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PRESS RELEASE

EU, Denmark and Sweden support reform of the legal aid system in Vietnam

Hanoi - Today, more than 125 people gathered at an international workshop entitled "*Draft Scheme on the Reform of Legal Aid Work*" to discuss the main areas of the future reform of legal aid in Vietnam. The 2-day workshop will continue tomorrow 11 July 2014 at the Women's Union Building, 20 Thuy Khue Street, Hanoi.

The workshop, organized by the Ministry of Justice under the Justice Partnership Programme (JPP) funded by the EU, Denmark and Sweden, offered an opportunity for discussions by Vietnamese organizations and international experts leading up to the finalization of the Draft Scheme on reform of legal aid work. The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) is preparing to submit the reform scheme to the Prime Minister for government approval at the end of the year. The main themes of the workshop were: 1) Solutions to finance legal aid work, 2) Extending legal aid coverage to those most in need, 3) Legal aid and social welfare policies for the disadvantaged, 4) Quality assurance of legal aid, and b) Socialization of legal aid.

Madame Nguyen Thuy Hien, Vice Minister of Justice, chaired the workshop that counted with participants from the Government Office, and Ministries of Internal Affairs, Finance, Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs, Public Security and Defense. The justice system was represented by the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuracy and the Vietnam Bar Federation. Other participants included the Women's Union and representatives of international organizations and independent experts.

Background Information

The seminar was organized under the Justice Partnership Programme (JPP), funded by the EU, Denmark and Sweden. The JPP is a five-year programme (2010-15) in support of justice sector reform in Vietnam. The JPP is a cooperation between the MOJ as the lead agency, the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuracy, the Vietnam Bar Federation, non-governmental organisations and the funding partners.

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