

INFORMATION

International Conference: "New international circumstances and effects to Vietnam"

Institute of World Economics and Politics (IWEP), under Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, has recently hold an international conference on *New international circumstances and effect to Vietnam* in Hanoi, with the participation of specialists and scholars from Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, The World Bank in Vietnam, and Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The conference aimed to identify and evaluate how new international circumstance would affect to Vietnam.

The whole world is now facing with two major crisis, participators pointed out. In long term, it is the crisis of the growth due to the quick changes of the global system on economy and politics. In short term, it is the crisis of truth. Moreover, the big gap of technology, between developed and developing economics, has led to the globally slow down in the transition to the knowledge economy and green economy as well as new developing models.

The global economy is in "a new risky period" due to the serious influences of the European sovereign - debt crisis. A series of countries lost their credit ratings, leading to the crisis of trust and putting the global financial market in a difficult situation. Disasters as earthquakes, tsunami, drought and flood shocked the leading economies. The wide-spread of political turbulence in

North Africa and Middle East created new danger of food and energy security. To prompt the growth, developed economics still remain their low interest rate policies, but new economics have been struggling to implement monetary policies and tighten fiscal policies in efforts of lower inflation.

It has become more difficult for national policy - making cooperating with global policies due to political turmoil and the risk of social turbulence in some countries as well as attempts ahead the elections of politicians. Up to now, the aid agreements has not effectively worked to address the European sovereign - debt crisis as expected because they could not strengthen the trust for less developed economics in European area. High prices now become the most notable problem for governments due to its affects to the stability of politic and society.

The current circumstance reminded Vietnam of re-considering the thoughts of development and improving the reformation, therefore overcoming existing barriers of the economic growth. If the economic restructuring and transition of growth model are long term solutions, sovereign debt control is the mid - term target so the first priority for now is to lower inflation. According to the conference, winning back the trust of market then recovering the growth rates are important solutions for Vietnam economy to overcome ahead difficulties.

PV.

Scientific conference: The relationship of economic growth and developments of literature and art in modernization and industrialization

A scientific conference on '*The relationship between economic growth and the developments of literature and art in modernization and industrialization*' has recently been organized by the Central Council of Literature and Art Theory and Criticism (CCLATC) in Hochiminh city.

The conference expected to identify the status of art and culture, then recommend to Communist Party and State macro - solutions so that creating the fundamental changes in spirit building of society. There was the participation of near 200 representatives from cities and provinces around Vietnam. They are leaders, scientists as well as researchers, bringing to conference with more than 60 research papers.

Opinions about a vivid development of Vietnamese economy, in recent years, have reached the agreements in the conference. The growth has remarkably changed the face of whole society and contributed to strengthen Vietnam position in regional and global market. Vietnam's Human Development Index (HDI), for example, has continuously increased and 10 year earlier to complete the Millennium Development Goals of poverty reduction.

Creative activities in fields as movie, culture and music have expanded the margin of reflection and reached a new developing step. Despite the economic recession, State still remained its 1.9% of investment fund on culture, even up

to 2.1% sometime. However, there was the serious downgrade in social culture and morality when moral standards were ignored, traditional values were also violent. The inhuman behaviors have been increasing in both quantity and level while the inequality as well as the difference in how to enjoy culture, literature and art, are getting bigger.

For a society, economy is the material basic while culture is the spiritual foundation. The relationship between economic growth and cultural development is the internal nature and ask for a suitable solution, by which economic growth can become the premise and condition to develop culture, literature and art. Literature and Art and economy are always seen as two pillars of social growth, however, there is an imbalance between these two pillars. The pillar of Literature and Art has a negative trend in comparison with economic growth.

Research papers mentioned to many recommendations about the improvement in leading of Communist Party, the management of State in cultural, literature and art activities. Furthermore, it is the fulfillment, checking and building of policies including salary, royalties, treatment for talents, capacity building, and a close collaboration with associations of Literature and Art in releasing, introducing as well as promoting high quality works of literature and art. These works play an important role as setting the aesthetic orientation for public. Besides, diversifying and improving their attractiveness can also create national and impressive brand names which will leave international friends beautiful memories

about Vietnam...

At the end of the conference, representatives totally agreed with the recommendation about the package of 7 urgent solutions to tackle current difficulties and challenges. Firstly, it is necessary to keep educating governmental staff, Communist Party members and public about important roles of culture, literature and art, and fulfilling new values of Vietnamese people. Cultural values of economic, moral and aesthetic activities, secondly, need to be improved. The third solution is about building and editing cultural standards of politics, law, business, morality and aesthetics. Fourth point is to strengthen culture of leadership and management in business as well as the culture of youth personalization. All related branches of government have to carefully check investment plans in culture, literature and art, so they can effectively work together with investment schedule in economy. The improvement of Communist Party and State in cultural management is also essential. Fifth solution is about the need of cultural, literature and art movements closely connecting with patriotic emulation movements. Sixth method is raising the responsibilities of public, of society, of artists as soldiers. Last but not least, seventh point is the high and important role of CCLATC in step by step building the foundation of Vietnam cultural theory.

PV.

Conference: The Press, Media and Human rights

In Hanoi on February 23rd, 2012
Ministry of Information and

Communications of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam hold a conference on 'The Press, Media and Human rights' with its partner The World Bank Vietnam. There was the participation of leaders of governmental departments and some international organizations in Vietnam.

