Name of the student

Name of the professor

Course Name

Date

Why does United States arm Vietnam?

President Barrack Obama administration has announced on Monday that it is fully lifting a long time ban on the sale of military weapons United States imposed on Vietnam. In the joint press conference with the Vietnam president Tran Dai Quang, president Obama said that the abolition of the ban of deadly weapons was part of defense cooperation with the country. The president disapproved people opinion that his government was intending to counter China growth in the region (Richard F.Grmmett).

The United States is expressing its desire to let go his decades of tense post-war relationship with the country and to start new economic and military ties. This may improve the president legacy on the foreign policy. To add to this point, the United States is committed to keep international rules in Asia continent particularly China and also to improve various ties to smaller countries in the region where tension are common (C.Foster).

The United States intention was based on the desire to complete the long process of moving towards the stabilizations with the Vietnamese people. The cooperation between the countries is aimed at improving the marine security positions such as strong defensive ties. The ban was more emphasized on improving the nature of the relationship between the two countries (Andrew F.Krepinevich).

Chinese factor has also become a major concerned in that decision. Senior researchers like Bruce Klingner at the Heritage Foundation did not do share the United States sentiment. According to Brace, Vietnam and the small countries in the southeast region have increasing been concern by Beijing’s actions and their push to extend their sovereignty in the region. If I can say China has become more and more aggressive about its claims to marine rights in the southeast region, which is an area that is rich in fishing resources, oil and minerals reserves lying under the seabed. A few of the countries in that regions also proclaim the sovereignty over the islands and waters in the area. This countries include Malaysia, Taiwan, Philippines, China, Singapore, Cambodia and Vietnam. However, only china has gone ahead to build tiny submerged reefs, which resembles man-made islands that are equipped with military-use facilities such as 3000 long runway. This initiative has heightened tensions in the region. By lifting this ban, United States can now help solve the disputes among the countries amicably (carter).

According to Sandy Pho an associate at the Kissinger institute on Chinese Wilson center based in Washington, it was right to say that lifting the ban was motivated mainly by china’s actions. The key driving force to that decision made by Obama administration, is to want the whole world to know that Vietnam is a tactical partner (Brown).

There also seemed to be a strong economic factor that is behind the decision for United States to lift the ban. The Obama administration has made Asia a central piece to make its larger foreign policy strategy as they see the surrounding region as a base of the future of the United States economic growth. It forms a larger market for the country exports that can create a lot of job at home. Vietnam is strategically located in between north and south Asia with 200 miles coastline on the South China Sea, which is a consideration when repositioning their military forces in the area. For over 20 years, the two countries have decided to normalize their diplomatic relationship. The United States really want to take their diplomatic relationship beyond the past of their ban and Cold War because they need a country in the south Asia which they can use to gain their interest.

 Vietnam becomes a good harbor for that vision. According to 2015 pew survey about 80 percent of the people of Vietnam see America as a good potential. Vietnam is considered one of most pro-countries in the Asia. It also forms a Trans-pacific Trade (TPT) agreement that Obama administration has championed for a long time. The United States is ranked the seventh largest investor on trade among countries that is worth approximately 44 billion last year.

 Lifting the ban on weapons that is put in place to dispute human right abuses, will eventually deepen the economic and military ties to Vietnam and also benefiting weapons manufacturing companies in Americans. The Obama administration view it has a way to strengthen its relationship with Vietnam, although it form a key factor of improving military sales. This is a prospective bonus for United States defense contractors being Vietnam is graded the eighth largest weapons importer in the world. The amount of money spent on imports arms and weapons increased by 699% from the 2011 to 2015, a figure that was estimated by the *Stockholm international peace research Institute.* An research analysis indicated that Vietnam needs to improve their maritime security ability, and this include patrol aircraft, naval craft and coastal radars that the United States weapons companies can sell to them. These kinds of incentive will no longer go to another weapons selling country such as Russia.

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