

**THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEMOCRATIC LAWYERS'
STATEMENT**

ON VIETNAM'S IMPLEMENTATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

presented at
THE 26TH HRC SESSION
Geneva, June, 2014

IADL welcomes Vietnam's active engagement with the UPR process. Their acceptance of a large number of recommendations is testimony of their strong commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights.

Vietnam experienced a very long war with long legacies. During the Vietnam war, the United States launched a chemical warfare, the largest and longest in the history of mankind by spraying over the country over 80 million litres of toxic herbicides of different kinds, but commonly known as Agent Orange. These chemicals contained high quantity of dioxin that is considered one of the most dangerous toxins ever known. Over 4 million Vietnamese people were exposed to the effect of these chemicals and consequently suffered different kinds of terrible diseases. Birth defects and severe deformities are now showing up in children of the third and fourth generation.

The deadly mark left by Agent Orange on the natural environment of Vietnam includes the destruction of mangrove forests and the long-term poisoning of soil especially in the known "hot spots" near former U.S. military bases.

IADL has had close ties to the people of Vietnam for many years. We have been working closely with our affiliate the Vietnam Lawyers Association and with the Vietnam Association of Victims of Agent Orange in an effort to seek remedies for these victims which to date have received no compensation or any humanitarian aid from the U.S. government.

Vietnam made lot of efforts to overcome the consequences of this terrible war and maintain a peaceful environment for national development.

Especially, since the last cycle of the UPR in 2009, Vietnam has made significant achievements in the implementation of human rights: Vietnam invited five UN Special Rapporteurs to visit the country, in a sign of interest in promoting human rights. Vietnam successfully encouraged its people to take part in the amendment of its Constitution, which attaches greater importance to securing its citizen's rights.

Great efforts have been made to help increase the living conditions of the people. We encourage Vietnam to continue its efforts and we call on the government to do whatever they can to assist agent orange' victims in their fight for justice.

We wish Vietnam all success in the implementation of the accepted recommendations.