

INFORMATION**Workshop: “Opportunities and Challenges to the Relics of Huế in the International Integration Period”**

Recently, the Workshop on “Opportunities and Challenges to the Relics of Huế in the International Integration Period” was held in Hanoi and chaired by Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism, and Centre for Preserving Relics of the Ancient Huế Capital City. The Workshop was among a series of events of the “Week of Huế’s Culture and Day of Returning to the Origin on November 23” on the occasion of the 4th anniversary of Vietnam’s Cultural Heritage Day (November 23), the 15th anniversary the complex of the Ancient Huế Capital City’s Relics was recognized by UNESCO as the World’s Cultural Heritage Site (December 11, 1993 - December 11, 2008) and the 5th anniversary of Ceremonial Music and Songs – Imperial Music of Huế were recognized by UNESCO as intangible and orally transmitted cultural heritage of mankind (November 7, 2003) that took place in Hanoi.

Attended at the Workshop were Mr. Lê Đức Anh – former President of the State, Mr. Trần Chiến Thắng – Vice Minister of Culture, Sport and Tourism, representatives of the leadership of Thừa Thiên-Huế Province, Heritage Department, Centre for Preserving Relics of the Ancient Huế Capital City, UNESCO Representative Office in Hanoi and a good many of domestic and international participants.

Huế used to be the capital city, a point of convergence of the Vietnamese nation’s quintessences; this has also been the venue for meeting and exchanging of humanity’s civilizations. The remaining relics as a whole at present is the height of the harmonious combination of architecture and nature; is a clear-cut portrayal of the ancient capital city of Vietnam, imbued with the Vietnamese cultural identity; at the same time characterized by the very distinctive cultural nuances of the land of Thuận Hóa - Phú Xuân -Thừa Thiên - Huế. Undergoing severe wars and calamities until 1975, of the Huế relic complex only 475/1000 works still remained, but in a seriously damaged or downgraded, many became ruins. In the context of an ever-developing society like today with the ever-growing livelihood needs, building of infrastructure to serve man’s basics has become a pressing and legitimate demand. Nevertheless, how to preserve and develop, preserve and do not slow down development, develop yet do not affect the principles of preservation in accordance with national standard are still a thorny problem for the Huế relic complex to solve.

At the Workshop, the participants discussed the two key subjects: 1/ Confirming the great values of Huế’s relics and the achievements of the cause of preserving Huế’s cultural heritage in the recent period and stating that these achievements are the comprehensive demonstrations on the three aspects of preserving tangible cultural heritage,

intangible heritage, and environmental landscape of the Huế's relic region and 2/ Identifying new opportunities and challenges to the cause of preserving Huế's relics in the new period, the period of international integration.

The participants expressed their sympathies for the view that the relic complex of Huế at present is facing the opportunities resulted from the lines of giving prominence to culture, regarding culture as objective and also motive power for development of the Party, preferential policies on cultural objectives of the State along with more and more generous and practical care and support of social organizations and people from all walks of life. Such cultural activities as annual Huế Festival are great opportunities for exhibiting, demonstrating the beauty steeped in culture of Huế. And this is also the opportunity for this city to call for investment cooperation in preserving and promoting its traditional heritage value.

Addressing the Workshop, UNESCO representative in Vietnam stressed: Preserving tangible heritage and intangible heritage constitutes two integral essential parts in the effort to promote cultural diversity in the world of which Huế is a typical example since it is not restricted to relics but associates the relics, construction architecture with the related intangible significances. Measures to control and protect heritage, full awareness of heritage values should be further strengthened so as to give positive support to the sustainable development of Thừa Thiên-Huế.

