

Solidarity, commitment, responsibility sharing, good fulfillment of information-library tasks in new situation

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Abstract: *On 8/5/2015, the 40th anniversary celebration of establishment (8/5/1975 - 8/5/2015) was held at the headquarter of the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS), Institute of Social Sciences Information (ISSI). Attending the Celebration, Prof. and Dr. Nguyễn Xuân Thắng, Member of the Party Central Committee, Secretary of Party Committee, the President of VASS expressed his congratulations to ISSI's 40-year achievements and provided it with long-term strategic activities in the coming time. It is pleased to introduce to readers.*

Dear comrades,

On behalf of the Party Committee and Leaders of VASS, I would like to send you cordial greetings and warm congratulations. Wishing our festival today really happy as ISSI's inherent traditions.

Dear comrades,

If it is said that the ISSI's 40-year journey in the history of formation and

development is long, it is not too long; however, if it is said short, it is not too short. Yet that period of time is enough for us to recognize how to strive, build and develop ISSI.

As clearly stated in the comrade Institute Director's report, if looking at its history, we should not start from 1975 but the time when got the Library of the École française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO) and Board of Social Sciences Information. These are predecessors and bases for the

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establishment of the ISSI in 1975. As you can see, since its establishment, ISSI has had such specific functions as "doing researches, communicating, providing information and materials on social sciences for the Communist Party of Vietnam and the Government of Vietnam's agencies and mass organizations responsible for social sciences". With those functions, information task is so important as research task; development of information systems, scientific database is so important that our Party and State have intentionally put great faith in our Institute.

About 10 years ago, the Office of the Party Central Committee requested 4 institutes under the current VASS, including Vietnam Institute of Economics, Institute of World Economics and Politics, Institute of Sociology and Institute of Social Sciences Information to take responsibilities for developing topical information and databases on important issues of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the Government of Vietnam's concern. This, actually, does not only prove their trust in VASS but also clearly reflects ISSI's specific characteristics. ISSI is responsible for providing correct, timely, topical and professional information, etc to make contributions to answering questions about outstanding issues of the

country, and those arising during the management and development of social sciences themselves.

About library activities, it can be said that the ISSI's Library is the one at National level on Vietnam social Sciences. The library may be placed under the ISSI's management; however, it is not the only library of ISSI as well as VASS but is the social sciences and humanities world of the whole country and every readers interested in social sciences-related issues. Therefore, the ISSI's stature is much larger, beyond the concept of our administrative nature all along. In the past 40-year journey, in my opinion, the ISSI has been operating in accordance with its functions and tasks and has had very important contributions to the general operations of the VASS, as well as in the implementation of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the Government of Vietnam's tasks. For example, the maintenance and exploitation of the databases that are unique in the Library of Social Sciences so far and even later on - the important documents related to maritime sovereignty, related to the country's history and Vietnamese people, to the ancient bibliographies, ancient maps, etc. The ISSI preserved, promoted documentary values and real contributions in important historical events when such documents'

appearance is necessary. At the same time, the ISSI also built a lot of reports, scientific papers providing not only pure information, which is actually the result of rewarding research, the strategic information... These products have also been reflected in the Institute leader's report. Those are the researches on cultures, values, the East Asian development model, democracy and dictatorship, etc... and on many issues related to the EFEO.

Even the ISSI moved its headquarter from no. 26, Lý Thường Kiệt street to no. 1, Liễu Giai street; however, the address at no. 26, Lý Thường Kiệt street always plays an important role in its development with its statue. At no. 26, Lý Thường Kiệt street, we still organize EFEO reading room, open Hanoi Campus Center, addresses connecting French speaking universities. That is the legacy, the connecting point of the past, present and future.

Dear comrades,

The above clearly shows its strategic importance. The ISSI gradually, though not very fast, but fairly firmly developed in the right direction, showing its statue in the overall development of the VASS. Achieving all of these accomplishments, first of all there must be contributions and efforts of generations of cadres, public

servants and employees of the ISSI. Everyone, in different positions and jobs, is a structural component, a factor to connect and create synergy to get the ISSI as today.

