



EUROPEAN UNION

DELEGATION TO VIETNAM

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PRESS RELEASE

EU Affairs reviewed through a series of events organized under the EU – Vietnam Strategic Dialogue Facility

Hanoi –The Delegation of the European Union to Vietnam is currently organizing a series of events on EU-Affairs in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as part of the EU – Vietnam Strategic Dialogue Facility. These activities consisting of a EU public lecture, a high-level roundtable discussion and a training workshop in EU affairs aim at strengthening the knowledge of the EU institutional arrangements as well as mandate and decision making mechanisms, in the context of the recent developments, including the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty - that entered into force in December 2009- and the impact of the recent debt crisis.

Opening the series of events, today's Public Lecture entitled *"What is the impact of the financial and sovereign debt crisis on EU institutional reform and foreign relations"* will be given by Prof. Steven Blockmans - a senior research fellow and the Head of the EU Foreign Policy Unit at the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS), a non-partisan think tank based in Brussels. Students from several universities in Hanoi including the Hanoi National University, Foreign Trade University, University of Social Sciences and Humanity, the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam and the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences attended the lecture as well as representatives from the EU Member States' embassies in Hanoi.

At the public lecture, the speaker provided assessment on the changing roles of EU institutions in its transformation process, the legitimizing mechanisms of the EU decision-making process and the impact of the austerity measures on the global position of the EU in the world.

In the opening remarks, the Ambassador and Head of the Delegation of the European Union, Dr. Jessen, emphasized that *"improving the awareness and understanding of EU-Affairs and the functioning of the EU institutions is fundamental in underpinning EU – Vietnam relation and bringing forward the partnership that has been elevated by the official signing of the EU - Vietnam Partnership Cooperation Agreement last year"*

The public lecture will be followed by a high-level round table discussion and a training workshop designed for officials in Hanoi and other provinces in Vietnam. It is the first time that this series of events to inform and train government officials and students on EU affairs is being organized.

The high-level round table discussion on EU-Affairs will take place on the 26th of August. On this occasion, senior officials and leaders from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will focus on the role of the EU worldwide. The discussion will assess the principles, values and objectives of the EU external actions, the evolution of its mandate and powers since the Lisbon Treaty came to force, the EU decision-making process and the role of the EU in global and regional issues.

The series of events will be closed by the two-day training workshop in Da Nang on the 27-28th of August for 50 officials from provincial departments. The workshop will provide a wide range of information on the EU and its institutions, including the overview and key facts of EU-cooperation in Vietnam, EU-Vietnam relations, operational principles, the institutional arrangements of the EU, the EU's external actions, the global role of the EU and regional issues, etc.

Background Information

The EU-Vietnam Strategic Dialogue Facility is a three-year program that aims to support Vietnam's development through the implementation of activities in areas covered by the EU-Vietnam Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA). This EU-funded €2.9 Million project will continue until January 2016.

The new EU-Vietnam Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) was signed on 27 June 2012. It replaces the Cooperation Agreement between Vietnam and the EU dating back from 1995. When fully in force, the PCA will cover policy dialogues between the EU and the Government of Vietnam in priority areas of co-operation in more than 40 sectors; and thus, the PCA will, as a comprehensive framework, facilitate a broader, more diversified and more political partnership between Vietnam and the EU.

Mr Blockmans is also a Professor of EU External Relations Law and Governance at the University of Amsterdam, a visiting professor at the University of Leuven, and one of the founding members of the Centre for the Law of EU External Relations (CLEER). The CEPS in Brussels is ranked among the world's top 10 think tank in the 'Global Go To Think Tank Rankings'.

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