## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Scope of the Document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. State Structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The Constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Citizenship and Nationality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Political System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- National Assembly elections, May 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Judiciary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Legal Rights/Detention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Death Penalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Internal Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Prison and Prison Conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Conscientious Objectors &amp; Deserters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Medical Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- AIDS / HIV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Educational System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Overview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Freedom of Speech and the Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Religious Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Political Activists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Dissidents within Vietnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Dissident groups outside Vietnam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Employment Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- People Trafficking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Freedom of Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Vietnamese Diaspora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Returnees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Visas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ethnic Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Child Care Arrangements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Homosexuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.C Human Rights - Other Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Treatment of former South Vietnamese combatants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Boat people and returnees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronology of Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prominent People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References to Source Material (with external links)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **Scope of the Document**

1.1 This Report has been produced by the Country Information and Policy Unit, Immigration and Nationality Directorate, Home Office, from information obtained from a wide variety of recognised sources. The document does not contain any Home Office opinion or policy.

1.2 The Report has been prepared for background purposes for those involved in the asylum / human rights determination process. The information it contains is not exhaustive. It concentrates on the issues most commonly raised in asylum / human rights claims made in the United Kingdom.

1.3 The Report is referenced throughout. It is intended for use by caseworkers as a signpost to the source material, which has been made available to them. The vast majority of the source material is readily available in the public domain.

1.4 It is intended to revise the Report on a six-monthly basis while the country remains within the top 35 asylum-seeker producing countries in the United Kingdom.
2. Geography

2.1. Vietnam is bordered by China, Cambodia, and Laos. The geography of the land splits the country into two main river deltas divided by a central highland region. The capital city is Hanoi, with Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) the country's second city. There are 58 provinces (*tinh*, both singular and plural) [3a][8h map]

2.2 According to the UN, the total population in 2003, was estimated to be 81.4 million [7bf], with the ethnic Vietnamese (the Kinh) estimated in 1989 to comprise 87% of the total population. [8e][3c] There are 54 official ethnic communities. [8f]

2.3 The official language of the country is Vietnamese. There are 92 other living languages, and one extinct language. [8f] It was estimated in 1993 that 86.7% of the population spoke Vietnamese, split into three dialects (Northern, Central and Southern). [8f]

3. Economy

3.1 Experiments in economic reform have moved in waves, and have had some setbacks. A planned Marxist-Leninist controlled economy was imposed and extended throughout the country after 1975. Meanwhile, Vietnam was both isolated and depended on Soviet subsidies because of its various foreign-policy decisions at the time. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Vietnam had to start developing along the lines of a market-led economy in the mid-1980s. [4z][7ba] A mid-1990s boom occurred and Vietnam was set to become the next Asian Tiger economy. There were social and political problems with the resultant land ownership issues (see 3.3 - 3.8). Though economic freedoms are now technically in place, after the Asian economic crashes of 1997/98 actual development from state planning has been slow. [8e][7ba]

3.2 A landmark trade deal with the US signed on 13 July 2000, further US trade deals under discussion at the moment (Autumn 2000), and the opening of Vietnam stock exchange was held herald a new period of growth. [4x] However, such not been realised, and in April 2002, it was reported that many promises of foreign development were now being cancelled and others under review by foreign business, as foreign businesses have complained of Vietnamese ineffective bureaucracy and corruption. [7y] Though Vietnam's ambitious hopes of joining the World Trade Organisation in 2005 have been boosted by endorsements from the US and World Bank, current progress toward the requisite 'full market economy' remains too slow. [7be]

3.3 Land issues. In 1996 and particularly in 1997, the then buoyant economy prompted many local and entrepreneurial initiatives centred on land use. In a number of cases local officials expropriated or compulsorily purchased land
for future speculation. In many cases, villagers or long term residents were dispossessed, and often felt cheated. Land issues were further clouded by officials' prejudices against certain groups. In 1997, many violent incidents occurred directly related to land expulsions. [4ab][5a]

3.4 Notable disputes included the protests over the planned golf course at Kim No commune, Tho Da village in December 1996 [4ab] and thirty incidents in June 1997 [4ad]. Over 3,000 protestors were active in June 1997 in one province alone - Thai Binh province 45 kilometres southeast of Hanoi. The protests in Thai Binh led the government to investigate local mismanagement of land and construction deals (reporting back in September 1997), and led to a cleansing of the local Party and government structures. [4ad][4ae] Land disputes continued to cause reported unrest throughout 1997 and 1998. [4af][4ah]

3.5 Officials have been implicated in corruption associated with land deals. In September 2001, the trial began of a central bank official, a tourism chief and six planning ministry officials on charges of corruption surrounding the construction bids for the West Lake amusement park, where a company allegedly falsified financial documents in order to secure their bid in 1999. The allegations when first aired in 1999 led to the temporary disgrace of the deputy prime minister, Ngo Xuan Loc. [7s]

3.6 Some land disputes have been clouded by officials' prejudice, such as the Long Binh dispute. The mainly Catholic village lies in Dong Nai province, 40 kilometres north-east of Ho Chi Minh City. There were major protests in January 1998 during forced evictions, akin to previous clashes at the nearby village of Tra Co where 3000 villages fought with police in November 1997. [4ah] Officials sought to downplay Catholic connections with regards to subsequent arrests. [4ai]. Buddhists are also involved in land disputes, mainly in relation to disputes over the planning and building of Buddhist temples and shrines, [4ac] For example, the monks in Hue in 2000, where the authorities have denied permission to carry out repairs to pagodas. [1b]

3.7 The Government drive against corruption has been a main news story in 2002 / 2003, with the culmination of a trial of 155 alleged racketeers. [7aq] The main defendant is Truong Van Cam (known as Nam Cam) the alleged head of a criminal empire based in Ho Chi Minh City. His co-defendants include 13 police officers, 3 prosecutors, 3 journalists, and several high-ranking government officials including a vice minister of public security, the director of Vietnamese state radio and a vice national chief prosecutor. [7aq]

3.8 In June 2003 the Vietnamese Politburo announced a programme to restructure state-owned farms by 2005. According to the resolution, state-owned farms are still performing poorly due to slack management, inefficient use of land and resources, outdated techniques and harsh working conditions. Under the programme, farms will be clearly split into two - those producing to sell and those producing to feed the public. Money is to be invested to upgrade existing facilities and to improve the yield and quality of agricultural and forestry products. Farms running at a persistent loss will be turned to
other ends or dissolved. Those made redundant as a result will receive financial assistance and training. [4ce] Furthermore in August 2003, the Government announced a public consultation exercise with a view to generating ideas for incorporation into the process of revising the Land Law. [4cg]

4. History

4.1 A new chapter in the history of Vietnam began in September 1945 when Ho Chi Minh, leader of the Viet Minh, a communist dominated front organisation, proclaimed the country’s independence. The Viet Minh had stepped into the power vacuum created by the surrender of the Japanese, who had displaced the French colonial rulers of Vietnam during World War II. However, the French tried to re-establish their authority over Vietnam and fighting soon erupted between their forces and the Viet Minh, who retained effective control over much of the countryside, particularly in the north. French resources were drained by the continuing conflict and, after a major defeat at Dien Bien Phu, the French agreed to withdraw at the Geneva Conference of 1954, which effectively divided Vietnam into a communist-controlled north (the Democratic Republic of Vietnam) and a Western-backed south (the Republic of Vietnam). [7u][12b]

4.2 When promised nation-wide elections were opposed by South Vietnam, the North Vietnamese began to use northern forces to strengthen the communist movement in the south in order to achieve national re-unification in what was essentially a civil war. The USA increased its support for the south in the 1960s with troop levels exceeding half a million men towards the end of the decade, but was unable to defeat the north. The withdrawal of US forces begun in 1969 was completed just after the Paris Peace Agreements of 1973. However, the civil war continued and in 1975 a North Vietnamese invasion led to the rapid collapse of the South Vietnamese regime. [7u][12b]

4.3 The country was formally re-unified as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in July 1976. However, peace was disturbed by growing problems with China, which led to the expulsion or flight of over half a million people of Chinese origin between 1978 and 1980, many of them “boat people” who escaped to south-east Asia and Hong Kong and were resettled in the West. Relations reached a low point in 1978/9 when Vietnam invaded Cambodia to depose the Khmer Rouge government and China in retaliation sent an army on a month long punitive expedition into parts of north Vietnam. Because of its perceived occupation of Cambodia, Vietnam endured a period of international isolation in the 1980s, when it received support only from the USSR and its allies and its economy suffered as a consequence. [7u][12b]

4.4 As Soviet support faltered and economic problems grew the Vietnamese leadership re-assessed priorities and embarked on a programme of economic liberalisation from the late 1980s. Following the completion of the withdrawal of its forces from Cambodia in 1989, and its co-operation in the 1991 Paris
settlement of the Cambodian conflict, Vietnam emerged from its isolation. Relations were normalised with China in 1991, Japan in 1993 and finally with the USA in 1995, the same year that it became a member of ASEAN. Economic liberalisation and improved international relations that paved the way for foreign investment led to significant growth in the economy and in the standard of living in the 1990s. [7u][12b]

5. State Structures

The Constitution

5.1 The 1959 constitution of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) was replaced by the December 1980 constitution of Vietnam (unified), which in turn was revised and accepted by the National Assembly on 15 April 1992. "The Constitution" therefore refers to the 1992 revision. [3i][8e]

Citizenship and Nationality

5.2 The 1992 Constitution sets out under Article 5 that 'the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is the unified State of all nationalities living in the territory of Vietnam'. Citizenship is defined in Article 49 as "a person with Vietnamese nationality" and a citizen's duties are defined under Articles 50 to 80. [9a]

Political System

5.3 The state is a communist state based on Marxist-Leninist precepts. The Communist party of Vietnam (CPV) monopolises power as the sole legal party. [3i][8e]

5.4 The National Assembly (made up of mainly Party candidates, presented with Party nominations) elects the President and Vice-President. The National Assembly Standing Committee (again Party-led) supervises the passage of legislation and monitors the activities of the executive. The country is divided into provinces and municipalities that are subordinate to the central Government. [3i][8e]

5.5 The President is the Head of State, and appoints the members of the Government. Tran Duc Luong is the current President, elected by the 10th National assembly on 24 September 1997, and re-elected in July 2002. [3i][7am][8e]

National Assembly elections, May 2002
5.6 In May 2002, there were elections for deputies to the forthcoming 11th National Assembly. [7z][7aa][7ab][7ac] There were 498 National Assembly seats at stake. [7aa] 135 candidates were not Communist party candidates. [7aa] 13 candidates were judged to be independents, though accepting the constitutional rule of the Communist party. [7ab] The 16.5% proportion of non-Party candidates was 'slightly up' on the 1997 elections. [7ab] Before the elections, three senior Communist officials were disqualified on suspicion of involvement in immoral behaviour, corruption and dubious associations. [7z] A total of 759 candidates ran in the elections, all having gained prior approval from the Fatherland Front, a mass organisation closely linked with the Communist party. [7aa]

