

# Leaders of China and Vietnam pledge to strengthen political and economic ties

BEIJING (AP) — The leaders of China and Vietnam pledged to further their economic ties and gave a nod to their shared communist ideology during the first visit by Vietnam’s new president to Beijing on Monday.

To Lam, who took office in May, made China the destination of his first state visit, signaling the continuing importance the Southeast Asian nation places on its giant neighbor despite ongoing territorial frictions in the South China Sea.

Chinese President Xi Jinping and his wife, Peng Li Yuan, hosted a ceremony for Lam and his wife, Ngo Phuong Ly, at Beijing’s vast Great Hall of the People, replete with flags, flowers and a marching band.

Xi remarked on the “deep friendship” between Vietnam and China and said Vietnam was a priority for Beijing’s “neighborhood diplomacy.”

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