



**ALTERNATIVE REPORT ON THE LIST OF ISSUES RELATED TO
THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL
RIGHTS FOR THE FOURTH REPORTING CYCLE OF THE SOCIALIST
REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM**

CO-SUBMITTED BY

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I. INTRODUCTION

This alternative report on the list of issues related to the Vietnamese government's execution of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) that the Committee considered and adopted concluding observations at its 3599th and 3600th meetings on March 25, 2019.

Unlike Vietnam's report, which mainly mentions laws, decrees, and administrative decisions as a guarantee of compliance with international human rights law, this alternative report will present the Vietnamese government's implementation of the provisions of the ICCPR through after-the-fact monitoring.

The data used in this report have been collected by human rights activists in Vietnam and validated through social media research. All URLs cited in this report are accessible on the submission day. Because of the word limit of the report format, some ICCPR violations by the Vietnamese government are specified in reference footnotes to the Vietnam Human Rights Network's Report 2022-2023.¹

¹ Vietnam Human Rights Network. *Report on Human Rights in Vietnam 2022-2023*, https://www.vietnamhumanrights.net/english/documents/Report_2022_2023_net.pdf

This alternative report addresses the following issues:

- The right of self-determination
- The right to life
- Human trafficking and forced labor
- The right to freedom from arbitrary detention and torture
- The right to be entitled to a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent, and impartial tribunal
- The right to freedom of religion
- The right to freedom of expression
- The right of peaceful assembly
- The right to freedom of association with others
- The right to freedom from discrimination

II. REPORT ON SPECIFIC ARTICLES

1. THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION (Article 1)

The 1993 Constitution stipulates, “Citizens have the right to participate in the management of state affairs through elections” (Articles 27 and 28). However, Article 4 of this Constitution asserts the Communist Party of Vietnam’s (CPV) absolute leadership over all national activities.² The General Secretary of the CPV, Nguyen Phu Trong, affirmed that the Constitution is “the most important political and legal document after the Party Platform.”³ Because of this contradiction and the intention to maintain political monopoly at all costs, all provisions on political rights stated in Articles 20 and 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Articles 1 of the ICCPR, which Vietnam has committed itself to uphold, are nullified. People are deprived of the right to choose their political system and representatives peacefully.

1.1. Rigged Elections

To proceed with the 15th National Assembly and all-level People’s Councils in May 2021, the Politburo of the CPV issued Directive No. 45-CT / TW to determine the party committees’ leadership in organizing the elections.⁴

² “The Communist Party of Vietnam - the Vanguard of the working class, concurrently the vanguard of the laboring people and Vietnamese nation, faithfully representing the interests of the working class, laboring people and entire nation, and acting upon the Marxist-Leninist doctrine and Ho Chi Minh Thought, is the force leading the State and society.” (Article 4 of the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2013)

³ VNExpress. *Tổng bí thư: ‘Đề phòng thế lực muốn xóa bỏ điều 4 Hiến pháp’*. <https://vnexpress.net/tong-bi-thu-de-phong-the-luc-muon-xoa-bo-dieu-4-hien-phap-2886937.html>

⁴ Thư viện Pháp luật. *Chỉ thị của Bộ Chính Trị*. <https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/Bo-may-hanh-chinh/Chi-thi-45-CT-TW-2020-lanh-dao-cuoc-bau-cu-dai-bieu-Quoc-hoi-khoa-XV-nhiem-ky-2021-2026-445540.aspx>

The May 2021 election results have been pre-arranged. Resolution No. 1185 / NQ-UBTVQH14 of the 14th National Assembly states that the 15th National Assembly will have 95 members of the Party Central Committee, about 50 deputies under 40 years old, about 160 re-elected deputies, six deputies from religious groups, etc. The Resolution also set the number of non-Party candidates for candidacy from 25 to 50 delegates, equivalent to 5-10% of the total deputies.⁵

In the National Assembly elections, all applicants must be screened by the Fatherland Front, a CPV front organization, through the “Consultative Conference” and the “Voter Conference” at central and local levels.

For the National Assembly election in 2021, according to the final official list after the third consultation, there are 866 candidates nationwide, of which nine are self-nominated.⁶ Eight of the nine self-nominated candidates are senior party members, of which four are current members of the National Assembly.

At the local level, to increase the CPV’s political control, the Politburo issued Resolution No. 22/NQ – TW in 2008, stipulating a model that calls for “the secretary of the party committee to concurrently serve as chairman of the People’s Committee of commune and ward.” This “unification” model allows no border between a party organization and a government unit.

So far, this model has been applied at all government levels nationwide. For example, in Quang Ninh province, one hundred percent of Party cell secretaries are concurrently the heads of the associated communes or neighborhoods; this percentage is over ninety percent in Hai Duong and Thanh Hoa provinces.⁷

In short, through legislation and daily operations, the people have no voice in the governmental apparatus, whether at the central or local level. These institutions do not represent the people but are simply the CPV’s tools for carrying out totalitarian policies.

1.2. Stamping out the Opposition

The Government maintained its intolerance of outside dissent or criticism to protect the Party’s political security. At the Central Public Security Party Committee Conference on June 15, 2023, General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong once again repeated the slogan, “Do not allow the formation of an opposition political organization in the country.”⁸

Thus, organizations promoting democracy and human rights, such as Bloc 8406, the People’s Action Party, the Democratic Party of Vietnam, the Vietnam Progress Party, the Populist Party,

⁵ Chinhphu.vn. *Nghị quyết số 1185/NQ-UBTVQH14 của Ủy Ban Thường Vụ Quốc Hội: Dự kiến số lượng, cơ cấu, thành phần đại biểu Quốc hội khóa XV.* <https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/Bo-may-hanh-chinh/Nghi-quyet-1185-NQ-UBTVQH14-2021-du-kien-so-luong-co-cau-thanh-phan-dai-bieu-Quoc-hoi-khoa-XV-462918.aspx>

⁶ Báo điện tử Đảng Cộng sản Việt Nam. *9 người tự ứng cử đại biểu Quốc hội khóa XV.* <https://daihoi13.dangcongsan.vn/bau-cu-dai-bieu-quoc-hoi-khoa-xv-va-dai-bieu-hdnd-cac-cap/tin-tuc/9-nguoi-tu-ung-cu-dai-bieu-quoc-hoi-khoa-xv-5831>

⁷ Xây dựng Đảng. *Công tác tổ chức xây dựng Đảng các tỉnh, thành phố miền Bắc: Năm mới, quyết tâm mới.* <https://www.xaydungdang.org.vn/nghi-quyet-va-cuoc-song/nam-moi-quyet-tam-moi-18432>

⁸ Tài Nguyên & Môi Trường. *Phát biểu của Tổng Bí thư Nguyễn Phú Trọng tại Hội nghị Đảng ủy Công an Trung ương.* <https://baotainguyennmoitruong.vn/phat-bieu-cua-tong-bi-thu-nguyen-phu-trong-tai-hoi-nghi-dang-uy-cong-an-trung-uong-359691.html>

the High Tide of Humanism Movement, the Committee for Human Rights, the United Workers-Farmers Association, Viet Labor Movement, the Vietnamese Political and Religious Prisoners Friendship Association, the Patriotic Youth, the Vietnam Path Movement, Vietnam Blogger Network, the Brotherhood For Democracy, the Constitution Group, the Vietnam National Self-Determination Coalition, Vietnamese Women for Human Rights, and the Independent Journalists Association continued to be persecuted and banned. Many members of these organizations were isolated or imprisoned.

In 2022 and 2023, at least 97 dissidents were brought to court with heavy sentences. Twenty-five people are being detained and awaiting trial (as of October 15, 2023).⁹

In short, through legislation and daily operations, the people have no voice in the governmental apparatus, whether at the central or local level. These institutions do not represent the people but are simply the CPV's tools for carrying out totalitarian policies.

2. THE RIGHT TO LIFE (Article 6 and Paragraph 24 of the Committee's Concluding Observations and the Report)

Despite removing some crimes eligible for the death sentence, the Criminal Law, amended in November 2015 and June 2017, retained the death sentence for 18 crimes. Vietnam is among the few countries applying the death penalty for corruption and bribery. The government did not disclose the number of death sentence executions that the government considers national secrets; those who accidentally or intentionally violate them can be sentenced to up to 15 years in prison (Articles 337, 338 Criminal Law). Government documents show that the number of people sentenced to death has increased rapidly (nearly 30%), and the conditions for detention management have not met the requirements, leading to overcrowding in some detention camps.¹⁰

Another concern is that multiple death sentences from a single court session happen too frequently. In 2022-2023 (as of October 15, 2023), at least there were six trials with 4-10 death sentences.¹¹

Since 2013, Vietnam has replaced firing squads with lethal injections using domestically-produced poison. Scientifically, there has never been any report on the effectiveness of Vietnam-made poisons for executions, which means that reduced suffering for the condemned is far from guaranteed. In early 2022, the Vietnamese Communist Government proposed to use robots to execute death sentences.¹²

Flaws in criminal proceedings leading to unjust death sentences are of significant concern. In recent years, among the unfair cases have been the high-profile death sentences of Hồ Duy Hải, Nguyễn Văn Chương, Lê Văn Mạnh, Đặng Văn Hiến, and two land petitioners of Đồng Tâm

⁹ [Vietnam Human Rights Network. 32.](#)

¹⁰ Công an Nhân dân. *Bản giải pháp quản lý người bị kết án tử hình trong các trại tạm giam* <https://cand.com.vn/lanh-dao-bo-cong-an/ban-giai-phap-quan-ly-nguoi-bi-ket-an-tu-hinh-trong-cac-trai-tam-giam-i677004/>

¹¹ [Vietnam Human Rights Network. 32](#)

¹² HDLLTƯ. *Đổi mới, nâng cao hiệu quả công tác thi hành án hình sự, đáp ứng yêu cầu xây dựng, hoàn thiện nhà nước pháp quyền XHCN Việt Nam.* <https://hdll.vn/vi/nghien-cuu---trao-doi/doi-moi-nang-cao-hieu-qua-cong-tac-thi-hanh-an-hinh-su-dap-ung-yeu-cau-xay-dung-hoan-thien-nha-nuoc-phap-quyen-xhcn-viet-nam.html>

Commune, Lê Đình Công and Lê Đình Chức. Lawyers and even government officials considered those cases did not have sufficient evidence and involved reliance on forced confessions under police torture, subsequently contradicted by retractions.

