

Information

The 7th National Congress of Delegates of Scientific Association of History of Vietnam (Term of 2015 -2020)

On 30th November 2015, in Hà Nội, the Scientific Association of History of Vietnam (Association SAHVN) held the 7th National Congress of Delegates (term of 2015 - 2020). Attending the meeting were President Nguyễn Tấn Sang, former General Secretary Lê Khả Phiêu, Chairman of the Central Committee of Vietnam's Fatherland Front Nguyễn Thiện Nhân and representatives from departments, the Party, ministries and sectors of central level and nearly 400 members of the Association SAHVN.

In the opening speech, Professor Phan Huy Lê, Chairman of the Association SAHVN of term 6 highlighted the main missions of the Association, of which the leading was to contribute to promotion of Vietnam's history development to enhance understanding of history, serve the demand of developing the country and create new awareness of the national history. The project of research and compilation of Vietnam National History Annals chaired by the Association included 25 volumes of history and 5 volumes of chronology of events, which were being deployed and would "make efforts to reflect all the findings of Vietnam's history and selected achievements of the world.

For activities of consultation and peer-review, the Association concentrated on the contents related to history and culture, especially the nation's cultural heritage, one focus of which was *the issue of teaching and learning history in schools*. The Association cooperated with the Ministry of Education and Training in holding two national conferences of assessing the situation of teaching and learning history in secondary schools and proposed remedies. The Association also recommended while not compiling the textbooks yet, it is required to add the content of confirming and defending the national sovereignty for Paracel Islands and Spratly Islands. In recent times, as the Ministry of Education and Training publicised the draft of *Overall General Education Program* and designed the integrated subject of *Citizens and the Fatherland*, the Association held the workshop for giving out straight views to correctly define the position and educational requirements of history in schools. The resolution in the closing session of the 13th National Assembly on 27th November 2015 determined on "keeping history in new curricula and textbooks", restoring its appropriate position in general education as a result of important contributions from the Association SAHVN.

Speaking at the Congress, President Nguyễn Tấn Sang highly appreciated

the role of historical science and historians, particularly in recent times when the national sovereignty has been infringed upon, the historians have been studied, sought and brought out the historical evidence of Vietnam's sovereignty over the South China Sea and 2 Paracel and Spratly Islands.

President Nguyễn Tấn Sang asked the Association encouraged the force and devotion of historians to the largest extent in deploying and completing Vietnam History Book of the highest quality and heartened historians to directly participate, as an organization of consultation and peerreview, in the career of fundamental and comprehensive education renovation, first and foremost is the role and function of history in general education.

At the Congress, Vice President cum Secretary General of the Association SAHVN Dương Trung Quốc also presented the Summary report on operations of the Association SAHVN of term 6 (2010-2015) and Orientations and Duties of term 7 (2015-210). The representatives discussed about professional activities at the local associations, about Vietnamese historian circle and inter-national ones and about history in general education. The 7th Congress of the Association SAHVN also elected the Executive Committee of term 7 (2015-2010) including 64 members, representatives of the fields of history at research

institutes, universities, associations of provincial and municipal levels and its affiliated branches.

NGÔ THẾ LONG

Publication of the report Publication of the report on “Characteristics of Vietnam rural economy: The results of rural household survey in 2014 in 12 provinces”

Recently, in Hà Nội, Central Institute for Economic Management, Institute of Labour Science and Social Affairs, Institute of Policy and Strategy for Agriculture and Rural Development have coordinated publication of the report on “Characteristics of Vietnam rural economy: The results of rural household survey in 2014 in 12 provinces”.

The content of the report was the survey result on a large scale carried out every two years, beginning from 2002. In this survey of 2014, statistical data were collected in regard to saving, income issues to others such as land, immigration of 3648 rural households in 12 provinces of Lào Cai, Đắk Lắk, Điện Biên, Đắk Nông, Hà Tây (former), Phú Thọ, Nghệ An, Quảng Nam, Khánh Hòa, Lâm Đồng and Long An. The report had 10 main chapters.

Most of participating representatives agreed to the comments that the results of year 2014 had many changes compared with those of year 2012. *The report* had numerous new points which reflected the picture of reality of rural

households' economic characteristics in Vietnam for the last two years. The issue on rural household economy was described in detail through data sheets in the report.

Together with the recovery of economic growth rate of Vietnam, rural household economy in 12 provinces surveyed in the period of 2012-2014 also demonstrated their progress. Income and living conditions of rural people had been improved. Diversification in foods was increased. The rate of poverty was reduced in the duration of survey, especially in mountainous areas. Many programs and Policies for rural development had obtained the important achievements, particularly in supporting the people in better access to input and output markets of agricultural and non-agricultural products. The approach to public services such as vocational education and training, health care had showed much progress. Rural people were participating more and more enthusiastically in the activities of the social networks.

