

VIETNAM GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF LABOR (VGCL)

Delegation Visit to the United States
October 11-16, 2004

Visit Objectives

A delegation of senior representatives from the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor (VGCL) will visit the United States in October 2004. The delegation will meet with United States government officials, representatives of trade unions and members of the private sector. Objectives of the trip for the VGCL include: update interested parties on developments in the labor environment in Vietnam, develop relationships and dialogue with those interested in Vietnam's labor environment, and learn about experiences and practices of other countries (in this case, the US) as they relate to protecting workers' rights. The delegation will travel to Washington, DC and Portland, Oregon. The US-Vietnam Trade Council will be assisting with arrangements on behalf of the delegation.

Background

This is the second delegation of senior VGCL leaders to visit the United States. In 2000, Vietnam and the US Department of Labor signed a Memorandum of Understanding, which created the framework for dialogue and cooperation on further improving working conditions in Vietnam.

The VGCL works with the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), the International Labor Organization (ILO) on US-funded programs in the areas of industrial relations, HIV education and prevention, and drug abuse. The VGCL cooperates closely with the ILO on several other initiatives, including trade union capacity building, occupational health and safety, the prevention of child labor, and providing legal assistance to workers.

In addition, the VGCL and the Asia Foundation are cooperating on a program to enhance enforcement of Vietnam's Labor Laws throughout the country. The VGCL works closely with the US-based non-governmental organization (NGO) The International Youth Foundation on a program called The Global Alliance for Workers and Communities. This program assesses the needs and aspirations of factory workers and works with other NGOs to develop and implement programs to address the identified needs.

Organizational Overview

The Vietnam General Confederation of Labor is the national trade union center in Vietnam. Established 75 years ago, the VGCL currently has a membership of 4.3 million workers in the public and private sectors (including foreign invested enterprises). Under the VGCL, there are 64 federations of labor, representing all provinces and major cities in Vietnam; plus 20 national industrial unions.

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The primary objective of the VGCL is to protect and defend the rights and interests of the working population in the country. The VGCL currently maintains relations with hundreds of international, regional and national trade union centers around the world, viewed as instrumental to the organization's efforts. In recent years, the VGCL has increased cooperation with key multilateral institutions, including the ILO and others.

Delegation Members

**Dr. Dang Ngoc Tung – Leader of the Delegation
Senior Vice President of the VGCL
Member of the National Assembly of Vietnam**

Dr. Tung was elected Senior Vice President of VGCL in October 2003. Based at VGCL headquarters in Hanoi, Dr. Tung leads the confederation's operations and strategic direction. Dr. Tung is also Member of the National Assembly of Vietnam (Parliament). Prior to assuming his current role, Dr. Tung was President of the Ho Chi Minh City Confederation of Labor. Dr. Tung has a PhD in Economics. Dr. Tung is married and his only son is a lecturer at a university in Ho Chi Minh City.

**Mr. Nguyen Van Dung
Director, Organization and Personnel Department; Member of Presidium of the VGCL**

Mr. Dung has a long and distinguished career with VGCL. He served as Director of the Confederation's International Relations Department before transitioning into his current role as one of the organization's senior leaders. His current responsibilities include Membership Development, Human Resources and Training. Mr. Dung is a member of the Presidium of the VGCL. He is from Ninh Binh Province in northern Vietnam and has a degree in bio-chemicals. Mr. Dung has a son and a daughter. His son is currently pursuing a doctorate degree at John Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland.

**Dr. Vuong Van Viet
Editor-in-Chief, *Lao Dong* (Labor) Newspaper; Member of Executive Committee of the VGCL**

As Editor-in-Chief of one of Vietnam's largest newspapers, Dr. Viet is an influential voice in support of the country's workforce. Prior to assuming his current role, Dr. Viet was the Deputy Director of the International Relations Department. He is from Hai Duong Province, which borders Hanoi. Dr. Viet has a doctorate degree in History. He has two daughters. Both his wife and his eldest daughter are teachers at a college in Hanoi.

**Mr. Tran Van Ly
Acting Director, International Relations Department of the VGCL**

Mr. Ly is responsible for leading VGCL's cooperation with a variety of international organizations. His duties include developing programs and relationships with a broad spectrum of international parties, including the ILO, foreign union organizations and others. Prior to assuming his current role, Mr. Ly was the Director of The Project Management Center, where he was responsible for managing VGCL's work on a variety of projects and programs with local and foreign organizations. Fluent in English, Mr. Ly is a graduate of Vietnam's Institute of International Relations. His wife is a teacher and his two sons are students – the oldest is in university and the youngest is in secondary school.