On September 22, 2023, the Vietnamese government executed Mr. Lê Văn Mạnh by lethal injection despite his and his family's claim of innocence.¹³ A day earlier, the Delegation of the European Union to Vietnam and the diplomatic agencies of Canada, Norway, and the UK had called Vietnamese authorities to halt executing him.¹⁴

3. HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND FORCED LABOR (Article 8 and Paragraph 40 of the Committee's Concluding Observations)

3.1. Human Trafficking

The Chairwoman of the Judiciary Committee of the National Assembly of Vietnam, Ms. Le Thi Nga, admitted that human trafficking increased by 10.26 percent in 2022.¹⁵

According to Walk Free's latest Global Slavery Index, Vietnam has about 396,000 people living in modern slavery, which means that, on average, out of 1,000 people, more than 4.1 people live in that condition.¹⁶

In today's Vietnam, human trafficking involves victims of three main types:

- Young women and girls were lured to serve as “sex slaves” or forced labor in Vietnam and other countries,
- Workers exported to foreign countries and
- “Brides” sent to foreign countries.

3.1.1. Women and children tricked into sex slavery or forced labor

Trafficking of women for prostitution is a common form of domestic and transnational trafficking. According to the Ministry of Public Security, in 2022-2023, 80% of human trafficking victims are trafficked to countries sharing a border with Vietnam and 20% to other countries via land, air, or sea.¹⁷

According to the latest report of the Blue Dragon organization, more than 60% of victims and traffickers in Vietnam are ethnic minorities. Among ethnic minorities, the Hmong are the most

¹³ BBC. VN: *Tử tù Lê Văn Mạnh đã bị thi hành án, bắt chấp gia đình kêu oan gần 20 năm.* <https://www.bbc.com/vietnamese/articles/c6p6pppq15yo>

¹⁴ Delegation of the European Union to Vietnam. *Joint Local Statement on the forthcoming death penalty case of Mr Le Van Manh in Vietnam.* https://www.eeas.europa.eu/joint-local-statement-mr-le-van-manh_en

¹⁵ Lao động. *Vụ Việt Á đã khởi tố 89 bị can; Tân Hoàng Minh lừa đảo hơn 8.000 tỉ đồng.* <https://laodong.vn/thoi-su/vu-viet-a-da-khoi-to-89-bi-can-tan-hoang-minh-lua-dao-hon-8000-ti-dong-1114031.ldo>

¹⁶ Walk Free's Global Slavery Index. <https://www.walkfree.org/global-slavery-index/findings/regional-findings/asia-and-the-pacific/>

¹⁷ VNExpress. *80% nạn nhân buôn người bị bán qua biên giới.* <https://vnexpress.net/80-nan-nhan-buon-nguoi-bi-ban-qua-bien-gioi-4489244.html>

vulnerable to trafficking. They account for more than 32% of all victims and 33% of all traffickers (in this dataset) while representing only 1.4% of the country's population.¹⁸

Domestic trafficking for sexual exploitation has also grown in recent years. Many girls from low-income families in the countryside are lured into working as bartenders but receive guests and then sell sex. These girls want to quit their jobs but cannot because they can be locked up and confined.¹⁹

3.1.2. *exploitation of exported workers*

Currently, about 580 thousand Vietnamese people are working abroad.²⁰ In 2022, the total number of Vietnamese workers exported under contracts reached 142,779 people.²¹

Besides the number of workers exported through government-licensed agencies, illegal intermediary agencies recruit many other workers secretly. There are currently no exact numbers of those “underground” workers, but government officials have acknowledged many undocumented workers over the years.²²

Most export workers, especially the “underground” workers, are exploited, abandoned by brokers, and poorly treated by their employers with hard work and meager wages; sometimes, their passports are confiscated, so they have to live like prisoners, confined in a narrow space controlled by the factory owners.

In 2022-2023, the public was particularly concerned about cases of abuse of Vietnamese workers on a large scale in the Philippines²³ and Cambodia²⁴ (primarily working on online casino sites). They were forced to work 12-16 hours a day, not allowed to leave the premises, sold to other employers, or call their families and relatives in Vietnam to pay a ransom from \$3,000 to \$30,000 to return home.

3.1.3. *Selling of Vietnamese “brides” to foreigners*

According to Vietnam's Ministry of Public Security, an average of 18,000 Vietnamese citizens married foreigners annually between 2008 and 2019, primarily Taiwanese, Chinese, Americans,

¹⁸ Blue Dragon. *Human Trafficking and Traffickers in Vietnam*. <https://www.bluedragon.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Blue-Dragon-Profile-of-trafficking-in-Vietnam.pdf>

¹⁹ VOV. “Gái hát” hay nạn nhân của tội phạm buôn người? <https://vov.vn/phap-luat/gai-hat-hay-nan-nhan-cua-toi-pham-buon-nguoi-823560.vov>

²⁰ Hà Nội Mới. 580.000 lao động Việt Nam làm việc ở nước ngoài. <https://hanoimoi.vn/580-000-lao-dong-viet-nam-lam-viec-o-nuoc-ngoai-464623.html>

²¹ Lao Động. 142.779 lao động Việt Nam đi làm việc ở nước ngoài. <https://laodong.vn/cong-doan/142779-lao-dong-viet-nam-di-lam-viec-o-nuoc-ngoai-1135224.laod>

²² Báo Thái Nguyên. Ngăn chặn tình trạng xuất cảnh trái phép. <https://baothainguyen.vn/xa-hoi/202111/ngan-chan-tinh-trang-xuat-can-h-trai-phap-367993A/>

²³ AP. 2,700 people tricked into working for cybercrime syndicates rescued in Philippines. <https://apnews.com/article/philippines-cybercrime-raids-china-indonesia-malaysia-vietnam-de16f11954700ffd432377267f571892>

²⁴ Công An TP HCM. Nhiều người bị lừa ra nước ngoài lao động rồi ép gia đình gửi “tiền chuộc” https://congan.com.vn/vu-an/canh-giac/canh-bao-thu-doan-lua-dua-nguoi-ra-nuoc-ngoai-lao-dong-roi-ep-gia-dinh-gui-tien-chuoc_147487.html

and Korean. Most (78%) of women married to foreigners are from low-income families with low education and high unemployment.²⁵

These are only the marriages officially registered with the government. The number of Vietnamese “brides” brought out of the country through marriage brokerage services without registration is much higher. According to a recent survey, registered marriages are less than 10% of the survey sample in some provinces near the northern border.²⁶

Apart from a few happy exceptions, such brokered marriages often lead to painful outcomes. Many Vietnamese brides suffered torture and mistreatment before being passed on to other men. The hardship eventually forced them to escape and try to survive in a foreign country, only to be recruited into brothels, where they either risk death or see no other option but to kill themselves.²⁷

3.2. Forced Labor

The use of prisoners in prisons, patients in rehabilitation centers, drug addiction camps, and students in reform schools for labor is widespread in Vietnam.

In March 2022, at the Ministry of Public Security proposal, the National Assembly Standing Committee issued Resolution No. 54/202, sending prisoners to work at construction sites managed by private enterprises.²⁸ On March 13, 2023, the government issued Decree No. 09/2023 detailing the implementation of the above Resolution by the National Assembly.

According to Decree No. 133/2020 / ND-CP, labor prisoners receive only 10% of the proceeds from the labor revenue after deducting “reasonable expenses in the work organization process.” With this regulation, most of the labor prisoners work for free!

