

## INFORMATION

**Chinese – Vietnamese border Cultural Exchange Conference**

On January 7-8, 2011, *Chinese Vietnamese border cultural exchange conference* held by National University of Education and Guangxi Folk Arts Association in Hoa Son, Ninh Minh, China on the occasion of 61<sup>st</sup> anniversary of Vietnam – China diplomatic relations establishment (1950 -2011).

Attending the conference were 50 scholars and lectures from South china universities and 4 scholars from Vietnam

After President of Guangxi popular customs Association cum Head of Organization board, Prof. Vưong Quang Vinh making his speech, attendees to the conference listened to reports of scientists, from methods to fix the ethnic group background of two countries are not completely similar, it needs to pay attention to study and comparison of Prof. Phạm Hồng Quý about the similarity in some festivals such as worship ancestors, worship “mẻ Bjoóc” (mother Hoa), the way and spirit of welcome new year and entertainment on the occasion of Double Five festival, Mid-autumn festival, the role of Buddhism and impact of Confucianism or we can image a “cultural space” with folk songs, popular customs with similarity and now in can affect practically to the education of people in community.

Those difference can be explained by origin of human, the style of hair of

married women, natural phenomenon such as “waiting husband block” or the same story with different end, for example *Lưong Sơn Bá – Chúc Anh Đài* compared to *Slam Péc – Anh Tài*. The author acknowledges and acquires new cultural characters of group of people which show that material culture changes faster than spiritual culture.

Economic exchange and cooperation between the two counties is paid more attention, among those is the development of tourism, with plan to bring benefit to citizens of both countries in sustainable development.

Besides the conference, scholars also visit Hoa Son mountain (Change ethnic group calls *Pham Lei*) and learn about picture of Timbal, figure like people on the timbale...determined by C14 that is drawn by a special kind of paint 2.600 years ago on cliff.

*SON DUONG***Scientific Conference: Lev Tolstoi and the acception of his inheritance in Vietnam**

100 years ago, Russian great writer Lev Tolstoi left the world and bequeathed huge works and great admiration for mankind. On the occasion of 100 years of his death aniversary, in Hanoi, Institute of Literatura, National University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnamese Writer Association and Center for East – West Cultures and Languages coordinated to hold a Scienctific conference with topic “Lev Tolstoi vand acception of his

inheritance in Vietnam". There was crowded attendance from writers, scholars and those who pay attention and admire him with 31 speech sent to the conference.

Target of the conference is looking back the way how Lev Tolstoi comes to Vietnam in aspect of translation, broadcasting and studying, as well as discovering contribution and literary value of Lev Tolstoi from new approach. That is a chance for us to open a new studying direction about Lev Tolstoi, focus on focus on ideal moral values which he paid down as a policy, for example: tolerance, tolerance, unselfishness, unselfishness, altruism, struggling without struggling without riot... based on new published and new announced and new translated documents.

Tolstoi was not a saint, but he was a genius. It can be said that, when he was alive, Lev Tolstoi was a famous name together with Puskin, Gogol, Dostoevski,... who create a gold century for Russian literature. More than a century passed, but his name is more and more stunning. Great achievement of an are concentrated in Russian literature in 19th century. His writings were marked as "Academy for Writers" because of their historical, practical values and because of their historical, practical values and study and creativeness of artistic thought before time. He was not only honored as a genius writer but also a brilliant philosopher, thinker with large contribution to literature and struggle for future of human being without violence, oppression, exploitation for a world of

noble humanity values.

Fame of Lev Tolstoi has been coming to intelligentsia and social, political activists of Vietnam since early decades of 20th century. Brilliant literary talents of Tolstoi won the hearts of many literary soldiers of Vietnam and affect importantly to their works. Tolstoi made literary, social life in Vietnam more diversified, modern and profound. At the same time, the acceptance of Tolstoi's works in Vietnam enrich and diversify Russian cultural life on the itinerary to the East.

