same bag, associated with the Vietnamese legend of protecting and sharing the same breed among hundreds of children born in the same egg sac. That can only be achieved through a compassionate heart, humane thought, and being always concerned for the people and the country of President Ho Chi Minh.

Furthermore, the Declaration of Independence was written from the heart of a person who fought all his life for the independence and freedom of the nation and the people, so the language is concise with clear and strong arguments that are close to people and easy to understand. In just 3 short sentences: "The French fled, the Japanese surrendered, and King Bao Dai abdicated. Our people have broken down the colonial chains for nearly 100 years to build an independent Vietnam. Our people again overthrew the monarchy for decades and established the Democratic Republic" (Ho Chi Minh, 2011). President Ho summarized the circumstances surrounding the birth of Democratic Vietnam and the achievements of the entire nation's struggle. Besides, the phrases "the truth" and "the truth is" that he repeated many times, especially in the conclusion of the Declaration of Independence, clearly demonstrated and affirmed the truth and legality of the Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, which the allied forces and other factions cannot deny. It can be seen that the language Ho Chi Minh used in the Declaration has touched millions of Vietnamese hearts, becoming a summons and a determination to maintain the nation's independence and freedom.

The historical value of the Declaration of Independence is also shown in that this is a document that signals a new era, an era of national liberation from the oppression and exploitation of colonialism on a worldwide scale, to regain the right to live in independence and freedom. The victory of the August Revolution and the "Declaration of Independence" by President Ho to mark the

establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam have become powerful catalysts and sources of inspiration for independence movements globally. The Declaration of Independence had a direct influence in Laos, instilling confidence and motivating the Lao people to seize control, leading to their proclamation of independence on October 12, 1945. The events of the August Revolution in 1945 and the subsequent establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam significantly impacted Southeast Asian nations, fostering liberation movements that resulted in the recognition of independence for the Philippines (July 1946), Burma (January 1948), Indonesia (August 1950), and Malaysia (August 1957). Furthermore, the August Revolution of 1945 in Vietnam ignited encouragement and momentum in the Chinese struggle for national liberation in Northeast Asia. In October 1949, this idea became a reality with the victorious Chinese Revolution and the creation of the People's Republic of China, representing a significant advancement in dismantling colonial imperialism and inspiring the national liberation movements connecting communists from Europe to Asia. In 1952, Libya achieved independence, influenced by these occurrences. In South Asia, the Indian independence movement gained momentum from Vietnam's August Revolution, transitioning from autonomy requests to complete independence on January 26, 1950 (Thai, 2009). The August Revolution of 1945 in Africa, along with the influence of the Vietnamese people, inspired many North African countries to struggle for and gain independence, such as Egypt (1952) and Algeria (1954). In 1960, a total of 17 African nations had achieved independence. The Cuban people were inspired by the widespread presence of the national liberation movement in Vietnam and other colonized nations in Latin America. Under the leadership of Fidel Castro, the Cuban Revolution succeeded on January 1, 1959.

## 6. Conclusion

After more than eight decades, the Declaration of Independence remains intact, a document of contemporary significance and high theoretical value as it contains the truth of humanity about human and nation's rights. The Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, drafted by Ho Chi Minh, has significance beyond its time, as the ideas and opinions expressed in it are still valid today. It is the dialectical unity between the right to national independence and the right to life of each person. It is the expression of the desire to live in peace and freedom with the spirit of determination to "dedicate all one's spirit and strength, one's life, and wealth to maintain that freedom and independence." (Ho Chi Minh, 2011)

The Declaration of Independence has awakened, stirred, and encouraged the spirit of patriotism and national pride, affirming the legitimacy of the struggle to protect national independence and thereby gathering and uniting all walks of life. The people became a unified bloc, creating the strength to protect their newly won independence against the risk of the French colonialists returning to invade. The Declaration is the happy ending of the journey to find and the process of realizing the desire to liberate the country and people of the Indochina Communist Party, of Ho Chi Minh in particular, and the people of Vietnam in general. At the same time, the Declaration is also a message affirming the resilience, determination, faith, and iron will of the Indochina Communist Party, Ho Chi Minh, and the Vietnamese people to protect legitimate independence and freedom. The Declaration of Independence serves as a robust legal foundation, affirming the national sovereignty of the Vietnamese people on the global stage and marking the beginning of a new era in Vietnam's history. This era is defined by the establishment of a democratic regime, progress towards socialism, and the enhancement of Vietnam's international standing. President Ho Chi Minh's ideas in the Declaration have become a profound source of spiritual strength for the nation, enabling the Party, the military, and the people to overcome numerous challenges and achieve significant milestones in national unification, socio-economic development, and international integration.

Years will pass, but the Declaration of Independence giving birth to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam still lives forever in the hearts of generations of Vietnamese people, not only because of its historical and legal value but also because of its humanistic value of human rights and national

rights. In the work of building and protecting the Fatherland, the Vietnamese people appreciate and promote the values of history to build the present and look towards the future.

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