

Technical Assistance Update
June 2001

- **Roadmap, Catalog of Reform, and BTA Summary**

As part of a USAID funded project and with assistance from Baker & McKenzie, the U.S.-Vietnam Forum recently completed a comprehensive roadmap of over 300 pages attempting to catalogue Vietnamese laws, decrees and circulars that could be affected by particular commitments made in the U.S.-Vietnam Bilateral Trade Agreement. This roadmap outlines issue areas, timelines, relevant government agencies, and current legal instruments that will likely need to be reviewed for BTA implementation. We are also cataloging legal reforms already made by Vietnam to implement the BTA and are working with the law offices of Powell, Goldstein, Frazer & Murphy to produce a summary of the BTA.
- **Resident Legal Advisor, Hanoi**

Lisa Yarmoshuk will be in Hanoi this summer as a Trade Council's Resident Legal Advisor on the Technical Assistance Project. She will work with Legal Advisor Lee Baker and International Trade Policy Analyst Shiumei Lin on issues relating to BTA implementation focusing particularly on trading rights and transparency. Ms. Yarmoshuk is a WTO expert and has worked with Weil, Gotshal & Manges LLP advising government clients on WTO, NAFTA and other trade issues. She also served as Research Assistant on the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement Chapter 18 Binational Panel. She is a law graduate of McGill University and College D'Europe. We look forward to introducing her to the business community in Vietnam.
- **Customs Study Tour**

In March, the Forum hosted a delegation in the U.S. from Vietnam's General Department of Customs led by the Vice Director Le Manh Hung with key officials in charge of drafting and implementing Vietnam's new Customs Law. Under a grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development, the U.S.-Vietnam Forum has worked closely with Vietnam's General Department of Customs to provide technical assistance on drafting the new Customs Law, which is expected to be discussed and passed by the National Assembly June 20 –26, 2001. The Forum, through Customs Expert Dick Belanger of Powell, Goldstein & Murphy LLP, has provided substantial review, assistance and comments on the 14th draft of the law, and conducted seminars GATT/WTO Valuation and Post Clearance Audit. While in the U.S., the delegation continued discussions already started with Mr. Belanger in Washington, visited JFK Airport in New York, Port of Seattle, and the U.S.-Mexico border in San Diego. This program was made possible with cooperation from the U.S. Customs Department, the Port of Seattle, and corporate members of the U.S.-Vietnam Trade Council.

- **Insurance Seminar**

In conjunction with the Department of Commerce's Office for Financial Services, the Forum helped organize a 3 day seminar in Hanoi in May for the Ministry of Finance providing technical assistance on draft implementing regulations for Vietnam's new Business Insurance Law. Passed by the National Assembly in December 2000, the Insurance Law brings Vietnam's insurance industry into compliance with international standards and opens up the sector to further competition. Sponsored by the American Council for Life Insurance, delegation members included Shannon Yu - Director, Office of Financial Services, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce; David Parsons - Commissioner, State of Alabama Insurance Commission; Lilian Cheung - International Vice President, Actuary, New York Life International; Edward Lo -- Director and Regional Operating Office, AIG Investment Corporation; Greg Crichton- -- Senior Vice President and General Counsel, AIA; Chris Tragakis - General Manager, AIA Vietnam; Ian Lancaster - Senior Vice President, Strategic Marketing, Asia Pacific, Chubb Corporation. Topics covered included Insurance Supervision, Technical Reserves, Solvency, Investment and Returns. Comments were also made on draft implementing regulations submitted by the Ministry of Finance. This program is a series of technical assistance programs the Forum has organized in association with the U.S. Department of Commerce.

- **State Bank of Vietnam Fellows**

The Forum is currently hosting Mr. Nguyen Van Lieu, Deputy Manager of Foreign Department, State Bank of Vietnam and Mr. Tran Duc Tan, Legal Expert, State Bank of Vietnam on a two week study tour to New York City, and Glynco, GA. Mr. Lieu and Mr. Tan are in the U.S. to study Financial and Securities Fraud with Citigroup, AIG and the U.S. Department of Treasury's Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. This program is made possible under a grant from USIA.

- **Cooperation with other Educational Programs**

In June 13, the Forum organized a policy briefing by members of the business community for a delegation of ten government officials on a Stanley Foundation trip. The officials came from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Public Security, Party Planning Committee and Institute for International Relations.

The Forum was pleased to organize two panel discussions and a reception for the Tuck and Hanoi School of Business on the Washington portion of the International Executive Development Program for Vietnamese Managers on July 6. The twenty-three Vietnamese executives in the program come from several different sectors, including banking and investment, construction, textiles and pharmaceuticals. The U.S.- Vietnam Trade Council assists the Tuck School annually with the Washington portion of this program for executive training of Vietnamese managers.

The U.S.-Vietnam Forum, the educational affiliate of the U.S.-Vietnam Trade

Council, has since 1997 conducted various projects providing technical assistance on international trade issues to Vietnam. For more information, please contact the U.S.-Vietnam Trade Council.