

Supplementing the theoretical foundations on the renewal policy into the ideological foundation of the Party: Foundations and tasks

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● **Abstract:** The first guiding principle in the Draft Political Report submitted to the 14th National Party Congress states: “Firmly upholding, applying, and creatively developing Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought, and the theory of the renewal policy...”. This is the first time the Party has identified “the theory of the renewal policy” as a constituent part of the Party’s ideological foundation, alongside Marxism - Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought. The supplementation of “the theory of the renewal policy” to the Party’s ideological foundation is a historically significant development in theoretical thinking, demonstrating the Party’s political acumen. At the same time, this also places heavy demands and tasks on the Party’s theoretical work. This article presents the basis for supplementing “the theory of the renewal policy” to the Party’s ideological foundation and the tasks arising therefrom.

● **Keywords:** theory of the renewal policy; ideological foundation of the Party.

1. Introduction

From the 7th National Party Congress (1991) to the present, our Party has consistently affirmed that Marxism - Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought are the ideological foundation of the Party. Through nearly 40 years of renewal and more than a third of a century since the 7th National Party Congress, the time has come to add the “theory on Vietnam’s renewal policy” to the Party’s ideological foundation. This affirms the Party’s theoretical achievements in applying and creatively developing Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought over the past 40 years of renewal, while also providing a theoretical basis for guiding and mobilizing the Party, the people, and the armed forces to successfully build socialism and firmly defend the Fatherland in the new era of national development.

2. Content

2.1. Theoretical and practical foundations for incorporating the theory of renewal into the Party’s ideological foundation.

Firstly, the theory of Vietnam’s renewal policy has clearly demonstrated the characteristics

of a coherent scientific theoretical system, encompassing both the fundamental principles of socialism and the strategic orientations for building socialism across various sectors.

The philosophy of science holds that a theoretical system is considered scientific when it forms a system of concepts, categories, principles, and objective laws with correct and defined content. Comparing it to these standards, the theory of the Party's renewal policy has fully met the requirements of a scientific theoretical system, and moreover, it is a revolutionary theoretical system.

The Draft Report on summarizing several theoretical and practical issues of the socialist-oriented renewal process in Vietnam over the past 40 years has fully presented the development of the Party's theoretical understanding over the past 40 years of renewal. On the most general level, it is easy to recognize the basic contents of the theory of the renewal line that our Party has defined. The fundamental line, the red thread running throughout the renewal process, is clearly affirmed and steadfastly upheld: national independence linked with socialism. The model and characteristics of Vietnamese socialism are clearly defined in the Platform for building the country during the transition period to socialism (supplemented and developed in 2011) adopted by the 11th National Party Congress. The goals for national development in the process of building socialism have also been defined in the Platform for Building the Country during the transition period to socialism adopted by the 7th National Party Congress, the Platform for building the country during the transition period to socialism (Supplemented and developed in 2011) adopted by the 11th National Party Congress, and the 13th National Party Congress's orientation: by 2025, Vietnam will be a developing country with a modern industrial sector, surpassing the low-middle income level; by 2030, it will be a developing country with a modern industrial sector and a high-middle income level; and by 2045, it will be a developed country with a high income. The value system of Vietnamese socialism is established with profound scientific and humanistic principles, based on harmoniously and rationally handling the relationship between economic growth and the achievement of social progress and equity, and environmental protection at each stage of development.

The major directions for national construction during the transition period to socialism were outlined in the 1991 Platform and the 2011 Platform (comprising eight closely interconnected directions within a unified system). The major relationships requiring deep understanding and rational resolution in the process of national construction and development have been progressively and more fully defined: the 2011 Platform listed eight major relationships; the 12th National Party Congress added the relationship between the State and the market, adjusting the relationship between the market economy and socialist orientation to the relationship between adhering to market laws and ensuring socialist orientation; the 5th Central Committee Meeting of the 12th National Party Congress added the relationship between the State and the market to the relationship between the State, the market, and society; the 13th National Party Congress added the relationship between practicing democracy and strengthening the rule of law, ensuring social discipline, bringing the total to ten major relationships. The driving force for national construction and

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development has been clearly identified as strongly igniting patriotism, national self-reliance, the strength of national unity, and the aspiration for a prosperous and happy country; promoting socialist democracy, the combined strength of the entire political system and of Vietnamese culture and people; nurturing the people's strength, improving the quality of human resources, and establishing mechanisms to attract and utilize talent; promoting innovation, strongly applying science and technology, especially the achievements of Industrial Revolution 4.0; combining national strength with the strength of the times; maximizing internal resources, taking advantage of external resources, and creating new impetus for rapid and sustainable national development.

