

UPDATE

August 2006 – March 2007

Vietnam's WTO Membership



Vietnam Joins WTO – January 11, 2007

Vietnam's WTO membership took effect on January 11, 2007. In celebration of this event and US-Vietnam normalization, the Council and the Embassy of Vietnam co-hosted a reception on January 11 for over 400 guests at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. Attendants to this event included Hosted by Ambassador Nguyen Tam Chien the event was attended by Assistant Secretary of State Christopher R. Hill, Senator Jim Webb, Representative Earl Blumenauer (the new co-chair of the US-Vietnam Congressional Caucus), former U.S. Representative Rob Simmons (former co-chair of the Caucus). During this reception, USTDA Director Thelma Askey also presented Ambassador Chien with the USTDA's 2006 Country of the Year honor for Vietnam.



Photo: With the presence of Ambassador Nguyen Tam Chien [C] and co-chairman of the US-Vietnam Congressional Caucus Earl Blumenauer [L], Senator Jim Webb spoke to the audience at the January 11 reception.

UPCOMING HIGHLIGHTS

(See page 4 for further details)

March 14-16, 2007 Vietnam's DPM Pham Gia Khiem Visit the United States

March 23-27, 2007: USDOS/USVTC Workshops on Responsible Governance in Hanoi, Danang and Hochiminh cities

April 2007: USAID/USVTC/STAR Transparency Study Mission to Washington DC and California

March 20-April 6, 2007: Vietnam's National Assembly Session



Photo: Ambassador Chien presented an award to Virginia B. Foote, USVTC President and USABC Executive Vice President for the work of the US-Vietnam WTO Coalition.

WTO Approved Vietnam's WTO Accession Package

On October 26, 2006, the Working Party formally approved Vietnam's accession package. On November 7, 2006, the WTO General Council approved Vietnam's membership at a special session in Geneva. "The remarkable efforts that Viet Nam has put into preparing for membership should be an

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inspiration to us all, as several members have observed,” WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy said.



Photo by Dominic Favre/Reuters: Vietnam's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Pham Gia Khiem (R) watches as WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy (L) and Vietnam's Trade Minister Truong Dinh Tuyen (C) exchange

Vietnam Ratified its WTO Accession Package

On November 29, 2006, Vietnam's National Assembly enacted Resolution No. 71/2006/QH11 ratifying Vietnam's WTO Accession Protocol. On December 12, 2006, Vietnam officially notified the WTO of its ratification, and became the 150th Member of the WTO on January 11, 2007.

US Grants PNTR for Vietnam

On December 8, 2006, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 6406 granting PNTR to Vietnam. On December 9, 2006, the U.S. Senate passed senate version of H.R. 6111 granting PNTR to Vietnam. On December 29, 2006, President Bush signed into law the proclamation to extend permanent nondiscriminatory treatment (PNTR) to the products of Vietnam.

Vietnam's APEC 2006

Vietnam successfully organized the 14th APEC summit in Hanoi in November 2006. The U.S. President George W. Bush, accompanied by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Trade Representative Susan Schwab and the chief executives of giant U.S. companies, attended 2006 APEC Summit Hanoi and held a bilateral summit with Vietnamese leaders and businesses. The USABC/USVTC served as Chair of the US Business Coalition for APEC 2006.

APEC Summit

The APEC Economic Leaders held two-day meetings at the newly built National Convention Center in Hanoi on November 18-19, 2006 under the chairmanship of Vietnam's President Nguyen Minh Triet. In addition to the approval of 2006 APEC Hanoi Action Plan, the Leaders agreed on a separate declaration on the Doha Round to express their strong political commitments to international trade liberalization.

PM Dung addresses US – Vietnam APEC Plenary

On November 16, 2006, the US-APEC Business Coalition organized a United States - Vietnam Plenary with a keynote address by His Excellency Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung. The Plenary was attended by over 300 American business leaders attending the APEC Business Summit. Also organized by the Coalition the US Delegation met with Vietnam's key economic Ministers, including Minister of Trade Truong Dinh Tuyen, Minister of Planning and Investment Vo Hong Phuc, and Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry Chairman Vu Tien Loc.

APEC Coalition Meetings

APEC Coalition organized additional meetings during Hanoi 2006 APEC week included a briefing with the Honorable Susan Schwab, U.S. Trade Representative, meetings with his Excellency, John Howard, Prime Minister Howard of Australia, Minister of Commerce Bo Xiao of China, Prime Minister of Royal Government of Thailand Surayud Chulanont, first Vice President of Peru Luis Giampietri Rojas, and with Vietnamese businesses and leaders.

US Treasury Secretary Paulson in Vietnam

Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson was in Hanoi to attend the APEC Finance Ministers meeting on September 7-8 and to expand on the US dialogue with the major economies in the Asia-Pacific region. In addition to bilateral meetings with his counterparts attending the APEC meetings, he met with the PM and Vietnamese officials who are leading the country's reform program and integration into the global economy. In addition, he met with VN Entrepreneurs and Vietnamese Business Students to emphasize the importance of continued economic reform, underline the importance of trade liberalization – including in the financial sector, and encourage greater efforts to thwart the financing of terrorism

Technical Assistance Updates

STAR/USVTC-EF Steering Committee Study Mission

On November 8 - December 12, 2006, the USVTC and STAR organized a study mission for the Steering Committee of the USAID-STAR Project to Washington DC to meet with various US government departments and agencies, including US Trade Representative, Department of Commerce, US Patent and Trademark Office, US Security and Exchange Commission, US Trade and Development Agency, Department of State, Department of Treasury to review the activities of phase I - STAR project in the last 5 years and to discuss new action plans to 2009. The delegation was led by Mr. Nguyen Quoc Huy, Vice Minister, Office of the Government & Chairman, Government Steering Committee for BTA Technical Assistance, and included Mr. Bui Huy Hung, Director of International Relations Department, Office of the Government, Mr. Thach Can, Director of International Relations Department, Ministry of Science & Technology, Mr. Nguyen Dang Hung, Deputy Director of Multilateral Economic Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Nguyen Sinh Nhat Tan, Deputy Director of Legal Department, Ministry of Trade, Mr. Dang Tuan Hiep, Head of WTO Division, International Relations Department, Ministry of Finance, Mr. Le Hong Son, Director of Documentary Inspection Department, Ministry of Justice and Mr. Tran Hao Hung, Deputy Director of Legal Department, Ministry of Planning and Investment.

