

# **MESSAGE TO THE WORLD LEADERSHIP ALLIANCE-CLUB DE MADRID'S CONFERENCE**

## **Transatlantic Approaches on Digital Governance: A New Social Contract in the Age of Artificial Intelligence**

*Ha Noi, September 2, 2020*

From Viet Nam – the nation of Agarwood (Tram Huong), I would like to send warm greetings and wishes for good health and prosperity to all of you – delegates of the World Leadership Alliance – Club de Madrid. Unlike the World Leadership Alliance – Club de Madrid meeting held in October 2019, the Meeting this year is organized in a completely different world. We are not being able to meet in person and have to connect from various places in the world, but in exchange, we feel the motivation to connect stronger than ever.

### **Looking back the half of 2020**

There is a Vietnamese saying that “A long road tests a horse’s strength” which has the same meaning as “the proof of the pudding is in the eating”. The challenges in the first half of 2020 are new but still being one of the many tests for us to understand more about the inner power of each community, country and to appreciate more the value of solidarity, love for people, and responsibility to the community. Facing up with challenges from the COVID19, Viet Nam has and always been standing strong with the target “No one is left behind”. This success is the most practical proof of the strength of solidarity, and the responsibility to the community. This is also a spirit and target that members of the World Leadership Alliance – Club de Madrid are aiming to: constantly demonstrate responsibility and efforts to promote peace – security of the world.

For over more than 4000 years of history, love for people, love for family, community, and country have become the beauty of Vietnamese people. This has been become a major power source to help Viet Nam to overcome countless difficulties and challenges. In the ancient belief of Vietnamese people, the images of four immortal gods have become the symbol of strength and dream of Vietnamese throughout many generations:

- Ability to control natural disasters to living in harmony with nature
- Desire to free people, and against injustice
- The love between people, laborious and creativity
- Will of independence, self-reliance, win the foreign invasion

Inheriting and promoting these spiritual values, many generations of Vietnamese have made legend story. There are 14 national heroes of Viet Nam including Hai Ba Trung (Trung sisters Queen) (c.AD 14-c.AD 43), Tran Hung Dao (1228-1300), Tran Nhan Tong (1258-1308), Nguyen Trai (1380-1442), Ho Chi Minh (1890-1969), Vo Nguyen Giap (1911-2013) had won many hearts in the world. Each extraordinary person has their different legend, at different time, however, they all have one thing in common: they won the hearts of people by their thoughts imbued with humanistic value, not by the loss of their enemies. They were strongly aware of the value of peace, humanitarian, and passed on to us the beyond time vision. After the victory over the Ming dynasty's occupation forces (1428), Nguyen Trai wrote the proclamation of victory, stated clearly "just cause always prevails over ferocious; compassion is the virtue to embrace in place of violence"<sup>1</sup> – only justice and virtue are the final solutions to dispel all hatred. President Ho Chi Minh, in the most

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<sup>1</sup> Nguyen Trai, 'Binh Ngo Dai Cao' [平吳大告] (Proclamation of the Pacification of the Marauding Chinese), 1428

difficult time of the country in 1945, also affirmed: “Viet Nam is willing to befriend with all democratic countries in the world. Viet Nam does not bear a grudge against anyone”<sup>2</sup>. Thanks to this beyond time vision, Viet Nam – a country has grown in the midst of war – is known by the world as the symbol of peace. Attending the World Leadership Alliance – Club de Madrid, we – people of Viet Nam today – proudly spread great humanistic values that our previous generations passed on to us, blending it into the dream of peace of people all over the world.

### **The Tram Huong Khanh Hoa ATC Company – an ambassador of Vietnam’s value**

Tram Huong (Agarwood in English) is an ambassador of Vietnamese people because the values and legends of Viet Nam are embodied in Tram Huong. Agarwood is a scent of Heaven and Earth, through thousands of millions of years of accumulation of heaven and earth’s spirit. Therefore, when being burnt, Agarwood will release pure aromatic smoke that opens up human perception and consciousness. The author Gerard A. Persoon from Leiden University (Netherlands) has called Agarwood as “the Wood of the Gods”<sup>3</sup>.

In the flow of history, culture, not only in Viet Nam but all over the world, Agarwood has always been attached with holy and noble things and being an inseparable part of religion and belief. Agarwood presents in all major religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Japan’s Shinto, etc. To the Vietnamese, Tram Huong scent is indispensable to ritual and traditional ceremonies such as praying for ancestors, Mother Goddess worship because we believe that the purity of Tram

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<sup>2</sup> Ho Chi Minh, ‘Complete works of Ho Chi Minh’ Vol.V, (Hanoi: National Political Publishing House, 2011), pp.256

<sup>3</sup> Gerard A. Persoon, ‘Agarwood: The Life of A Wounded Tree’, (Leiden: IIAS Newsletter, 2007), pp.24

Huong is the sacred offering, connecting mortal people to heaven. Thanks to Agarwood, the holy can empathize with the prays and wishes of mortal people.

In India, ancient religious texts such as Hinduism and Buddhism have mentioned about Tram Huong. In the Mahabharata epic (telling the history of India in the period of BC1493 - BC1443), Tram Huong was mentioned as an expression of wealth, elegance, and happiness. In *Mahayana Mahaparinirvana sutra (Nirvana Sutra Buddhism)*, the use of Tram Huong was mentioned in the introduction part, describing a series of events and commandments of Buddha while he was on the way to Nirvana “each person is holding tens of thousands of parts of fragrant woods like Agarwood”<sup>4</sup>.