In the strategic task of defending the Fatherland, our Party has clearly stated its viewpoint and policies on the issue of national independence, sovereignty, and national interests, linking them with the protection of the socialist Fatherland of Vietnam and international integration, in the spirit that national interests are paramount, resolutely defending national independence; defending the Fatherland early, from afar, and before the country is in danger, using the combined strength of the great national unity in the people's defense and people's security posture, combined with building a solid foundation of people's support, in which the People's Army and the People's Police are the core, while actively and proactively engaging in comprehensive, diversified, and multilateral international cooperation, ready to be a friend and reliable partner with all nations.

In particular, our Party has formulated a theory on building and rectifying a clean and strong Party and political system, in which Party building is identified as a key task; building the Party so that it has the capacity of a single Party to lead and govern; building the Party in terms of politics, ideology, ethics, organization, and personnel; and reforming the methods of leadership and governance. The Party has also made progress in understanding the connection between Party building and building the entire political system; perfecting and promoting socialist democracy; unleashing the strength of the people; building and promoting the role of the great national unity; and reforming the organization and operation of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and other political and social organizations.

Regarding scientific concepts and categories, the most notable is the Party's proposal of entirely new concepts: socialist-oriented market economy; socialist rule of law; and an advanced Vietnamese culture imbued with national identity. The concept of "socialist-oriented market economy" - a core element in the social infrastructure - was established at the 9th National Party Congress, and its meaning has been increasingly defined fully and specifically, in line with the new era and Vietnamese

reality. The concept of “socialist rule of law” - a core element in the social superstructure - was established at the Mid-term National Conference of the 7th National Party Congress (1994), along with the mechanism of “Party leadership, State management, and people’s ownership,” from which the meaning of the concept has been increasingly defined fully and clearly. The concept of “an advanced Vietnamese culture imbued with national identity” - a core element in the spiritual life of society - was defined in Conclusion Notice No. 38-TB/TW dated February 3, 1997, of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, with specific content regarding the advanced characteristics and the characteristics imbued with national identity of Vietnamese culture; defining culture as the spiritual foundation of society.

If we compare the main points outlined by K.Marx and F.Engels in the Communist Manifesto, the work that officially launched Marxism, with the main points outlined by leader Nguyen Ai Quoc - Ho Chi Minh in “The Revolutionary Path” - considered the beginning of Ho Chi Minh Thought, it can be said that the theory of the Party’s renewal policy, built over the past 40 years, has similarities in various issues. Of course, the content of each issue has fundamentally developed to suit the new era and the practical realities of renewal in Vietnam.

Secondly, the theory of the Party’s renewal policy has seen significant new developments compared to Marxist-Leninist doctrine, Ho Chi Minh Thought, and the Party’s theory before the renewal period.

In the theory of Vietnam’s renewal policies, a series of new concepts, categories, and principles have emerged that the founders of Marxism-Leninism, President Ho Chi Minh, and our Party before the renewal did not have the opportunity to address. For example, the concept of “socialist-oriented market economy” was previously only mentioned by K.Marx and F.Engels in relation to capitalist market economies; V.I. Lenin in his New Economic Policy, President Ho Chi Minh, and our Party before the reforms only mentioned commodity economies during the transitional period to socialism. Similarly, regarding the state in socialism, K.Marx and F.Engels previously only mentioned the bourgeois rule of law; V.I. Lenin in the early years of the Soviet government, President Ho Chi Minh, and our Party before the renewal only generally referred to the dictatorship of the proletariat, the proletarian state, and the socialist state, without using the concept of a socialist rule of law state.

The 13th National Party Congress generally assessed the development of the theory of socialism and the path to socialism in Vietnam, that is, the theory of the Party’s renewal policy: “The theoretical system on the renewal policy, on socialism and the path to socialism in Vietnam continues to be supplemented and developed”⁽¹⁾; “Looking back at 35 years of implementing the renewal process, 30 years of implementing the Program for building the country in the transitional period to socialism, the theory on the renewal policy, on socialism and the path to socialism in Vietnam is increasingly perfected and gradually realized”⁽²⁾; “The great achievements of historical significance are the crystallization of the creativity of our Party and people, affirming that the path to socialism in our country is in line with Vietnamese reality and the development trend of the times”⁽³⁾.

