



# General Assembly

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## Seventy-seventh session

Item 118 (c) of the provisional agenda\*

**Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of members of the Human Rights Council**

### **Note verbale dated 4 August 2022 from the Permanent Mission of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly**

The Permanent Mission of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to the United Nations has the honour to refer to the candidature of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam for election to the Human Rights Council for the term 2023–2025, at the elections to be held during the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly.

In accordance with General Assembly resolution [60/251](#), the Permanent Mission has the further honour to transmit herewith the voluntary pledges and commitments of the Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, reaffirming its commitments to the promotion and protection of human rights (see annex).

The Permanent Mission of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam would be grateful to the President of the General Assembly if the present note and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Assembly, under item 118 (c) of the provisional agenda.

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\* [A/77/150](#).



## **Permanent Mission of Viet Nam to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly**

### **Candidature of Viet Nam to the Human Rights Council, 2023–2025**

#### **Voluntary pledges and commitments pursuant to General Assembly resolution [60/251](#)**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. The Government of Viet Nam presents its candidature to the Human Rights Council for the term 2023–2025, aspiring to make active, responsible and effective contributions to global efforts to promote and protect human rights. Viet Nam has been endorsed by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as the Association’s candidate for this position.

#### **Appreciation by Viet Nam of human rights values**

2. Viet Nam believes in the universality of human rights as the common aspiration and shared value of humankind, essentially enshrined in United Nations declarations and international treaties in this area.

3. Viet Nam encourages dialogue and cooperation among countries and all relevant stakeholders, particularly at the United Nations human rights mechanisms, to improve the quality of life for each and everyone around the world.

4. Viet Nam also holds that the promotion and protection of human rights must be undertaken in a comprehensive and holistic manner, in all civil, political, economic, social, cultural and developmental aspects, and in accordance with both commonly recognized international standards and the relevant legal frameworks of each nation.

#### **Highlights of human rights accomplishments in Viet Nam**

5. Throughout their millenniums-long history of nation-building and defence, the Vietnamese people have fought hard and made untold sacrifices to defend their own inalienable human rights and fundamental freedoms. Viet Nam’s development, particularly since the Doi Moi reforms, has always been people-oriented and people-driven. Our people-centric vision, policies and actions all aim at the goal of a “prosperous people, strong nation and equal, democratic and civilized society” where the legitimate needs of the people would be better met.

6. The 2013 Constitution of Viet Nam dedicates an entire chapter with 36 articles to expressly stipulating human rights and citizens’ fundamental rights and obligations. Since then, Viet Nam has promulgated, amended and supplemented more than 100 laws and ordinances relating to human rights and citizens’ rights, notably, the 2015 Criminal Code, the 2015 Civil Code, the 2015 Referendum Law, the 2016 Children Law, the 2017 Legal Aid Law, the 2018 Cybersecurity Law and the 2019 Labour Code.

7. Viet Nam has implemented concerted measures, prioritizing resources for socioeconomic development and raising living standards for the people. Achievements in this area and the country’s strengthened international integration have created favourable conditions and sufficient resources to better ensure human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Vietnamese people are effectively enjoying rights and freedoms better than ever before.

8. Viet Nam has achieved most of the Millennium Development Goals and is actively implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. From 2010 to 2020, Viet Nam recorded an average annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of 6 per

cent. In the same period, per capita income was doubled,<sup>1</sup> the rate of poor households decreased from 14.2 per cent to 3.0 per cent and health insurance coverage increased from 60.9 per cent to 90.7 per cent.

9. Preventive health care, from the national to local levels, continues to be strengthened and proven effective in ensuring the people's right to health, particularly in the fight against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

10. The Government continues to allocate 20 per cent of the overall State budget to education, enabling the nationwide universalization of kindergarten and elementary education.

11. All civil and political rights are better ensured. More than 900 registered press agencies are active in Viet Nam. Over 70 per cent of the population have access to the Internet on a daily basis and among them, 95 per cent use social media for educational and business purposes. The people participate in and provide their inputs to the drafting of legal documents or policies, including by using online tools.

