

Chairman of Vietnamese National Assembly reaffirms Vietnam's particular commitment to relations with the EU as part of its global integration strategy

On 5-7 December 2011, the Chairman of the National Assembly of Vietnam, Mr. Nguyen Sinh Hung, met with European Parliament President Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Council of Ministers Herman Van Rompuy and European Commissioner for Trade Karel De Gucht. These meetings provided an opportunity for the EU and Vietnam to reaffirm their commitment to intensifying bilateral ties on the basis of the new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) concluded in 2010. Both sides agreed that this Agreement should be complemented by a mutually-beneficial Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The EU encouraged Vietnam to resist any market access restrictions that would only exacerbate macro-economic instability. It encouraged Vietnam to view progress in the promotion and protection of human rights, including freedom of expression, as a driving force for long-term development. Both sides welcomed their decision to upgrade and intensify their regular dialogue on these issues. The EU stressed that it had a strong stake in prosperity and security in Asia, and emphasised its willingness to be an active and constructive player in the evolving Asian regional architecture.