

REPORT OF THE VIETNAM PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN VIETNAM

1. The Vietnam Peace and Development Foundation, as a non-governmental organization operating in the issues of peace and development, recognizes Vietnam's achievements in the protection and promotion of human rights.
2. On the basis of the Constitution, the law of Vietnam continues to realize these rights in accordance with international human rights standards. Vietnam has been making every effort to strengthen the legal system of human rights and establish institutions to ensure the promotion and protection of human rights in reality.
3. The right to petition and complain of the people is ensured by the Law on Complaints and Denunciation. The handling of people's petitions and complaints has improved a great deal with the ratio of responses to petitions and complaints by administrative agencies reaching 84% in 2012.
4. Vietnam ensures the right to assembly of the people through important legal documents, including Article 69 of the 1992 Constitution and Decree 88/2003/ND-CP of 30 of July 2003 of the Government on the organization, operation and management of associations. In the country, there are now about 450 associations (compared to 115 in 1990); 18 trade unions and 6,000 grassroots level organizations and thousands of associations in all areas of the society.
5. Vietnam has created favourable conditions for religious activities. The country has successfully organised major religious events such as the Buddha Birthday Festival; Christmas; Catholic and Protestant Easter; the Seventh Congress of the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha; the 10th Plenary Assembly of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences. There are now in Vietnam 4 institutes and 32 colleges of Buddhist studies, 6 Catholic Grand Seminaries, 1 Protestant Institute for Biblical Theology, 1,177 religious dignitaries participating in social management (deputies to the National Assembly or People's Councils at different levels). The State has recognised the legal status for 17 new religious organisations, bringing the total number of religious organisations in Vietnam to 34.

6. The right to freedom of press and information of the Vietnamese people has been reflected through the rapid development of the mass media. There are now in Vietnam 728 press agencies with more than 900 publications (179 newspapers, 549 magazines, 67 radio and TV stations, 50 online newspapers, and 260 websites), 17,000 journalists, 191 social networking websites, 2.5 million blogs, 32.4 million internet users, up 10.4 percent against 2011 and ranking second in Asia-Pacific in terms of internet development (according to the International Telecommunication Union). The democracy and transparency practiced by the State is strengthened through the critiques from the press, media and feedback of people. Cabinet members are now responsible for not only attending the Q & A sessions of the National Assembly but also answering people's questions through live TV and radio programmes. All people have a chance to contribute their ideas to the draft amended version of the 1992 Constitution. (By 30 April, there have been more than 26 million ideas gathered through 28,000 seminars and conferences).
7. Regarding education and training, the Government has made efforts by increasing budget allocations to the current figure of 20% of total public expenditures. Education quality has also been improved. 99.5% of the communes have primary schools, 93.2% junior high schools, 12.9% senior high schools, and 96.6% kindergartens. By 2012, 100% of the communes had achieved universal primary education, many had achieved universal secondary education; nation-wide enrolment rate of primary education at the right age was recorded at nearly 98%.
8. The law and policies of Vietnam consistently follow the principles of equality, unity, and mutual respect and support for shared progress among ethnicities. The Government has also paid due attention to improving health care for areas of ethnic minorities: health network has been developed, district and provincial hospitals have been improved, 99.39% of the communes have medical clinics, 77.8% of the communes achieved national standards for health care.
9. Vietnam is a party to almost all core international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR);

the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR); International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD); Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Vietnam is the second country in the world and the first in Asia to sign the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The country has also ratified 17 conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), including those related to gender equality, rights of the child...

10. Vietnam has fulfilled all obligations under international treaties to which Vietnam is a party and participated actively in many United Nations human rights mechanisms. Vietnam has submitted its periodic reports to all human rights treaty bodies. The work done by Vietnam has manifested the Government's strong commitment to respect its international obligations in the human rights field, which is recognised and highly appreciated by all treaty bodies members and the international community.
11. Vietnam is an active member of ASEAN in promoting and protecting human rights in the region. Vietnam and other ASEAN member states have established the ASEAN Intergovernmental Committee on Human Rights (AICHR), the ASEAN Committee on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC). Vietnam also served as Chair of ACWC in 2010.
12. Vietnam has actively cooperated with the UN to implement the accepted UPR recommendations. From July 2010 to November 2011, Vietnam invited 4 special procedures of the Human Rights Council (on ethnic minority issues, extreme poverty and human rights, effect of foreign debt on the enjoyment of human rights, and the right to enjoy the highest attainable standards of physical and mental healthcare). The results of these country visits have met both sides' requirements.

As an NGO with great interest in the promotion and protection of human rights, we are confident that with the Government's efforts, human rights will be further promoted in the future.