



**Memorandum of Understanding
between
the Vietnam-USA Society and the Institute for Global Engagement**

The Vietnam-USA Society (VUS) and the Institute for Global Engagement (IGE) agree to continue working together to strengthen U.S. - Vietnam understanding and cooperation, building and expanding upon the work begun through the 1 July 2005 Letter of Intent. To this end, VUS and IGE will work to encourage and sustain progress already being made in ensuring religious freedom and the rule of law in Vietnam through the next steps, detailed below.

Principles of Cooperation

VUS and IGE re-affirm the principles of cooperation stated in the 2005 Letter of Intent, agreeing to work together through consensus, mutually respecting:

- One another's national cultural and historical context
- The rule of law and each country's legal system
- The need for timely consultation

Next Steps

IGE and VUS will work together to:

1. Maintain frequent communication to foster better mutual understanding about the actual religious situation in Vietnam and America.
2. Continue facilitating annual reciprocal visits of U.S. and Vietnamese religious, government, academic, NGO, and business leaders such that the relationship between Vietnam and the United States is strengthened through mutual understanding.
3. Institutionalize, on a regular basis, a conference series on "Religion and Rule of Law in Southeast Asia" to deepen regional understanding of effective religion legislation and implementation through comparative discussion, beginning in the fall of 2007.
4. Promote community-to-community relations between America and Vietnam focusing on Vietnam's socio-economic development by carefully expanding the "Glocal Ventures" model established in Lao Cai province to other provinces.
5. Facilitate, as appropriate, intra-faith discussions between Vietnam and the U.S about religious freedom and its responsible exercise.

6. Facilitate, as appropriate, provincial level training seminars for local Vietnamese officials and religious leaders on Vietnam's religion regulation and the need for its compliance, building trust as a result.
7. Develop and implement a pilot program for articles 4, 5, and 6 in 2007. Protocols for these pilot programs will be worked out jointly by VUS and IGE in close consultation with relevant Vietnamese authorities.

Together, these steps are designed to further respect and guarantee of religious freedom in Vietnam consistent with Vietnamese culture and the rule of law, building on the significant progress already made, thereby strengthening and sustaining U.S.-Vietnam relations.

Signed 9 September 2006 in Hanoi, Vietnam



Hoang Cong Thuy
Secretary General
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Chris Seiple
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