At the Workshop, the participants' ideas converged on some following points: *first*, a "Master Plan of Huế City" should be formulated to meet the requirements for preserving in combination with the harmonious development of the city and the relic region of Huế; *second*, as the striking values of Huế heritage is being requested by UNESCO to be extended to relevant landscape and environment scope, special attention thus should be paid to planning and developing the city of Huế; *third*, there still remains lot of inadequacy in such issues as heritage management assignment. Since activities of preserving, repairing heritage in general and Huế heritage in particular are much characterized by their specifics, there should be supplements or adjustment of specific policies for a special heritage region (policies on house and garden system protection policy, separate regulations on Huế heritage preservation and restoration in the area of fundamental construction, artisan policy, preferential capital, credit, etc.); *forth*, highly qualified human resources (on the aspects of researching history, culture, traditional music; designing, preserving, formulating project and monitoring execution, landscape and environment, chemical tests, etc.) to meet requirements for preserving Huế heritage in the new period are still very insufficient against the demand if greater amounts are invested in preserving Huế heritage; *fifth*, there are still limits to the information system for storing, analyzing and treating documents to serve heritage preservation and management effectively; to activities of

promoting Huế heritage values through the hi-tech media.

VÂN HÀ

Workshop on “Senior Policy on Law and Justice Reform”

For two days of February 4 and 5, 2009, the Workshop on *Higher Policy on Law and Justice Reform* was held in Bà Rịa - Vũng Tàu by the National Assembly of Vietnam in coordination with the European Union (EU) in the framework of Project of Institutional Support for Vietnam, chaired by National Assembly Vice President Nguyễn Đức Kiên. Attended at the Workshop were leaders from relevant Ministries, departments, sectors, together with scholars at home and abroad.

At the Workshop, Vietnamese and international legal experts exchanged information and shared their experiences of issues so as to assist the process of law and justice reform in Vietnam, advancing to a more transparent and dutiful public administration based on a jurisdictional State.

Some specific issues such as the National Assembly with new challenges with respect to national administration in integration process; some approaches to strengthening National Assembly's capacity; mechanism for Constitution protection in Vietnam today – theory and practice; review of law making process...; more distinctive delineation of legislative, executive and justice; justice reform in the orientation towards more independence; law on right to information, etc. were interested in and

discussed by the experts at the Workshop.

According to the National Assembly Vice President Nguyễn Đức Kiên, the legal system of Vietnam is still weak in terms of quality and insufficient in terms of quantity, and these are the very pressure for completing the current law making process. Playing the role of a legislative body requires an effective willing process, thereby imposing many challenges on the National Assembly. He believed that a member of the National Assembly is not expert in every field as well as a committee of the National Assembly cannot verify all draft laws. As a result, the mechanism for expert cooperation and consideration of draft laws on committees of the National Assembly were agreed upon by many participants.

Asst.Prof. DSc. Phạm Duy Nghĩa (Law Faculty, Hanoi National University) was of the opinion that what the National Assembly of Vietnam can do is to become a forum to promote debates about the multiform effects of policies, thus helping educate sense for duty of candidates, encourage the development of a dynamic and diverse civil society, and by so doing, to step by step review the draft laws in the angle of protecting the legitimate rights of candidates”.

Vietnam's efforts were highly appreciated by the experts in law and justice reform in order to complete the legal system and organize effectively activities of the legal and justice bodies to guarantee Vietnam's stable socio-economic development, contributing to attracting foreign investment and

strengthening help and assistance from international community for Vietnam. They also observed the renovations of Vietnam National Assembly in recent time (from renewal of mechanism for the National Assembly activity organization, formation of bodies in charge... to legislative activities, monitoring by the National Assembly, National Assembly bodies and members...). These renovations have made important contributions to the socio-economic development and brought about more and more practical benefits to the people.

However, the experts also made their straightforward suggestion that the National Assembly should distinctively display their function for deciding and monitoring. For pressing and serious matters, these should be monitored to the end by the National Assembly. Members of the National Assembly, bodies, and particularly committees of the National Assembly should better fulfill their role. In dealing with pressing matters, it's time this must be assigned to the committees of the National Assembly. And the relationship between the legislative and justice bodies (Nguyễn Sĩ Dũng, Vice Chairman of the National Assembly Office).

By the end of the Workshop, the experts concluded that the Workshop was a good chance for the relevant agencies and sectors to discuss priorities, challenges and major issues of the law and justice reform process in Vietnam, and proposed their urgent and practical recommendations for expediting the current law and justice reform process.