5.7 40 million voters were eligible to vote. On polling day (19 May 2002), the Government claimed initially a 95% turn out, [7ab] and then a 99% turn out. [7ac] The results were published on 25 May 2002, (after one local rerun) and 51 non-Party candidates, of whom two were independents, were elected. [7ac]]

5.8 Before the meeting of the new Assembly, the Party was rocked by a number of fresh allegations of corruption, and two ministers were dismissed from their posts. [7ap] The 11th National Assembly however did meet on 19 July 2002, and set about its first task of formalising the new ministerial line-up. [7ao] Firstly, there was the formal re-election of the president, and the National Assembly returned a vote of 97% in favour of President Luong's continuing in the Presidency. [7am] He duly re-appointed his Prime Minister, Phan Van Khai. [7ai] The cabinet was announced [7aj] and three new ministries were created, emphasising the development of the communications industry and concerns about the natural environment. [7ai]

Judiciary

5.9 The legal system is based on Marxist-Leninist Communist theory and French precedent law. The Supreme Court heads the legal system, and includes provincial courts, district courts, and military tribunals. [1a][3a] The Constitution provides for the independence of judges and jurors, but in practice the Party maintains a close relationship with the courts. [1d]

5.10 The Supreme People's Procuracy brings charges against the accused and serves as prosecutor during trials. A judging council, made up of a judge and one or more lay assessors, determines guilt or innocence and also passes sentence. The relevant people's council appoints lay assessors, who are required to have high moral standards but who do not need to have legal training. The legal institutional framework and legal culture, which favors the Procuracy over the judiciary and preserves a presumption of guilt in criminal cases, constitutes a major obstacle to free and fair trials. Although the Constitution asserts that citizens are innocent until proven guilty, a foreign legal expert who analysed the court system during 2000 found that more than
95% of the persons who were charged with a crime were convicted. The country's lawyers also complained that judges generally presume guilt. [1d]

5.11 The publishing industry dealing in law books and official publications is in disarray, leading to, argues the source, a chaotic legal system and incompetent legal advice. [4am]

Legal Rights/Detention

5.12 The Government continues to arrest and detain people arbitrarily, though the police do have the right to arrest and detain without recourse to a court of law. The police on occasion have disregarded the various rights accorded to detainees under the Criminal Procedure Code. [1c][1d]

5.13 A revised Criminal Code came into effect in July 2000. The revised codes puts stricter limits on the time permitted for the Procuracy (the investigative branch of the police who prepare cases and initiate public prosecutions) to investigate before closing a case. [1c][1d]

5.14 Arrest warrants have the following features: standard Socialist Republic of Vietnam banner at the top, with Arrest Warrant (in Vietnamese) below the banner; the rule contravened by the accused; and the issuing authority's name in the top left hand corner. Though a court official or the police can issue an arrest warrant, its validity requires the Public Prosecutor's authorisation, and therefore should include the signature of the President or Deputy President of the Prosecution Institute. [6r]

5.15 Courts may sentence persons to administrative detention for a period up to 5 years after release from prison. These provisions were enforced unevenly. The MPS used administrative probation to place persons under house arrest without trial for up to 2 years. [1d]

Death Penalty

5.16 In a rare official disclosure of information about the use of the death penalty, the Supreme People's Court informed the UN Human Rights Committee in July 2002 that between 1997 and 2002, 931 people had been sentenced to death. These included 535 cases of people convicted of "violations of the right to life", 310 involved drug-related offences, 24 involved corruption charges, and 5 involved people convicted of property-related offences. The number of executions carried out during this period was not made public. Executions in Vietnam are carried out by firing squad, sometimes in front of large crowds. The Chairman of the UN Human Rights Committee called for the gradual abolition of the death penalty in Vietnam. [2h] According to the chair of a Vietnamese civil rights group, the Vietnam Committee for the Defence of Human rights, "Death penalties continue to be pronounced despite advice from the upper echelons... who have called for it to be used less." (Vo Van Ai, 30 May 2000), and in the new Criminal Code, capital offences have been reduced to 29, as opposed to 44 previously. [4u]
Internal Security

5.17 The military forces used to be involved with internal security, but policing is now mostly controlled by the Ministry of Public Security. The Ministry controls the police, a special investigations agency, and other units that maintain internal security. **[1d]** However, in some remote areas, the military forces were the primary government agency, providing infrastructure and all public safety functions, including maintaining public order in the event of civil unrest. Since 2001 the military has played a large role in the Central Highlands by enforcing restrictions on gatherings, by detaining individuals, and by enforcing travel restrictions. **[1d][2h]** A system of household registration and of block wardens who monitor political activities, is also run by the Ministry. **[1a]**

5.18 In the period 1995 to 2000, the Ministry of Public Security posted wanted notices for 50,775 criminals. At the time of reporting (October 2000) 19,000 criminals were being sought. Over the 5 years, 63,087 delinquents were encouraged to give themselves up. **[4as]**

5.19 One article written in August 2002, alleged that police corruption is rife at every level, and deeply ingrained in police culture. **[6ae]**

5.20 In its fight against internal corruption, the Ministry of Public Security released a statistical report on discipline cases in October 2000. Since 1986, 5,176 inspections were held in 4,305 units. 1,834 corruption cases were lodged, with prosecution proposed for 283 officers, such as in the Nam Cam case, where over 100 officers have been disciplined. **[4at]** Several senior police officials are co-defendants in the on-going Nam Cam trial. **[7aq][6ae]** Likewise, the Government is taking action against border police involved in drug smuggling. **[6ab]**

5.21 Members of the police force have been involved in serious crimes, for instance the rape of a young woman by five riot police reported in April 1997. Reports of such incidents have spurred a public campaign to press the government to reform the police. **[4ao]**

Prisons and Prison Conditions

5.22 Prison conditions are harsh, but not generally life-threatening. Pre-trial detention conditions are particularly bad. Overcrowding has prompted many amnesties. **[1d]**

5.23 On 1 September 1999, the government announced a prisoner amnesty, aiming to free 1,712 prisoners and reduce the sentence for a further 4,316, beginning 2 September 1999. It was unclear whether any dissidents would be released: a dozen dissidents were released amongst the 7,800 prisoners...
released in the two independence day amnesties in 1998. [4b] The amnesty announced on 29 April 2000 released 12,264 prisoners, including 29 foreign nationals. [4j][4l][4p] A further amnesty, to coincide with independence day, was announced on 30 August 2000, announcing the release of 10,693 prisoners. Again, there were no indications that key political dissidents were included. [4aa] In July 2001, the authorities confirmed that over 23,000 prisoners were granted amnesty, including 65 foreign nationals; and promised further reforms in prison management and re-education facilities. [4be] In July 2002, the number of amnesties was set at 6,110. [7ad]

5.24 Conditions in pre-trial detention are particularly poor. There are credible reports that authorities sometimes deny inmates access to sunlight, exercise, and reading material. Prisoners awaiting trial and remaining "under investigation" sometimes experienced harsher conditions than those who were convicted and sentenced. Nevertheless, most prisoners had access to basic health care. [1d] Women are usually held separately from men, but in similar conditions: juveniles are sometimes held together with adult prisoners. Likewise, ill prisoners are referred to hospital and medical treatment, but mentally ill people are often incarcerated with the general prison population. [1d]

5.25 In the period 1979 to 1994, prison camps operated local irregular economies. Contact with family members may have been subject to local payments. In 1998, Amnesty International (AI) were still reporting incidents of the withholding of family contact from prisoners in re-education camps as a means of control. [6ah]

5.26 In September 2001, there was a report of the death of a prisoner under interrogation at Hoang Tien prison that was a media embarrassment for the Government in January 2002. [1d]

5.27 In 2002, the Government permitted selected diplomatic observers to visit two of its prisons on at least two occasions. However, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) were denied any access. [1d]

Military

5.28 The military forces are responsible for defence from external threats: however, in some remote border regions, the military forces are the prime government agency and take on many Government functions by default. [1d]

5.29 An August 2002 count of the armed forces showed a total of 484,000 regulars, with the army accounting for 412,000 troops. Reservists number 4-5 million. Military service is compulsory and lasts for 2 years. [8e]

5.30 In November 2001, the Government announced the reviving of conscription of women, for the first time since the late 1970s. The recruits, aged between 18 and 40 years, would hold the rank of second class reservist.
and have to do one year's military service. The army are particularly keen on recruits with computing, secretarial and librarianship skills. [7k]

Conscientious Objectors & Deserters

5.31 The position of deserters from Vietnamese military forces is unclear: NGOs, such as Amnesty International, refer to Article 256 of the 1986 Criminal code, arguing that desertion carries the death penalty. [6u] The article however refers to active service in a combat situation, and other experts report that desertion in Vietnamese society does not carry a negative stigma, with the individual's reasons for desertion being taken into account. Most deserters are sent back to their units for punishment, at the commander's discretion, with no specific penalty for desertion. [6a]

5.32 The Canadian IRB gathered the following observations on desertion trends in July 2001. Since 1989, military careers have not been seen to be attractive career routes; that most desertion occurs in the south of the country; officially, desertion rates have fallen and army life stabilised; conscription is started to target skills and selective in uptake. [6u]

Medical Services

5.33 Though the Government 'has attached great importance to primary healthcare', with campaigns to promote iodized salt, vaccination programmes for six preventable diseases, and supplying vitamin A to children, health care varies, and, in rural areas, is rudimentary. [9b] UN indices regularly mark Vietnam highly for provision of educational and health services given the GDP per capita. [8e] On 14 May 2003, following the outbreak and spread of SARS in the region, the World Health Organisation described the Vietnam approach as a model case study on how a country should combat such an epidemic. [7ay]

5.34 Mental health. A mental health programme is one of the ten objectives listed in the National Health Programme of 1999. In spite of a lack of mental health legislation, primary care is provided for maintenance and rehabilitation while community based mental healthcare is integrated in the primary healthcare system. The Government limits financing to those patients suffering from schizophrenia and epilepsy. For other mental disorders, patients' families are expected to pay for treatment. [3g]

