

July 11, 2018

To: the Office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights

From: the Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament

Copy to: Vietnam Peace Committee

MESSAGE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN VIETNAM

The Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament (CPAPD) has maintained friendly exchanges and cooperation with Vietnam Peace Committee (VPC) for decades. As requested by the latter, based on available public sources, our observations as well as glancing over reference materials offered by the VPC, the CPAPD as a stakeholder of its Vietnamese counterpart hereby submits a report on human rights promotion of Vietnam to the Office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights. The CPAPD is not responsible for investigating and verifying those statistics enumerated in the following report.

1. We notice that the Vietnamese government and National Assembly have made great efforts to strengthen its legal system and policies in the field of human rights, with the aim of promoting and protecting the political, economic, social and cultural rights of its people.
2. When the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was founded in 1976, it clearly stipulates that it is a State of the people, by the people and for the people. Its 1992 Constitution ensures people's equal rights in all political, economic, social areas as well as before the law; the right to freedom of religion and belief; the right to freedom of movement and residence within Vietnam; the right to complain and criticize; the right to work, study and enjoy health care etc., regardless of their sex, social status, belief and religion. Its 2013

Constitution adopted by the National Assembly on 28/11/2013, became effective from 01/01/2014 has further institutionalised the promotion and protection of human rights, in accordance with international standard of human rights. The 2013 Constitution had separated Chapter II with 36 direct institutions and clear regulations of fundamental rights and obligations of citizen.

Many laws has also been adopted and amended by Vietnamese National Assembly with a view to create enabling legal foundation for respecting and enforcing human rights. The right to petition and complaints, the right to religion and belief and the right to freedom of press and information of its people have also been respected and protected by its consistent policies. (The right to petition and complaints 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; 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. Vietnam has already published the book “Protection and promotion of human rights in Vietnam” in January 2018...).

3. 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; United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman

or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

4. In addition, Vietnam has also initiated various campaigns to raise people's awareness of human rights protection, with participation of different social sectors. Exchanges and cooperation have been conducted regarding the promotion of human rights both domestically and internationally.

The right to form associations/ organizations was defined in Constitution 2013. By December 2016, there are more than 52,500 associations/ organizations representing people from all walks of life including youth, women, workers, farmers, people with disabilities, scientists, professors, and workers.

Recently, Vietnam is building a bill on association, the draft bill has been consulted by state offices, NGOs, experts and people of different callings.

5. 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.

Women play more and more important roles in the political system, economy, culture and society. The rate of women in Vietnam participated in National Assembly in the 2016-2021 tenure went up by 2.62 % compared to last period to reach 26.72%; the rate of women participating in People's Council at provincial level was 26.54% (an increase of 1.37%); at district level was 27.85% (increased by 4.88%); at ward level was 26.59 % (increased by 4.88%).

The rights to participation of children also have been impulsed by implementing program of promoting the rights of children to participate in child issues for the 2016 – 2020 period (according to Decision No 1235/QĐ-Ttg dated on 3/8/2015). In June 2017, Ho Chi Minh City launched the first council of children in Vietnam, helping children to raise their voices,

recommendations of policies related to them. This model has been formed in Hanoi, Binh Dinh, Quang Ninh and Yen Bai.

Favorable chances are created for people of ethnic minorities to join political system, social management and state management. 86 deputies to the 14th National Assembly (2016-2021) belong to ethnic minorities (17.3 percent).

6. Meanwhile, significant achievements in the cause of socio-economic development in Vietnam have also been witnessed. As a result, the rate of households under national poverty line has been reduced by 31.7% in 2017 compared to the rate of the previous year. The education and training budget has increased annually. Education quality has been improved. The rate of graduation from high school to enroll university is 50%; to enroll college and vocational college is 23% and to enroll vocational centers is 13%. The consistent efforts have been made to facilitate every people in enjoying their rights to health, with priority given to women, children and people of ethnic minorities. The rate of traffic accidents was reduced by 7% compared to the rate in 2016.

Great efforts of sustainable development brought positive results of developing economy and ensuring social justice. With the aim of building an enabling government towards people, Vietnam continues the economic growth of GDP 6.68%, 6.21%, 6.81% in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

7. 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, etc. 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.

8. 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).
9. As an NGO that have frequent exchanges on the issue of promotion and protection of human rights with our counterparts, we appreciate the fact that the Vietnamese people are encouraged and provided with conditions to exercise their fundamental human rights as stipulated by the law. We do appreciate the promotion and protection of human rights in Vietnam and believe that with the joint efforts of the Government and people, the country will be able to gain greater achievement in the issue.

Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament
Secretariat, Beijing