



ỦY BAN HÒA BÌNH VIỆT NAM / VIETNAM PEACE COMMITTEE

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Contribution from the Vietnam Peace Committee on the implementation of human rights in Vietnam

The Vietnam Peace Committee (VPC) would like to share its views about Vietnam's achievements in the protection and promotion of human rights since 2014.

In recent times, Vietnam has tirelessly worked to improve its legal system and ensure legal enforcement of human rights in all aspects, including civil and political rights. The achievements recorded in the protection of civil and political rights of the people showcase the strong commitment and unceasing effort of the State of Vietnam in the context of outstanding social and economic hardships.

1. The Constitution, adopted by the National Assembly on 28/11/2013 and became effective on 01/01/2014, has further institutionalised the promotion and protection of human rights, in accordance with international standards of human rights. The 2013 Constitution, with 11 chapters and 120 articles, reserves Chapter II with 36 provisions on fundamental rights and obligations of citizens.

2. Vietnam is a multi-religion country with the presence of many major religions in the world including Buddhism, Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam and other domestically originated religions. All religions co-exist in harmony and are intertwined with the traditional beliefs of Vietnamese ethnic communities. Vietnam always respects and implements consistently policies ensuring freedom of belief and religion. This is affirmed in the 2013 Constitution, the Law on Belief and Religion (effective from 01/01/2018), and 2 Government decrees on implementation of the Law on Belief and Religion.

3. Great efforts toward sustainable development have brought positive results in developing the economy and ensuring social justice. (Vietnam registers GDP growth rates of 6.6 percent, 6.21 percent and 6.81 percent in 2015, 2016 and 2017, respectively)..

4. Hunger eradication and poverty reduction has always been one of the core goals of the State and people in Vietnam. The poverty rate was reduced from 7 percent in 2015 to an estimated 5.2 percent in 2016. The coverage of insurance increased from 77 percent of the population in 2015 to 83.8 percent in 2017, or

78.2 million persons. The rate of the poor and near-poor participating in insurance reached 77 percent in 2016.

5. Ensuring the right to education is always considered one of the top priorities in development strategy. Despite tight constraints, Vietnam still maintains 20 percent of the state budget spending for education. Investment in fundamental infrastructure has got averagely 15 percent of total public expenditure for education and training. In 2014, the Government promulgated Decree No. 20/2014/ND-CP on universalisation of education and eradication of illiteracy, Decree No.06/2018/ND-CP providing, free lunch for pre-school kids, grade-schoolers in areas of ethnic minorities, etc.

With such efforts, all the 63 provinces and centrally-administered cities have succeeded in universalisation of pre-school education for 5 year-old and primary education. In 2016, the literacy rate of people aged 15-35 years and 15-60 years nationwide was 98.69 percent and 97.73 percent, respectively.

6. Vietnam has 7 million people with disability, or 7.8 percent of the nationwide population, among them 48 percent are women and 28.3 percent children. Programs and plans for people with disability have been carried out effectively. So far, allowances have been provided to 896.644 people with severe disability and special disability.

7. The Vietnamese Government has made consistent efforts to help people enjoy their rights, with priority given to women, children and people of ethnic minorities.

Women play more and more important roles in the political system, economy, culture and society. The rate of Vietnamese women deputies to the National Assembly in the 2016-2021 tenure reaches 26.72 percent, up 2.62 percent from the previous tenure; the rate of women members of People's Councils at the provincial level is 26.54 percent (up 1.37 percent); at the district level, 27.85 percent (up 4.88 percent); and at the ward level, 26.59 percent (up 4.88 percent).

Children's right to participate has been impulsed by the implementation of program on promoting the right of children to participate in child issues for the 2016 – 2020 period (following Decision No 1235/QD-Ttg dated 3/8/2015). In June 2017, Ho Chi Minh City launched the first Children's Council in Vietnam, helping children to raise their voices, recommending policies related to them. This model has been followed in Hanoi, Binh Dinh, Quang Ninh and Yen Bai.

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

8. The Vietnamese people enjoy freedom of speech and expression. The development of socio-political organisations, mass organisations and professional organisations has contributed to create mechanisms for people to express their aspiration and participate in social management. Every week, a Cabinet member is responsible for answering citizens' questions through live TV and radio programmes.

9. The Law of the Press (amended in 2016 and effective as of 01/01/2017) shows the clear spirit of 2013 Constitution, which defines the right to freedom of the press and information, emphasizes the right to creativeness of press writings, to provide and approach information, and to raise ideas for criticism, petition, appeal and denunciation over the press.

The press keeps developing and has become information forums of social organizations and people's organisations, and a tool to protect the right of the people and monitor the implementation of laws and policies. Criticisms from the media and feedbacks from the people have contributed a great deal to the fight against corruption and wrongdoings in Vietnam.

By December 2017, there are 849 news organs with 1,111 printed newspapers (compared to 1,084 in 2013); 196 press offices and e-magazines; 67 radio and television stations with 182 channels; 01 national news agency, 196 e-newspapers and thousands of e-portals on the Internet. Vietnam has 18,000 registered journalists Facebook, Twitter and other networks have become very popular among Vietnamese, especially the younger generation. Currently, there are 58 million Facebook accounts in Vietnam, 28.35 percent of Vietnamese households have access to the Internet, with 50 million users (compared to 30.8 million in 2013)..

Vietnamese now have access to 75 international television channels, including CNN, BBC, Bloomberg, Australia Network, and those from France, Germany, Italia, Korea and China... All the big news organs are accessible to Vietnamese, including Reuters, BBC, VoA, AP, AFP, CNN, Kyodo, The Economist and Financial Times...

10. Vietnam has also had a variety of campaigns to raise people's awareness of human rights protection with cooperation between the government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Forums and conferences have been held with the participation of domestic and international scholars to discuss ways to improve the efficiency of human rights promotion in the country.

The right to form associations/ organisations was defined in the 2013 Constitution. By December 2016, there are more than 52.500 associations/ organisations representing people from all walks of life including youth, women, workers, farmers, people with disabilities, scientists, professors, workers,...

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

We do appreciate the achievements recorded in the promotion and protection of human rights in Vietnam and believe that with the joint efforts of the Government and the people, the country will be able to gain still greater achievements in this connection../.