In factories, the most common form of forced labor is being required to work overtime under the threat of being fired.²⁹ A study by a group of US and Vietnamese university experts in 2021 on forced labor in the garment industry in Vietnam shows that 6.11% of workers surveyed may be victims of forced labor.³⁰

Another kind of forced labor involves mistreating children, including forcing them to work under dangerous conditions. The Sustainable Development Goals Survey on Children and Women (SDGCW) for 2020-2021 shows that the labor rate of children aged 5-17 across the country is

²⁵ Cổng Thông tin điện tử Chính phủ. 70.000 phụ nữ ĐBSCL lấy chồng nước ngoài. <https://tphcm.chinhphu.vn/70000-phu-nu-dbscl-lay-chong-nuoc-ngoai-10119316.htm>

²⁶ Đặng Thị Hoa. Một số vấn đề về hôn nhân xuyên biên giới với phát triển xã hội ở Việt Nam hiện nay (VJOL). <https://vjol.info.vn/index.php/ssir/article/view/26233>

²⁷ Thanh Niên. Thảm cảnh cô dâu Việt trên đất Hàn - Bài 1: Com người khó lắm mẹ ơi! <https://thanhnien.vn/tham-canh-co-dau-viet-tren-dat-han-bai-1-com-nguoi-kho-lam-me-oi-185163109.htm#>

²⁸ Vietnam Plus. Thi điểm mô hình tổ chức dạy nghề cho phạm nhân ngoài trại giam. <https://www.vietnamplus.vn/thi-diem-mo-hinh-to-chuc-day-nghe-cho-pham-nhan-ngoai-trai-giam/779569.vnp>

²⁹ Fair Labor Association. *Forced Labor in Supply Chains: Addressing Risks and Safeguarding Workers' Freedoms*. https://www.fairlabor.org/sites/default/files/documents/reports/forced_labor_guidance_update_july-2019.pdf

³⁰ Sheldon Zhang, Ph.D. et al. *Prevalence of Forced Labor in Vietnam's Apparel Industry*. https://www.gfems.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/VietnamApparelLaborStudy_FinalReport.pdf

6.9%. The Central Highlands has the highest rate of child labor (13.8%). Children of the Hmong ethnic group have a labor rate of 25.5%.³¹

4. THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM FROM ARBITRARY DETENTION AND TORTURE (Article 9 and Paragraphs 26, 32 of the Committee's Concluding Observations; and Article 10 and Paragraph 30 of the Committee's Concluding Observations)

4.1 Arbitrary Detention

During the year 2022-2023, the United Nations Human Rights Council's Working Group on Arbitrary Detention has sent to the Vietnamese government 7 Opinions demanding clarification of cases of arbitrary detention and conviction for the following 25 prisoners of conscience: Nguyễn Tường Thụy, Đặng Đình Bách, Nguyễn Lâm Thắng, Bùi Tuấn Lâm, Đặng Đăng Phước, Trương Châu Hữu Danh, Bùi Văn Thuận, Lê Anh Hùng, Cấn Thị Thêu, Trịnh Bá Tư, Trịnh Bá Phương, Nguyễn Thị Tâm, Phạm Đoàn Trang, Nguyễn Thúy Hạnh, Đỗ Nam Trung, Đinh Văn Hải, Lê Trọng Hùng, Lê Văn Dũng, Trần Quốc Khánh, Lê Chí Thành, Đỗ Nam Trung, Trần Đức Thạch, Nguyễn Ngọc Anh, Châu Văn Khảm, and Nguyễn Bảo Tiên.³²

In the documents mentioned above, the UN Special Rapporteurs and human rights experts argued that the Vietnam government had violated fundamental principles of a fair trial, applied vague provisions of the Criminal Law, and violated general rules of human rights, in particular, Articles 9, 14, 19, 25, and 26 of the ICCPR.

4.2. Police Brutality

In November 2018, at the 65th Session of the UN Committee Against Torture, Vietnam introduced its first National Report on the Enforcement of the Convention Against Torture. Its representatives pledged to prevent and punish all torture violations. On February 14, 2023, Deputy Prime Minister Tran Luu Quang signed Decision 87/QĐ-TTg approving the plan to strengthen the effective implementation of the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the relevant recommendations of the Committee Against Torture.

However, the state security forces have continued to assault people in public or use corporal punishment while in custody, sometimes to death.

In 2022-2023 (as of October 15, 2023), at least eight deaths during temporary police detention were disclosed by the media.³³

4.3. An Inhumane Prison System

Corporal punishment and torture have been used to subdue prisoners. First, inmates are forced to work hard all day but are not entitled to the fruits of their labor. The work, including stone crushing, timber logging, farming, and brick-making, is difficult and dangerous. Second, despite strenuous work, prisoners must live in deplorable conditions: shelter, food, sanitation, and health.

³¹ UNFPA, UNICEF and VN GSO. *Viet Nam SDG CW Survey 2020-2021*.
<https://www.unicef.org/vietnam/media/8671/file/Child%20labour.pdf>

³² UN. *Opinions adopted by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention*. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/wg-arbitrary-detention/opinions-adopted-working-group-arbitrary-detention>

³³ [Vietnam Human Rights Net Work. 10](#)

However, the worst is the harsh punishments prison guards use to demoralize prisoners who dare to demand fair treatment.³⁴

Particularly for political prisoners, inhuman treatment is carried out even more systematically. In addition to forced labor, they are usually subject to additional sanctions, such as transfer to faraway prison camps, prohibition of visits, disciplinary isolation, suspension of medical treatment, beatings by the prison police or by criminal prisoners directed by them.

After completing their prison sentences, many former prisoners of conscience also said they were forced to do hard labor in a toxic environment with poor nutrition and medical treatment and were sometimes brutally beaten by jail wardens.³⁵

In 2022-2023, many cases of assault and mistreatment of prisoners of conscience were reported to their families and relatives.³⁶

In 2022-2023, three prisoners of conscience died mysteriously while in custody:

- On January 5, 2023, Pastor Dinh Diem, a religious prisoner serving a 16-year sentence for the alleged crime of “Activities aimed at overthrowing the people’s government,” died suddenly at prison camp No. 6 in Thanh Chuong district, Nghe An province.³⁷

- On November 20, 2022, Mr. Phan Van Thu, founder of An Dan Dai Dao, an independent Buddhist organization serving a life sentence for the same alleged crime, died in Gia Trung prison, Gia Lai province.³⁸

- On August 2, 2022, a citizen journalist, Mr. Do Cong Duong, died while serving an 8-year sentence for allegedly “abusing democratic freedoms” and “disturbing public order” in prison camp No. 6, Nghe An province.³⁹

5. THE RIGHTS TO BE ENTITLED TO A FAIR AND PUBLIC HEARING BY A COMPETENT, INDEPENDENT, AND IMPARTIAL TRIBUNAL (Article 14 and Paragraphs 34, 36 of the Committee’s Concluding Observations)

5.1. Violations of Basic Principles of Criminal Procedure Code

Continual violations of the principles of the procedure throughout the criminal proceedings, from arbitrary arrest to fabrication of evidence, forcible testimony, obstruction of lawyers, and cursory trials with pre-determined verdicts, have made a mockery of such procedures. Suspects are often

³⁴ RFA. *Tình trạng tù nhân trong các trại giam ở Việt Nam.*

<https://www.rfa.org/vietnamese/news/programs/OverseasVietnamese/vdsnv0520-tt-05202016134036.html>

³⁵ RFA. *Cựu TNLT Lê Thị Bình: Trại giam An Phước đánh đập, buộc tù nhân nữ lao động nặng nhọc.*

<https://www.rfa.org/vietnamese/news/vietnamnews/former-prisoner-of-conscience-le-thi-binh-says-an-phuoc-prison-camp-beat-and-force-female-prisoners-work-hard-11232022080412.html>

³⁶ *Vietnam Human Rights Net Work. 25*

³⁷ VNTB – *Mục sư Đinh Diêm đã được chôn và an táng tại Trại giam số 6 Thanh Chương, Nghệ An.*

<https://vietnamthoibao.org/vntb-muc-su-dinh-diem-da-duoc-chon-va-an-tang-tai-trai-giam-so-6-thanh-chuong-nghe-an/>

³⁸ RFA. *Tù nhân lương tâm Phan Văn Thu mất trong trại giam vì không được chăm sóc y tế kịp thời.*

<https://www.rfa.org/vietnamese/news/vietnamnews/phan-van-thu-died-in-prison-11212022074529.html>

³⁹ CPJ. *Journalist Do Cong Duong dies in prison in Vietnam.* <https://cpj.org/2022/08/journalist-do-cong-duong-dies-in-prison-in-vietnam/>

tortured during interrogation and isolated from their families and lawyers. Most court trials are summarily carried out within one day, sometimes lasting only a few hours. If any, the presence of a lawyer is just for embellishment since the time for deliberation is usually shorter than the time needed to read the verdict, meaning the court had already prepared the judgment ahead of time.

On September 18, 2023, in a hearing before the National Assembly Standing Committee, Mr. Nguyen Hoa Binh, Chief Justice of the Supreme People's Court, said the National Assembly allows 1.5% of 600,000 cases to be wrong due to subjective errors, which means about 9,000 cases are allowed to be faulty due to subjective errors.⁴⁰

For political cases, particularly, the violation of criminal proceedings is more serious. For example, in the Pham Doan Trang case, the participants were absent; the prosecution did not rely on any legal basis to make accusations; there was no authentic evidence but only forged evidence.⁴¹

In 2022 and 2023 (as of October 15, 2023), the Vietnamese government has used vague provisions of the 2015 Criminal Code to sentence at least 97 dissidents to harsh sentences. Twenty-five people are detained and awaiting trial.⁴² In all those criminalized political cases, basic principles of criminal procedure are violated at every possible stage: detention beyond the legal limit without indictment, no introduction of evidence or witnesses, and prevention of contact with lawyer and family. In many court sessions, lawyers are either disallowed or restricted in their defense; relatives cannot attend.

Unjust sentences are often the result of coercion, extortion, and the use of corporal punishment. In all those cases, the court decided the verdicts before the trials based on confessions obtained through physical and mental torture, disregard of rebuttal evidence, witnesses' persuasive counter-arguments, and the accused' retraction and petitions.