AIDS / HIV

5.35 AIDS and HIV-positive infection has steadily increased in Vietnam, entering mainly through a rise in prostitution and drug-use. Up to July 1998, 8,300 people were registered as being HIV-positive and 659 cases of AIDS. Non-Vietnamese medical sources put the number of infections at ten times the official rate, as facilities for diagnosis are poorly resourced and few. [6i]
5.36 In November 2001, the Ministry of Health gave official estimated figures of 48,000 people as HIV carriers, and 9,000 deaths from AIDS. [4bj] According to a survey carried out by UNAIDS it was estimated that at the end of 2001 the total number of persons living with HIV/AIDS was 130,000. [3h] In the first 7 months of 2003, there was an increase of 100% in the number of people who died from the disease; a 5% rise in the number of HIV carriers; and a 70% in the number of AIDS patients, according to the Ministry of Health. [4cf]

5.37 Other countries have been concerned by the growth of HIV/AIDS in Vietnam. The US government has pledged US$10 million for a five-year program on HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment strategies. [4bg] Local newspapers in November 2001 raised questions about the financial probity in 1999 / 2000 of the then National Committee for AIDS Prevention (now the AIDS Prevention Office). [4bh]

5.38 Prevention The gay community has been involved in awareness campaigns. Most government resources were in 1998 directed towards treating patients ill with secondary infections, with health education as a secondary priority. [6i] In November 2001, the government announced that there was to be a "communication month" to help AIDS awareness, running between 15 November and 15 December, and including World AIDS day on 1 December. [4bj] Infection of pregnant mothers and babies has increased dramatically, with 210 babies tested HIV positive, and an estimated 2,500 other infants may be infected. [4bj][4bk] The government has announced its intention to construct a centre for the fostering of HIV babies. [4bj] In response to the infection rates announced in May and August 2003, the Government re-iterated its 5 solutions to curb the spread of HIV/AIDS, namely the establishing of a national strategy, tougher measures against drug trafficking and prostitution, more inexpensive treatments, international co-operation and raising awareness with Vietnam. [4ca][4cf]

5.39 Treatment. In November 2001, the government announced that it would conduct bidding on the import of specific drugs for HIV/AIDS treatment for 1,000 - 2,000 patients. [4bi] In late 2001, the Government put forward plans to send all of Vietnam's 100,000 registered drug addicts to compulsory drug detoxification centers for up to 2 years. According to Human Rights Watch, as many as 75,000 drug users remained in detention during the 2002 in 71 drug detoxification camps. [5g] In February 2002, the Government announced that more than 20 Vietnamese drugs companies had been identified to capable of producing low-cost generic anti-AIDS drugs. The Government's next step was to seek a disentanglement from foreign company-held intellectual property rights, to legally produce low-cost drugs. [7w] A news article claimed there is only one hospital dedicated to AIDS patients, Binh Trieu hospital, Ho Chi Minh City, in Vietnam. [7ax] In May 2003, the Government approved the production of a new treatment by local pharmacists where the cost to patients would be 20% lower than imported combinations. [4bz]

5.40 Discrimination A job ban was imposed in November 1999 by the Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA), banning people
diagnosed HIV-positive from a long list of professions. [4g] In February 2000, unofficially, government officials also suggested a ban on HIV-positive people marrying. Such measures, including the occupations ban, are regarded by AIDS groups as unnecessary, unfounded in fact, and part of an unwanted heavy-handedness in the Government's dealings with the problem. [4k]

Educational System

5.41 Primary education is compulsory and lasts 5 years, usually beginning at the age of six years' old. [8e] Secondary education lasts 7 years in 2 tiers - of a 4-year junior period ("Level II"), then a 3-year senior period. Total secondary enrolment was estimated in 1997 to account for 57% of the total school population. [8e] In 1997, there were 123 colleges of higher education. [8e]

5.42 While education is compulsory to the age of 14, the authorities did not enforce the requirement, especially in rural areas where Government and family budgets for education are strained and where children were needed for agricultural labour. However, the culture's strong emphasis on education led parents who could send children to school to do so, rather than to allow them to work. Due to lack of classroom space, most schools operated two sessions, and children attended either morning or afternoon sessions; a result of attending school only half days was that children were able to attend classes and work. In 2001, it was reported that some street children both in HCMC and Hanoi participated in night education courses. The Government has been in the process of extending free public education from 6 years of age to 9 years of age. The public school system includes 12 grades. [1d] Students must pay for textbooks, and certainly from Level II onwards, there are tuition fees. [6af]

6. Human Rights

6.A Human Rights Issues

Overview

6.1 The overall opinion of the US State Department of Vietnam's human rights record in 2002 was 'The Government's poor human rights record worsened in some respects and it continued to commit numerous, serious abuses.' [1d] This was a view borne out in the annual reports of Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch. [2h][5g] However, the key abuses seemed to be around particular pressure points (Montagnards; key dissidents, political and religious; prison conditions) rather than a general curbing of those liberties permitted to the general populace. [1d]

6.2 The Government claimed in May 2003 to have made strides in improving human rights and strongly rejected the assessment of Amnesty International
The 2002 US State Department Report (Mar 2003) noted improvement in the level of intrusion into citizens' daily lives. [1d] It also stated that the security forces were still committing human rights abuses, in terms of beating up suspects during arrests, and harassing street children. [1d]

6.3 The visit of President Clinton to Vietnam in November 2000 was heralded as a major diplomatic bridge building exercise. NGOs pressed President Clinton to bring human rights issues to talks with the authorities, which he did. However, talks on economic and social rights were the more fruitful. [7f][7g]

6.4 In its 2002 annual report, Amnesty International reported that access to the country was denied, and that it did not receive a direct response from the government to any of the concerns raised with the authorities regarding the human rights situation. A Vietnamese Government spokesperson publicly criticised the organisation on several occasions for alleged "interference in internal affairs". Domestic human rights monitoring was not permitted and access continued to be denied to independent international human rights monitors. The UNHCR, diplomats and journalists based in Vietnam were only allowed to visit the Central Highlands region under strict supervision. [2h]

Freedom of Speech and the Media

6.5 The Constitution provides for freedom of speech and freedom of the press; however, the Government significantly restricted these freedoms. Both the Constitution and the Criminal Code include broad national security and anti-defamation provisions that the Government used to restrict severely such freedoms. During 2002, reporters and editors practised self-censorship. A press law provides for monetary damages to be paid by journalists to individuals or organisations harmed by reporting, even if the reports are true. This law poses a threat to investigative reporting. Several media outlets continued to test the limits of government press restriction by publishing articles that criticised actions by party and government officials; however, the freedom to criticise the Communist Party and its highest leadership remained restricted. Nonetheless, there were press reports about topics that generally were considered sensitive. [1d][3f][7g]

6.6 Domestic newspapers, television and radio stations remained under government control. On 18 June 2002, the Prime Minister signed a decree restricting access to international television programs broadcast by satellite exclusively to government officials, state media, and foreigners. On 20 June 2002, the chief of the CVP's Central Ideology and Culture Board announced that the media should not "expose secrets, create internal divisions, or hinder key propaganda tasks" in its coverage of the controversial Nam Cam corruption case, which was slated to go to court by the end of 2002. Among the 151 people arrested in conjunction with the case, Vietnam's largest trial ever in terms of numbers of defendants, were twelve police officers, three former prosecutors, and two journalists. [1d][3e][3f][5g]
6.7 The authorities reject all requests for publishing licences from dissidents or independent organisations. [3e] On 8 January 2002, Deputy culture and information minister Nguyen Khac Hai issued a decree ordering police to seize and destroy any publication that had not been checked by the Government. [3e] In early April 2002, the Communist Party banned all documents, books, newspapers and other publications containing "bad or inaccurate" news. [3e] In July 2003 the main Student newspaper (Sinh Vien) was suspended for 'multiple grave editorial mistakes' [7bb] while in mid-June 2002, Prime Minister Pham Van Khai issued a nationwide ban on foreign satellite TV programmes. [3e]

6.8 The Government has increasingly been aware of the circumvention of Government censorship by the use of the Internet and other electronic means. The Government enforced stricter control in August 2002 by ensuring that the military became the providers of Vietnam’s fifth largest Internet service provider. [3f][7ae] In June 2002, the authorities tightened up controls at Vietnam’s 4,000 public Internet cafés to prevent customers from accessing “state secrets,” pornography, or “reactionary” documents. The government blocked approximately two thousand websites, including those of Vietnamese dissident groups based overseas. [3e][3f][5g] On 7 August 2002 the Ministry for Culture and Information blocked the Internet website TTVNonline.com for posting news items that violated the press law by "distorting the truth" and not having prior authorisation. [3e] In August 2003 threatened further restrictions on internet use [7bh], following the highly publicised case of a doctor who was sentenced to 13 years imprisonment for spying and using the internet to deliberately undermine the Government. [2j][7bi] The sentence was later reduced to five years. [7bi]

Journalists

6.9 According to the annual report of the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ): 'In an effort to contain public dissatisfaction with official corruption and a lack of political reform, Vietnam’s government tightened its already stringent control over the media during 2002. Writers were detained, harassed, placed under tight surveillance, or arrested for expressing independent viewpoints, while authorities targeted those who use the Internet to distribute independent news or opinions'. [3f] Throughout 2002, the Government maintained its stringent control over foreign journalists in the country. Foreign reporters must receive formal permission before conducting interviews or travelling outside Hanoi and are frequently lambasted in the official press for supporting “hostile forces” overseas. [3f] The authorities vehemently rejected the assessment of press freedom put forward by CPJ. [4by]

6.10 Advocates of free expression in Vietnam lost an influential voice in August 2002, when dissident Lt. Gen. Tran Do died. Do, a decorated war veteran and the former head of the Culture and Ideology Department, was expelled from the Communist Party in 1999 after he began to call openly for multiparty democracy. During his last years, Do was under tight surveillance.
and his writings were banned. In a three-part memoir, which police confiscated from him in 2001, he wrote, "Our present life, it seems, is less and less like what we dreamed of building, and more and more like what we had spent time overthrowing." [3e][3f]

6.11 In 2003, the authorities continued to maintain a tight grip on the country’s media. While the main state-run Vietnam News Agency (VNA) received high praise from the Government on 20 June 2003, the occasion of Vietnam’s national press day, [4cl] the Voice of Vietnam (VOV) website demanded even greater state management of the press. [4ck] On 22 July 2003 the Prime Minister issued two decrees on the role of the national news agency. These essentially served to consolidate the authorities’ hold over the media by strengthening the position VNA and VOV still further. [4ch]

Freedom of Religion

6.12 Freedom of religion is enshrined in the Constitution, but only extended to registered groups. Six main religious groupings are permitted: the Buddhists, the Catholic Christians, the Protestant Christians, Moslems, the Hoa Hao and Cao Dai. Most congregations are registered, and most human rights abuses involve unregistered groups. [1d][6p] All the major religious groups are internally split into official and unofficial groups. [4h] The official associations are becomingly increasingly vocal about government interference in religious affairs, and are reported to co-operate together in lodging complaints. [4ac][1d] Registration issues are at the fore of most disputes between (unofficial) religious groups and the government. This particularly so in the case of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (see below) and the unofficial Hoa Hao groups (see below). [6p]

