INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND RETURN MIGRANTS IN VIET NAM

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1) Vietnam and international migration

In the trend of the international integration and globalization, Vietnam is among countries that have a big number of its people emigrate abroad. They stay in almost every countries and territories of the world. Every year, many of them return to Vietnam with different purposes: permanent stay (repatriation), relative visit, investment, business doing. etc.

With a full cognition of the positive impacts as well as the challenges brought by the migration, the Government of Vietnam has been finalizing and updating its regulations on migration in a hope to catch up with the common trend of the world. On the other hand, the Government also closely cooperates with related countries to better manage migration issues with the aim to stimulate the lawful migration and consistently prevent illegal migration.

We are now fully aware of the mutual relation between migration and development which has become the deep concern of many countries as well as the world community.

There are many causes of migration, among which, the main and deep-rooted cause is the economic one. That is due to the ever-increasing gap between countries on economic development level, on the accommodation of life, on the income and due to the fast speed of globalization.

Vietnam is aware that, beside its challenges, international migration has made positive contribution to the economic development of the involved countries. It generates the opportunity for the economic development, meets the demand of the involved countries for labor human resources, stimulates the technology transfer between countries, creates jobs, reduces unemployment, eliminates hunger and reduces poverty, improves life standard as well as increases the source of hard foreign currency for countries of origin.

Vietnam's population now is 84.2 millions and there are around 1.2 million young people entering the labor age each year. International migration has increased significantly in recent years. At present, there are 3.2 millions Vietnamese permanently living abroad (400,000 of them are graduates and post-graduates) and 500.000 Vietnamese migrant workers working in more than 40 different countries and territories all over the world under time -limited labor contracts.

Our Government considers Vietnamese overseas as the integral part of the Vietnamese people. This community plays an important role in the economic development of the country.

Beside the technology transfer, investment, trade, creating jobs and increase the skilled labor force of the country, about 2 billions USD sent to Vietnam per year by Vietnamese overseas. That is not yet including around 1.6 billion USD sent home by the migrant workers.

Government of Vietnam values and highly appreciates all kinds of contribution made by Vietnamese migrants for the economic development of Vietnam.

2. Some measures and policies to stimulate the return migrants to make contributions to the economic development of Vietnam:

- For the temporary return migrants, regardless of their present status of nationality: If they stay in Vietnam continuously for 06 months, they are eligible to buy and posses an apartment in Vietnam for living. They are all equally treated as the local people living in Vietnam for the economic benefits. There is no discrimination of the domestic prices applied between them, including air-tickets, house-purchase, taxes .etc.

- For the permanent return migrants: they can bring along all their personal belongings to Vietnam without import taxes.
- Regarding the immigration policy, in order to make it convenient and to facilitate for the Vietnamese overseas to enter or exit Vietnam, the Government of Vietnam has decided to exempt all kinds of visas to Vietnam for those people regardless of whether they are holding Vietnamese passports or foreign passports. This policy stimulates Vietnamese migrants to return Vietnam more often and produces positive impacts in different domains including economic development.
- For the Vietnamese migrant workers: Before leaving abroad, they are allowed to borrow from the banks a certain amount of money with a very soft rate of interests in order to give them easy condition that they can afford enough money for needed expenditures before departure; the workers are also given opportunity to attend the vocational training courses to improve their technologies, professional skill, to learn English and to study the law, the practices as well as the habits and customs of receiving country. After some years of working abroad, when their labor contracts ended, the workers return home, they will be encouraged to use their capital for investment and production. Their such doings play an important role in creating jobs, reducing unemployment, especially in the far distance and remote rural areas. The poverty there, thus, reduced step by step. For those return workers with good credits (did not violate the law of the original country as well as of the country of destination) and accomplished their old labor contracts, they were given priority to sign a new contract for a next departure.

In the coming years, labor export is still regarded as an important strategy of Vietnam. We estimate that around 75,000 to 80,000 Vietnamese trained workers will be sent abroad under time-limited labor contracts every year.

To achieve this aim, we understand that some works must be done:

- To build and improve law system on migration, particularly international labor migration, detailing the policies in management and encouraging the return migrants to take part more actively in the process of development;
- To establish institutions specializing in dealing with migration in order to provide information and knowledge to migrant workers;

- To strictly monitor activities of companies, agencies engaging labor export;
- To often raise awareness through training and media, helping migrant workers to make right decisions on working abroad;
- To set up and complete the system of Labor Management Committee at destination countries to help the workers when needed.
- Actively participate in regional consultative processes, multilateral dialogues and strengthen the cooperation with governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, business community for building partnership, capacity and sharing of best practices.

In recent years, Vietnam has often received prompt and precious assistances and cooperation from the IOM in many aspects of international migration. I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to the IOM for this matter and hope that the cooperation between IOM and Vietnam in the coming years will be further strengthened.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I thank you very much for your kind attention!