Vietnam's Constitution stipulates: "The People's Courts shall hold hearings in public" (Article 103). However, most human rights activists' trials in 2022-2023 were conducted quickly, within a day, sometimes just a few hours, with security forces up to hundreds of people in many cases. Relatives were not allowed to attend, and many were forcibly kept in their homes.

In contrast to these closed political trials, outdoor trials by mobile courts that resemble the public denunciations of the Land Reform Era have no legal basis for existence. Each year, the judiciary organizes about 3,000 mobile tribunals across the country.⁴³ Those mobile trials violate the dignity of the defendants, put heavy pressure on their families, and especially blatantly violate the principle of innocent presumption.

5.2. The Perfunctory Presence of Lawyers

⁴⁰ Pháp Luật. *Chánh án Nguyễn Hòa Bình: Thẩm phán chỉ phải chịu trách nhiệm khi có lỗi chủ quan.* <https://plo.vn/chanh-an-nguyen-hoa-binh-tham-phan-chi-phai-chiu-trach-nhiem-khi-co-loi-chu-quan-post752052.html>

⁴¹ Luật sư Lê Văn Luân. *Lời biện hộ cho bà Phạm Doan Trang.* (Bauxite Việt Nam) <https://boxitvn.blogspot.com/2021/12/loi-bien-ho-cho-ba-pham-thi-oan-trang.html>

⁴² [Vietnam Human Rights Network, 20](#)

⁴³ Luật sư Việt Nam. *Một góc nhìn về xét xử lưu động vụ án hình sự.* <https://lsvn.vn/mot-goc-nhin-ve-xet-xu-luu-dong-vu-an-hinh-su.html>

According to the Vietnam Bar Association, the country has over 17,284 lawyers registered for nearly one hundred million inhabitants.⁴⁴ Most are concentrated in big cities, especially Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi. People in remote areas have limited information and access to lawyers' legal services. For example, Bac Kan province, with a population of 324,353 people, currently has only five lawyers. On average, one lawyer for nearly 65,000 people. All five lawyers have not received formal training but are just retired judicial officers.⁴⁵

The main activity of lawyers is participating in legal proceedings; however, only about 20% of criminal cases are represented by a lawyer.⁴⁶ Especially in the cases of ethnic minority religious and human rights activists, the number of people with defense attorneys is "countable on the fingers of one hand." As many as hundreds of religious minority followers have been convicted over the years on vague Criminal code charges, especially Article 116, "undermining the policy of national unity."⁴⁷

Vietnam's judicial system has been crippled not only by the minimal number of lawyers, their low level of career awareness, and their unsatisfactory professional skills but primarily by the dependency of the lawyers' organization on the CPV. The Vietnam Bar Association Bylaws preamble clearly states, "The Vietnam Bar Association is a member of the Vietnam Fatherland Front under the leadership of the CPV and the administration of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam government." The current chairman of the Vietnam Bar Federation, Mr. Do Ngoc Thinh, is also the Party Secretary of the Vietnam Bar Federation and a member of the National Assembly.

In daily business, lawyers in Vietnam today are confronted with obstruction from the investigative police, the Procuracy, and even the Trial Panel. The usual fundamental rights of an attorney, such as the right to contact and advise the client, gather evidence, and be with clients during questioning, are always subject to the prosecuting agency's consent. The jury rarely pays attention to lawyers' arguments, while the latter often do not dare to contradict the prosecutors. In most cases, the lawyers' only duty is to ask for leniency.⁴⁸

In 2022-2023, the public was particularly concerned about the government's chase of the lawyers who advocated for victims of religious persecution in the Tinh That Bong Lai Buddhist temple case. One of the five lawyers was assaulted in the front yard of the court on the first day of the trial. After the trial ended, the police of Long An province summoned all of them to investigate their alleged crime of "Abusing democratic freedoms to infringe upon the interests of the State,

⁴⁴ Liên đoàn Luật sư Việt Nam. *Trưởng Ban Nội chính Trung ương làm việc với Liên đoàn Luật sư Việt Nam.* <https://liendoanluatsus.org.vn/truong-ban-noi-chinh-trung-uong-lam-viec-voi-lien-doan-luat-su-viet-nam/>

⁴⁵ Bắc Kạn. *Vì sao Bắc Kạn khó phát triển đội ngũ luật sư.* <https://baobackan.com.vn/vi-sao-bac-kan-kho-phat-trien-doi-ngu-luat-su-post51201.html>

⁴⁶ Luật sư Việt Nam. *Vướng mắc cần tháo gỡ để nâng cao hoạt động tranh tụng của luật sư tại phiên tòa hình sự.* <https://lsvn.vn/vuong-mac-can-thao-go-de-nang-cao-hoat-dong-tranh-tung-cua-luat-su-tai-phiên-toa-hinh-su.html>

⁴⁷ RFA. *Hầu hết tù nhân tôn giáo sắc tộc thiểu số không có luật sư trợ giúp pháp lý.* <https://www.rfa.org/vietnamese/news/vietnamnews/most-religious-activists-from-ethnic-minorities-have-no-legal-counseling-08112023073902.html>

⁴⁸ An Ninh Thủ Đức, *Luật sư chỉ định, có cho đủ... thủ tục.* <http://www.anninhthudo.vn/Ky-su-phap-dinh/Luat-su-chi-dinh-co-cho-du-thu-tuc/487759.antd>

lawful rights and interests of organizations and/or citizens.”⁴⁹ For fear of being arrested, all three lawyers escaped to the United States on June 16, 2023.⁵⁰

6. THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF RELIGION (Article 18 and Paragraph 44 of the Committee’s Concluding Observations)

6.1. Restriction of the Right to Freedom of Religion through Legislation

In the current legal context, religious activities in Vietnam are regulated by the Law on Belief and Religion, passed on November 18, 2016, and Decree No. 162/2017 / ND-CP issued on December 30, 2017.

The law has nothing new compared with previous regulations regarding state-religion relationships. First, religious organizations need the State’s recognition (Article 2.12 and Chapter V, Section 1). Secondly, their religious activities must be registered (Chapter IV). Finally, the government continues to have the right to interfere in the internal affairs of religions (Chapter V, Sections 2 and 3). These provisions contradict the basic principles of religious freedom in Article 18 of the UDHR and Article 18 of the ICCPR, which Vietnam has committed to respect as a member of the UN.

On June 21, 2022, the Government Committee for Religious Affairs coordinated with relevant ministries and branches to draft a Draft Decree to replace Decree 162/2017/ND-CP and a Draft Decree on sanctioning administrative violations in belief and religion.

The contents of both drafts are not intended to improve the relationship between the State and religion; on the contrary, they allow the government to control the organization and activities of religions more closely.

For example, according to the Draft Decree to replace Decree 162/2017/ND-CP, the central state management agency in charge of belief and religion and the provincial People’s Committee have the right to suspend all religious activities of religious organizations according to decentralization of authority (Article 13); the central state management agency in charge of belief and religion has the right to suspend all training activities of a religious training institution (Article 17); religious organizations that wish to make donations to carry out their beliefs, religious and social charity activities must obtain permission and be permitted to conduct them (Article 26); religious activities online need permission from the Government (Article 28).⁵¹

The draft Decree on administrative sanctions in belief and religion specifies administrative sanctions for violating the Law on Belief and Religion 2016 provisions. The degree of punishment ranges from fines, cancellation of transfer decisions, nomination and appointment of religious dignitaries, and suspension and dissolution of religious organizations.

⁴⁹ Long An Online. *2 luật sư bào chữa cho các bị cáo vắng mặt do bị hành hung*. <https://baolongan.vn/2-luat-su-bao-chua-cho-cac-bi-cao-vang-mat-do-bi-hanh-hung-a138861.html>

⁵⁰ BBC. *VN: Vì sao công an 'truy tìm' ba luật sư nhân quyền bào chữa vụ Thiên Am*. <https://www.bbc.com/vietnamese/articles/c28pzmvvwg3o>

⁵¹ Chính phủ. *Nghị định Quy định chi tiết một số điều và biện pháp thi hành Luật tín ngưỡng, tôn giáo (Dự thảo 2)*. <https://datafiles.chinhphu.vn/cpp/files/duthaovbpl/12.du-thao-2-nghi-dinh-quy-dinh-chi-tiet-mot-so-dieu-va-bien-phap-thi-hanh-lua-tntg.pdf>

6.2. Violation of the Right to Freedom of Religion through Organization Control.

The government continues to outlaw large and orthodox religious organizations that are not under the control of the CPV. As for Buddhism, the government only recognizes the state-run Buddhist Sangha of Vietnam (formed in 1981)⁵² while outlawing the Unified Buddhist Sangha of Vietnam (started much earlier as a legitimate heir to the various traditional Buddhist sects of Vietnam). In the case of the Hoa Hao Buddhist Church, the State banned the Orthodox Hoa Hao Buddhist Church leadership. It installed the pro-government Hoa Hao Buddhism Central Administration Board.⁵³ As for the Cao Dai Church, the government set up the Dai Dao Tam Ky Pho Do Cao Dai Tay Ninh, ruled by an Executive Council, to separate from the Traditionalist Cao Dai Church, called Dai Dao Tam Ky Pho Do. As for Protestant Churches, the government has recognized only ten organizations, leaving about 70 other Protestant groups illegal.⁵⁴

