



OPENING REMARKS

**By H.E. Thanh T. Nguyen,
Ambassador, Permanent Representative**

**Head of the Delegation of Viet Nam
to the Adoption Session of the UPR Working Group Report on Viet Nam**

(26th Session of the Human Rights Council, June 20, 2014)

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Mr. President,

It is a great pleasure for me to present our report and attend this second dialogue on the promotion and protection of human rights within the framework of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Viet Nam. I most warmly welcome the broad participation of representatives from countries, international organizations, NGOs and other stakeholders in the discussion today. I look forward to hearing cooperative, constructive, and responsible contributions to our UPR process in accordance with the UPR principles set out by the Human Rights Council.

Viet Nam attaches much importance to the UPR mechanism and has actively and seriously participated in this process. We view the UPR as a good opportunity for States to enhance the awareness of human rights and improve institutions, policies and mechanisms in this important field. We highly appreciate the genuinely engaging dialogues with all countries, international organizations and NGOs for better promotion and protection of human rights.

Mr. President,

On the 5th February 2014, we had a very constructive and productive dialogue with 106 countries in the UPR Working Group's 18th session. Our high level Vietnamese delegation did seriously and openly engage in that session and provided 09 responses to the questions and comments. And I would like to sincerely thank the participating States for their positive comments and appreciation to the quality of Viet Nam's UPR, as well as policies and Viet Nam's efforts on enhancing human rights for our people over the first cycle of 2009-2014. In that session, we received totally 227 recommendations.

Guided by seriousness and transparency, right after the February session, the delegation informed the UPR outcomes to all ministries, Governmental institutions, domestic and international press, social, political and professional organizations. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also collaborated with the UNDP to organize an international workshop on the UPR outcomes and recommendations to Viet Nam. Several other ministries, agencies, research institutes, central and local media has also held forums and discussions on the UPR results. This clearly manifests Viet Nam's real interest and benefit in participating in the UPR process, thus helping to raise further awareness of all civil servants and people on human rights.

Mr. President,

The firm policy of Viet Nam is to place the people at the center as both a goal and driving force for our national development strategies. This policy has been consistently reflected and updated in the judicial and institutional systems, and development policies and programmes with a view to better promoting and protecting human rights, as well as to improving spiritual and material life for people, enhancing democracy, and promoting a rule-of-law state, equality and social welfare. In addition, Viet Nam advocates strengthening international dialogue and cooperation on human rights as this is an opportunity for sharing and learning experiences and good practices.

In that spirit, right after the UPR Working Group's session, Viet Nam established an Inter-Ministerial Working Group to seriously and promptly review all comments and recommendations from other participating States. The Government of Viet Nam has approved a comprehensive report on the list of supported recommendations and has assigned 13 relevant ministries and Government agencies with detailed tasks for the implementation of those recommendations. I am happy to inform our meeting today that, among 227 recommendations, Viet Nam has supported 182 recommendations, accounting for 80.17%. This high percentage of recommendations enjoyed our support has vividly demonstrated Viet Nam's serious forwardness, openness and determination in promotion and protection of human rights.

The supported recommendations arise from Viet Nam's consistent policy and commitments to the international community on human rights, particularly our voluntary commitments as a Member of the Human Rights Council, especially on:

(i) Strengthening policies, measures and resources for the promotion and protection of economic, cultural, social and political and civil rights in line with international norms;

(ii) Trying to achieve all MDG goals by the deadline (Viet Nam has currently achieved and bypass 6/8 goals);

(iii) Completing and improving of the legal and judicial systems and national mechanisms on human rights;

(iv) Ensuring the rights for social vulnerable groups, especially for women, children, persons with disabilities, the elderly and ethnic minorities;

(v) Enhancing on education and awareness of human rights; as well as building capacity for law enforcement agencies in the framework of the law-ruled state;

(vi) Participating in international human rights conventions, observing obligations as provided in international conventions, guaranteeing rights of vulnerable groups.

Regarding the recommendations pertaining to the authority or competence of judicial, legislative, social and political organizations, the Government has sent written notes requesting those organizations to coordinate and collaborate with executive branch for the implementation.

The detailed list of 182 recommendations was in the addendum and the UPR Secretariat has circulated the list prior to the commencement of this session. Such a detailed list of assignments indicates Viet Nam's serious commitments and further engagement to the UPR process.

Regards those recommendations that Viet Nam is not yet in a position to support, it is deemed that, they have not gained universal recognition, and/or they are not suitable to the historical, social and cultural particularities of the land, consistent with the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Program of Action. In addition, some recommendations were found to be based on incorrect information or misunderstanding of the situation in Viet Nam.

Mr. President,

Viet Nam is swiftly implementing the 2013 National Constitution, with one of the highest priorities being to concretize the many provisions on human rights and citizen's rights as provided in the Constitution. This is one of the important and fundamental priorities to guarantee rights and freedom of each and every person. Currently, relevant Vietnamese institutions are reviewing, amending, supplementing and promulgating legal documents on human rights, fundamental rights and obligations of citizens in accordance with the spirit of the 2013 Constitution. In May 2014, the Standing Committee of the National Assembly endorsed the Legislation Making Agenda from now to 2015, which will consider amendment and formulation of several important legal documents such as Demonstration Law, Information Access Law, Association Law and Referendum Law.

Although currently facing temporary challenges, Viet Nam in the first six months of 2014 continued to provide sufficient resources for the implementation of the MDGs and national programmes on social welfare, especially for households with financial difficulties, women, children, the elderly, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities and people in remote and mountainous areas. In addition, due attention has been paid to the grass-roots democracy and participation of social and political organizations and all classes of people in planning and implementation of national important policies and programmes, particularly in the issues relating to security, peace, stability and development of the country.

Apart from efforts to stabilize the economy and maximize people's ownership role in social and political life, Viet Nam has cared for and invested in activities to better serve cultural, religious and belief life of people. It is noteworthy that Viet Nam successfully hosted the UN-recognized VESAK Day with the participation of about 3,500 Buddhist representatives and dignitaries from 90 countries and territories, and tens of thousands of Buddhist followers and interested people. A series of regional and international cultural events have also been held in Viet Nam, such as Hue Festival 2014, Viet Nam Ethnic Minorities' Cultural Day, etc., thus contributing to spiritual and material life for people, increasing mutual understanding, exchange and respect spiritual and cultural life with other peoples in the region and in the world.

Taking this opportunity, I wish to inform you all that, Viet Nam shall ratify by the end of this year the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Recently, numerous workshops on the two conventions have been held at national and local levels in Viet Nam in order to raise the awareness of civil servants and people on the spirit and content of these international instruments.

Mr. President,

My Vietnamese delegation looks forward to open and constructive dialogues with other countries and partners for the ultimate goal of enhancing international cooperation in human rights to better promote and protect human rights.

I thank you, Mr. President./.