6.13 The Government generally allowed persons to practice individual worship in the religion of their choice, and participation in religious activities throughout the country continued to grow significantly. The Penal Code establishes penalties for "attempting to undermine national unity" by promoting "division between religious believers and non-believers." [1d]

Religious Groups

Buddhists

6.14 Traditional Vietnamese Buddhism, as practised, is an amalgam of Mahayana Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucian traditions, with the exception of the Khmer minority’s practice of Theravada Buddhism (the Khmer number c. 1 million and live exclusively in the Mekong Delta, in the south of the country). It is the dominant religion, with three-fourths of the 80 million population being nominal Buddhists, and of that nominal group, about 30% held to be devout.
and practice their religion regularly. [1e] In 2002 Government and CPV party officials increasingly admitted that they follow traditional and Buddhist religious practices. [1d]

6.15 The Buddhist clergy, within and without the official church association, are active in pressing for their rights. The most vocal is the unregistered Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam, which was previously the chief Buddhist denomination in the former Republic of Vietnam (South Vietnam). [4ac] In September 1999, a chief UBCV Buddhist dissident, Thich Quang Do, was prevented from registering and publishing a Buddhist journal. [4d] Thich Quang Do was confined to his monastery in Ho Chi Minh City in June 2001, after announcing that he planned to leave HCMC to visit the patriarch of the UBCV Thich Huyen Quang in Central Vietnam. [7h] His detention led to a series of incidents, including an MEP, Olivier Dupuis, being denied access to Do's pagoda. [7i] However, on 17 March 2003, representatives of the European Commission were permitted to visit Quang, the first foreigners permitted to do so in 20 years. [7au] This was followed on 3 April 2003 by a visit from the Prime Minister, Phan Van Khai, for talks lasting over an hour. [7aw]

6.16 Thich Tri Luc, a Buddhist monk, who fled from Vietnam in early 2002 to Cambodia, disappeared on 25 July 2002 while under the protection of the United Nations. [7ak] There are no indications in the source of how or why he has disappeared.

Hoa Hao

6.17 The Hoa Hao is a Buddhist off-shoot, founded in the south of Vietnam in 1939. It rejects many of the ceremonial aspects of traditional Vietnamese Buddhism. [1e] Hoa Hao was recognised as an official religion in 1999. It had been banned for the previous 25 years. The official Office of Religious Affairs numbers Hoa Hao membership at 1.3 million, but unofficial sources put the membership at much higher, circa 4 million. [1e][6s]

6.18 Hoa Hao was founded in 1939 by Prophet Huynh Phu So at Hoa Hao village in An Giang province, in Southern Vietnam. [6v] The southern Vietnamese roots, allegations of massacres and assassinations of Hoa Hao in 1945 and 1947, and armed opposition to the Communists during the Vietnam civil war led to tension with the authorities for 1978 onwards. [6s][6v]

6.19 In May 1999, the government convened a Hoa Hao conference in An Giang province. The government-chosen group proceeded to create an 11 member committee to oversee the administrative affairs associated with recognition. Many Hoa Hao groups regarded this committee and succeeding committees to be unrepresentative, particularly in the exclusion of Le Quang Liem, held by many overseas members to be the church's leader. [2c][6s]

6.20 There have been reports of violent action by the police against Hoa Hao members during the run-up to the year 2000 Founder's day (26 December)
celebrations. There have been reported instances of police brutality during demonstrations protesting about the continuing harassment of Le Quang Liem, since December 1999. [6s][6v] Le Quang Liem has called for non-violent approach by the Hoa Hao in the face of provocation. [6s] Amnesty International has been particularly concerned about the trial of 5 Hoa Hao members in September 2000. [2c]

6.21 Although the authorities arrested and otherwise strictly controlled Hoa Hao "dissidents" in 2002 the Government permitted other Hoa Hao believers more freedom to practice their faith. [2h][5g] Between 100 and 200 visitors worship at the central Hoa Hao Pagoda in An Giang Province on a daily basis. Police authorities routinely question some persons who held alternative religious or political views, such as UBCV monks and Hoa Hao leaders. [1d]

Christians

6.22 Catholics number about 6 to 7 million, and are a legacy of French colonial rule of Indo-China. The largest concentrations are to be found in the south of the country, particularly around HCM City. [1e] Many of the land disputes of the mid to late 1990s occurred in Catholic areas and in Catholic villages, particularly in Dong Nai province. [4ag][6d]

6.23 The Roman Catholic Church faced significant restrictions on the training and ordination of priests and bishops. The Government effectively maintained veto power over Vatican appointments of bishops; however, in practice it had shown willingness to discuss appointments with the Vatican. In recent years, the Government eased its efforts to control the Roman Catholic hierarchy by relaxing the requirements that all clergy belong to the government controlled Catholic Patriotic Association. The Catholic Church operated 6 seminaries, and in 2001 received permission from the central authorities to open a seventh. However, local authorities did not consent to the seminary's proposed location and it had not opened by the end of 2002. The Catholic Church also received permission to accept new seminarians, but only every other year. Over 800 students were enrolled nationwide at year's end. The local people's committee must approve all students, both upon entering the seminary and prior to their ordination as priests. A few more recent seminary graduates remained unordained as long as 10 years. Most observers believed that the number of ordained priests was insufficient to support the growing Catholic population. [1d]

6.24 In May 2001, a Vietnamese priest, Thadeus Nguyen Van Ly, brought out tensions between the authorities and Vietnamese Catholics. [7r][2h] A Vatican delegation in June 2001 expressed their concern over the arrest. [7r] The authorities later stated that its relationship with the Roman Catholic church was improving. [7r][2h] In April 2003, Amnesty International raised concerns about a contrived espionage case against the nephews and niece of the incarcerated priest. [2i] On 17 July 2003 Father Ly's jail sentence was reduced from 15 to 10 years. [4cj][7bc]
6.25 Protestants have claimed that the situation for practising Protestant Christians remains poor, with worshippers routinely arrested, beaten and imprisoned for refusing to deny their faith. The US State Department Report on Religious Freedom 2003 put the number of protestants at 1 million. Ethnic Hmong and Tai Christians in the north, particularly in Lai Chau and Lao Cai provinces, were beaten, detained, and pressured by local authorities to renounce their religion and cease Christian gatherings. In February 2002, reports were received that the security presence had been increased in border communes in Muong Lay District, Lai Chau, where Hmong Christians were prohibited from gathering for religious ceremonies and some chapels were dismantled. On 7 August 2002, Hmong Christian Mua Bua Senh died in Dien Bien Dong District, Lai Chau, after numerous beatings by police officers for refusing to renounce his religion. In October 2002, the officially-recognised Evangelical Church of Vietnam (North) admitted several hundred Hmong Christian churches, providing some measure of protection against persecution. Nonetheless, at least twelve Hmong Christians remained in prison for their religious beliefs during 2002.

6.26 The Canadian IRB were asked about the Baptist church in Vietnam, reporting findings in September 2002. In March 2002, the Government had not given the Baptists registered status, but had plans to do so, along with the Mennonite, Adventist and other house churches. Overall, the conclusion was that such unregistered groups faced no particular threat from the authorities, but, quoting the US State Department Report on Religious Freedom, 2001, "In practice there are no effective legal remedies for violations of religious freedom caused by the capricious actions of officials."

6.27 Underground Protestant congregations in the Central Highlands and in the north western provinces continued to suffer severe abuses during 2002. Certain north west provinces reportedly did not have any officially recognised churches or pagodas, allegedly due to provincial government disapproval. Authorities in those areas also reportedly arrested and imprisoned ethnic minority believers for practising their faith peacefully citing their lack of officially recognised status. During 2002, there were reports that some Protestants in the Central Highlands, particularly in Dak Lak Province, experienced continued difficulties and restrictions despite evidence of reduced tensions in some other parts of the Central Highlands.

Cao Dai

6.28 The Cao Dai is an indigenous religion encompassing many elements of larger, world religions, though some sources do refer to Cao Dai as a Buddhist offshoot. Numbers have been estimated as high as 7 to 8 million people, with 300,000 adherents outside Vietnam. Other sources put numbers at around 3 million followers, with over half in southern Tay Ninh province. Cao Dai emerged in 1926. Since 1975 the
Government has prohibited ordination into the Cao Dai priesthood. However, during 2002, at least 18 new priests were ordained and 920 apprentices entered the process leading to priesthood. Other existing priests were promoted to higher ranks. [1d]

Thanh Hai Vo Thuong Su / Ching Hai / Guan Yin Method

**Fuller details are given in Vietnam Extended 1/2003 January 2003.**

6.29 The group or movement is primarily known after its founder, the self styled Supreme Master Suma Ching Hai and / or by its principle practice, the Guan Yin "Deep Unity " or "Total Integration" alt. Quan Yin Method, Guanyin Famen. Please note that it should not be confused with a Buddhist group, banned in PRC, called Yi Guan Dao "the Way of Unity" alt. Tian Dao. [6m][4bc][pace 3aa in China assessment]

6.A.30 The Vietnamese title for Supreme Master Suma Ching Hai is Thanh Hai Vo Thuong Su, and she was born Hue Dang Trinh in Vietnam. Her father was ethnic Chinese and her mother Vietnamese. [4aw] Ching Hai is currently resident in Taiwan. [6m]

6.31 Her own movement began in 1988, starting in Taiwan, and fast moving to other countries, such as mainland China in 1992, with the rapid growth attributable to Ching Hai’s programme of lectures and audiences around the world. [4aw][4ax][4ay][4az][4ba]

6.32 The beliefs and practice of the movement are essentially wrapped up in a personality cult centred on Ching Hai. [4aw][4ax][4ay][4az] A core belief is that all behaviour be based on the "five noes" - no killing, no stealing, no lewd behaviour, no telling lies, no drinking - and being strict vegetarians. [6m][4aw][4bc]

6.33 Numbers of adherents worldwide have been given as numbering 2 million (in report dated May 1999.) [4aw] Other reports put the number at 500,000 (in a report dated April 2001) [4bd] and 500,000 in China alone (report dated September 2000) [4bc]

6.34 Publications were seized and 17 members were arrested on 7 November 2000 by the Vietnamese authorities. 10 members had previously been arrested in mid-1998. [7e] It is not known to be currently active in Vietnam. [14a]