All minor religious organizations are prohibited, disorganized, and persecuted. Those include the Evangelical Church of Christ,⁵⁵ the Church of God,⁵⁶ the Grace to Salvation Assembly,⁵⁷ Falun Gong,⁵⁸ and the ethnic Hmong sects Giê Sùa, Cô Dợ,⁵⁹ Duong Van Minh,⁶⁰

All religious activities, such as practice sessions, retreats, and processions, must receive prior government approval. For instance, to demonstrate that there is religious freedom in Vietnam, the Ministry of Home Affairs listed the “favors” granted in 2022, “There are 183 meeting sites that have been granted registration for religious activities; 646 people were ordained and nominated clergy; 3,238 people are appointed, elected, and promoted to hold dignitary positions; 424 religious clerics allowed to transfer.”⁶¹

⁵² Đỗ Trung Hiếu. *Hồ sơ “Thống Nhất Phật Giáo.”* <https://phatgiaokhongcongsan.blogspot.com/2011/05/ho-so-thong-nhat-phat-giao-o-trung-hieu.html>

⁵³ Ban vận động Ban Tôn giáo Chính phủ. *Phật giáo Hòa Hào 20 năm hoạt động và phát triển.* https://btgcp.gov.vn/doi-song-tin-nguon-ton-giao/Phat_giao_Hoa_Hao_20_nam_hoat_dong_va_phat_trien-postWzRDAGgadj.html

⁵⁴ VOV. *Nhiều tổ chức Tin lành hoạt động bất hợp pháp tại Việt Nam.* <https://vov.vn/phap-luat/nhieu-to-chuc-tin-lanh-hoat-dong-bat-hop-phap-tai-viet-nam-1056066.vov>

⁵⁵ Công An Nhân Dân. *Bài 1: Những hoạt động vi phạm pháp luật của tổ chức “Tin lành Đấng Christ”.* <https://cand.com.vn/Chong-dien-bien-hoa-binh/bai-1-nhung-hoat-dong-vi-pham-phap-luat-cua-to-chuc-tin-lanh-dang-christ-i642892/>

⁵⁶ Công an Nhân dân. *Đằng sau cái gọi là “Hội thánh của Đức Chúa trời Mẹ”.* <https://cand.com.vn/phap-luat/bai-1-dang-sau-cai-goi-la-hoi-thanh-cua-duc-chua-troi-me-i643064/>

⁵⁷ Công an Nhân dân. *Đấu tranh hiệu quả với tổ chức tà giáo “Ấn điển cứu rỗi”.* <https://cand.com.vn/Lan-theo-dau-vet-toi-pham-dau-tranh-hieu-qua-voi-to-chuc-ta-giao-an-dien-cuu-roi-i630110/>

⁵⁸ VOA. *Chính quyền giải tán nhóm sinh hoạt Hội Thánh Đức Chúa Trời ở Hội An.* <https://www.voatiengviet.com/a/chinh-quyen-giai-tan-nhom-sinh-hoat-hoi-thanh-duc-chua-troi-o-hoi-an/6993260.html>

⁵⁹ Báo Công an nhân dân. *Làm rõ bộ mặt thật của tà đạo “Giê Sùa” và “Bà Cô Dợ”.* <http://cand.com.vn/thoi-su/Lam-ro-bo-mat-that-cua-ta-dao-Gie-Sua-va-Ba-Co-Do-613626/>

⁶⁰ Thế giới & Việt Nam. *Nhận thức đúng đắn về tổ chức bất hợp pháp Dương Văn Minh.* <https://baoquocte.vn/nhan-thuc-dung-dan-ve-to-chuc-bat-hop-phap-duong-van-minh-175989.html>

⁶¹ Tuyên Giáo. *Từ chủ trương, chính sách đến thực tiễn đời sống tín ngưỡng, tôn giáo ở Việt Nam hiện nay.* <https://tuyengiao.vn/tu-chu-truong-chinh-sach-den-thuc-tien-doi-song-tin-nguon-ton-giao-o-viet-nam-hien-nay-148752>

The communist government has trained “police officers disguised as clergy,” predominantly Buddhist monks, to install in temples and monasteries in the country and abroad. The document of the IX Buddhist Congress in November 2022 stated that the church has the task of carrying out cultural diplomacy and people-to-people diplomacy.⁶² So, hundreds of (state-owned) monks have been trained to infiltrate overseas Buddhist communities to tame them along the lines of the VCP.⁶³

6.3. Violation of the Right to Freedom of Religion by Repressive Actions

The communist government of Vietnam has suppressed its citizens’ freedom of religion in various ways:

- *Criminalizing religious activities.* Many religious leaders were prosecuted and jailed based on vague clauses of the Criminal code; for example, leaders of An Dan Dai Dao,⁶⁴ Pastor Nguyen Trung Ton,⁶⁵ Pastor Y Yich,⁶⁶ missionary Nay Y Blang,⁶⁷ missionary Y Krech Bya,⁶⁸ and leaders of Tinh That Bong Lai temple.⁶⁹

- *Preventing gatherings for religious activities*

In 2023, the government interfered, obstructed, and dissolved many religious gatherings and harassed the participants. Exemplary cases were reported in the Vietnam Human Rights Network’s 2022-2023 report.⁷⁰

- *Infringement on religious organizations’ properties*

After taking control of South Vietnam, the Communist government confiscated most landholdings, educational, social, and healthcare facilities, and some monasteries and seminaries. For example, in the Archdiocese of Saigon alone, 400 facilities were confiscated after 1975,⁷¹

⁶² Luật Khoa. *3 nhiệm vụ chính trị mà đảng giao cho Giáo hội Phật giáo Việt Nam*

<https://www.luatkhoa.com/2023/03/3-nhiem-vu-chinh-tri-ma-dang-giao-cho-giao-hoi-phat-giao-viet-nam/>

⁶³ The Epoch Times. *Vietnam’s Covert War Against Overseas Buddhists.* https://www.theepochtimes.com/vietnam-covert-war-against-overseas-buddhist-ubcv_1518272.html?

⁶⁴ VOV. *Việt Nam tuyên án 22 người về tội 'hoạt động nhằm lật đổ chính quyền'*

<https://www.voatiengviet.com/a/viet-nam-22-nha-hoat-dong-bi-tuyen-an-toi-hoat-dong-nham-lat-do-chinh-quyen/1596676.html>

⁶⁵ RFA. *Sức khỏe TNLT Nguyễn Trung Tôn nguy kịch, trại giam từ chối điều trị y tế.*

<https://www.rfa.org/vietnamese/news/vietnamnews/prisoner-of-conscience-nguyen-trung-ton-suffers-many-serious-diseases-without-treatment-06272023090239.html>

⁶⁶ USCIRF. *Y Yich.* <https://www.uscirtf.gov/religious-prisoners-conscience/forb-victims-database/y-yich>

⁶⁷ VOA. *Việt Nam bắt giam thầy truyền đạo thuộc Hội thánh Tin lành Đấng Christ Tây Nguyên.*

<https://www.voatiengviet.com/a/viet-nam-bat-giam-thay-truyen-dao-thuoc-hoi-thanh-tin-lanh-dang-christ-tay-nguyen/7100376.html>

⁶⁸ Mach Song Media. *Thư chung gửi Ngoại Trưởng Blinken: Hãy lên tiếng với Hà Nội về tình trạng đàn áp tôn giáo leo thang.* <https://machsongmedia.org/vietnam/quyenconngoi/1926-thu-chung-gui-ngoai-truong-blinken-hay-len-tieng-voi-viet-nam-ve-tinh-trang-dan-ap-ton-giao-leo-thang.html>

⁶⁹ Luật Khoa. *Vụ án Tinh thất Bông Lai: Rốt cuộc họ phạm tội gì?* <https://www.luatkhoa.com/2022/06/vu-an-tinh-that-bong-lai-rot-cuoc-ho-pham-toi-gi/>

⁷⁰ [Vietnam Human Rights Network, 56](#)

⁷¹ 123doc. *Các cơ sở công giáo mà nhà nước việt nam đã chuyển quyền sử dụng.*

<https://123docz.net/document/4318895-cac-co-so-cong-giao-ma-nha-nuoc-viet-nam-da-chuyen-quyen-su-dung.htm>

and the Archdiocese of Hanoi currently has 95 facilities under the State's ownership.⁷² A handful of the confiscated facilities are still used for educational purposes. However, many are exploited by the government in profit-making services such as discos, hotels, or apartments for government officials.

