

## Parliamentarians praise Vietnam's success in story of aid and development

**Hanoi, March 25, 2005** – Parliamentarians from thirteen different countries around the world reviewed the World Bank's activities in Vietnam during a recent visit.

Members of parliament from countries as diverse as Italy, Belgium, India, Jordan, Kenya, France, Philippines, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Australia, Germany and Korea toured Vietnam from 21-24 March as part of the "Parliamentarians in the Field" program of the independent Parliamentary Network on the World Bank.

For all delegates, it was clear that the economic growth in Vietnam is contributing to poverty reduction. **Senator Patricia Crossin from Australia** said, "We have been very impressed by the focus on poverty reduction of the Vietnamese Government at the central level and by the people at the local level, which the World Bank supports in many of its projects".

Others commented that in some countries, aid is a "business" which in turn has a distortionary impact on the development of the country. By contrast, Vietnam does not seem to be wholly reliant on aid but rather uses it as a supplement to achieving its own poverty reduction strategy.

During their four days in Vietnam, the delegates visited three World Bank projects: the Hon Mun Marine Protection Area Project in Nha Trang; the Community Based Rural Infrastructure Project in Ninh Thuan province; and the Urban Upgrading Project in Ho Chi Minh City.

Across these three projects, the delegates were pleased to learn that community consultations had been carried out and in some cases efforts were made to enhance both physical infrastructure and develop human capital. As **Dr Myoung-Ock Ahn from Korea** said, "human resource development, education, health and women's livelihoods, is vitally important for sustainable poverty reduction".

The delegation intends to provide a report to the World Bank, member countries and NGOs to increase policy dialogue on development issues identified from the visit.

The PNoWB was set up by Parliamentarians about 5 years ago, and now counts about 800 members all over the world. The network has three broad aims: to advocate for increased transparency and accountability in the World Bank, to advocate for development and development funding within national parliaments and the relevant international arenas, and to increase the scope and quality of the parliamentary contribution to the development debate.

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The visit to Vietnam is one of the Network's key activities, organized jointly with the World Bank and supported by a grant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland. The purpose of this visit is to foster a better understanding among Parliamentarians of development activities in Vietnam and the role of the World Bank.

Please visit [www.worldbank.org/vn](http://www.worldbank.org/vn) to learn more about the World Bank's program in Vietnam and [www.pnowb.org](http://www.pnowb.org) for more information on the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank.

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**Additional Notes**

- *The World Bank strongly supports Vietnam's efforts in attaining Vietnam's localized Millennium Development Goals and targets.*
- *The World Bank provides three types of services to Vietnam: (1) design and financing of development projects; (2) analytical work, policy advice, and technical assistance; and (3) donor dialogue facilitation. In addition, every year the Bank co-chairs the Consultative Group (CG) meeting, in which all donors gather to discuss the aid program for Vietnam.*
- *Since reengaging in Vietnam in 1993, the World Bank has supported 35 projects to help fight poverty in Vietnam through finance for agriculture, infrastructure, health programs, schools, and other essential needs.*
- *Since 1993, US\$5 billion has been committed to Vietnam, of which over \$2.7 billion has been disbursed. This makes Vietnam the largest IDA-only borrower in the world.*

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