12. A total of 70,000 active associations in Viet Nam represent youth, women, workers, farmers, the elderly and people with disabilities or are scientific, professional or business organizations, charities and other non-governmental organizations. Operating in a conducive environment, these associations are making significant contributions in all aspects of social life in Viet Nam and constructively engaging in the making of laws and policies.

13. In Viet Nam, multiple religions and beliefs coexist in harmony and together make significant contributions to the country's development. Over 95 per cent of Viet Nam's population profess a particular belief or religion and over 26 million people are religious devotees (almost 27 per cent of the population).

14. Promptly responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, Viet Nam has adopted a whole-of-government approach and coordinated, effective measures to promote and protect human rights, leaving no one behind. Among them, the highest priority is given to ensuring people's right to health and their ultimate right to life.

15. At the same time, Viet Nam has been taking actions to minimize the adverse economic and social impacts of the pandemic, to maintain and recover production and business activities and to ensure the employment, social security and living conditions of the people, especially vulnerable groups. Social security packages worth approximately \$2.2 billion have been issued to support more than 20 million people to sustain their livelihoods. The beneficiaries of these packages include poor people, people with disabilities, the elderly, the unemployed and underemployed and people with nil or reduced income, due to the impact of the pandemic.

16. In 2020, Viet Nam conducted more than 350 international flights to bring home Vietnamese expats in need of repatriation for protection against the pandemic, especially vulnerable groups such as the elderly, children and women.

17. Thanks to these measures, Viet Nam has so far managed to control the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, entering a "new normal" status while promptly achieving economic recovery. Among a few economies enjoying the highest growth rate in the world in 2020, Viet Nam attained a growth rate of 2.91 per cent.<sup>2</sup> The National Assembly of Viet Nam also adopted a target economic growth rate of 6 per cent for 2021.

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<sup>1</sup> From \$1,331 per year in 2010 to \$2,750 per year in 2020.

<sup>2</sup> According to the International Monetary Fund.

18. Viet Nam attaches great importance to the adherence to and implementation of international treaties in protecting and promoting human rights in the country.

19. Viet Nam is currently a State party to seven out of nine key international human rights treaties<sup>3</sup> and 25 conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO).<sup>4</sup> A road map has been set for future ratification of ILO Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87).

20. Viet Nam abides by its obligations under international human rights treaties to which it is a party, including that of reporting on their implementation in the country.

#### **Engagement by Viet Nam in international endeavours for human rights**

21. Appreciating universal human rights values, Viet Nam has been actively participating in bilateral, regional and global cooperation in this area, in line with its independent, self-reliant foreign policy for peace, cooperation and development, and is engaged in multilateralization and diversification of external relations, and proactive and robust international integration.

22. Within bilateral frameworks, Viet Nam pursues cooperation and dialogue to better mutual understanding, aiming at addressing matters of mutual interest and fostering implementation capabilities in the field of human rights.

23. In the South-East Asian region, Viet Nam has practically contributed to enhanced solidarity and cooperation among ASEAN member States in the promotion and protection of human rights. Its role has been particularly visible in the building of the ASEAN Charter, the ASEAN Community and the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration and the establishment and functioning of the ASEAN human rights-related mechanisms.<sup>5</sup> With Viet Nam joining hands, ASEAN is firmly committed to the promotion and protection of human rights in the region in conformity with the commonly recognized international standards, creating frameworks for enhancing cooperation among ASEAN member States in this field.

24. Viet Nam has consistently been supportive of and has dutifully participated in the universal periodic review. Viet Nam firmly upholds the value of the universal periodic review as an effective United Nations human rights mechanism for the exchange of information and experience, deepening mutual understanding and cooperation on the basis of equality and transparency. In the third universal periodic review cycle (2019), Viet Nam accepted 241 out of 291 recommendations (83 per cent) and is actively implementing them through a national master plan. Viet Nam's initiative to develop such a national master plan has proved exemplarily effective since the second universal periodic review cycle.