International Visitor Leadership Program, Vietnam's Study Mission on Standards

On March 4-10, 2007, the International Visitor Leadership Program, the Department of State and the US Embassy in Vietnam organized a seven-member Vietnamese delegation to Washington DC to participate in an International Visitors Leadership Program in support of Vietnam's compliance with the World Trade Organization's (WTO) commitments regarding Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT). The delegation met with various government departments and agencies, including USTR, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), Office of Management and Budget of the Executive Office of the President, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and also with various

private organizations, including Meridian International Center, American National Standards Institute (ANSI), Sidley & Austin and Brown & Wood and USVTC. The delegation was led by Mr. Hien Dang Ha, Ph.D., Director, Conformity Assessment Department, Directorate for Standards and Quality, and included Mr. Trung Dang Chu, Vice Head, Pharmaceutical Legislation & Policy Division, Drug Administration of Vietnam, Ministry of Health, Mr. Nang Doan, Ph.D., Director, Legislation Department, Ministry of Science and Technology, Mr. Thuyet Minh Nguyen, Member, Science, Technology and Environment Committee, Vietnam National Assembly, Mr. Dung Van Tran, Director, Quality Assurance and Testing Center 3, Directorate on Standards and Quality and Mr. Dien Van Vu, Ph.D., Director, Vietnam Standards and Quality Center.

Grant Announcement - United States – Vietnam: Responsible Government Exchange Program (VN & US)

In September 2006, USVTC-EF was awarded an 18-month grant from the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Citizen Exchange, to conduct a program that will promote shared expertise, open dialogue and understanding on governance issues among leaders of government, non-governmental organizations and civic associations in the U.S. and in Vietnam. The project will engage young leaders to discuss actual mechanisms of transparency and accountability and to create greater public awareness and participation in policy making for responsible governance. With the State of Oklahoma, the USVTC will work closely with Young Businesspeople Association and the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy and Consulate General, experts, and U.S. private sector to implement this program.

8th IPR Seminar: Border Enforcement of IPR (HCMC)

With generous support from a donor that wishes to remain anonymous, USVTC, in collaboration with the General Sciences Library, organized the 8th Seminar in our IPR Seminar Series. The August 31 morning seminar focused on "Border Enforcement of IPR". Special guest speakers included Mr. Peter Fowler - Senior Counsel, USPTO Office of Enforcement, Thomas J. Treutler – Managing Partner, The Law Offices of Thomas J. Treutler, and representatives of the HCMC Customs Department.

Upcoming Highlights

Vietnam's DPM Pham Gia Khiem Visit the United States

On March 11-16, Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Pham Gia Khiem visited the United States to strengthen the increasingly active relations between Vietnam and the US, as well as to promote economic, trade, scientific, technological and educational ties.

USVTC-EF Workshops on Responsible Governance in Hanoi, Danang and Hochiminh Cities

The U.S.-Vietnam Trade Council Education Forum in cooperation with Vietnamese Young Businesspeople Associations in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City and with the State of Oklahoma will organize three one-day workshops in Ho Chi Minh City, Da Nang and Hanoi from March 23rd to March 28th on Responsible Governance. This is one of the activities under the USVTC-EF and State of Oklahoma program "United States – Vietnam: Responsible Government Exchange Program" sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. The Program aims to educate citizens and community leaders in mechanisms and administrative procedures for regular engagement in public discussions and participation in public policy. Two key speakers are flying in from Oklahoma to participate in these workshops – Professor Rodger Randle and Senator Billy A. Mickle. Professor Randle will address the overarching issues related to responsible governance and present an international comparative perspective drawing from historical, political, and social experiences of the United States, the United Kingdom and France. Senator Mickle will draw on his prolific public service and private sector experience to ground the theoretical discourse to specific best practice examples and identify areas for improvement in Oklahoma.

USAID/STAR/USVTC Study Mission on Transparency

To support the ongoing efforts of Vietnam to improve transparency and strengthen an open E-government and implementation of transparency commitments under Vietnam's WTO Accession Protocol and the U.S. – Vietnam Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA), in the third week of April, USVTC-EF and STAR will organize a study mission on transparency to

Washington DC and California for a Vietnamese delegation led by his Excellency Mr. Doan Manh Giao, Chairman of the Government Office of Vietnam. The delegation will meet with various government departments and the private sector to study and discuss the regulatory framework and practical experience to promote and ensure transparency and to study the most practical ways to comply with WTO requirements on transparency.

"Catalog of Legal Updates: Vietnam Trade Policy Regime" - Monthly

Since 2000, USVTC has compiled the *Catalog of Legal Updates*, identifying laws and regulations promulgated by Vietnam as they relate to obligations under the BTA and WTO accession. The "*Vietnam Trade Policy Regime: Catalog of Legal Updates*", focuses on legal developments with a view towards what Vietnam has undertaken or will undertake for its WTO accession. The next Catalog will complete the WTO accession preparation – coming soon!