PV.

### **Social and labor tendency in Vietnam in 2009/10**

Recently, Vietnam announced the report "Tendency of labor and society in Vietnam 2009/10" to provide specific analysis about labor market in Vietnam and clarify potential opportunities and challenges for Vietnam in remained years of *Decade of sustainable job in Asia up to 2015*.

*Decade of sustainable job in Asia up to 2015* is commitment approved at 14<sup>th</sup> Asia Regional Meeting held in 9/2006. Sustainable jobs including how to create jobs for labor as well as jobs with productivity, good working conditions and income to ensure the employers can get rid of the poor, have welfare if they fall in risk and also they can raise their voice.

The report presented by study group of Institutes for Labor sciences and social affairs with technical and financial support from ILO. The report includes 3 chapters. *Chapter 1* analyze economic development and labor market tendency

as well as poverty and inequality; *chapter 2* gives context to discuss about labor market issues and social issues in Vietnam, especially impact of global economic crisis at the end of 2008 and early 2009 on society and labor market, with appendix system for labor market statistic in comparison to the world and divided in gender; *chapter 3* clarify main opportunities and challenges for Vietnam during 2010-2015, address on job, productivity, competitiveness development and social welfare improvement in scale.

Since Vietnam renewal 1986, Vietnam economy develops impressing with average growth by 75%/year during period from 2000 to 2008. This tendency comes along with the change from agricultural economy to economy develops based on industry and services with remarkable increase of export in GDP. Average income per person pass the average level in the world, by 1000 USD in 2008, 2.5 times higher than average income in 2000. However, the fast development of economy must be re-considered in the context that work force of Vietnam is increasing and pressing job creation for labors. Work force of Vietnam continues increasing from 2010 to 2015. Take the volume to consideration, Vietnam is one of those with highest labor forces increasing in ASEAN, after Indonesia and The Philippines. Moreover, urbanization tendency will cause pressure of jobs and infrastructure, services in urban areas of Vietnam.

At the end of the report, the author provides some recommendation to Vietnam Government for setting Social

Economic Development strategy in 2011-2020 as well as Social Economic Development Plan in 2011-2015, including:

- Invest in labor market management to push up sustainable and comprehensive development
- Maintain increase in labor productivity to compete and improve living standard.
- Support to create and improve job quality through policies which focus on jobs.
- Improve social security to balance growth with equality
- Set up labor market information system to support the decision making with full information.

HÒA AN

#### **International Sciences conference: Quality of Economic growth in Vietnam 2001-2010 and orientation up to 2020**

On 2/24/2011, in Hanoi, at University of National Economy coordinated with, National Assembly's Economics Committee, Japan National policy study Institute held the International Sciences conference with topic "Quality of Economic growth in Vietnam 2001-2010 and orientation up to 2020". The conference attracts about 200 representatives from State Management Agencies, universities, research institutes, associations, business communities, international organization in Vietnam.

Where is the position of quality of economic growth in Vietnam in growing chart? What is the element which set obstacles to the quality of growth and

how to get over such obstacles? These are hot question in growth matters posed in the sciences conference.

According to speech at the conference, the government should not pay too much attention to target of growth rate. For quality of economic growth in Vietnam during period 2001 - 2010, most of the representatives judge that: over the past 10 years, Vietnam is one of the high growth rates in the region and in the world, even during global economic crisis period. However, economic growth of Vietnam mainly depended on scale development, quality of growth is low and presented through the low effectiveness in using resources, structure of growth is unreasonable, national competitive capability is low and inequality tends to increase.

Enter the period 2011 - 2020, Vietnam as a developing country with low average income will face opportunity and challenges to implement the strategy to catch up with and pass the average income trap. To achieve socio-economic development target for period 2011 – 2020, quality of economic development must satisfy sustainability.