**Freedom of Assembly & Association**

6.35 The right of assembly is restricted in law and in practice, and the Government restricted and monitored all forms of public protest. Persons who
wished to gather in a group are required to apply for a permit, which local authorities can issue or deny arbitrarily. However, persons routinely gathered in informal groups without government interference. In general the Government did not permit demonstrations that could be seen as having a political purpose. During 2002, there were a number of peaceful protests of up to 50 persons, mostly older rural women over land tenure issues. On one occasion, police firmly, but peacefully and respectfully, moved the protesters away from the Prime Minister's residence. In October 2002 the Government sentenced two individuals for disturbing public order for organising a protest over land compensation issues in HCMC earlier in 2002. [1d] On 14 August 2002, approximately 2,000 persons attended war hero and government critic General Tran Do's funeral in Hanoi. The Government also made no move to interfere with a hastily arranged, but well attended memorial mass for Cardinal Nguyen Van Thuan on 20 September 2002 in HCMC. In December 2002 there were reports that police dispersed one or more gatherings of Hmong Christians. [1d]

6.36 The Government restricted freedom of association. The Government prohibited the legal establishment of private, independent organisations, insisting that persons work within established, party-controlled organisations, often under the aegis of the VFF. Citizens were prohibited from establishing independent organisations such as political parties, labour unions, and religious or veterans' organisations. Such organisations existed only under government control. However, some entities were able to operate outside of this framework with little or no government interference. [1d]

Political Activists

6.37 There were about fifty dissidents in 2001 judged by Amnesty International as being held as prisoners of conscience (56 in 1999, "dozens" in 2000). [2f] Estimates by NGOs range from 65 to 40, with the US State Department stating that 'it is difficult to determine the exact number of political detainees.' [1c] Some unofficial sources have estimated as many as 150 political prisoners in 2002, but the number of confirmed by the US State Department is much lower, with about twenty named individuals to their knowledge. [1d] Dissidents are political dissidents and of unregistered religious groups claiming oppression. [2a][2b] Appendix A to the Human Rights watch report, the silencing of dissent, gives a partial list of political prisoners in Vietnam in April 2000. [5b] The Vietnamese Government denies holding political prisoners categorically, and such prisoners so described by others were convicted of violating national security laws. [1d]

6.38 The US State Department Report for year 2000 (February 2001) states that "there were credible reports that three political and religious prisoners with serious medical conditions are held under harsh conditions in remote prisons." [1b] In April 2002, five prisoners who might be classed as prisoners of conscience were released along with 419 prisoners under an amnesty. [1d]
**Dissidents within Vietnam**

6.39 Key dissidents include Nguyen Dan Que, who in June 1999, called for the government to permit an independent human rights organisation to promote democracy. He claimed that human rights abuses were systematic on 13 October 1999. Dr Que himself had spent 20 out of the past 23 years in prison. Dr Que was again arrested in March 2003, and is currently one of eight journalists imprisoned. On 16 July 2003 Dr Que was offered exile as a condition for release.

6.40 Since 1975, there have be no political parties independent of the VCP, and no parties in operation as "the Democracy Party". Likewise, the Canadian IRB contacted, in June 2001, the chairman of the International Institute for Vietnam, who in turn had no knowledge of "the Vietnamese Freedom Association" allegedly operating within Vietnam.

6.41 Likewise, CIPU has been unable to find any information on the following purported organisations: the Vietnamese People's Movement; Action In Vietnam; the Vietnamese People's Action movement; Vietnamese People Action Group. The last reports of the PAP, the people's Action Party, date from October 1999, when Vietnamese press reported the trial of 24 members including the leader Nguyen Sy Binh. Binh, reportedly an American of Vietnamese origin, had set up the PAP in 1995 and had been previously deported from Vietnam to Cambodia that same year.

6.42 Arbitrary arrest of dissidents has declined over the years: "Dissidents of all kinds are less frequently imprisoned than in the past" according to Mike Jendrzejczyk of the Human Rights Watch in May 2000. However, in December 2002, Amnesty International (AI) "expressed profound shock" at the 12 year prison sentence given to Nguyen Khac Toan, a dissident charged as "a spy" after pressing human rights issues since 2000. In June 2003, AI expressed similar dismay at the 13 year sentence given to dissident Dr Pham Hong Son after a closed trial which lasted just one day.

6.43 The Vietnamese Government officially honoured a political dissident, Lieutenant-General Tran Do, when Tran Do died in August 2002. Tran Do had previously been a war hero and an important official in the Government until he broke ranks in 1997.

**Dissident groups outside Vietnam**

6.44 The Government of Free Vietnam is a dissident group based in California, USA, and reportedly operating armed groups in based within Laos and Cambodia along the Vietnam border. The group has claimed responsibility for a number of attempted bombings throughout Vietnam. In May 2001, 37 members of the group were tried in Ho Chi Minh City on terrorist charges. The accused were among 50 members of the Government of Free Vietnam arrested in 1999 and 2000. Nguyen Huu Chanh, an American citizen of Vietnamese origin, is the leader of the organisation, and
the Californian basis of the group has led to formal complaints to the US government by the Vietnamese government. [4bf][7p]

6.45 The Montagnard community leaders in North America have complained that the Vietnamese government has no foundation to its claim that the North American community instigated unrest in the Vietnam central highlands (see below at Montagnards.) [4bf]

Employment Rights

6.46 There is a two tier minimum wage structure, one ($40 a month, scaled on exemptions down to not less than $30) for joint venture industries, and $12 a month for domestic, non-foreign venture operations. $12 a month is inadequate to provide a worker and family a decent standard of living. Many households have side-enterprises, and include more than one wage-earner. [1d]

6.47 Government provision for industrial health and safety monitoring is held to be inadequate, but some reforms have been achieved through employees' trade unions. [1d]

6.48 Child workers are defined as workers under the age of 18 years. With certain exceptions of persons between 15 and 18 years, child labour is technically illegal. However, one survey held that about 40,000 children between the ages of 8 and 14 years were working in violation of the law. [1d] Rural areas have high rates of child labour, mainly as agricultural workers working from the age of 6 years. [1d]

People Trafficking

6.49 The trafficking of women and children is an active social problem. The UN Development Program estimates 10,000 women and 14,000 children have been sold abroad since the early 1990s. Mostly, females were sent to China, Cambodia, Taiwan, Macao, Hong Kong, Australia, the USA and Singapore as child brides, housekeepers, prostitutes or slaves. 40% of the 300,000 sex workers in Cambodia are Vietnamese. Bonded labour is the main means of securing victims; most facilitators are women also ensnared in bonded labour. [4s][5g] In an August 2002 report, Vietnamese prostitutes in Cambodia were imposed prison sentences by the Cambodian authorities, despite having, allegedly, been trafficked into the country, with the authorities having taken no action against the traffickers. [7ar] Some sentences were handed down during 2002 under Vietnam's law against trafficking in women and children. In May 2002, the People's Court in Hanoi convicted five Vietnamese people for trafficking women to China and sentenced them to up to fourteen years in prison. In September 2002, the court in Ho Chi Minh City sentenced the operator of a prostitution ring to 8 years in prison. [5g]
6.50 The sex trade is reportedly growing in the face of a growing disparity between rich and poor. In January 2000, a survey indicated that sexual abuse including rape was included in the social background of about 30 percent of teenage prostitutes, with the remaining 70 percent pushed into the sex trade by family poverty. [4aj] Child rape has increased from 57 cases in 1998, to 72 in 1999, to 21 in the first quarter of 2000. [4al]

6.51 Poverty has also lead to an increase in "street kids" with reported increases in custodial sentences for "delinquents", typically male, illiterate, and between 14 and 16 years old. [4ak]

Freedom of Movement

6.52 The government operates a system of documentation based on residence permits similar to China's hukou system. The basic document, the ho khau, includes a curriculum vitae that contains the individuals' past history, the past history of family members, and is somewhat similar to a police or criminal record. It also notes religious affiliation. This form of control enables the monitoring of both people who have "fallen out of favour" with the government and adherents of groups and organisations not approved of by the Party. The ho khau is necessary for all administrative processes, such as education, work, admission to hospital, etc. [6g]

6.53 The Household Registration (ho khau) is automatically withdrawn by the authorities if the citizen fails to fulfil a year's residency requirements, and therefore emigrants lose their ho khau status very quickly. [6x]

6.54 Further to the Ho Khau, adult Vietnamese citizens carry an Identity Card. If the holder is a practitioner of one of the six registered religious faiths, then it is registered on the ID card. "None" on an ID card may indicate participation in practices such as ancestor worship, Daoism, etc. which may be regarded as beliefs rather than as part of the six permitted religions. The source contacted by the Canadian IRB thought that it might be possible for members of dissident groups e.g. the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV) not to be permitted to be classed as "Buddhist" but given "None" as a designation. [6p]

6.55 Citizens' access to passports sometimes was constrained by factors outside the law, such as bribery and corruption. Refugee and immigrant visa applicants sometimes encounter local officials who arbitrarily delayed or denied passports based on personal animosities, or based on the officials' perception that an applicant does not meet programme criteria, or to extort a bribe. [1d] For a Vietnamese citizen to secure a passport within Vietnam, applicants must submit their birth certificate, their household registration document (ho khau), government-issued ID card and, if applicable, a letter of introduction for a passport. [6z] A certificate of police clearance is not required, according to the Embassy of Vietnam in Ottawa. [6z] Likewise, the Canadian IRB could not find any reports of passports being withheld to people
who had "fallen out of favour" with the government, nor is there provision for such an action in the passport regulations of decision no. 957 of November 1997 (exit and re-entry in Vietnam). [6aa regulations translated and reproduced in full]. Indeed, an IRB report, quoting a prominent Vietnamese human rights activist exiled to the US, states that the authorities are eager to allow dissidents to go into self-imposed exile, and so will not withhold the issuing of passports. [6n]

6.56 Recently expired passports issued in Vietnam may be renewed abroad at consular offices. In Canada, the Embassy of Vietnam requires the expired export, two photos, and, if applicable, the applicant's landed immigrant certificate. [6y]

Vietnamese Diaspora

6.57 There are large emigrant Vietnamese population groups and established communities outside Vietnam (current population estimated c. 80 million). For example, the US Census 2000 enumerated 1,122,528 in the USA; the Canadian 1996 Census, 136,810; and c.20,000 in the UK. [3d][3c] The populations grew mainly after 1978 with the fall of South Vietnam.