HIÊN LY

Climate Resilient Cities. A Primer on Reducing Vulnerabilities to Disasters: Hanoi, Vietnam

I/ City Description

Hanoi

Covering an area of more than 918 square kilometers, Hanoi comprises two different topographical features: the delta and the Middle Region of the North. Most of the deltaic land lies on both sides of the Red River and its tributaries. The Middle Region comprises Soc Son district and a portion of Đông Anh district, a prolongation of the Tam Đảo mountainous mass stretching towards the Delta, which is 7–10 meters or sometimes even hundreds of meters above sea level. Hanoi has been merged with Hà Tây and some parts of Hoà Bình and Vĩnh Phúc since August 1, 2008. Since official information about population, area, average elevation, etc. of the newly merged Hanoi is not available yet, the profile refers to inner Hanoi only.

Since Independence Day in 1945, there have never been any dike failures that have caused flooding in Hanoi City. The dike system has never broken due to disasters, even during the biggest flood years of 1969, 1971, and 1996.

Research indicates that the impact of sea-level rise from global warming could be catastrophic for Vietnam. A five-meter sea-level rise in Vietnam would have an impact on up to 16 percent of the land area, 35 percent of the population, and 35 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). The highest impact in Vietnam would be on the Red

River Delta and the Mekong Delta. The research uses satellite maps of the world overlaid with comparable data for 84 coastal developing countries to calculate the toll of such changes on people, GDP, urban areas, and agriculture in five developing regions.

Vietnam experiences a tropical monsoon climate. The wide range of latitudes and the marked variety of topographical relief means that the climate tends to vary considerably from region to region. Mean annual temperature ranges from 18–29°C, and a distinct seasonal difference is felt between the dry season in November to April and the warm rainy season from May to October. Mean annual rainfall ranges from 600 millimeters to 5,000 millimeters, 80–90 percent of which is concentrated in the rainy season.

Its location and topography make Vietnam one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, suffering from typhoons, tropical storms, floods, drought, seawater intrusions, landslides, and forest fires. Of these, the most damaging and frequent are typhoons, tropical storms, and floods. Over recent decades, the damage due to natural disasters has increased drastically. This trend may continue as climate change is expected to alter the current storm system and precipitation regimes.

Projections of population change and development suggest that, even without any changes in climate or sea level, the number of people at risk is expected to rise 60 percent by 2025, and that the US\$720 million of capital value currently at risk from annual flooding

may increase ten-fold, or 5 percent, of Vietnam's GDP. Rising sea levels will almost certainly occur and increase this risk even further. Sea-level rise of 30 centimeters to one meter over the next 100 years is expected, which is projected to cause capital value loss every year of up to US\$17 billion (80 percent of the country's annual GDP) if no protective measures are taken. The increased risk is not restricted to coastal areas; in fact, rise of river beds and backwater effects will also cause serious problems to inland river regions, with a total of 40,000 km² flooded annually.

Changes to precipitation regimes expected under climate change scenarios will further exacerbate flooding problems. Most climate models indicate overall increases in precipitation. The concentration of Vietnam's annual rainfall over a short rainy season makes the system sensitive to rainfall increases.⁷ Wet-season rainfall increases are expected to increase peak flows considerably and reduce the return period of a 100-year event to 20 years.

Nam Định Province

Nam Định Province lies in the Red River Delta Region, which, like the Mekong Delta Region in the south of the country, is fertile and highly productive agriculturally. The low-lying land provides ideal conditions for wet rice cultivation. This high productivity has made the Red River Delta Region one of the most densely populated and intensely cultivated areas of coastal Vietnam. Nam Định's close proximity to the capital, Hanoi, means that transport and communication links are relatively good.

