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VIETNAM Assessment



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VIETNAM Assessment

Creating a Sound Investment Climate

edited by

Suiwah Leung

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Foreword

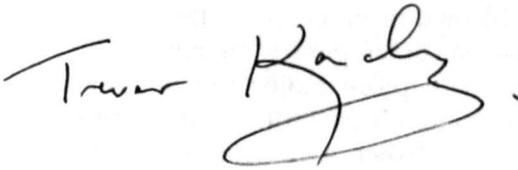
In 1990 the Australian National University's Research School of Pacific Studies convened a major conference on current conditions in Vietnam, and each year since then has held a Vietnam Update Conference. This has rapidly established itself as one of the leading international conferences of its type on contemporary Vietnam.

In engaging leading scholars to explore major policy issues relating to Vietnam, the Update Conference provides an invaluable focus for academic research, with direct spin-offs for policy development processes both in Australia and Vietnam. At the same time, it serves to inform the broader Australian community of important recent events and trends in what is an increasingly significant—and rapidly changing—regional neighbour. It also provides a unique opportunity for interchange between groups with diverse backgrounds and differing perspectives. The Update Conference enables academics, business people, public servants, aid workers and others with an interest in Vietnam to engage in wide-ranging and thought-provoking dialogue on political, social and economic issues of concern to both Vietnam and Australia.

From the outset, the conference organisers have encouraged the participation of scholars, commentators and officials from Vietnam. Indeed, in any one year up to half of the conference participants are Vietnamese. This effort has not only maximised the quality of the discussions at the Update Conference, but also facilitated the establishment of important and productive links between Vietnamese and Australian scholars and institutions.

Vietnam Assessment: Creating a Sound Investment Climate is an important contribution to the understanding of Vietnam's development prospects. Vietnam is confronted with critical choices about its future. The papers in this volume help chart the challenges and opportunities facing Vietnam as it continues on its path of economic transformation.

In introducing this selection of papers from the 1995 Vietnam Update Conference, I am also pleased to note the inclusion of papers from the second Vietnam Economic Research Project Workshop, an initiative of the National Centre for Development Studies. It is aimed at producing and publishing quality research on the Vietnam economy through a teaching and research program conducted with postgraduate students drawn from the National Economic University and the Central Institute for Economic Management in Hanoi, and the University of Economics in Ho Chi Minh City. The contribution of papers to this volume is an excellent indication of the Project's success.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Trevor Kanaley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Trevor Kanaley
June 1996

Contributors

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Le Dang Doanh is President of the Central Institute for Economic Management (CIEM), a key economic thinktank within the Ministry of Planning and Investment in Vietnam. The CIEM offers policy advice, and has recently been involved in the drafting of several pieces of economic legislation. Mr Doanh is a prominent commentator on developments in the Vietnamese economy and frequently expresses his own position on economic matters.

Suiwah Leung is Director of Graduate Studies in Economics of Development at the National Centre for Development Studies at the Australian National University (ANU). She is also Convenor of the Vietnam Economic Research Project, which is in part funded by a grant from the Australian aid agency, AusAID. The Project promotes research on the Vietnamese economy by scholars and researchers at the ANU and various institutions in Vietnam. The three Vietnamese institutions to which the ANU is specifically linked through the Project are the Central Institute of Economic Management, the National Economic University in Hanoi and the Economic University of Ho Chi Minh.

Elizabeth Maitland is a lecturer in the Department of Business Development and Corporate History at the University of Melbourne. Her chapter in this book represents part of her PhD research on Australian investment in India, Indonesia, Vietnam and the Philippines. Ms Maitland conducts extensive fieldwork in Australia

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The Vietnam Economic Research Project links the Australian National University (ANU) to three major institutions in Vietnam: the National Economics University in Hanoi (NEU), the University of Economics in Ho Chi Minh City (UEH), and the Central Institute of Economic Management (CIEM) in the Ministry of Planning and Investment in Vietnam. I would like to thank the respective Heads of the three institutions for their participation in the Conference, and for their support throughout the Project. A special vote of

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Suiwah Leung
June 1996