The opening speech of Mr. Đỗ Quý Doãn, Deputy Minister has strengthened the aim of the conference. It was seen as the opportunity for the press and experienced specialists on local and international human rights to exchange opinions and experiences. Therefore the press and media can more actively join in the campaign of human rights conservation and promotion in Vietnam. The conference took place in two main sessions:

Topic of the first session is 'International Commitments on freedom of the press, media and human rights'. Representatives focused on human rights and development, international laws on freedom of the press, media as well as standards of international human rights. Based on those standards on human rights, especially on the freedom of the press and speech, specialists have agreed with the essential improvement of information access ability and widely providing information with public. This high social significance of viewpoint can fully implement human rights, but also contributed to the progress of economic and social development of countries.

The second session of workshop is on 'International experiences of media on implementing the freedom of the press, media and human rights'. Research papers shared experienced lessons of

Vietnam and some other countries about the role of the press and media towards the conservation and promotion of human rights. Ireland case was seen as one of the most valuable experiences for related countries. According to Ireland law, the connection link between human rights and freedom of the press is only explained as the free of speech and it is equal to human rights. However, it has to work according to restrictions ensuring rights for other individuals, including public's benefit approval. Besides, the press is also in charge of objectively and fairly providing information relating to human rights.

In conference, human rights were confirmed to implement according to the legal restrictions as well as international standards on freedom of the press, speech and information.

Local and international specialists have provided some solutions to support the press as a media tool of human rights after the conference. It asked for the better and more effective improvement of law publishing and awareness of public and governmental staff on human rights. Reflection and encouragement of outstanding behaviors are necessary in implementing human rights in all aspects of social life. Moreover, finding out and timely informing violence to human rights and public's legal benefits so that authorities will have timely intervention. Besides, the press also needs to join the capacity building programme of knowledge on human rights.

CHU HU'ONG

Vietnam Development Report 2012: An Overview

The theme of this VDR is market economy for a middle-income Vietnam. The report focuses on weak institutions, distorted incentives and inadequate information - labeled as the three "I's" of the market economy - as the explanation for Vietnam's current tribulations

In 1986, Vietnam launched *Đổi Mới* - a homegrown, political and economic renewal campaign - that marked the beginning of its transition from a centrally planned economy to a socialist-oriented market economy. Between 1990 and 2010, Vietnam's economy has grown at an annual average rate of 7.3 percent, and the per capita income almost quintupled. Vietnam's transition from a centrally planned economy to a market economy and from an extremely poor country to a lower-middle-income country in less than 20 years - is now a case study in many development textbooks.

But Vietnam's other transition - to becoming an industrialized and modern economy - has barely begun. According to its recently approved Socio-Economic Development Strategy for 2011 - 2020, Vietnam aspires to achieve a per capita income level of US\$ 3,000 (in current U.S. dollars) by 2020. This translates into a nearly 10 percent annual growth in per capita income over the next decade - requiring the country to replicate and sustain the economic success it achieved in the last 10 years. The Socio-Economic Development Strategy goes on to identify the country's key priorities to meet this ambitious target: stabilize the economy, build world-class infrastructure, create a

skilled labor force, and strengthen market - based institutions.

Meeting these aspirations will not be easy. The country has experienced bouts of macroeconomic turbulence in recent years - double-digit inflation, depreciating currency, capital flight, and loss of international reserves - eroding investor confidence. Rapid growth has revealed new structural problems. The quality and sustainability of growth remain a source of concern, given the resource-intensive pattern of growth, high levels of pollution, lack of diversification and value addition in exports, and the declining contribution of productivity to growth. Vietnam's competitiveness is under threat because power generation has not kept pace with demand, logistical costs and real estate prices have climbed, and skill shortages are becoming more widespread.

As the country celebrates the Silver Jubilee of Đổi Mới, this VDR 2012 looks ahead at some of the pressing issues Vietnam needs to tackle to build a strong foundation for its quest to become an industrialized country by 2020. According to the recently approved five-year plan, three areas that need urgent attention are restructuring of the state-owned enterprises (SOEs), improving the effectiveness of public expenditure and stabilizing the financial sector. The analysis undertaken in this report focuses on first two of these priorities.

VDR 2012 shows that the SOEs, which own disproportionately more fixed capital

(land and credit) to their size, are less efficient at using them than nonstate and foreign enterprises - requiring restructuring of the state-owned sector (read Chapter 2 for details). Second, the analysis finds that Vietnam is allocating its public resources in a way that is creating a suboptimal and fragmented infrastructure at the local level that does not always contribute to building an effective infrastructure system at the national level, thus justifying changes to the allocation mechanism (see Chapter 3 for details). Finally, the Report finds that the amount and quality of fiscal, financial, and economic information that the Government of Vietnam currently collects and releases to the market is inadequate for the smooth functioning of a middle-income country (see Chapter 4 for details). The report then identifies the reasons for SOE inefficiencies and ineffectiveness in public investment and offers some broad policy options for discussion.

The Report argues that the root causes of the current problems lie in the country's incomplete transition to a market economy. Specifically, the report focuses on weak institutions, distorted incentives and inadequate information-labeled as the three "I's" of the market economy - as the explanation for Vietnam's current tribulations. The report provides a number of ideas and suggestions to address these problems which can help to create a foundation to sustain rapid growth for Vietnam in the next 10 years.

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