



PRESS RELEASES

The EU and Vietnam hold Human Rights Dialogue

EU-Vietnam Human Rights Dialogue

On 1 December 2017 in Hanoi the European Union and Vietnam held the seventh round of their annual enhanced Human Rights Dialogue, under the EU-Vietnam Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. The Dialogue assessed recent developments in the field of human rights in Vietnam and Europe, and was preceded by meetings with NGOs from Europe and Vietnam. The Vietnamese Centre for Women and Development gave an overview of their work with human trafficking and domestic violence victims, while the Centre for Supporting Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin shared their experience, particularly about working with children.

The EU underlined the deterioration of civil and political rights and discussed freedom of expression, association, assembly, religion and belief and access to information. The EU expressed serious concerns about the extensive application of the national security provisions in Vietnam's Penal Code and noted the steep rise in the number of detentions, arrests and sentencing of Vietnamese citizens related to the expression of their opinions. The EU indicated a number of individual cases, reiterating its request for all the Vietnamese citizens detained for peacefully exercising their freedom of expression to be released.

The European Union highlighted the crucial role of civil society organisations in mobilising public and private sectors to improve support to vulnerable groups, in fostering innovation and prosperity, and in enhancing public service delivery and sustainable governance. The Dialogue also addressed cooperation in international fora,

implementation of recommendations from international bodies and international labour standards. The EU encouraged Vietnam to issue standing invitations to UN Special procedures, noted the submission of the first UNCAT report, called on Vietnam to step up efforts in this area and offered support in this direction.

The EU delegation was led by Ms Mercedes Garcia Perez, Head of Division Human Rights in the European External Action Services (EEAS). The Vietnamese delegation was led by Mr Vu Anh Quang, Director General of the International Organisations Department of the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and it included representatives from various services, agencies and ministries.

The eighth round of the enhanced Human Rights Dialogue will be held in 2018 in Brussels.

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