- Forced renunciation of religion

The most radical form of repression is forced renunciation of people's faith. On November 9, 2021, the Prime Minister signed Decision No. 78/QĐ-TTg approving the project "Fighting, preventing, and moving towards eradicating Duong Van Minh's illegal organization in Tuyen Quang, Cao Bang, Thai Nguyen, Bac Kan, and Lao Cai provinces;"

On September 15, 2023, Deputy Minister of Home Affairs Vu Chien Thang issued document No. 5254/BNV-TGCP on several tasks for the "Church of God the Mother" to the People's Committees of provinces and cities. The document instructs authorities at all levels to "promptly detect and resolutely fight and organizationally eliminate the Church of God the Mother in Vietnam."⁷³

On July 16, 2023, Dan Toc Mien Nui magazine reported that the Yen Bai provincial government forced five families with 32 people to abandon the "Giê sù" sect, and nearly 50 families with over 250 people pledged to leave the sect "Save by Grace" to return to the traditional beliefs of the Hmong people or religious organizations recognized by the government.⁷⁴

On April 12, 2023, local authorities in Nam Quang commune, Bao Lam district, Cao Bang province, went to the house of the H'mong people to force them to sign a pledge to renounce Duong Van Minh's sect.⁷⁵

On November 3, 2022, Tuyen Quang Provincial Police actively propagated the campaign to abolish Duong Van Minh Sect. As a result, 100% of the H'mong households in Tuyen Quang province who had followed the Duong Van Minh sect signed a commitment to renounce it.⁷⁶

On February 28, 2023, Cao Bang Provincial Party Committee said it had "successfully mobilized" 162 households/562 people to give up the Duong Van Minh sect.⁷⁷

⁷² RFI. *Giáo hội Công giáo Việt Nam phản đối chính quyền phá tu viện Camêlô*. <https://www.rfi.fr/vi/viet-nam/20110526-giao-hoi-cong-giao-viet-nam-phan-doi-chinh-quyen-pha-tu-vien-kin-camelo>

⁷³ Bộ Nội Vụ. *Văn bản số 5254/BNV-TGCP V/v một số công tác đối với "Hội thánh của Đức Chúa Trời Mẹ"*. http://cms.btgcp.gov.vn/upload/documents/15_09_2023/vb-vv-mot-so-cong-tac-doi-voi-hoi-thanh-cua-duc-chua-troi-me-2023-09-15-21-43-51.pdf

⁷⁴ Dân Tộc Miền Núi. *Ngăn chặn kịp thời các tổ chức tôn giáo trái phép tại Yên Bái*. <https://dantocmiennui.vn/ngan-chan-kip-thoi-cac-to-chuc-ton-giao-trai-phep-tai-yen-bai/335065.html>

⁷⁵ RFA. *Chính quyền Cao Bằng ép nhiều tín đồ Dương Văn Minh ký giấy bỏ đạo*. <https://www.rfa.org/vietnamese/news/vietnamnews/authorities-in-cao-bang-province-force-multiple-followers-of-duong-van-minh-to-renounce-their-faith-04132023083823.html>

⁷⁶ Dân Tộc và Miền Núi. *Bình yên trở lại trên những bản Mông (Bài 2)*. <https://dantocmiennui.vn/binh-yen-tro-lai-tren-nhung-ban-mong-bai-2/331744.html>

⁷⁷ Luật Khoa. *Tỉnh Cao Bằng: Chính quyền buộc hơn 500 người từ bỏ đạo Dương Văn Minh*. <https://www.luatkhoa.com/2023/03/ton-giao-thang-2-2023-ngan-can-phai-doan-hoa-ky-gap-tin-do-tin-lanh-cong-nhan-nghe-boi-toan-nhung-phat-co-dong-dung-nhan-sai-cai/>

7. THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION (Articles 19, 20 and Paragraphs 46, 52 of the Committee’s Concluding Observations and Report CCPR/C/136/2/Add.4)

The freedom of expression and information in recent years has not improved but, on the contrary, has been restricted steadily more. The government continues to monopolize the media, suppress information unfavorable to the regime, and persecute people with opposing opinions or dare to tell the truth.

7.1. The State’s Monopoly of Speech

During the December 2020 National Conference on Media & Journalism, Member of the Politburo, Secretary of the Party Central Committee, and Head of the Central Propaganda Department Vo Van Thuong, currently the President of the State, once again emphasized, “Vietnam has no private press. This is a matter of principle.”⁷⁸

The press continues to play the role of the mouthpiece of the Party and the government to shape public opinion.

7.2. Anti-free Speech Legislation

In addition to the 2015 Criminal Law, the right to freedom of expression is now regulated by the 2016 Press Law, the 2016 Law on Access to Information, and the 2018 Law on Cybersecurity.

- According to the 2016 Press Law, the press’s task is “to propagandize and disseminate, and contribute to the formulation and protection of, the line and policies of the Party, policies and laws of the State,...” (Articles 4, 2. , b). The journalist must “protect the viewpoints, lines, and policies of the Party and policies and laws of the State; to discover, propagandize and protect positive factors; to prevent and fight against wrongful ideas and acts.” (Articles 25, 3, b)

- The 2016 Law on Access to Information allows the people to know exclusively what the authorities want to tell them while legalizing its prohibition of information unfavorable to the CPV. The government does this under vague concepts copied from the Criminal Law, such as state interests, national security, and destruction of unity (Articles 6 & 11 of the Law on Access to Information).

- The Cybersecurity Law, detailed by Decree 72/2013/ND-CP in 2013, Decree 27/2018/ND-CP in 2018, and Decision No. 512/QĐ-BTTTT dated March 31, 2023, by the Ministry of Information and Communications on the management, provision, and use of Internet services, requires Internet service companies to provide information about Internet users to the government without a court order. These companies must set up a branch or representative office in Vietnam and remove inappropriate content within 24 hours of receiving a request from the Ministry of Information and Communications or the Ministry of Public Security.

On May 8, 2023, the Vietnamese government announced that the Ministry of Information and Communications and the Ministry of Public Security have been working together to draft a decree requiring all social media account holders to identify themselves. This measure includes

⁷⁸ Tuổi Trẻ. Đảng và nhân dân rất kỳ vọng vào báo chí. <https://tuoitre.vn/dang-va-nhan-dan-rat-ki-vong-va-bao-chi-2020123112385858.htm>

foreign platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube. And that Decree will be issued by the Ministry of Information and Communications by the end of 2023.⁷⁹

In June 2023, the Vietnamese government requested that social media platforms use artificial intelligence (AI) models to automate the detection and removal of politically sensitive online content.⁸⁰

According to a Ministry of Information and Communications report, preventing and removing malicious information in cyberspace in the first six months of 2023 reached the highest rate ever. Facebook removed 2,549 posts, 12 accounts, and 54 advertising pages; YouTube removed 6,101 videos and seven channels; TikTok removed 415 links and 149 offending accounts.⁸¹

Even more concerning is that social media sites originating outside of Vietnam are regulated by an arrangement between the Vietnamese government and the companies providing these media services. For example, on July 7, 2023, the YouTube channel of Lawyer Nguyen Van Dai, a former refugee political prisoner in Germany, was locked under pressure from the Communist Government of Vietnam.

7.3. Criminalizing Freedom of Speech

In 2022 and 2023 (as of October 15, 2023), at least 27 people who used social media to express political opinions were arrested and prosecuted for allegedly violating Article 117 of the 2015 Criminal Code “Making, storing, spreading information, materials, items to oppose the State of Socialist Republic of Vietnam;” forty-four people accused of violating Article 331 “Abusing democratic freedoms to infringe upon the interests of the State, lawful rights and interests of organizations and/or citizens.”⁸²

In 2022-2023 (as of October 31, 2023), the government has used Article 331 of the 2015 Criminal Law, “Abusing democratic freedoms to infringe upon the interests of the State, lawful rights and interests of organizations and/or citizens,” to convict 44 citizens who have exercised their right to free speech.⁸³

Three key members of the Independent Journalists Association, Dr. Pham Chi Dung, Nguyen Tuong Thuy, and Le Huu Minh Tuan, are serving heavy sentences ranging from 11 to 15 years in prison.⁸⁴

7.4. Violence Against Journalists

⁷⁹ Tuổi Trẻ. *Sẽ yêu cầu tất cả chủ tài khoản mạng xã hội phải định danh.* <https://tuoitre.vn/se-yeu-cau-tat-ca-chu-tai-khoan-mang-xa-hoi-phai-dinh-danh-20230508134715584.htm>

⁸⁰ Reuters. *Vietnam tells foreign social media to use AI to detect 'toxic' content.* <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/vietnam-tells-foreign-social-media-use-ai-detect-toxic-content-2023-06-30/>

⁸¹ VietnamNet. *Gỡ bỏ hàng nghìn thông tin xấu độc trên Facebook, YouTube, TikTok.* <https://vietnamnet.vn/6-thang-dau-nam-go-bo-hang-nghin-thong-tin-xau-doc-tren-facebook-youtube-2160057.html>

⁸² Vietnam Human Rights Network. 98-101

⁸³ Vietnam Human Rights Network. 40

⁸⁴ Fidh. *Vietnam: Sentencing of Pham Chi Dung, Nguyen Tuong Thuy and Le Huu Minh Tuan.* <https://www.fidh.org/en/issues/human-rights-defenders/vietnam-sentencing-of-pham-chi-dung-nguyen-tuong-thuy-and-le-huu-minh>

The number of media people experiencing violence has increased. The Report on Human Rights in Vietnam 2022-2023 of the Vietnam Human Rights Network documented at least ten registered journalists attacked in 7 cases.⁸⁵

8. THE RIGHT OF PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY (Article 21 and Paragraph 48 of the Committee’s Concluding Observation)

Presently, gatherings to express people’s views and aspirations are still regulated by Decree 38/2005 of the Government and Circular No. 09/2005/TT-BCA of the Ministry of Public Security. According to these two legal documents, people must register in advance and get permission from the relevant People’s Committees for gatherings of five people or more. In addition, they must disclose the names of the attendees, the content, the date, and the time of the meeting. Gatherings that do not meet the above conditions are considered illegal.

In 2011, Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung proposed and submitted a draft Law on Demonstrations; however, after more than 12 years, the draft law has not been included in the legislative agenda of the current National Assembly.