6.58 The North American Vietnamese communities have developed a number of groups and networks that keenly watch political developments within Vietnam. (See above at dissident groups.) [4bf][7o][8c][8d]

6.59 Of the Protestant Hmong and other ethnic groups who have been involved in land protests, 38 people have been "allowed to settle" in the United States. (No indication within the report of whether the 38 were permitted to leave Vietnam by the Vietnamese authorities, and only inferred that the US authorities granted refugee status to the 38 people once inside the US.) [7q]

Returnees

6.60 In 1988, Vietnam signed a memorandum of understanding with UNHCR regarding assisted voluntary returns to Vietnam. From 1988 to 1997, over 106,000 Vietnamese have returned voluntarily under the agreement. There is 'no credible evidence to substantiate claims that refugees returning under UNHCR auspices were harassed because of their status as returnees.' [6f][6h] 88 returnees in the same period were reportedly arrested and detained on criminal charges: the UNHCR has pressed the authorities for information and better access for families. [6h]

6.61 The Government generally permits citizens who emigrated to return to visit, but it considers them citizens and therefore subject to the obligations of citizens under the law, even if they adopted another country's citizenship, unless their formal renunciations of citizenship were approved by the President. In practice, the Government usually treats them as citizens of their adopted country; emigrants are not permitted to use Vietnamese passports.
after they adopt other citizenship. [1d] Overall, Vietnamese aid agencies admit that "few returnees are subjected to open persecution… [although] many are dogged by low-level bureaucratic harassment - delays in getting household registration and access to schools, extra fees, needless red tape, added scrutiny from local officials." [6h] Other reports agree that household registration (with attendant rights), which can only be restored when back in country can be difficult to restore. [6x]

Visas

6.62 In 1998, the Vietnamese Government eased access for overseas Vietnamese to return on visits. [4bp] In March 2000, the Prime Minister Phan Van Khai revoked restrictions on Vietnamese citizens obtaining passports, pass cards, and exit and re-entry controls. [4bo] There are three types of Vietnamese passport - standard, official and diplomatic - with all having a five year validity. [4bo]

6.B Human Rights - Specific Groups

Ethnic Groups

6.63 There are 54 official ethnic communities. [8f] The indigenous ethnic minorities are diverse and spread out over two-thirds of the country area. [3c] there are essentially three main groupings within the ethnic minorities: of indigenous groups living in the Central and other highlands; the non-indigenous Chinese communities; and the Khmer groups of the Mekong delta area. [3c]

6.64 Although the Government officially is opposed to discrimination against ethnic minorities, longstanding societal discrimination against ethnic minorities is widespread. In addition, there continues to be credible reports that local officials sometimes restrict ethnic minority access to some types of employment and educational opportunities. [1d] Most recently, the issue of how to improve all aspects of lives of ethnic minority people was high on the agenda of the government's May session on 29 May 2003. The government paid attention to building infrastructure facilities, accelerating economic restructuring and poverty reduction, and planning ethnic minorities' resettlement. [4bv] On 24 June 2003, VOV increased its airtime for ethnic minorities in the Ede, Gia Rai, K'Ho, Ba Na and M'Nong regions [4cm]

6.65 Chinese. According to the World Directory of Minorities, the Chinese are known as the Hoa - not to be confused with the Buddhist group Hoa Hao (see above). "The majority of ethnic Chinese today live in the south and still suffer from low-level discrimination, mainly due to the fear that they might dominate the economy again." [3c] The Chinese community, of between 900,000 and
one million, keeps a very low profile politically, concentrating on business development. [3c][4an][8e]

6.66 According to the Minority Rights Group International's *The Chinese of South-East Asia*, published January 2000, the Chinese minority in Vietnam today live mostly in urban areas, are involved in the economic resurgence of the country, and are now permitted (since early 1990s) to run Chinese-language schools and associations. There are no precise numbers of these institutions but they are held to run into the thousands. Apparently they are popular with Vietnamese, who wish to learn Mandarin and get on in business. [3b] Politically, the Chinese remain under-represented, but all restrictions on their participation in the political process were lifted in the mid-1990s. [6ac]

6.67 News reports of 1998 present the ethnic Chinese community in Vietnam as a flourishing part of business community, and fully accepted and integrated in Vietnamese society. [4an] An April 2002 IRB report quotes sources stating that in Ho Chi Minh City, 50 percent of the local control activity is initiated by the ethnic Chinese business community. [6ac] The ethnic Chinese are seen as an important economic bridgehead between the Hanoi Government and overseas Chinese investors. [6ac]

6.68 One expert contacted by the Canadian IRB stated:

"Ethnic Chinese are second and third generation citizens of Vietnam. They were born in the country, they speak the language and are perfectly integrated into Vietnamese society." [6e]

6.69 Vietnamese Chinese were victims in the period 1975-79, when China and Vietnam fell out over Cambodia. Half a million Viet Chinese were expelled over the border to Southern China. Ethnic Chinese continued to experience problems until the late 1980s. [6e] But as above indicates, they have returned and are economically important in cross-border trade.

6.70 Hmong. The Hmong (known as the Miao in China) are not indigenous to Vietnam. They have settled in the mountainous regions of Northern Vietnam, just as they settled in the highland areas of Laos in the nineteenth century. The authorities, reportedly, treat them as most of the ethnic minorities are treated in the highland regions - ambivalently, with due respect for local customs and practices and yet also policies that demand greater integration with wider Vietnamese society. [3c][6o] Protestant Christian missionaries have been active amongst the Hmong, and they with other highland groups make up to two-thirds of Vietnam's estimated 800,000 Protestants (see Christians). [6o]. There have been reports, notably the US State Department *Annual Report on International Religious Practices*, that the Hmong have been harassed by the Vietnamese authorities. Different reports give a variety of intertwined reasons, such as over land rights, 'civic-loyalty' to the Vietnam state, past involvement with former South Vietnamese forces (though deemed tenuous by commentators, as most Hmong live in the north and away from conflict zones), and conversions to Christianity. [6o]
6.71 Montagnards. The hill-tribes people who fled Vietnam central highlands to Cambodia in February 2001 have been identified as being Montagnards in news and NGO reports. [2d][5d] Amnesty International and the Human Rights Watch were particularly critical of 6 to 12 year sentences handed out to fourteen men for their part in the protests. [2d]

6.72 On 21 January 2002, the repatriations of Montagnards from Cambodia under UNHCR facilitation reach a crucial point (in the opinion of NGOs) with the signing of a voluntary return agreement. [2e] The issue has been highlighted by the Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch since March 2001 and further highlighted by a comprehensive Human Rights Watch report published in April 2002 [2e][2f][5g]. It also received international press coverage and led to an offer on 26 March 2002 by the United States Government to take the 1,000 or so refugees. [7x]

6.73 Inequality between the sexes is slowly being reduced. In July 2000, the UN Gender Development Index showed improvements for women in terms of employment and representation in management and government. [4t]

6.74 International and local NGOs report that domestic violence is common. Social and official attitudes are changing, expressed in an increased divorce rate and increased discussion in the media. [1d] A United Nations report of October 2002 highlighted that violence against women was widespread in Vietnam, and there was still a general societal condoning of such violence. [7as]

6.75 There is no specific law relating to domestic violence, though Article 4 of the 2000 Law on Marriage and Family may be interpreted as such. [6ag] The authorities are still held by NGOs as being slow to intervene. Spousal rape is not recognised. [1d] Officials are accused of having conservative attitudes regarding intervention, intervening only when the woman is "really innocent". [6ag] There is a clear rural / urban split in the reporting of domestic abuse, with rural women clinging to traditional subservience. [6ag] Female prostitutes, along with child prostitutes, are particular targets of people-traffickers. (See above, People-trafficking) [1d]

6.76 The Government controlled Women's Union has a broad agenda to promote women's rights, including political, economic, and legal equality, and protection from spousal abuse. The Women's Union operates micro-credit consumer finance programmes and other programmes to promote the advancement of women. International NGOs and other international organisations regarded the Union as effective, but they and Women's Union representatives believe that much time is required to overcome societal attitudes that relegate women to lower status than men. The Government also
has a committee for the advancement of women, which co-ordinates inter-ministerial programmes that affect women. [1d]

Children

6.77 With regards to family structure generally, the Canadian IRB reported in December 1996 on information supplied by the Paris-based Vietnam Committee on Human Rights. It stated:

"Families that do not conform to the traditional family model, including those headed by a single mother, would thus be seen in an "unfavourable light". … however, that disapproval would be on purely moral terms, and that it is unlikely that a single mother with an illegitimate child would suffer systematic discrimination or harassment." [6c]

6.78 Regarding persecution of an illegitimate child, issue of a single mother, the Vietnam Committee on Human Rights holds that there would be no systematic discrimination or harassment. A single mother would however suffer " a (societal) lack of protection" in terms of competing for scarce resources against two-parent families, with no concessions to their status. [6c]

6.79 In 1994, the Vietnamese government instituted a two-child birth control policy, which has reportedly brought the average birth rate of 3.8 children per Vietnamese woman in her reproductive life-time down to 2.3 children in 2001. [7j][1d] A degree of coercion has been used to achieve such a drop. Party members are expelled if they more than two children; parents of three or more children are asked to pay the health and education costs of the third child. In the most serious cases, land has been confiscated. Family Planning officials claim that such sanctions are being used less and less as a small families message filters through and self-limiting economics apply. [7j] The US State Department considers the regulations to have been enforced through exhortation rather than coercion, with penalties rarely enforced. [1b] Regulations are reportedly enforced unequally throughout the country. [7j]

6.80 A draft law was in preparation in November 2001 designed to ban gender testing. Vietnam has one of the world's highest abortion rates (on average, two abortions per woman in her reproductive life-time), and a tradition of preference towards and for male children. The government, though concerned about the numerical growth of the population are also concerned about gender imbalance, and thus are keen to avoid China's experience of gender imbalance stemming from a one-child policy. [7l]

6.81 International organisations and government agencies report that, despite the Government's promotion of child protection and welfare, children continue to be at risk of economic exploitation. [1d] In February 2003, the Committee on the Rights of the Child discussed the Vietnamese Government's January 2003 report on its efforts to implement the Convention on the Rights of the
The Committee was gravely concerned that Vietnam's move towards a market economy was having a detrimental effect upon the children of the country. It was particularly concerned about child abuse, children involved in the sex industry, and street children. Poverty, not the lack of Government desire for change, is held to be the root cause. Rural children are increasingly particularly disadvantaged.

Child Care Arrangements


6.82 In August 2002, the Government announced in the 11th National Assembly that the two existing committees - the National Committee for Population and family planning, and the National Committee for Childcare and Protection - would be merged into a new Ministerial Committee for Population, Family and Children, with ministerial representation in the Cabinet. It was held to be indicative of greater Government awareness of good provision in these areas.