Based on the theory of socialism and the path to socialism in Vietnam, during the renewal period, clearly shown in the Platform for building the country during the transitional period to socialism (1991) and the Platform for building the country during the transitional period to socialism (Supplemented and developed in 2011), the 13th National Party Congress assessed: “The Party’s political platform continues to be the ideological and theoretical banner guiding our nation to steadfastly continue to comprehensively and synchronously promote the renewal process; it is the foundation for our Party to perfect the line of building and protecting the socialist Vietnamese Fatherland in the new stage”⁽⁴⁾. The Party’s political platform most concentratedly and concisely reflects the level of understanding and theoretical thinking of the Party. The correctness of the Party’s Platforms developed during the years of renewal has proven that the theory of the Party’s renewal policy is entirely worthy of being an integral part of the Party’s ideological foundation, playing a leading role in the ideological and spiritual life of society.

Thirdly, practice has proven that the theory of Vietnam’s renewal policy, together with Marxism - Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought, is the ideological foundation of the Party and the guiding principle for the actions of the Party and our people in the process of national renovation.

The renewal process over the past 40 years has been entirely new, unprecedented, and lacked adequate and specific theoretical preparation. It has fundamentally changed perceptions and thinking compared to the pre-renewal era. It has been a process of exploration, experimentation, summarizing practical experiences, and conducting theoretical research to gradually form a theory of the renewal policy, while simultaneously applying the achievements of theoretical development to practical activities. However, based on Marxism - Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought, through extremely creative intellectual efforts, our Party has gradually formed the renewal policy, that is, formed the theory of the renewal policy. This theory, along with Marxism - Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought, has served as the ideological foundation of the Party, guiding and directing all practical activities of reform, socialist construction, and national defense over the past 40 years.

Summarizing 30 years of implementing the renewal process, the 12th National Party Congress assessed: The great achievements of historical significance that our country has achieved over 30 years of renewal have “affirmed that the Party’s renewal policy is correct and creative, and that our country’s path to socialism is in line with Vietnam’s reality and the development trend of history”⁽⁵⁾. The 13th National Party Congress continued to affirm: “The achievements of 35 years of implementing the Doi Moi (national renewal) process, 30 years of implementing the 1991 Platform for Building the Country during the Transition Period to Socialism, and especially the 10 years of implementing the Platform (supplemented and developed in 2011), have continued to affirm that the Party’s renewal line is correct and creative. These great achievements of historical significance are the crystallization of the creativity of our Party and people, affirming that our country’s path to socialism is consistent with Vietnamese reality and the development trends of the times; affirming that the correct leadership of the Party is the leading factor determining the victory of the Vietnamese

revolution. In the context of a rapidly changing and complex world situation, the Party's Platform continues to be the ideological banner, the banner of struggle, and the banner that unites the strength of national solidarity to strive for a Vietnam that is "prosperous, strong, democratic, just, and civilized"⁽⁶⁾.

Regarding the achievements of theoretical work, the 13th National Party Congress assessed: "The Party's theoretical thinking has made progress. The theoretical system on the renewal policy, on socialism and the path to socialism in Vietnam continues to be supplemented and developed. The work of summarizing practical experience and conducting theoretical research has been strengthened and contributed scientific grounds for the formulation of the Party's guidelines and policies"⁽⁷⁾.

It is clear that the great and historically significant achievements of the renewal process have been significantly contributed to by the theory of the Party's guidelines, as an integral part of the Party's ideological foundation, serving as the basis for creating ideological unity between the Party and society.

Fourthly, incorporating the theory of Vietnam's renewal policy into the Party's ideological foundation is consistent with the methodology of Marxism - Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought: the theory of socialism is not dogmatic or rigid, but an open theory that must be constantly supplemented and developed.

F.Engels once wrote: "Our theory is not a dogma, but an explanation of the process of development, which includes within itself a series of successive stages"⁽⁸⁾. V.I. Lenin reminded: "We do not consider Marx's theory as something that is already finished and inviolable; on the contrary, we believe that it only lays the foundation for the science that socialists need to develop further in all aspects, if they do not want to become outdated with respect to life"⁽⁹⁾; "We are not dogmatists. Our doctrine is not a dogma but a compass for action"⁽¹⁰⁾.

President Ho Chi Minh also requested: "to develop our theory and thought to be more complete"⁽¹¹⁾. The inclusion of the theory of the renewal policy into the Party's ideological foundation is in accordance with the profound teachings of the founders of Marxism - Leninism and President Ho Chi Minh. In fact, many ruling communist parties also add this element to their ideological foundations.

Fifthly, more than half a century has passed since President Ho Chi Minh passed away, and the practical realities of building socialism in our country and the world situation in recent decades have undergone significant changes.

