Vietnam – South Australia: Economic and trade cooperation shifts from orientation to action.

Against the backdrop of the Vietnam-Australia relationship being upgraded to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, economic and trade cooperation between the two countries, particularly with South Australia, is shifting from strategic orientation to substantive networking activities.

A notable milestone was the first Vietnam-Australia Trade Promotion Program, held on January 29th in Ho Chi Minh City, with the participation of nearly 100 Vietnamese and Australian businesses operating in various fields such as information technology, artificial intelligence, automation, education and training, import and export, agricultural products and food, real estate, and tourism. The event is expected to become a direct bridge between the business communities of the two countries in this new phase of cooperation.

Speaking at the program, Mr. David Dean – President of the Australian-Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce in South Australia (AVCC) – noted that Vietnam is emerging as one of the priority markets for Australian businesses. According to him, besides its impressive economic growth rate, Vietnam also possesses an increasingly open investment environment, creating many opportunities for cooperation, especially in areas where South Australia excels, such as agriculture and food, technology, education, and innovation.

Conversely, representatives of the Vietnamese business community believe that the need for direct connections with Australian partners is increasing. Mr. Vo Son Dien – Vice President of the Ho Chi Minh City Business Association (HUBA) and President of the Ho Chi Minh City Supporting Industries Association (HASI) – stated that in the context of global supply chain restructuring and the increasing emphasis on green growth criteria, transforming cooperation orientations into concrete projects is an urgent requirement. He believes that bilateral trade promotion programs should not only focus on exchanges but also aim to build long-term, effective, and sustainable cooperative relationships.

The highlight of the program was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Vietnamese business organizations and the AVCC, aiming to strengthen coordination in trade promotion, investment connection, and support for members of both sides to expand their markets. Within the framework of the event, lively B2B business networking sessions took place, focusing on key sectors such as import-export, technology, real estate, and tourism.

From a business perspective, Mr. Pham Duc Thuan – Director of HLS Thuan Hai Import-Export Co., Ltd. – stated that his company has connected with Australian partners to promote the export of agricultural and aquatic products, while also seeking opportunities to import high-quality products such as honey and wine into the Vietnamese market.

At the local level, South Australia is emerging as an important economic partner of Vietnam. In 2024,

bilateral trade between Vietnam and South Australia reached approximately AUD 837 million, making Vietnam the state's sixth-largest export market. Analysts believe that with a stable political and diplomatic environment and growing interest from the business community, economic and trade relations between Vietnam and South Australia are expected to continue expanding in a substantive manner, bringing long-term benefits to both sides as well as the Vietnamese community in Australia.

Source: Ho Chi Minh City Supporting Industries Association

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