Many ideas agree that, to build and implement policies in general and economic policies in specific effectively, in coming time, Vietnam needs to: focus on some priority issues up to 2020; study typical experience in the world then learn to set up suitable development package for Vietnam; build steps to set up and implement chosen policies; build a inter-ministry cooperation mechanism, supervise the progress by the highest level.

Besides, the conference agrees that, as experience from 13 countries which succeed in high and sustainable growth, Vietnam needs to focus on 5 elements: know how to exploit international economy, maintain macro-economic sustainability, achieve high rate of saving and investment; let the market freely distribute resources and the government needs to be decisive, reliable and full ability. At once, it needs to continue improving socialist oriented market economy, improving manufacturing factors, increase effect of state-own fields; improve effect of policies implementation; raise quality, effectiveness and ability of supervision and evaluation the policies implementation; improve state management quality and controlling capability of state to increase growing quality toward sustainable development in coming time.

*PV.*

## **Gender equality in Viet Nam**

### *Basic Capabilities*

· Although Viet Nam has made significant strides towards achieving gender equality, gender gaps remain. Vietnam's ranking on key gender measures remains similar to that of low income countries in the region. Vietnam ranked 71 out of 134 countries on the 2009 World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index; 94 out of 155 countries on the 2007 Gender Development Index and 62 out of 109 countries on the 2007 Gender Empowerment Measure.

· The normal sex ratio at birth is 104-106 boys to every 100 girls. In Vietnam in

2008 the sex ratio at birth was 112 to 100, up from 110 to 100 in 2006. If the current skewed sex ratio continues, Vietnam will have a surplus male population from 2025.

- Vietnam has seen significant improvement in the enrollment of girls in school. The rate of participation at primary and secondary levels is close to equal, and in tertiary education there are more girls than boys. Female literacy rates are close to that of men, at 91.3% for women compared to 95.8% for men. However, among the poor, and in some specific regions of Viet Nam, a gender gap remains with girls less likely to be in school in the poorest 20% of all Vietnamese households and among northern mountain ethnic communities.

- Small-scale studies have shown that parents are less likely to invest in health care for their girls. A 2008 study found that 61% of boys compared to 39% of girls under five years of age were admitted to three national hospitals in 2006-2007.

#### *Economic Power*

- According to 2007 labour force data 65% of women aged 15 and over were active in the labour force, compared to 74% of men. Women make up 46.6% of the workforce. Women are more likely to work in agriculture or services, while men predominate in industry. Men are also more likely to be in paid employment (23.6 % of men compared to 21.4 % of women).

- Women are concentrated in vulnerable (or informal) employment: 78% of women are either self-employed or unpaid family workers. However, women are much more likely to be unpaid family workers, 53% of women compared to 32% of men fall into this

category, while men are more likely to be self-employed (43% of men compared to 25% of women). Both self-employed and unpaid family work is vulnerable because workers typically do not receive any protection or benefits. In addition, as unpaid family workers receive no earnings for the work they perform more than half of working women in Vietnam receive no direct income.

- According to 2006 VHLSS data women manage or lead 22% of businesses, and are more likely to have leadership roles in non-state owned enterprises. However, women operated non-agricultural businesses are smaller in scale than those operated by men and more likely to be home-based, while those operated by men typically have much higher revenues.

- The new Constitution, the Labour Code, and the Law on Gender Equality all state that women shall receive equal pay for equal work. However, women continue to be paid less than men for the work they do. Women in urban areas earn 87% of the hourly wage received by men, while in rural areas this is slightly higher at 88%, though rural men and women earn significantly less than those in urban areas do.

- Women typically have lower levels of ownership, and control over, key assets in Vietnam. Women with their names on Land Tenure Certificates (LTCs) report having greater freedom to take and use loans, while women without LTCs in their name face greater difficulties accessing credit. Joint titling provides women with greater security in the event of divorce, protects women's rights in inheritance and old age and promotes more equal household decision-making.