President Ho Chi Minh passed away more than half a century ago, yet his thoughts remain invaluable. The realities of the country and the world over the past half-century have undergone fundamental changes, especially during the nearly 40 years of renewal. Therefore, alongside incorporating Ho Chi Minh's thought into the Party's ideological foundation and remaining steadfast in its principles, the Party has creatively applied his ideas, actively exploring, experimenting, and summarizing practical experiences to provide answers to new theoretical questions and make necessary new developments in the theory of socialism and the path to socialism in Vietnam. This is entirely objective, necessary, and logical.

2.2. Tasks to be undertaken

After 40 years of national renewal and looking forward to the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Party and the 100th anniversary of the founding of the new Vietnam, the country is entering a new era of development. Having added the “theory of the renewal line” to the Party’s ideological foundation, it is necessary to continue to promote research and development of the Party’s theory, especially the theory of socialism and the path to socialism in Vietnam.

Firstly, continue to research and develop the theory of socialism and the Vietnamese model of socialism

The world today and in the coming decades is undergoing and will continue to undergo profound and significant changes, especially due to the impact of Industrial Revolution 4.0. Consequently, many new theories of socialism have emerged and will continue to emerge, along with new socialist ideological movements.

The world today and in the coming decades is undergoing and will continue to undergo profound and significant changes, especially due to the impact of Industrial Revolution 4.0. Consequently, many new theories of socialism have emerged and will continue to emerge, along with new socialist ideological movements. Socialist countries continue to develop these theories. Therefore, it is necessary to closely monitor and refer to new theoretical achievements on socialism worldwide in order to selectively absorb them and develop the theory of the renewal policy, of socialism in general, and of Vietnamese socialism in particular. The development of the theory of the renewal policy should focus on researching and clarifying the general model, basic characteristics, fundamental relationships, and main driving forces of Vietnamese socialism and the path to socialism in Vietnam. The criteria of “independence,” “a wealthy people,” “a strong nation,” “democracy,” “justice,” “civilization,” “freedom,” “prosperity,” “happiness,” etc., are closely interrelated; the compatibility between the superstructure and the base of society; the harmony in the relationship between different sectors; the socialist orientation of Vietnam; etc..

Secondly, conduct research to define the overall policy direction for the new era of national development

The term of the 14th National Party Congress is a period of completing the tasks of the period of accelerating industrialization and modernization of the country; the country is entering a new era of development, striving to achieve the goals set by the 13th National Party Congress for 2030 and 2045. Based on the theoretical framework of the renewal policy formed over 40 years of reform, it is necessary to supplement and develop the basic contents of the renewal policy in the new era of development, including groundbreaking viewpoints, initially established in recent resolutions of the Politburo of the 13th National Party Congress and the resolutions of the 14th National Party Congress. The theory of the new era of national development will be a theoretical development of the Party’s renewal policy, linked to the theory of the transitional period to socialism and the theory of socialism in Vietnam in general.

Thirdly, further clarify the theoretical framework for some important and newly arising issues in key areas of social life

Although the theory of the Party's renewal line has achieved great theoretical advances, the theories on many specific issues in various aspects of social life remain unclear. Meanwhile, numerous problems will arise in all areas of politics, economics, culture, society, national defense, security, and foreign affairs, requiring thorough and timely solutions. The policies on developing the digital economy, green economy, circular economy, national digital transformation, building a digital government, smart cities, digital society, digital citizens, national governance, cultural industry, and digital culture alone have raised a series of new theoretical issues that require satisfactory answers based on groundbreaking new thinking and understanding.

3. Conclusion

The theoretical review of 40 years of renewal has affirmed the creative development of the theory of the renewal policy for building socialism in Vietnam, contributing to supplementing and developing Marxism - Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought on socialism and the path to socialism. On a general level as well as in specific areas of the process of building socialism in Vietnam, the theory of the renewal policy has correctly, relatively fully, and increasingly clearly defined fundamental theoretical issues, providing a basis for guiding practical activities in building socialism in our country. However, the ongoing process of building socialism and strengthening national defense in the coming years will inevitably give rise to numerous theoretical and practical issues that require timely, in-depth research and comprehensive analysis, thereby contributing to the country's rapid and sustainable development ■

Submitted: November 5, 2025; Revised: November 6, 2025; Approved for publication: January 5, 2026.
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● Endnotes:

(1), (2), (3), (4), (6) CPV: *Documents of the 13th National Party Congress*, Vol.I, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, 2021, pp.74, 103, 104, 26, 104-105.

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