

BUILDING CONSENSUS IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIALISM-ORIENTED MARKET ECONOMY DEVELOPMENT IN CONTEMPORARY VIETNAM

(Continued)

Nguyen Thi Lan Huong^(*)

Abstract: *Based on theoretical issues related to a social consensus and the practical aspects of a socialist-oriented market economy in our country, this article provides an overview of the social consensus in the context of the market economy in Vietnam, highlighting some fundamental characteristics. The article explores the experiences of building the social consensus within the framework of Vietnam's socialist-oriented market economy, including the role of building the Party, the political system, and political-social organizations; the significance of harmonizing the interests of social subjects,... in the construction and maintenance of the social consensus.*

Keywords: *Social consensus, socialist-oriented market economy, Vietnam.*

2. Building a consensus society in Vietnam economics, politics, culture, society, and national security.

2.1. Consensus society in Vietnam During the cause of renovation, social consensus has been

Fundamentally, Vietnam is a consensus society, where the majority of the population agrees on the country's development goals proposed and enacted by the Party and the State. This consensus is evident in various aspects of social life, including (those of) considered the core strength fostering solidarity/unity and stability in political and social dimensions. The Communist Party of Vietnam sees this stability as a

^(*) Associate Professor, Ph.D., Institute of Philosophy, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences.

BUILDING CONSENSUS IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIALISM-ORIENTED...

prerequisite, the foundation for promoting economic growth, achieving social progress and justice, and ensuring the rightful benefits for the people, placing them as masters in a democratic society with a political system and a democratic - rule of law state¹⁷.

The concept of social consensus was first used by the Communist Party of Vietnam in the documents of the Seventh Central Committee Plenum of the Ninth term¹⁸. Since then, social consensus, as a fundamental content in building social consensus, has consistently been emphasized in the Party's documents across congresses. Depending on the practical conditions of each stage, social consensus has incorporated new perceptions while maintaining fundamental consistency regarding *goals, foundations, subjects, and essential contents*¹⁹. Several key points characterize social consensus in Vietnam:

First, there is consistency in the goal, which is to build “a peaceful, independent, unified, and territorially integral Vietnam, with a prosperous population, a strong

country, democratic, just, and civilized.” This aligns with the socialist goals in Vietnam.

Second, the basic contents of social consensus in Vietnam encompass all issues related to the nation's fate and development, specific to each period in various fields such as economics, politics, culture, society, and national security.

Third, the subject of social consensus in Vietnam includes all classes, strata, ethnicities, religions, both Vietnamese people inside and outside the country, represented by the Party, the State, and political and social organizations. The Party assumes a leadership role, the State is the pillar, and political organizations (with the Fatherland Front at the center of social unity) are the core force.

Fourth, the foundation of social consensus in Vietnam involves (i) harmonizing interests among society members, (ii) implementing widespread justice and democracy, and (iii) emphasizing the spirit of national identity and tolerant cultural traditions²⁰.

2.2. Some distinctive points in building a consensus society in Vietnam today

In order to build and maintain social consensus, Vietnam currently focuses on the crucial points of the third and fourth aspects, which are related to the subject and foundation of consensus. These two issues are intricately and directly connected.

Concerning the role of representative subjects in building social consensus in Vietnam, the role of the Communist Party of Vietnam as the ruling party and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is foremost. To genuinely achieve social consensus, an effective leadership subject must first efficiently gather social classes. This subject must possess ethical and political qualities, as well as the courage and leadership capabilities, as these qualities form the basis of the people's solid trust. In other words, the Party and the political system must gain the trust of the people. Recognizing this deeply, the Communist Party and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam significantly focus on building the people's trust

in the leadership and management of the country.

The trust in the right choice of the nation is a key factor in creating social consensus. This belief in the ideals of socialism chosen by the people is entirely based on reality. It manifests in the confidence placed in the Communist Party of Vietnam, as only the Party currently possesses the political capacity, strength, intelligence, and qualities to lead the nation in achieving its goals. The Party remains steadfast in its socialist objectives, continually innovating and being creative in leadership methods, self-discipline, and self-improvement. This is the reason why the Party places special emphasis on Party-building activities, especially from the Twelfth Congress onwards. To build people's trust, the Communist Party of Vietnam has consistently adhered to the goals of socialism, emphasizing ideological, ethical, lifestyle, political, and intellectual aspects in Party-building. Simultaneously, it tirelessly constructs a clean and robust political system.

BUILDING CONSENSUS IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIALISM-ORIENTED...

At the 4th Central Committee Conference of the 13th term, alongside the construction of the Party, a new content was added, which is the establishment of a clean and strong political system. From a theoretical perspective, it can be seen that this is a very correct and timely awareness and action to consolidate the legitimacy and legality of the role of the Communist Party of Vietnam in its nature of leading the Party, holding power, and managing the socialist rule of law state.

Simultaneously with construction, strengthening trust is a must, ensuring harmonious interests among groups and members in various areas of social life.

In the economic field, to build social consensus, the core issue is to solve the harmony of interest relations among economic subjects and components. To achieve this, Vietnam has rigorously implemented justice/fairness among economic components through legal tools and policies: ensuring justice/fairness in resource allocation, creating equal opportunities, and ensuring harmonious interests among

economic subjects in society. Alongside this is the removal of obstacles and barriers causing inequality and injustice in the economic field. At the 13th Congress, the Party continues to emphasize: “(it is necessary to) focus on perfecting and improving the quality of the socialist-oriented market economy institutional system, better solving the relationship between the state, the market, and society.”²¹ “Implementing comprehensive market-oriented socialist economic institutional reforms, modern, synchronous, integrating, and effectively enforcing the law, is a prerequisite for promoting the country's development”²² to thoroughly achieve justice in the economic field.

