In 2015, the two countries’ trade hit a new height, at €8 billion ($8.97 billion), making Germany the biggest EU trade partner of Vietnam. Of this figure, Vietnam enjoyed a trade surplus of €8 billion ($8.97 billion), up 22 per cent year-on-year.

The EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement, expected to take effect in early 2018, and a plan to establish a German-Vietnamese Chamber of Industry and Commerce (GVCIC) in Vietnam will help expand the bilateral trade, and help Vietnam attract more German investments.

**What are the most outstanding features of Germany-Vietnam investment and trade ties now?**

Germany will also increase its development co-operation with Vietnam. Last year, Germany committed to providing €220 million ($246.6 million) in Vietnamese development co-operation over two years, focusing on vocational training, energy, and environmental protection.

**Over the past few years, Vietnam and Germany have been planning to establish GVCIC. Why has it taken so long to be established? How is the plan being prepared?**

GVCIC is to be seen in the context of the German-Vietnamese Strategic Partnership, established by German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung in October 2011. This body shall be a platform of exchange of information for both German and Vietnamese companies in accessing each other’s markets. The new element of this chamber compared with the existing German institutions present in Vietnam today (Representation of German Industry and Commerce, and GBA – the German Business Association) is the possibility of membership of Vietnamese companies. They will enjoy the full service of a German designed chamber.

Today, GBA is an association of mostly German companies active in Vietnam. Although the representation offers some limited services in market access information for German companies in Vietnam and Vietnamese companies in Germany, only a full-fledged chamber will really give a boost to the bilateral trade.

The chamber will be set up by a merger of the Representation of German Industry and Trade on one side, and GBA on the other side. Therefore, the responsibility for the merger is with the members of GBA (meaning private enterprises) and the German Business Association (meaning a branch office of the German Chamber of Industry and Trade), not with the federal government.

GVCIC is a primarily private German institution – made up of German and Vietnamese companies. The plan is to establish a German-Vietnamese Chamber of Industry and Commerce, and a German representative offices in Vietnam. The new element of this chamber compared with the existing German institutions present in Vietnam today (either GBA or BAW) is the possibility of membership of Vietnamese companies. They will enjoy the full service of a German designed chamber.

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**What is your view about German investment flow into Vietnam in the time to come?**

In Germany, Vietnam is regarded as one of the most attractive investment destinations within ASEAN. There is, certainly, still room for improvement. But I am confident that more German companies will continue to invest in the country after the reform policy continues, especially administratively and judicial reforms.

**What is the plan being prepared?**

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