Beside the positive signs, the report also showed that the picture of Vietnam countryside still needed further improvement. The differences in incomes of household farmers were very clear, notably agricultural incomes were falling from 28% down to 18%. This situation was due to the relatively ongoing decrease in the role of agriculture. While average benefits in rural areas continued improving thanks to the

economic growth, the difficult areas and disadvantaged groups were not benefited equally in terms of not only income but also access to services, joint markets, food security, etc. in particular, the satisfaction index of the life of the rural people in this survey declined in comparison with that of 2012. Specifically, the percentage of respondents as happy was only 43.9%, which was 5.2% lower than 2012 whereas that as unhappy reached 56.1%, which was 6% higher than in 2012.

The report indicated that the picture of rural Vietnam had prospered but with potential risks such as social evils in the countryside. Therefore, in addition to policies on economic development, the State should pay more attention to social issues for sustainable socio-economic development.

MAI LINH

International conference: “Human rights research and Education in Vietnam - Opportunities and Challenges”

The international conference “Human rights research and Education in Vietnam: Opportunities and Challenges” has been co-hosted by Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS), Embassy of Denmark in Vietnam, Law Department - Vietnam National University (VNU) and Denmark Institute for Human Rights (DIHR) in Hanoi lately. The conference is a part of the project “Human rights and Education” which is

one of the components of the “Good Governance and Public Administration Reforms Program - Phase II: 2012-2015” funded according to the financing agreement between the Government of Denmark and the Government of Vietnam. Approximate one hundred participants from inside and outside the country attended the conference.

This conference also is the forum for scholars, researchers, lecturers to share experiences and discuss on the results and assessments of human rights research and education in Vietnam in 2012-2015 as well as denote the opportunities and challenges in the next phase.

In the conference, discussions concentrated on four important topics. Firstly, making analysis and assessment on the *current situation of human rights research and education in Vietnam* during the past time, especially achievements after Doimoi policy; then figuring out the issues need to be studied and educated. Secondly, making assessments on social impacts of human rights research and education in Vietnam during the past time in such following perspectives: promoting citizen’s knowledge on human rights, community knowledge, policymakers’ perception as well as perception at all levels of government and ministries. Thirdly, *international experiences sharing in human rights research and education*. And finally, *human rights research and*

education in Vietnam opportunities and challenges. Today, opportunities and challenges denote popularity of human rights all over the world.

The conference came to a successful end by reports delivered and discussed. It is confirmed that human rights research and education in Vietnam has made big step forward in many perspectives, such as breakthrough in policy consultancy, many studies have been reported, the network of institutions of human rights research and education has been built nationwide. Many lessons of human rights research and education from other regional countries were shared. Opportunities and challenges in human rights research and education in Vietnam have been denoted, especially the context of politic and society and the international support to Vietnam were clarified. Besides, there are many challenges, human rights is a long-term and closely attached with social development issue. It can not be absolutely resolved in short term but need to be linked to each stage of social development. Therefore, human rights research and education needs to be patient and the capacity in human rights research and education in Vietnam must be promoted in the coming time.

TA.

International Symposium “Confidence building in Asia”

The international symposium “Confidence building in Asia” has been co-

hosted by Institute for Northeast Asia Studies (Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences) in Hanoi lately. Participants included representatives of the two host agencies, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and so on and many domestic and international researchers.

Generating confidence building plays an important role in achieving peace and prosperity in Asia-Pacific region. In current context of international relations, especially when the security environment surrounding Japan and Vietnam has been changing significantly, this is the time to review the confidence building in Asia. Adequate resolutions and steps of Asian countries to build international relationship and confidence by sustainable cooperation in the context of fully changing Asia-Pacific region becomes the core issue to be discussed. Hence, the participants focused on the two main issues: 1/ Confidence building from the viewpoint of ASEAN's indispensable role in regional construction; 2/ *Confidence building from the viewpoint of safeguarding sea security.*

According to the participants, the new regional structure forces ASEAN to express more its key role, especially in the relationship with strong nations. However, in order to play well its role, ASEAN need to overcome itself to face many institutional problems, centrifugal trend..., it needs to have consistent policy and actions in dealing with common problems including security.

It is considered that Northeast Asia has an important location in the global geopolitical map. This is the region that is endowed with many natural resources, drawn many key seaborne routes. Additionally, it is where economic cooperation is happening strongly and generating dependence among countries.

Today, regional security environment implicates many risks because arm race trends to increase, maritime territorial disputes is put on sharp display. Notably, nationalism, extreme religious cult, unilateralism and political attitude of hegemonism ignoring international laws, neglecting the peace, security and living environment of human being are in upward trend. Benefit division, shortage of strategy confidence among countries make Asia not reach agreements and useful collective security arrangements to deal with emerging security challenges.

Some resolutions to confidence building in Asia were suggested, such as: joint maritime patrols, decreasing unilateral army swelling, generating cooperation in some insensitive fields, obeying strictly international rules, international law of the sea and regional agreements, establishing information sharing centers and regional centers for maritime security, building mechanism to control and prevent conflicts between ASEAN and China; stakeholders need to sign commitment not to militarize South China Sea;...

MINH PHÚC