Talking about Tram Huong (Agarwood), it would be a great missing out not to mention Tram Huong Khanh Hoa - ATC the best Agarwood in the world which was used to be searched by many merchants on the Maritime Silk Road from the East to the West at the Ancient Era. Khanh Hoa province of Viet Nam has an exceptional climate where cold and warm ocean currents interfered, where forest, ocean, and mountain collide, and is a land where Gods and Man are living in harmony. A famous French and Swiss Doctor and adventurer Alexandre Yersin (1863-1943) in the 20th century was totally convinced by the beauty of Khanh Hoa. Leaving behind all the adventures and glories, he determined spending the rest of his lifetime in Khanh Hoa where he kept working and devoting for human beings. Alexandre Yersin found his final destination in Khanh Hoa where his great wisdom and vision have been spread and lived forever.

Tram Huong is an embodiment of the Goddess Po Nagar – the Holy Mother of the magnificent mountains and sea of Khanh Hoa. The Goddess is worshiped as the

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<sup>4</sup> R.N. Iyengar (2003), *Internal consistency of eclipses and planetary positions in Mahabharata*, Indian Journal of History of Science 38(2), pp.77-115.

guardian Goddess who brings peace, happiness, and prosperity. Under the lights of the Goddess Po Nagar, there is always a pure scent of Tram Huong. Therefore, Tram Huong is also a representative of prosperity, peace, and happiness.

Tram Huong presents throughout the length of history and the depth of culture, spirituality, and belief of Viet Nam, becomes an inseparable part of Viet Nam. Tram Huong is formed marvelously– from a wounded trunk, gradually tempered by time, sun, wind, and climate conditions to become an eternal aroma.

The story about Agarwood is the story of Viet Nam: overcoming miserable pains in the past, Viet Nam remains as a compassionate and peace-loving nation.

In the eyes of international friends, Tram Huong (Agarwood) has always been presented for the image of Viet Nam. The Tram Huong Khanh Hoa – ATC has become a messenger to connect many great intellectuals of the world to Viet Nam in the Nha Trang Sea Festival 2015, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Viet Nam – US relations. At this time, General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong also paid an official visit to the US upon the invitation of former President Barack Obama. Many great intellectuals such as Professor Joseph Nye, Professor John Quelch, and many scholars from Harvard University, MIT were convinced by the initiative of building Nha Trang Peace and Innovation Village to become a place of wisdom and quintessence of the world.

Nha Trang Peace and Innovation Village will become a hub for Vietnamese talents as well as an ideal place for scholars and leaders around the world to relax, live, and innovate. With the Center of Vietnam Agarwood Pleasure Art, Nha Trang Peace and Innovation Village welcome and honors the wisdom and all cultures, beliefs of friendly and peace-loving nations in the world. “This will be a birthplace of new knowledge and leading initiatives which plays a decisive role in the development of

Viet Nam and the world”. This is a statement of Mr. Nguyen Anh Tuan – Director of Boston Global Forum and Michael Dukakis Institute for Leadership and Innovation – the companion of the Tram Huong Khanh Hoa - ATC from the very beginning.

The year of 2017 marked an important step forward of Tram Huong Khanh Hoa - ATC when the ATC agarwood hand fan was chosen as a special souvenir gift given to APEC leaders 2017 as an affirmation of leaders of Viet Nam Government is willing to spread its unique value to the global. This decision demonstrates the confidence of the leaders of Party and State to the value of the Tram Huong Khanh Hoa - ATC as a representative of Viet Nam in the world. This was also a beginning for many efforts of the Government in encouraging the development of Agarwood industry to become one of the high intellectual and technology economic sectors. Tram Huong is expected to become an economic sector that can bring benefits to Vietnamese people and spread Vietnam’s value to the world.

### **Towards AI World Society**

Valuing and spreading values of Viet Nam and Tram Huong Khanh Hoa - ATC to the world, I am honored to recognize the common in the ideas and targets of the World Leadership Alliance – Club de Madrid. The Boston Global Forum’s message on building an AI World Society (AIWS) for people and put people at the center has moved me. I am touched by knowing that humanistic values, the message that my nation is spreading now have many more companions. I am truly happy for a thinking of a modern, advanced and imbued with humanisms world of AI in the future, a society that “no one is left behind”.

Following the success in Madrid (October 2019), World Leadership Alliance – Club de Madrid this year will discuss new initiatives that play an important role in

building up an Artificial Intelligence Society for people. Challenges from the first half of 2020 will not stop us but it is an opportunity for us to connect better and more effectively. In the World Leadership Alliance – Club de Madrid 2019, I only attended as a guest, but attending the conference this year, I and the Tram Huong Khanh Hoa - ATC have a stronger determination and commitment to become a companion, a friend of the World Leadership Alliance – Club de Madrid. I strongly believe that my attendance and my company will contribute to spreading the vision of the Conference as well as helping you to understand more about the values of Vietnam’s contribution to the AI World Society in the future.

I would like to send you the warm invitation to Viet Nam – the nation of Agarwood and to the Peace and Innovation Village: a place with beautiful landscapes, aroma and friendly people. Mr. Vinton Gray Cerf, the father of Internet has accepted our invitation to become our guest of honor of the Nha Trang Peace and Innovation Village. I am confident that his experience in this visit will lay a solid foundation for the development of Nha Trang Peace and Innovation Village – a forum of intellectual and AI in the region and the world.

I am looking forward to welcoming you in Viet Nam – the Country of Agarwood, the country of peace - loving people to share knowledge to make good dreams come true.

Thank you!

**Chairman of the Tram Huong Khanh Hoa Company - ATC**

**Nguyễn Văn Tường**