Although banned, mass protests continued in various places in 2022-2023 for multiple reasons, most notably the rallies of land expropriation victims demanding justice and exploited workers demanding improvement in wages and working conditions. According to a report by the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor, in 2022, there were 157 collective work stoppages arising from labor relations (an increase of 50 over the same period in 2021).⁸⁶ In the first three months of 2023, there were 23. All of the above strikes are illegal because they were not organized and led by the employees’ representative organization as specified by the Labor Law 2019 (Chapter XIV, Section 5). During this time, there were also gatherings of land petitioners in many places throughout the country.⁸⁷

To prevent people’s protests like in previous years, in 2022, the government created several regiments and battalions of mobile police in reserves in provinces and cities whose purpose is to crack down on people accused of “disturbing public order” and “illegal demonstrations.”⁸⁸

9. THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION WITH OTHERS (Article 22 and Paragraph 50 of the Committee’s Concluding Observations)

The legal provisions governing associations are Ordinance No. 102 / SL / L004 of May 20, 1957, Decree No. 45/2010 / ND-CP of 2010, amended and supplemented by Decree No. 33/2012 / ND-CP of 2012. Under this legal framework, free association is not a right defined by the ICCPR; instead, it is only a privilege from the government.

⁸⁵ [Vietnam Human Rights Network. 47-48](#)

⁸⁶ Thanh Niên. *Doanh nghiệp chờ giải thể, chủ bỏ trốn, công nhân không có thương tết.* <https://thanhnien.vn/doanh-nghiep-cho-giai-the-chu-bo-tron-cong-nhan-khong-co-thuong-tet-1851540834.htm>

⁸⁷ [Vietnam Human Rights Network. 35-36](#)

⁸⁸ RFA. *Hơn chục tỉnh/thành lập lực lượng trấn áp biểu tình.* https://www.rfa.org/vietnamese/in_depth/more-than-a-dozen-provinces-establish-force-to-suppress-protests-08102022133917.html

In 2005, the government announced a Draft Law on Associations. After many submissions and withdrawals, the bill on association has not been mentioned in the 15th National Assembly legislative agenda.

In the current reality, besides the CPV and its peripheral organizations called “socio-political organizations,” no organization that does not share the same political stance with the VCP is allowed to operate. Even specialized civil society organizations, such as mutual aid organizations, professional organizations, and environmental protection organizations, must also be approved and controlled by the CPV.

In 2022-2023, the Vietnamese communist government has cracked down on several scientific, economic, and environmental groups such as:

- Institute of Technology Research and Development (SENA - Southeast and North Asia) run by Dr. Nguyen Son Lo;⁸⁹
- Institute of Policy, Legal, and Development (PLD) headed by Mr. Hoang Ngoc Giao;⁹⁰
- The Green Innovation and Development Centre was founded and operated by Ms. Nguy Thi Khanh.⁹¹
- The Center For Media In Educating Community (MEC) was founded and operated by Mr. Mai Phan Loi.⁹²
- Law and Policy of Sustainable Development Research Center (LPSD) directed by LS Dang Dinh Bach.⁹³

Concerning trade unions, the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor (VGCL) is the only legal labor union organization in Vietnam today. It was established by the CPV in 1929, along with the Party’s founding, purporting to unite workers to support its policies and action programs. To hold workers’ activities under the Party’s line, the trade unions’ executive committees at all levels must “implement the policies, resolutions, and regulations of the Party and superior trade unions.”⁹⁴

To participate in two Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and the European Union–Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA), Vietnam has committed to respecting workers’ rights under the ILO provisions.

On November 20, 2019, the Vietnam National Assembly passed Labor Law No. 45/2019/QH14. The most noticeable addition in the Labor Law 2019 is “The right to establish, join and participate in representative organizations of employees” (Art 170). However, with the

⁸⁹ Tuổi Trẻ. *Khởi tố nguyên viện trưởng Viện Nghiên cứu công nghệ và phát triển Sena*. <https://tuoitre.vn/khoi-to-nguyen-vien-truong-vien-nghien-cuu-cong-nghe-va-phat-trien-sena-20220727195956284.htm>

⁹⁰ RFA. *Bắt tạm giam Viện trưởng Viện Nghiên cứu Chính sách, Pháp luật và Phát triển (PLD) Hoàng Ngọc Giao*. <https://www.rfa.org/vietnamese/news/vietnamnews/researcher-hoang-ngoc-giao-arrested-with-accusation-of-transferring-documents-to-foreigners-12192022082527.html>

⁹¹ Thanh Niên. *Bắt nữ giám đốc Trung tâm phát triển sáng tạo xanh GreenID*. <https://thanhnien.vn/bat-nu-giam-doc-trung-tam-phat-trien-sang-tao-xanh-greenid-1851427961.htm>

⁹² BBC. *Ông Mai Phan Lợi bị án tù 4 năm vì tội 'trốn thuế'*. <https://www.bbc.com/vietnamese/vietnam-59953280>

⁹³ VietnamPlus. *Giám đốc trung tâm nghiên cứu lĩnh án 5 năm tù vì tội trốn thuế*. <https://www.vietnamplus.vn/giam-doc-trung-tam-nghien-cuu-linh-an-5-nam-tu-vi-toi-tron-thue/810609.vnp>

⁹⁴ Luật Việt Nam. *Current Charter of Vietnam Trade Union, issued on February 3, 2020*. <https://luatvietnam.vn/lao-dong/quyet-dinh-174-qd-tld-2020-ban-hanh-dieu-le-cong-doan-viet-nam-khoa-xii-180584-d1.html>

constraints provided by other law provisions, the employees' representative organizations referred to are not full-fledged union organizations as defined by ILO Convention No.87.

So far, the Vietnamese government has not issued any regulatory document specifying how to implement this provision related to the "enterprise-based employees' organization," no such organization is allowed to be established according to that model.

In 2022-2023, the state propaganda machine issued warnings that those who want to develop "workers' organizations at enterprises" are "hostile forces" and "reactionaries" who entice workers to "form an opposition political force under the guise of 'independent trade unions.'"⁹⁵

10. THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION (Article 27 and Paragraph 56 of the Committee's Concluding Observations)

Vietnam has participated in many international conventions on anti-discrimination; however, discrimination and unequal treatment have not improved, especially on the issue of discrimination against citizens of the former Republic of Vietnam, those outside the CPV, religious believers, ethnic minorities, and women.

10.1. Discrimination against Supporters of the Government of South Vietnam

Although the war ended nearly half a century ago, Vietnam is still pursuing a policy of discrimination and stigmatization against supporters of the previous government. Its categorization of people as "having contributed to the revolution" versus "being part of the puppet regime" dictates how people's lives unfold. This profiling policy still creates great educational, political, and economic inequality.⁹⁶

After 1975, about 200,000⁹⁷ Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) wounded and disabled veterans had to accept the victors' mistreatment. They lived in extreme poverty without any source of income. Many were pushed to new economic zones. Some become street beggars.

Meanwhile, the government has adopted an opposite policy towards Communist cadres, veterans, and their families. As reported by the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs, more than 9.2 million "meritorious" people (about 10% of the country's population) enjoy preferential policies due to their service to the Revolution, of which nearly 1.3 million people are enjoying the monthly preferential regime.⁹⁸ With these preferential measures, 99.7% of households with meritorious services now have a living standard equal to or higher than the

⁹⁵ Công an Nhân dân. *Núp bóng "tổ chức đại diện người lao động" để chống phá Đảng, Nhà nước.* <https://cand.com.vn/Chong-dien-bien-hoa-binh/nup-bong-to-chuc-dai-dien-nguoi-lao-dong-de-chong-pha-dang-nha-nuoc-i630256/>

⁹⁶ RFA. *Ngược đãi sau 30/4 là bi kịch lịch sử.* http://www.rfa.org/vietnamese/in_depth/discr-after-fall-saigon-04222015080143.html

⁹⁷ Hội HO Cứu Trợ TPB & QP. *Chuyện người thương binh.* <http://tpbvnh.blogspot.com/2016/10/chuyen-nguoi-thuong-binh.html>

⁹⁸ Bộ LĐ-TBXH. *Hoàn thiện chính sách ưu đãi người có công với cách mạng: Đậm nghĩa tình, tri ân sâu nặng.* <http://www.molisa.gov.vn/Pages/tintuc/chitiet.aspx?tintucID=230151>

households in their area, and there are no more households of people with meritorious services in the poor house category.⁹⁹

10.2. Discrimination against Non-communist Citizens

The CPV has about 5.3 million members in a country with approximately one hundred million inhabitants. Discrimination between communist and non-communist citizens is not limited to the public domain but extends to all social activities, from the economy to education and social security.

In the economy, all CPV members receive a salary depending on their seniority. Party members with 30 party-age years or more are entitled to bonuses depending on seniority. The national budget is funding the compensation of the CPV members.

In education, admission to universities is based on the students' and their families' profiles, even if such schools are not public-security or military institutions, which explicitly only accept Communist Party or Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union members.¹⁰⁰

Social services such as housing and healthcare depend on the recipient's position vis-à-vis the Party.

10.3. Discrimination against Religious Believers

Religious believers have continued to experience discrimination and stigmatization. The Communist government still regards religion as a threat to the regime. Therefore, besides banning and suppressing some religions, they treat religious followers as second-class citizens in all social areas, especially in public services and education.