It shows that we can be proud with the fact that the ISSI's development in the past 40 years is a very valuable asset. The task set out for the staff generation today is that they must be responsible for further maintaining, building and developing the Institute so that it is always regarded as a special importance in a strategic location in the VASS's development.

Dear comrades,

Currently, VASS has planned the development direction with vision 2030. Upon placing ISSI under the development strategy of VASS, we are confident in our orientation in developing VASS, in our research mission as well as providing scientific justifications, human resources training, specifically, those specialized in information - library.

The fact remains that if our library system is obsolete and degraded, it is very hard to either update/enter socio-scientific researchers into the database or maintain such database in a suitable manner to meet the demands for searching documents. Consequently, it is impossible to deny the important

role of tasks of information and document development and maintenance. Information is often said to *support the research*; it, however, contributes fifty percent to the success of valuable scientific researches. Personally I believe that it is essential to evaluate the role of information and documentation related tasks. It seems to be that information - documentation - library related tasks used to be underestimated in many places, including ISSI and other academies under the VASS. Request for specific information is regarded as an assignment from the Office of the Party Central Committee which is slowly processed or reported in an unpractical or lengthy manner, impossible to meet the demand for updated and latest information with a focus on issues of concern. In the time to come, the Communist Party of Vietnam and the Government of Vietnam shall assign VASS, ISSI and Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations (VUSTA) to organize a pilot policy dialogue forum. There shall be many arising issues. VASS in general and ISSI and VUSTA in particular will cooperate tightly with each other to ensure the fulfillment of this task. For example, the proposal on Long Thành airport

construction will be discussed and what do we think about various opinions. Regarding the information task, it is essential to collect, summarize information from opposite ideas to have directional arguments for strategic projects. We should place Vietnam at the development position of the next 50 years rather at the current position to avoid the unsystematic expansion and innovation. I am wondering if such orientation for the development of ISSI is an advance in scientific research? I give this example to make you think about the crucial role of ISSI.

Dear comrades,

Our fulfillment of library related tasks is very good, but not the information related ones. This happens not only at ISSI but also many institutions under VASS. Consequently, I would like to recommend ISSI, after this Ceremony, have a seminar to discuss about this orientation. I am wondering if the HR quality, despite the huge quantity, is strong enough. This is, in fact, an important issue and I have asked ISSI's managers to put a serious focus on staff training for many times. In terms of training, it is needed to put strong efforts on specialized training, advanced training, systematic training and practical training.

Moreover, I also wonder if the Library of Social Sciences is able to ensure the sufficient integration if it continues using obsolete, old and unsustainable color printers available at ISSI in such an intensive integration. Thanks to VASS's efforts over the past time, we have got approval and prepared for the Project on the modernization of VASS's library that is expected to be implemented for 3 years (2015-2017) with the investment of more than VND 100 billion. This is a good chance for VASS's library to develop electronic library and digital library along with the traditional one to make it possible to integrate into the national and international library system.

The success of that Project depends on our strong determination and steady political will. This is a huge mission that needs the strong efforts of every staff and employee at VASS.

More importantly, success is only gainable at places where the consensus is available. Therefore, ISSI needs to be united and willing to share responsibilities with each other to protect not only the mankind's knowledge treasure but also the invaluable spiritual products that it has gained over the past 40 years. The same opinion should be shared from

managers to each employee while the strong belief in the future and specific solutions should be available to ensure the sound fulfillment of its noble duty.

VASS is strongly aware of the importance of the information-library task. Therefore, you can feel secure of our attention and investment for its development. We, however, have higher demands and assign more duties to ISSI. In the coming meetings with ISSI's managers and key personnel as well as its staff and employees, we will assign more specific duties.

In this 40th anniversary celebration of establishment of ISSI, I would like to send this message to encourage the consensus among staff and employees of ISSI. I hope that you will continue accompanying with ISSI for its development and more achievements in the scientific, information - library career to contribute to our country's development.

In this occasion, I, on behalf of the Party Committee and Leaders of VASS, would like to once again wish all of you good health, happiness, strong belief and continuous companion for ISSI's development.

Thank you very much! □