II/ Priority Hazards/Vulnerabilities

Flood Preparedness and Prevention for Hanoi

Hanoi faces the following risks and challenges in flood preparedness and prevention:

- Risks of large floods in the Red River are even greater than the historical flood in 1971 (due to climate change and destruction of upstream forests);
- Risk of rising water levels, given the same water discharge capacity over the previous years, has increased. Moreover, the situation of the river bed and overcrowded bridge construction has resulted in restricted building zones for houses (over the height of inner dikes);
- Increasing negative situations persist with high river flooding in combination with strong storm and heavy rainfall in Northern Delta during high tide periods (due to global climate change);
- Difficulties may arise from regulating flood discharge: advance relocation of 10,000 people from flood areas (worsened by their unwillingness to leave their homes) and risks of disruption of key flood resistance construction during emergency response;
- Dam breakdown is possible in upstream reservoirs during a big flood, (due to climate change in combination with heavy rainfall in large areas in the Red River Basin);
- Management of the flood-diversion zone is already challenging. The urbanization process is growing sharply. High population growth (due to increasing migration from rural areas to seek em-

ployment in the city) has put further pressure on dike management; and

- There are limitations in medium- and long-term forecasting for rainfall, floods, and storms.

Inundation in Hanoi City

Inundation is a threat to Hanoi given the following:

- The old and low capacity of underground sewage irrigation is unable to discharge water when rainfall is higher than 100 millimeters per hour;
- Many ponds and lowland areas have been replaced by construction and buildings, which leads to the reduction of water restoration capacity, and
- The urbanization boom has led to inefficient solid waste disposal, resulting in inundation and stagnation of underground water.

Nam Định Province Flood Protection

The Red River Delta Region, and in particular Nam Định Province, is currently affected by large and rapid changes in floodwater levels. Inundation occurs annually, due partly to very high river levels in the rainy season causing deep flooding in the Delta Region, but also due to tidal flooding at the coast, which brings shallower, saline floodwaters to low-lying coastal regions.

Nam Định Province is currently protected by a system of dikes and levees that have been built and added over the last 1,000 years by local communities.¹⁰ This system protects the agricultural land from inundation and allows rice production on which the local economy is dependent.

Disaster risk management is carried out at a local level within Nam Định Province. There is a well-defined vertical structure for the demarcation of responsibilities and roles within Vietnam. Each province and subsequent district is responsible for implementation of national policies. The main focus of policies is the prevention of risk from identified natural disasters. In Nam Định, the main recurring risk is from typhoons.

III/ Adaptation Measures: Enhancing Resilience to Climate Change Impacts

Hanoi

Hanoi is engaging in the following adaptation activities:

- Actively improve the flood preparedness and prevention standards for sustainable development. Current flood prevention probability level is 0.8 percent, but the target is 0.4 percent, and then 0.2 percent in the future;
- Strengthen the dike system to protect the right bank of the Red River (Asian Development Bank project);
- Strictly monitor, investigate, and respond to dike emergencies through institutional strengthening;
- The Regulations for Dike Management were revised and upgraded to the Ordinance for Dike Management in 1989, revised again in 2000, and currently changed to the Law for Dike Management in 2006;
- The Ordinance for Flood and Storm Control in 1990 and 2000 (revised) was developed into the Ordinance for Emergencies in 2000;

- The Network of Committees for Floods and Storms Control is to be strengthened at all levels;

- Dike Management Teams' efficiency and communication standards are to be improved, including (a) organization and development of dike-guard task forces, (b) local pioneer task forces for dike protection, and (c) search and rescue task forces in the army;

- Flood and storm contingency funds raised by local people; and

- National contingency fund and other revenue.

- Clear river bed and unlock river flows to ensure prompt flood discharge in the Red River, including lifting collapsed war-damaged bridges, lowering the elevation of inner dikes, relocating houses and construction from the restricted barrier of floods, and dredging river estuar deposits;

- There are limitations in medium- and long- term forecasting for rainfall, floods, and storms.

- Build upstream water reservoirs to control the flood pressures for Hanoi;

- Strengthen flood discharge and construction (following design procedures) to protect Hanoi in flood emergencies. Issue detailed socio-economic policies for flood discharge and control processes to ensure social equity;

- Plant and protect upstream forests (e.g., 5 million hectares forestation program with targets an increase in forest coverage up to 40 percent by 2010); and

- Implement “channelization” initiative for selected parts of the Red River that flow within the Hanoi zone.