For elected positions, the Vietnamese government often pre-sets some quotas for elected religious representatives, selected according to their loyalty to the CPV. For example, in the 15th National Assembly election 2021, the government picked up six religious dignitaries for this 500-member body.¹⁰¹ Religious followers cannot sit for the entrance examination to military or police schools with the three-generation background check system.¹⁰² In addition, military and police officers and their spouses may not profess Catholicism, Protestantism, or Islam.¹⁰³

The current standard curriculum vitae form for students in Vietnam always includes questions about religion. Students who declare they belong to religion will not be favored when choosing curricula, scholarships, and other benefits despite higher scores on aptitude tests.

10.4. Discrimination against Ethnic Minorities

⁹⁹ Tin Tức. *Huy động các nguồn lực chăm sóc tốt nhất dành cho người có công.* <https://baotintuc.vn/xa-hoi/huy-dong-cac-nguon-luc-cham-soc-tot-nhat-danh-cho-nguoi-co-cong-20210725164713158.htm>

¹⁰⁰ Tuổi Trẻ Online. *3 điểm mới khi xét tuyển vào trường quân đội.* <https://tuoitre.vn/3-diem-moi-khi-xet-tuyen-va-truong-quan-doi-20180305080716094.htm>

¹⁰¹ Tin Tức. *Dự kiến số lượng, cơ cấu, thành phần đại biểu Quốc hội khóa XV.* <https://baotintuc.vn/thoi-su/du-kien-so-luong-co-cau-thanh-phan-dai-bieu-quoc-hoi-khoa-xv-20210205202828048.htm>

¹⁰² Luật sư X. *Người theo tôn giáo có thể trở thành công an được không?* <https://lsx.vn/nguoi-theo-ton-giao-co-the-tro-thanh-cong-an-duoc-khong/>

¹⁰³ Dân Luật. *Theo đạo thiên chúa có được lấy sĩ quan quân đội không?* <https://thuvienphapluat.vn/cong-dong-dan-luat/theo-dao-thien-chua-co-duoc-lay-si-quan-quan-doi-khong-201278.aspx>

Discrimination against ethnic minorities is particularly prominent in the economy, education, and politics.

Economic growth in Vietnam only brings wealth to a few people, mostly in urban areas, widens the rich-poor gap, and exacerbates tensions among different social strata. This disparity leaves most people, especially ethnic minorities, on the sidelines. According to a 2023 study by United Nations experts, while making up only about 15% of the population, ethnic minorities account for 90% of the country's extreme poverty and more than 50% of the multi-dimensionally poor. Their average income is only 40-50% of the national average.¹⁰⁴

According to a World Bank report, the stunting rate among ethnic minority children is more than twice that of Kinh children (31.4% vs. 15%), and the rate of children underweight ethnic minority children is also 2.25 times larger than Kinh children (21.9% vs. 9.7%).¹⁰⁵

Several studies on ethnic minority children in Vietnam have concluded that ethnic minorities are the least likely to receive an education. Students of ethnic minorities are excluded from educational institutions, especially from secondary school and above. Up to 65% of Kinh and Hoa students are enrolled in high school, while only 13.7% are enrolled from other ethnic groups.¹⁰⁶

In the 15th National Assembly, the VCP arranged for 89 people from ethnic minorities to be elected to the National Assembly (17.84% of the total MPs). This arrangement indicates that, as with the ratio of religious or female representatives in the National Assembly, the target (or quota) is only a façade put up by the CPV for deceptive purposes.

10.5. Discrimination Against Women

10.5.1. Violence against women

During a discussion on the draft Law on Prevention of and Control over Domestic Violence (amended) in June 2022, National Assembly Deputy Ha Thi Nga, President of the Vietnam Women's Union, admitted that domestic violence "tends to be more severe, more diverse, more complex, has been and is leaving tragic and painful consequences for many families."¹⁰⁷

Outside the family setting, women are also subjected to societal violence, especially in the workplace. According to a 2023 poll by NÓI, a media company committed to telling the stories of Vietnamese women, nearly 90% of women polled shared that they had been sexually harassed. Most (63%) do not seek help because they do not fully understand it is harassment. Only 20% of victims who seek help are satisfied with the support they receive. More

¹⁰⁴ Ramla Khalidi, *UNDP in Viet Nam. Digital solutions empower ethnic minority women in Vietnam*. (Asia Times on 25 March, 2023). <https://asiatimes.com/author/ramla-khalidi/>

¹⁰⁵ The World Bank. *Persistent Malnutrition in Ethnic Minority Communities of Vietnam : Issues and Options for Policy and Interventions*. <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/ar/369601561716089327/pdf/Persistent-Malnutrition-in-Ethnic-Minority-Communities-of-Vietnam-Issues-and-Options-for-Policy-and-Interventions.pdf>

¹⁰⁶ Nguyen Tran Lam, *Oxfam in Vietnam. How to tackle inequality in Vietnam?* <https://vietnam.oxfam.org/latest/publications/report-how-tackle-inequality-vietnam>

¹⁰⁷ Quốc hội Việt Nam. *ĐBQH Hà Thị Nga: Bạo lực gia đình là nguyên nhân chính củatrên 76% số vụ ly hôn trong 10 năm qua*. <https://quochoi.vn/hoatdongdbqh/Pages/home.aspx?ItemID=67951>

importantly, up to 84% of victims said sexual harassment often happens in public places (office, gym, street, online.)¹⁰⁸

10.5.2. Gender inequality in employment

According to the General Statistics Office, in 2021, the average monthly income of women was 30% lower than that of men nationwide (4.8 million VND for women and 6.7 million VND for men). This gap is even more significant for workers in the agricultural sector (3.9 million VND for women and 6.1 million VND for men.)¹⁰⁹

The gap between men and women in employment widened in 2022-2023 when the difficult economic situation resulted in job loss for many people. According to Ms. Ha Thi Nga, Member of the National Assembly and Chairwoman of the Vietnam Women's Union, unemployment and layoffs have mainly intensified in the leather, footwear, and textile industries - with a high rate of female employees. So, most of those laid off or lost jobs are female workers with general education.¹¹⁰

The percentage of women holding leadership positions in all sectors of the economy is deficient. According to the latest studies, only 11% of CEOs in Vietnam are female, a low percentage compared to ASEAN countries (27%).¹¹¹

In the professional field, the proportion of women with high scientific titles and qualifications is low compared to men: female professors (3.5%), associate professors (5.9%), doctoral degrees (12.6%), and postgraduate degrees in science (5.1%).¹¹²

10.5.3. Gender Inequality in public services

Vietnam often prides itself on the number of women working in government. In the 15th National Assembly election in 2021, 151 women accounted for 30.26% of the total number of National Assembly members. These figures cannot represent women's participation because the appointment of members of the National Assembly is pre-determined by the VCP.¹¹³

Furthermore, the representative apparatus has no real power because Party committees make all crucial decisions. In fact, out of the 16 Politburo members, there is only one woman, and among

¹⁰⁸ Angeliqve Masse-Nguyen (NOI). *What Vietnamese women told us on sexual harassment?* <https://sustainablevietnam.com/2023/03/10/what-vietnamese-women-told-us-on-sexual-harassment/>

¹⁰⁹ Tổng cục Thống kê. *Thông tin thống kê giới tại Việt Nam 2021. Nhà xuất bản Thống kê, 2022.* <https://www.gso.gov.vn/en/data-and-statistics/2023/04/gender-statistics-in-vietnam-2021/>

¹¹⁰ Phụ Nữ Việt Nam. *Chủ tịch Hội LHPN Việt Nam: Cần giải pháp mạnh mẽ, kịp thời hơn nữa phòng ngừa, xử lý nghiêm đối tượng bạo hành, xâm hại phụ nữ, trẻ em.* <https://phunuvietnam.vn/chu-tich-hoi-lhpn-viet-nam-can-giai-phap-manh-me-kip-thoi-hon-nua-phong-ngua-xu-ly-nghiem-doi-tuong-bao-hanh-xam-hai-phu-nu-tre-em-20230525110505035.htm>

¹¹¹ TheLEADER. *Gỡ rào cản vô hình trên con đường thăng tiến của nữ lãnh đạo.* <https://theleader.vn/go-rao-can-vo-hinh-tren-con-duong-thang-tien-cua-nu-lanh-dao-m1678843274047.htm>

¹¹² Tổ chức nhà nước. *Trao quyền cho phụ nữ để thực hiện bình đẳng giới ở Việt Nam.* <https://tcnn.vn/news/detail/48988/Trao-quyen-cho-phu-nu-de-thuc-hien-binh-dang-gioi-o-Viet-Nam.html>

¹¹³ Ủy ban Thường vụ Quốc hội. *Nghị quyết số 1185/NQ-UBTVQH14 ngày 11/1/2021, dự kiến tổng số đại biểu Quốc hội khóa XV là 500 đại biểu.* <https://thuvienphapluat.vn/van-ban/Bo-may-hanh-chinh/Nghi-quyet-1185-NQ-UBTVQH14-2021-du-kien-so-luong-co-cau-thanh-phan-dai-bieu-Quoc-hoi-khoa-XV-462918.aspx>

the current 63 provincial-city party secretaries, there are only six women. Only three women are out of the present 27 cabinet ministers on the government side.

These are the most powerful positions in the current Vietnamese government system, so the lack of representation of women is deplorable.