· Currently, women do not have an equal say in decision-making at the household level. Men are seen as the head of the household, and key assets such as the house, agricultural land, business, vehicles such as cars and motorbikes, are more likely to be in men's names than held jointly or by women alone, in particular in rural areas.

Men typically make the decisions about larger scale purchases, while women are responsible for small purchases and day to day spending.

· Women tend to migrate at slightly earlier ages than men, and the number of internal female migrants is increasing.

In particular the number of women moving to urban areas and industrial zones now exceeds the number of men.

Women also count for the majority of overseas migrants from Vietnam to receiving countries. Women send a higher proportion of their income home in the form of remittances than men do (17% percent compared to 10%).

### **Political Voice**

· 25.8% of deputies in the National Assembly are women in the XII term (2007-2012), down slightly from 27.3% in the XI term (2002-2007). However, women chair only two of nine Committees of the National Assembly (Judicial and Social Affairs Committees).

· While women make up 24.6% of members of the Communist Party, they are under-represented at all levels. There are no female members of the Politburo and in the X<sup>th</sup> session only two members of the ten member Secretary Committee of the VCP are women, while only 13 of the 160 members of the Executive Committee are women.

· Women make up 23.9% of the members of provincial People's Councils, 23% of district level People's Councils and 19.5% of commune People's Councils. In terms of leadership there are more women to be found at the Vice-Chair level, with less than two percent of provincial Councils, and 4 percent of district and commune People's Councils, chaired by women.

· There is only one female Minister in the current term, and only 7.8 % of Vice-Ministers are women.

### *Legal Rights*

· Vietnam ratified the Convention for Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1982.

Gender equality is enshrined in the new Constitution which states (Article 63) that: *"Male and female citizens have equal rights in all respects, including political, economic, cultural, social and the family. All acts of discrimination against women and all acts damaging women's dignity are strictly banned. Men and women shall receive equal pay for equal work. Women workers shall enjoy a regime related to maternity. Women who are state employees and wage-earners shall enjoy paid prenatal and post-natal leave during which they shall receive all their wages and allowances as determined by law."*

· Vietnam passed the Law on Gender Equality in 2006 and the Law on Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence in 2007. Equal rights for men and women including the right to work, to equal wages, property rights, inheritance and the right to choose a marriage partner or divorce are guaranteed under various laws including the Labour Code, the Land Law, and the

Marriage and Family Law. However, discriminatory provisions do exist in some laws, such as prohibition of women working in dangerous conditions under the Labour Code, which restricts women's opportunities. Some rights are not yet protected. For example, some forms of violence against women, such as sexual harassment and stalking, are not currently prohibited by law.

- Under the Labour Code, the retirement age in Vietnam is 55 years for women and 60 years for men. While this provision was introduced to recognise women's contribution to work and family life by rewarding women with early retirement, in practice there are many negative impacts. Early retirement limits women's chances for promotion and access to training and development, and may also discourage employers from hiring women, especially older women workers.

- While national data on incidence of all forms of violence against women in Viet Nam is not yet available, a recent study suggests that 21 percent of couples experience domestic violence. Women and children were most often the victims of serious violence. Almost two-thirds of women believe it is acceptable for men to beat their wives. Domestic violence is a major factor in divorce, which is usually initiated by women.

- Women face specific barriers to accessing the justice system in Vietnam. Almost all domestic violence survivors report that they do not seek support from police or the court system. Usually survivors only access legal or court services when the abuse is very serious or they are seeking a divorce. Other crimes of violence, such as rape, also remain under-reported. In addition, the

Penal Code considers whether the victim was able to defend her/himself rather than whether s/he was able to give valid consent.

- Although the 2003 Land Law provides that Land Tenure Certificates (LTCs) should be in the name of both men and women, and a reported 90 % of new certificates are in both names, around two-thirds of existing LTCs are still in men's names only.

([www.undp.org.vn](http://www.undp.org.vn))