25. Viet Nam also actively cooperates with other United Nations human rights mechanisms. Since 2010, the country has received seven Human Rights Council special procedures and is preparing to receive the Special Rapporteur on the right to development once circumstances allow.

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<sup>3</sup> Namely, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention against Torture. Viet Nam is the first Asian country to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

<sup>4</sup> Including seven out of eight fundamental International Labour Organization conventions.

<sup>5</sup> Including the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights, the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children, the ASEAN Committee on Women and the ASEAN Committee on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers.

### **Viet Nam: a responsible partner at the Human Rights Council**

26. Viet Nam highly appreciates the role and contributions of the Human Rights Council in protecting and promoting human rights around the world.

27. Viet Nam has always actively and responsibly participated in the work of the Council, particularly as a member for the term 2014–2016. Viet Nam always heightens and encourages the spirit of cooperation and dialogue. Viet Nam acts wholeheartedly to advance mutual understanding, bridging differences and seeking effective and sustainable solutions for human rights challenges, on the basis of respect for independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, equality and mutual interests.

28. Given its experience, commitment and strong determination, Viet Nam is confident in its ability to partake in the Human Rights Council membership. Viet Nam will spare no effort to work with other countries in enhancing the Council's efficiency, transparency, objectiveness and balance based on the spirit of dialogue, cooperation, equality and mutual respect.

29. Viet Nam looks forward to receiving the valuable support of States Members of the United Nations for its candidature to the Human Rights Council for the term 2023–2025.

## **II. Priorities of Viet Nam at the Human Rights Council**

30. The priorities of Viet Nam in the Human Rights Council are as follows:

- Upholding the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, the mandate of the Council and its mechanisms, joining efforts to improve its efficiency
- Protection of vulnerable groups and combating of violence and discrimination against them
- Promotion of gender equality
- Protection and promotion of human rights in response to climate change, with particular attention to its impacts on the rights of vulnerable groups
- Human rights in the era of digital transformation
- The right to health, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and other communicable diseases
- The right to decent work, in our joint efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- The right to quality education, including education on human rights

## **III. Voluntary pledges by Viet Nam as a member of the Human Rights Council**

31. Viet Nam pledges to continue the efforts devoted to better enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the country, leaving no one behind. Viet Nam would equally contribute to global endeavours towards the same goal. In this process, the priorities of Viet Nam are as follows:

- (a) Strengthening the rule-of-law State, conducting legal reforms to enhance the institutional, judicial and policy foundation related to human rights and further incorporating provisions of international human rights treaties into national laws;

(b) Fostering effective measures and allocating sufficient resources to better ensure all economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights, in line with commonly recognized international standards;

(c) Accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with priority given to reducing multidimensional poverty, minimizing inequality, eliminating any racial discrimination, safeguarding sustainable livelihoods for the people, improving living conditions and access to public services and enhancing social security and social resilience in response to natural disasters and diseases, especially for vulnerable groups;

(d) Strengthening education on human rights to raise public awareness and the capability of law enforcement agencies, including through full implementation of the national programme to incorporate human rights into the national education system;

(e) Implementing fully and dutifully the accepted recommendations of the third cycle of the universal periodic review and upholding commitments and obligations under the international human rights treaties to which Viet Nam is a party, particularly via the effective implementation of relevant national action plans;

(f) Enhancing substantive dialogue and cooperation with all countries and United Nations mechanisms on human rights;

(g) Further contributing to the promotion of dialogue, cooperation, tolerance and mutual understanding among countries and stakeholders based on respect for independence, sovereignty, equality and mutual benefits;

(h) Engaging responsibly in the work of the Human Rights Council and promoting the role and the efficiency of the Council, with particular attention to the rights of vulnerable groups and the impacts of climate change on the enjoyment of human rights;

(i) Participating constructively in the review process of the Council, with focus on reforming and improving the efficiency in addressing human rights challenges of the Council's subsidiary bodies, including the universal periodic review;

(j) Making further substantive contributions to ASEAN human rights cooperation, particularly in the work of the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights and the implementation of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration.

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