6.83 The new ministry will manage the ten-year national action program launched by the National Committee for Childcare and Protection, operating with a US $ 33.3 million budget. The committee, and now the ministry, is responsible for the care and provision for all orphans under the age of 15. The orphan population numbers, according to a Vietnam Government news report, 124,000, out of a total child population of 27.8 million children. The population of street children was estimated at 20,000 in a Vietnamese Government report for 2001.

6.84 The Vietnam Red Cross has registered concern over children with AIDS/HIV who are routinely denied access to orphanages on the misunderstanding of infection. Between 12,000 and 17,000 children are held to be infected with HIV.

6.85 Foreign aid organisations have been permitted to assist in child welfare and care in Vietnam, for example, financial assistance from the Finnish Government and Save the Children Sweden (SCS) - Radda Barnen operating programmes with sexually abused children and other children with difficulties, including disabled orphans.

Homosexuals

6.86 In 1998, Vietnamese law did not address homosexuality. Society regarded homosexuality as "being a foreign problem" and there is little acknowledgement of the issue. According to academic specialists ‘...homosexuality does not yet exist as a firm concept in Vietnam...’ However in April 1997, Vietnam's first gay wedding took place in HCM (Ho Chi Minh).
Minh) City, to the embarrassment of local officials who were however powerless to prevent the ceremony. [6i]

6.87 A gay group in Vietnam puts the 1997 gay population at 10,000 people in HCM City and 800,000 people in total. [6i]

6.88 Anecdotal evidence quoted in the same 1997 report suggests that traditional Vietnamese society accepts male homosexuality in young men as the "lesser evil" compared to pre-marital heterosexual sex. [6i]

6.89 A major literary prize in Vietnam was won by the author of a gay sex novel in August 2002. The Peace and Safety Award is co-funded by the Police department of the Ministry of Public Security. [7af]

6.C Human Rights - Other Issues

Treatment of former South Vietnamese combatants

6.90 The Canadian IRB in June 2000 reported that there were no specific reports on the treatment of former officers of the former Republic of Vietnam, or their families. [6i] The report noted reports that indicated that former internees from re-education camps, interned on the basis of their pre-1975 association with the former government, suffered varying degrees of discrimination. [6i][1a] Other sources went further, linking such former internees with political and religious dissidents in a general culture of "having fallen out of favour" with the government, and subject to monitoring and risk of arbitrary detention. [6i][5b]

Boat people and returnees

6.91 All the detention centres for the "boat people" of the 1970s have finally closed down, resulting in a number of deportations back to Vietnam. In Hong Kong, all camp inmates were previously granted leave to remain in the camps on the condition that they might be repatriated under the Orderly Repatriation Program. The camps in Hong Kong finally closed in 1999, with about 100 involuntary deportations. [7b]
Annex A

Chronology of Events

*Based on Chronology given in BBC Timeline [7u]*

1945 The Viet Minh seize power and Ho Chi Minh proclaims Vietnam's independence.

1946, November - 1954 French forces attack Viet Minh at Haiphong. French Vietnam war(s) begin(s). After defeat at Dien Bien, the French agree to a peace deal in Geneva. Vietnam split into North and South Vietnam at the 17th Parallel.

1950 Democratic Republic of Vietnam (Communist Vietnam) recognised as a state by China and the USSR.

1954 - 1963 Period of Communist insurgency in South Vietnam; American aid is increased. In 1963, the Viet Cong, the Communist guerrillas of the South, defeat units of the South Vietnamese Army (the ARVN) and President Diem of the South is overthrown.

1964 Start of US offensive against North Vietnam.


1975 The Fall of Saigon - South Vietnam invaded by North Vietnam.

Unified Vietnam


1979 Khmer Rouge regime of Pol Pot in Cambodia ousted by the Vietnamese Army. The Vietnamese invasion prompts the Chinese to invade northern Vietnam. Many people are affected by the fighting, leading to the "Vietnamese Boat People" displacements. Vietnamese troops withdrew from Cambodia in 1989.

1994 US lifts its 30-year trade embargo, and restores full diplomatic relations in 1995. US relations reinforced in 2000, with the state visit of President Clinton. By December 2001, trade with the US is fully normalised.

2001, April The CPV elects Nong Duc Manh as new Party Chairman and leader.

2002, July - Vietnamese President Tran Duc Luong is reappointed for a second term by the National Assembly, which also reappoints Prime Minister Phan Van Khai for a second five-year term.

2003, March - EU European Commission representatives permitted to meet Thich Huyen Quang, head of the banned United Buddhist Church of Vietnam.
## Political Organisations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name (English translation; Vietnamese given when known)</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Type of organisation</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Action In Vietnam&quot;</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>dissident political  party</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communist Party of Vietnam / Dang Cong San Viet Nam</td>
<td>CPV DCSV</td>
<td>Official Political    Party</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;the Democracy Party&quot;</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>dissident political  party</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Assembly / Quoc Hoi</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>The main legislative body</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Religious Affairs</td>
<td>Government Department</td>
<td>Registers and monitors religious groups.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People's Action Party</td>
<td>PAP</td>
<td>Political party</td>
<td>Founded in 1995 by Binh, Nguyen Sy. The PAP have with their difficulties with the authorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam</td>
<td>UBCV</td>
<td>Unregistered Buddhist Group</td>
<td>The largest Buddhist group in former South Vietnam. Lead by Thich Quang Do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;the Vietnamese Freedom Association&quot;</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>dissident political  party</td>
<td>See the Free Vietnam Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Vietnamese People's Movement&quot;</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>dissident political  party</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Vietnamese People Action Group&quot;</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>dissident political  party</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;the Vietnamese People's Action Movement&quot;</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>dissident political  party</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam Women's Union</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Government-approved body</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex C

Prominent People

*References throughout text of extended bulletins.*

**Ai, Vo Van**: Chair of the Vietnam Committee for the Defence of Human Rights


**Chanh, Nguyen Huu**: American-Vietnamese dissident group leader.

**Do, Thich Quang**: Prominent member of Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam, arrested in September 1999.

**Do, Tran**: Leading Party member turned dissident; expelled from the Party in 1999 for calling for political reform. Died August 2002, and honoured by the Government.

**Duyet, Pham The**: Senior Party member who was arrested on corruption charges in 1998, and whose trial precipitated the Vietnam part of 1998 SE Asian economic collapse.

**Khai, Phan Van**: Appointed as Prime Minister in 1997.

**Linh, Nguyen Van**: Elected Party leader in 1986 (to 1997); brings in a more liberal economic policy.

**Loc, Ngo Xuan**: Deputy Prime Minister, temporarily disgraced in 1999.

**Luong, Tran Doc**: Elected President in 1997, and re-elected 2002.

**Ly, Thadeus Nguyen Van**: Vietnamese catholic priest and activist.

**Manh, Nong Duc**: Elected Party Chairman and leader in April 2001.

**Minh, Ho Chi**: Founder of the Indochina Communist Party, which became the CPV. The first leader of North Vietnam. Died in 1969.

**Que, Nguyen Dan**: Leading veteran dissident


**Trinh, Hue Dang**: aka. Thanh Hai Vo Thuong Su: Cult leader, aka. Suma Ching Hai, born in Vietnam, and whose cult is purportedly to be active in Vietnam.

Return to contents
# Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vietnamese</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cao Dai</td>
<td>Indigenous Vietnamese faith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ching Hai</td>
<td>Cult group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dang Cong San Viet Nam</td>
<td>Communist Party of Viet Nam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong</td>
<td>Ethnic group, known as the Miao in China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoa Hao</td>
<td>Buddhist offshoot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho khau</td>
<td>Household registration document (akin to China's <em>hukou</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quoc Hoi</td>
<td>National Assembly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tinh</td>
<td>administrative province</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Return to contents*
References to Source Material

1. **US State Department**
   At [http://www.state.gov/g/drl](http://www.state.gov/g/drl)

2. **Amnesty International**
   At [http://web.amnesty.org/library/eng-vnm/index](http://web.amnesty.org/library/eng-vnm/index)
   2a. Annual report 2000, Vietnam section
   2b. Annual report 1999, Vietnam section
   2g. ASA 41/013/2002, 20 December 2002, Crackdown on dissidents continues.
   2h. Annual Report 2002, Vietnam section
   2i. ASA 41/013/2003, 10 April 2003, Crackdown on dissent continues.
   2j. ASA 41/016/2003 18 June 2003, The crackdown continues - dissident sentenced for 'espionage'.

3. **Miscellaneous reports**
   3d. Vietnam Studies Internet Resource Centre (accessed 7 December 2001)
   3f. Committee to Protect Journalists; Attacks on the Press in 2002, Vietnam at [http://www.cpj.org/attacks02/asia02/viet.html](http://www.cpj.org/attacks02/asia02/viet.html)
4. **Reuters Business Briefing news reports**


4b. 1 September 1999, Reuters News Service, *Vietnam says will free 1,712 prisoners in amnesty*

4c. 6 September 1999, Reuters News Service, *Vietnam dissident calls for local rights group*

4d. 27 September 1999, Reuters News Service, *Top Vietnam Buddhists seek to publish journal.*


4g. 19 November 1999, GIN via IPS Newsfeed, *Job ban on HIV-positive is “wrong cure”.*

4h. 21 November 1999, GIN via IPS Newsfeed, *Government unsettled by religious revival*

4i. 8 January 2000, Voice of Vietnam website, Hanoi, (BBC Monitoring Service), *Radio Hanoi says news on arrest of Buddhist followers ”groundless”.*

4j. 27 January 2000, Reuters News Service, *Vietnam plans sweeping amnesties in 2000*

4k. 22 February 2000, South China Morning Post, *HIV carriers should be banned from marrying, conference told.*


4t. 14 July 2000, Vietnam Investment Review, *Slowly but surely women are closing the gaps of inequality, shows UN index.*

4u. 30 May 2000,

4v. 14 July 2000, Asia Pulse, *Davis criticizes Hanoi on human rights record.*

4w. 14 July 2000, Los Angeles Times, *Vietnam watershed*


4z. 18 August 2000, Los Angeles Times, *Big brother still knows best but now keeps some distance*
Vietnam - October 2003

4aa. 30 August 2000, Reuters News Service, Vietnam frees 10,00 to mark anniversary.
4ai. 26 March 1998, Radio Australia external service, Officials deny public order case linked to church dispute.
4ak. 29 May 2000, Vietnam News Brief Service, Teen criminals - SOS!
4ao. 17 April 1997, South China Morning Post, Five riot police held over gang rape.
4ap. 15 March 1999, South China Morning Post, Rough justice remains the rule.
4ar. 5 November 1999, Vietnam News Brief Service, Injustice judgement to be investigated.
4as. 20 October 2000, Vietnam News Brief Service, Review on five year of the fight against criminals.
4at. 31 October 2000, Vietnam News Brief Service, Police fight against internal corruption.
4av. 18 December 1996, The Times (London), Clintons’ fighting fund repays cash to Buddhist sect.
4aw. 30 May 1999, Sunday Mail (London), She's 4ft 6in claims to be a goddess and followers covet her sweaty socks.
4ax. 5 June 1999, Scotsman (Edinburgh), Is this woman a guru…
4ay. 7 June 1999, Scotsman (Edinburgh), The wee guru who can enlighten your wallet…
4az. 3 August 1999, Scotsman (Edinburgh), capital is no stranger to bizarre faiths…
4ba. 1 December 1999, SAPA Domestic News, Ching Hai causes stir at religions parliament.
Vietnam - October 2003

4bb. 31 July 1997, Reuters News Service, Buddhist sect behind money for Clinton defense.