After an international workshop on flood mitigation, emergency preparedness, and flood disaster management in Hanoi in 1992, the *First National Strategy and Action Plan for Disaster Mitigation* was developed and approved in 1994 (updated 1995). The Plan addressed the following important water-related disasters in Vietnam: river floods; flooding from the sea; increased runoff; erosion and siltation of river beds; slope instability, mudflows, and landslides; torrential rains in combination with strong winds; failures of water-retaining structures; and seawater intrusion into groundwater. The Plan had three main goals: forecasting and warning, disaster preparedness and mitigation, and emergency relief.

The Disaster Management Unit has since developed a *Second National Strategy and Action Plan for Disaster Mitigation and Management* for the period 2001–2020. This addresses all major phases of the disaster cycle and has the following 10 basic principles:

1. Disaster planning will be based on multi-hazard identification and risk assessment and on the different types of hazards and levels of disaster risk in different parts of the country.
2. Disaster preparedness and forecasting are the preferred methods of disaster mitigation.
3. Disaster preparedness and mitigation are the task of each local area throughout the country.

4. Measures for ensuring the long-term benefits of disaster mitigation for the whole community are to be given the highest priority.

5. Measures for reducing the risk of a particular type of disaster must be compatible with reducing the risk of other types of disasters.

6. All measures must be carefully considered, both for practicality and technology, and these measures have to be realistic in the Vietnamese context in its current and future state of development.

7. Reduction of disaster risk must be compatible with traditional disaster-coping mechanisms of local communities and must support hunger eradication and equitable poverty reduction.

8. Measures for disaster preparedness and mitigation must be consistent with the economic development level of each local area, as well as the desired general economic development of the country.

9. Measures for disaster mitigation must be compatible with measures for protecting the environment, protecting equitable development, sustaining natural resources, and preserving cultural heritage.

10. Cooperation and coordination between the central and local levels of government, state agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and the general public must be well established using a bottom-up approach starting at the grassroots level. Similarly, cooperation and coordination of external assistance needs to be strengthened and aggressively pursued.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE) has just drafted the *Vietnam National Target Program on Climate Change*, which will be effective by the end of 2008.

Nam Định Province

The following range of disaster risk management measures have been identified for Nam Định Province according to the draft Second National Strategy and Action Plan, though many have yet to be implemented and/or enforced:

- Afforest and protect existing upstream forest watersheds to reduce downstream floods;
- Build large- and medium-scale reservoirs upstream on big rivers to retain floodwaters;
- Strengthen dike systems to be able to resist design flood levels;
- Build flood diversion structures;
- Clear floodways to rapidly release floodwater;
- Strengthen dike management and protection works to ensure the safety of the dike systems;
- Construct emergency spillways along the dikes for selective filling of flood retention basins; and
- Designate and use flood retardation basins to decrease the quantity of water flow.

Nonstructural measures that have been identified include:

- Models for river flood forecasting should be developed to give prompt warnings and to be able to carry out quick and effective response measures;

- The National Disaster Committee and organizations for flood and storm control from central to local government levels have to be strengthened to mobilize flood and storm mitigation and management at all levels;

- Legal documents—such as the Regulation on Flood and Storm Warning; Ordinance on Flood and Storm Prevention; Ordinance on Dikes; and government regulations on construction of dikes, flood release, flash-flood prevention, disaster relief, activities of standing offices for flood and storm prevention, and damage measurement and assessment—have been prepared and need to be continuously reviewed and strengthened;

- Community disaster awareness should be enhanced through education, training, workshops, and circulation of disaster bulletins;

- Plans in accordance with all probable disaster situations have to be prepared, including disaster-specific measures, so that damage and losses can be mitigated;

- Shifting the cultivation season has to be studied as a measure to mitigate damage to agricultural production;

- Master plans have to be developed to mitigate hazards, to familiarize local populations, and to evacuate people where there is no available capability for limiting the impact of disasters that frequently occur; and

- From each disaster, lessons learned and experience must be collected for future application.

(www.worldbank.org/eap/climatecities)