In the social field, in order to achieve social consensus, it is essential to address the social issues arising from the downside of the market economy, meaning *implementing justice in the social field*, focusing on solving issues related to social welfare: employment, healthcare, education, etc. Therefore, the 13th Congress determines that, alongside

economic development, it is necessary to *implement sustainable social development management, ensuring progress and social justice*. “This involves fully realizing and ensuring the socialist orientation in social policies, strengthening the management of sustainable social development, ensuring progress and social justice in social policies, especially social welfare, social security, and human security; implementing comprehensive goals of economic, social progress, justice, and the environment, on that basis, innovating rational resource allocation to enhance the efficiency of social development; building and implementing a coherent system of social development policies, managing harmonious and sustainable social development”²³. In this regard, a series of social policies such as employment policies, social welfare policies, preferential policies for contributors, salary policy reforms, etc., must be implemented to ensure the basic and essential needs of the people in housing, transportation, education, healthcare, and

assistance for vulnerable groups...²⁴. Together with this, it is the construction and implementation of policies on population, health, and education: 'Innovating management mechanisms, building a fair, high-quality, efficient healthcare system that integrates internationally, implementing universal healthcare coverage, organizing the provision of public healthcare services, ensuring basic services, striving for over 95% of the population to be managed, monitored, cared for, and health protected²⁵.

In the political field, in order to achieve political consensus, Vietnam determines that democratization must be implemented in all aspects of social life. Along with strong participation of the people in the political life of the country, the Party and the State continue to concretize and perfect the democratic practice according to the spirit of the Platform on building the country in the period of transition to socialism (Supplemented, developed in 2011) and the Constitution of 2013, ensuring that all state power belongs to the people. Implementing

BUILDING CONSENSUS IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIALISM-ORIENTED...

democracy directly, representative democracy, especially grassroots democracy, correctly and effectively. Implementing the motto “People know, people discuss, people do, people inspect, people supervise, people enjoy” according to the mechanism “Party leadership, State management, the Fatherland Front and political-social organizations as the core for the people to be the masters”²⁶.

The 13th Congress, in the 12 orientations for national development for the period 2021-2030, emphasizes the *role of socialist democracy* in social consensus and social solidarity in direction No.9: “(It is necessary to) practice and widely promote socialist democracy, the right to mastery and the role of the people as subjects; promote the strength of the great national solidarity; consolidate, enhance the people's trust, strengthen social consensus; continue to innovate the organization, content, and methods of operation of the Fatherland Front and political-social organizations”²⁷. Always associating social consensus with the practice of

socialist democracy, national unity is a consistent and pervasive viewpoint of the Communist Party of Vietnam: “(It is necessary to) promote the strength of the great national solidarity, socialist democracy, and the people's right to mastery”²⁸.

In the cultural field, in order to achieve social consensus, the Communist Party and the State of Vietnam advocate respecting differences, respecting freedom of belief, promoting tolerance, while preserving and promoting the cultural identity of the nation, selectively receiving the essence of world cultures. The Party's viewpoint at the 13th Congress states: “(It is necessary to) successfully implement the goal of religious unity, great national unity. Ensure the freedom of belief, religion of everyone according to the law... Ensure transparency of information and ensure the right to information and access to information for the people, especially in deep, remote, and ethnic minority areas”²⁹.

It can be said that building a consensus society in the context of

Vietnam's socialist-oriented market economy has gone through the first stage with certain successes in terms of both awareness and action. The achieved results not only help Vietnam remain confident in the chosen path and the direction of national development but also provide valuable lessons in theory and practice. In the process, the position of social consensus is always placed in the overall context of the country's development relationships with all its historical and specific characteristics. The reality shows that rigidly applying consensus models to the country's practical situation is not feasible. Instead, the approach to building a consensus society within its own context, considering historical, socio-economic conditions, and cultural and political factors, is crucial. The role of the Party in power, the State, and political-social organizations forming a unified block in maintaining the strength of social consensus is essential, gradually achieving the goals of socialism that we are pursuing. □

(Translated by Tran Tuan Phong)

REFERENCES

- 17 Hoang Chi Bao, *the Role of the Vietnam Fatherland Front in Building Social Consensus.*” Link: <http://tapchimattran.vn/thuc-tien/vai-tro-cua-mat-tran-to-quoc-vietnam-trong-xay-dung-dong-thuan-xa-hoi-39866.html>.
- 18 The Communist Party of Vietnam (2003), *Documents of the Seventh Central Committee Plenum, 9th Term*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, pp.24-25.
- 19 The resolution of the 11th Party Congress affirms: 'The goal is to build a peaceful, independent, unified, territorially integral Vietnam with a prosperous population, a strong country, democratic, just, and civilized, eliminating complexes and prejudices about the past, class composition, accepting differences that do not contradict the common interests of the nation; promoting the national spirit, the tradition of humanity, tolerance... to rally, unite everyone on the common front, and enhance social consensus' (Communist Party of Vietnam (2011), *Documents of the 11th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, pp. 239-240)”.
- 20 Communist Party of Vietnam (2011), *Documents of the 11th National Congress*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, p.240.

BUILDING CONSENSUS IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIALISM-ORIENTED...

- 21 Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Documents of the 13th National Congress*, Vol. I, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, p.222.
- 22 Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Ibid.*, p.215.
- 23 Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Ibid.*, pp.147-148.
- 24 Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Ibid.*, p.149.
- 25 Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Ibid.*, p.266.
- 26 Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Ibid.*, pp.172-173.
- 27 Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Ibid.*, p.118.
- 28 Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Ibid.*, p.165.
- 29 Communist Party of Vietnam (2021), *Ibid.*, p.272.