4bc. 12 September 2000, ICHRD, Hong Kong (BBC Monitoring Service), The Information Centre for Human Rights and Democracy has learned that in addition to suppressing...

4bd. 14 April 2001, South China Morning Post, Six members of banned Taiwanese spiritual sect jailed.

4be. 4 July 2001, Voice of Vietnam text web site, Hanoi, Vietnam grants amnesty to 23,000 prisoners in 2000, conditions to be improved.


4bh. 20 November 2001, Vietnam News Service Brief, AIDS funds leakage

4bi. 28 November 2001, Vietnam News Service Brief, VN to import HIV/AIDS drug

4bj. 29 November 2001, Vietnam News Service Brief, HIV/AIDS cases going up

4bk. 30 November 2001, Vietnam News Service Brief, Anti-AIDS campaign continues to focus on preventive measures

4bl. 3 December 2001, VNA news agency web site, Hanoi, deputy premier urges more active role in HIV-AIDS fight.

4bm. 9 October 1999, Cong An Nhan Dan newspaper, Hanoi (BBC Monitoring Service), Court tries dissident group.

4bn. 6 August 2002, Vietnam News Service Brief, NA approves two new ministries

4bo. 20 March 2000, Vietnam Investment Review, Visa-free departures and arrivals

4bp. 28 August 1998, Saigon Times Weekly, Passport or immigration.

4bq. 24 September 2002, Vietnam News Service Brief, PM gives nod to foreign-assisted projects

4br. 26 June 2002, Vietnam News Service Brief, PM takes care of children


4bt. 12 December 2001, Vietnam News Service Brief, National action program for children approved


4bv. 29 May 2003, VNA news agency website, Hanoi. Vietnamese cabinet meeting focuses on ethnic minorities.


4bz. 9 May 2003, Nhan Dan website, Hanoi. Vietnam premier approves local AIDS drug project.

4ca. 3 May 2003, VNA news agency website, Hanoi. National Assembly committee presents report on HIV/AIDS situation.
4ci. 16 July 2003, Committee to Protect Journalists. Imprisoned journalist offered exile as condition for release.
4cl. 20 June 2003, VNA news agency website, Hanoi. Vietnamese party chief praises state news agency on national press day.
4cn. 3 August 2003, Vietnam's gays begin to gain recognition.

5. Human Rights Watch
http://www.hrw.org/asia/vietnam.php
5a. World report 1999, Vietnam
5c. World report 2000, Vietnam
5d. Rights protections should be on donors’ agenda
5f. News release, 23 April 2002, on Repression of the Montagnards
5g. World Report 2003, Vietnam

6. Canadian Immigration and Refugee Board - REINFO
At http://www.irb.gc.ca/en/researchpub/research/index_e.htm
6a. VNM19984.E, 17 March 1995, Treatment of Army deserters…
6b. VNM19431.E, 30 January 1995, (Returnees to Vietnam)
6c. VNM25543.E, 2 December 1996, Information on the societal attitude towards a single mother with an illegitimate child.
6e. VNM23692.E, 2 May 1996, Information on the current treatment of ethnic Chinese by the authorities and society in general.
6g. VNM28655.E, 14 January 1998, (Update on treatments of individuals and their families who have “fallen out of favour” with the government.)
6h. VNM27680.E, 12 September 1997, Information on the treatment of refugees
6i. VNM29783.E, 30 July 1998, Treatment of homosexuals...
6l. VNM34654.E, 29 June 2000, Treatment of former officers in the South Vietnam forces and their families...
6m. CHN36385.E, 8 February 2001, meditation practice called "Kuan Yin Famen"...
6n. VNM35244.E, 2 August 2000, Exit and re-entry laws (follow-up)
6o. VNM35233.E, 27 September 2000, Treatment of Hmong people by the Vietnamese government
6q. VNM36408.E, 5 March 2001, Whether a person who has never been a member of the Communist Party of Vietnam would be able to find any type of work...
6r. VNM36612.E, 17 May 2001, Information on arrest warrants, procedure when the sought person is out of the country...
6t. VNM37086.E, 11 June 2001, Vietnamese Freedom Association...
6u. VNM37496.E, 24 July 2001, Military service...
6v. VNM37830.E, 28 September 2001, Further information on the Hoa Hao sect
6w. VNM37709.E, 28 September 2001, Treatment of persons in possession of North American Vietnamese newspapers...
6x. VNM37802.E, 16 October 2001, Whether Vietnamese citizens or residents are required to cancel their Household Registration (Ho Khau) when leaving Vietnam to live abroad...
6y. VNM37780.E, 16 October 2001, Procedures for renewal of a recently expired passport at Vietnamese consular offices in Canada
6z. VNM37730.E, 16 October 2001, Documents required by Vietnamese authorities in order to issue a passport to a Vietnamese citizen from within Vietnam...
6aa. VNM35083.E, 27 July 2000, Exit and re-entry laws
6ab. VNM38953.E, 29 April 2002, Government and police involvement in drug smuggling and in the investigation of drug smuggling.
6ac. VNM38818.E, 26 April 2002, Treatment of ethnic Chinese in the workplace and educational system
6af. VNM40629.E, 29 November 2002, Information on "Level 2" education and whether it would require a written test or state exam.
6ah. VNM40274.E, 9 December 2002, Whether conjugal visits were allowed in Vietnamese prisons (1979-1994)
7. General website news reports
7c. 9 October 2000, Red Cross steps up Vietnam relief as flood deaths top 300
7e. 7 November 2000, Vietnam police crack down on sect, seize documents.
7f. 10 November 2000, Human rights groups urge Clinton to press Vietnam on freedoms
7aa. 19 May 2002, Vietnam votes for new National Assembly
7aq. 25 February 2003, Vietnam gangland trial begins

BBC articles at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/default.stm
7g. 11 November 2000, Self-censorship in Vietnam
7h. 4 June 2001, House arrest for Vietnam dissident
7i. 6 June 2001, MEP barred from Vietnam dissident
7j. 8 November 2001, Vietnam's two-child policy
7k. 14 November 2001, Vietnam women get call-up
7l. 14 November 2001, Vietnam to ban gender testing
7m. 19 April 2001, Vietnam confirms party supremo ousted
7n. 22 April 2001, Vietnam announces new party leader
7o. 16 May 2001, Vietnam tries opposition group
7p. 29 May 2001, 37 jailed on terrorism charges
7q. 18 June 2001, Vietnam 'plotters' face trial
7r. 22 June 2001, Vietnam says ties with Catholics 'improving'
7s. 10 September 2001, Vietnam corruption trial begins
7t. 30 October 2001, Vietnam rejects press freedom calls
7u. 7 May 2003, Timeline: Vietnam
7v. 28 January 2002, Vietnam jails people-smugglers
7w. 28 January 2002, Vietnam to produce cheaper AIDS drugs
7x. 26 March 2002, US offers to take Vietnam refugees
7y. 26 April 2002, Vietnam foreign investment slumps
7z. 16 May 2002, Three officials barred from Vietnam poll
7ab. 19 May 2002, 'Massive turnout' in Vietnam's poll
7ac. 25 May 2002, Vietnam Communists hail poll result
7ad. 30 August 2002, Vietnam to free 6,000 prisoners
7ae. 21 August 2002, Vietnam's army invades telecoms
7af. 20 August 2002, Novel breaks Vietnam's gay sex
7ag. 16 August 2002, Vietnam threatens internet crackdown
7ah. 13 August 2002, Vietnam to honour top dissident
7ai. 8 August 2002, Vietnam Assembly approves cabinet
7aj. 5 August 2002, Vietnam creates new ministries
7ak. 2 August 2002, Monk joins Vietnam's missing list
7al. 25 July 2002, Vietnam re appoints Prime Minister
7am. 24 July 2002, Vietnam president gets second term
7an. 23 July 2002, Vietnam questions prominent journalist
7ao. 18 July 2002, Scandal clouds Vietnam's reforms
7ap. 16 July 2002, Vietnam officials sacked for mob links
7ar. 5 August 2002, Cambodia jails Vietnamese 'brothel victims'
7as. 22 October 2002, 'Most Vietnamese women abused'
7at. 20 February 2003, Vietnam reforms 'harm children'.
7au. 17 March 2003, Vietnam dissident meets envoy
7av. 20 March 2003, Vietnam arrests dissident again
7aw. 3 April 2003, Vietnam PM meets church leader
7ax. 18 April 2003, AIDS: Vietnam’s silent sufferers
7ay. 14 May 2003, Vietnam gets top marks on SARS
7az. 28 May 2003, Hanoi dismisses rights censure
7ba. 13 July 2003, Ho Chi Minh legacy wears thin
7bb. 16 July 2003, Vietnam paper banned
7bc. 17 July 2003, Vietnam cuts priest's jail term
7bd. 25 July 2003, Vietnam on scam alert
7be. 7 August 2003, Vietnam reforms 'too slow'
7bf. 24 May 2003, Country profile: Vietnam
7bg. 18 June 2003, Vietnam net dissident jailed.
7bi. 16 August 2003, Vietnam threatens internet crackdown
7bl. 26 August 2003, Vietnam dissident sentence cut

8. Miscellaneous Websites

9. Vietnamese Government official websites and resources

Vietnam - October 2003

10. Other Non-Governmental Organisations

11. Adoption from Vietnam websites and related documents:-
11c. MAPS adoption agency - Vietnam program note and News from Vietnam at www.mapsadopt.org (Accessed 6 November 2002)
11e. Christina Noble Children's Foundation, CNCF in Vietnam, at www.cnf.org

12. UK Government Documents
12b. Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Comments on CIPU Vietnam assessment, October 2002

13. Articles from Academic periodicals

14. LEXIS-NEXIS News Articles
14a. 28 June 2002, LA Weekly (Los Angeles), Why not to write about a Supreme Master of the Universe

Return to contents