

Technical Assistance Update February 2002

➤ **Ministry of Finance – Delegation to the U.S.**

Pursuant to a grant from U.S. AID, the Forum organized a study mission of six Ministry of Finance officials to the United States from January 26 – February 7, 2002 . The mission focused financial sector commitments in the BTA and looked specifically at the legal and regulatory aspects in auditing & accounting services, tariffs, taxation policy & tax advisory services, and insurance. The Forum organized a program that involved consultations and workshops with relevant U.S. government agencies, non-governmental organizations, private sector companies, trade associations, and state and local regulatory bodies. Special thanks in particular to AIG, ACE, New York Life, KPMG, Ernst & Young, Citigroup, and Powell, Goldstein, Frazer & Murphy for hosting the delegation during this important study mission.

➤ **Ministry of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs (MOLISA) Delegation to the U.S.**

The Forum, pursuant to a grant provided by the U.S. State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, will host Vice Minister Nguyen Luong Trao and a delegation of officials from MOLISA and the National Assembly on a visit to the United States to continue the labor dialogue between our two countries. While in the U.S. , the delegation will meet with U.S. Government agencies, Congressional offices, Non-Government Organizations, labor unions, including the AFL-CIO, and companies. A more formal labor dialogue with U.S. Department of Labor is scheduled for Monday, March 4.

➤ **E-Commerce**

The U.S.-Vietnam Trade Council and the U.S. Department of Commerce, with support from the U.S. Trade and Development Agency, will organize two bilateral workshops on e-commerce policy, legal, and regulatory issues. The workshops will precede the 25th APEC Telecommunications & Information Working Group Meetings in Hanoi this year and are in response to Vietnam ’s initiative to strengthen the legal framework for electronic commerce.

➤ **BTA Summary**

The Forum has completed the translation of the Summary of the U.S.-Vietnam Trade Agreement written by PGFM with the aim of helping to facilitate the use and understanding of the agreement. In cooperation with the Ministry of Trade, we look forward to publishing this 30-page summary along with a list of “key provisions” in Vietnamese in addition to the English version. This document is currently available through our offices in Hanoi , Ho Chi Minh City and Washington .

➤ **U.S.-Vietnam Trade Council Website:**

The U.S.-Vietnam Trade Council’s website on technical assistance is now available for viewing at <http://usvtc.org/technicalassistance>. Viewers may now check out technical assistance programs and materials provided through the U.S.-Vietnam Forum since 1997 in various subject areas related to the BTA, the WTO and economic integration in general. This section will continue to be updated on a regular basis.

➤ **Catalog of Legal Updates**

We have continued to regularly issue our Catalog of Legal Updates keeping track of legal instruments promulgated by Vietnam that seek to address specific area provisions of the BTA since the agreement was signed. The latest issue (January 31, 2002) is now available on our website or through our offices.