

VIETNAM

Organisational structure of Vietnam Bar Federation (VBF)

1. Presently, under its Charter, VBF has seven professional committees:
 1. Committee on Protection of Rights and Interest of Lawyers;
 2. Committee on Lawyer Education and Training;
 3. Committee on Lawyer Supervision;
 4. Committee on Financial and Economic Development;
 5. Committee on Award and Discipline;
 6. Committee on International Relations;
 7. Committee on Legal Development and Legal Aid.

2. Besides these professional committees, VBF has other units including Lawyers' Journal, Legal Consultancy Center and Lawyers' Training Center and the Vietnam Business Lawyer Club. In addition, VBF has the Head Office in Hanoi and a representative agency in Ho Chi Minh city.

3. Moreover, VBF has established a number of sub-committees to deal with specific tasks such as the Sub-committee for revising the Code of Ethics and Conduct of the Legal Profession, the Sub-committee for revising the Charter of Vietnam Bar Federation to prepare for the new term starting from 2020.

4. In terms of quality, there are 13,563 lawyers including 3,850 lawyers in Hanoi and 5,498 lawyers in Ho Chi Minh city which account for nearly two thirds of the total lawyers in the country. This means that the distribution of lawyers continues to be disproportionate throughout Vietnam.

Activities of Vietnam Bar Federation

Professional activities

According to statistics in 2018, lawyers have participated in:

- a) 12,450 criminal cases and 12.858 civil cases;

- b) 79,499 legal advice cases;

- c) 7,271 other cases;
- d) 20,653 free legal aid cases.

Professional training

- 5. VBF has organized the bar admission exams in the North and in the South. Five hundred and thirteen trainee lawyers have passed the exams and been granted official law practice certificates.
- 6. In terms of professional training to improve qualification for lawyers, in 2018 VBF has organized 101 training courses on the Code of Conduct and Ethics and on other professional skills for lawyers. In addition to training courses organized by VBF, local bar associations take initiatives in organizing a number of training courses for their lawyer members.
- 7. VBF has issued its guidelines on the implementation of mandatory training and legal aid of lawyers.

Communication and promotion of the lawyers' profile

- 8. In 2018, 152 articles related to the operation of VBF, local bar associations and practicing lawyers in Vietnam were posted on the official website of Vietnam Bar Federation.
- 9. Vietnam Lawyer Journal (VLJ), the journal of VBF, published a lot of information on specialized and thematic events in developing, disseminating and implementing the law. VLJ also consolidated its organization and operation to improve the qualities of printed and online versions.
- 10. In 2018, in addition to organisation of free legal aid activities for the people, VBF cooperated and guided some local bar associations to organise legal aid activities for people living in the remote and mountainous areas. Some local bar associations have called on support from law practice organizations to organise free legal aid and charity activities. Consequently, thousands of lawyers have participated in free legal aid activities for thousands of peoples. Through these activities, the role and status of lawyers are highly recognized by society.
- 11. VBF has also organised meetings with the Central Committee for Judicial Reform and Ministry of Public Security to propose recommendations to create favourable conditions for lawyers during their law practice.

Protection of rights and interest of lawyers

- 12. With respect to protection of the right to law practice and other legitimate rights and interests of lawyers in 2018, VBF has received and timely dealt with 39 requests for protecting the legitimate rights and interest of lawyers.

Supervision of ethics, award and discipline

13. In terms of supervision of ethics, award, discipline, settlement of complaints and denunciations, VBF has closely cooperated with local bar associations to deal with complaints and denunciations. In 2018, VBF has received 270 complaints and denunciations of lawyers and trainee lawyers.
14. In addition to improving supervision of ethics and strictly dealing with violations of the laws and the Code of Ethics and Conduct of the Legal Profession in Vietnam, VBF has timely awarded individuals and groups who have made contributions to its activities in order to encourage lawyers, local bar associations and law practice organizations to be actively involved in developing the legal profession.

Legal developments

15. In terms of legal development in 2018, in order to improve the role and responsibilities of law practice organizations and lawyers in the implementation of general tasks of the country VBF has been actively involved in providing input for the draft Law on Criminal Judgement Enforcement, Law on Mediation, Law on Dialogue at Court and others as well as participating in meetings of the National Assembly's Judicial Committee to appraise draft laws.
16. In 2018, VBF continued to assign lawyers to participate in the revision and reform of administrative procedures. VBF has sent its submissions on simplification of administrative procedures in such areas as simplifying procedures for business registration, simplifying periodical reports within the scope of the Ministry of Transport and simplifying administrative procedures for specialized inspection of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.
17. VBF efforts in law reform are highly recognised by competent state agencies. Some recommendations of VBF on the revision and amendment of specific legal documents have been accepted.

External affairs

18. VBF has also strengthened its external affairs and international cooperation. In 2018, VBF signed cooperation agreements with international bar associations, namely Tokyo Bar Association (TBA), American Bar Association (ABA), French National Council of Lawyers (CNB) and Australasian Dispute Resolution Centre (ADRC). After that, VBF had many activities with these organisations, such as cooperating with the ABA to hold a workshop on the code of ethics and conduct of the legal profession or welcoming CNB's delegation led by CNB President visiting VBF.

19. Since the admission to LAWASIA and IBA, VBF has been an active member of these two organizations. In 2018, VBF cooperated with IBA to organize a national workshop on revising the code of ethics and conduct of the legal profession in Vietnam with the participation of many Vietnamese lawyers throughout the country and IBA's experts from Japan and the US.

20. In addition, through big projects Japan International Cooperation Agency (Japan), IRZ foundation (Germany) funded by VBF has had many cooperative activities with the Japan Federation of Bar Association (JFBA) and German Federal Bar (BRAK) such as organizing workshops in numerous areas, conducting survey trips to provinces in Vietnam, developing publications and holding training courses with an aim to consolidate the quality of community of Vietnamese lawyers.

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