

**OPENING REMARKS BY DR. CHU NGOC ANH,
VICE MINISTER OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY OF
VIETNAM**

9TH VEF ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 2012

Ladies and gentlemen,

Distinguished guests and friends,

First of all, as the Head of the Delegation from the Ministry of Science and Technology of Vietnam (MOST) and on behalf of the leaders of the Ministry, I would like to send to you all our best wishes on the occasion of the 9th VEF Annual Conference, 2012.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear friends,

At the beginning of 2011, I had the honor to attend the Conference for the first time, meeting with students at the University of Arkansas, witnessing your great success and the proud achievements of VEF after 9 years of operations. Today, it is my honor again to attend the VEF Annual Conference and to listen to the achievements of VEF Fellows and Visiting Scholars and the untiring efforts of VEF, especially its Board of Directors, without which there would not have been such achievements. I also would like to express my sincere thanks to VEF for its valuable contribution to the cause of education and human resources development during the past years.

Dear friends,

On this occasion, I would like to share with you some remarkable updates on activities in science and technology (S&T) in Vietnam and the directions for development in the future.

In terms of legislation, basically, we have finalized the legislative system for science and technology by developing and issuing important sector laws, such as the Science and Technology Law, the Law on Intellectual Property, the Law on Technology Transfer, and other laws, which help create favorable conditions for science research activities and science and technology development in the time of global integration. The Ministry of Science and Technology has advised the Government on the development of the medium-term and long-term science and technology development plans and strategies and the deployment of national

programs such as the Program for the Development of National Products through 2020 and the National Program for the Development of High Technology through 2020. There has been a rapid development in the number of S&T organizations run by enterprises, individuals, and foreign entities, besides agencies in the public sector.

In terms of investment in S&T, there have been more and more active contributions from the society in addition to the allocation of 0.5-0.6% of GDP by the Vietnam Government. The awareness about the importance of S&T in production, business, and competition in the era of global integration has been raised. The number as well as the quality of the staff working in the S&T sector has also been raised; however, the ratio of people doing research and development (R&D) work is still limited (6-7/10,000), while in other developed countries, this ratio is 12-15/10,000. In terms of infrastructure, we have been upgrading and strengthening the capacity for S&T organizations. Three hi-tech zones have been established in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, and Da Nang; 17 national laboratories have been developed, together with the initial development of excellent research centers, such as the MANAR at Vietnam National University - Ho Chi Minh City. Besides, in terms of communication infrastructure for S&T, we have dedicated networks for R&D, which are VINAREN and VISTA.

With the mechanism, policies, and resources in place for S&T activities, Vietnam has gained significant achievements, which have practical contributions to the economic development. Regarding agriculture and aquaculture, new species and variations of plants, with strong immunologic capacity, have been developed. Regarding industry, we have mastered the technology to manufacture giant structures and machines for the construction of vast capacity hydrology power plants, cement and ship yard factories, and harbors and mining works. In terms of health, many types of vaccines have been successfully researched and produced, and new and high technologies have been mastered in diagnosis and treatment, such as heart, liver, and kidney transplants; isolation and conservation of stem cells from marrow, blood, and the cornea; endoscopy operations; gene decoding; and ultrasonic scanning.

Those are just the very beginnings and still moderate achievements. In the coming time, together with the implementation of S&T tasks in the 5-year socio-economic development plan (2011-2015) of the Vietnam Government, the Ministry of Science and Technology will focus on the comprehensive renovation of the management and operation of S&T activities, such as (1) the development and implementation of S&T tasks; (2) the mechanism for investment in S&T; (3) the mechanism for the recruitment and utilization of the S&T human resources; (4) the

management of S&T entities; (5) the development of S&T markets; and (6) capacity strengthening for state S&T agencies.

Dear friends,

The former U.S. President Kennedy said, “Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country”, and, in Vietnam, we also have the same slogan. That spirit has been well grasped by students and fellows participating in the Vietnamese government 322 Program as well as in VEF and other programs. You are really a valuable source for the cause of modernization and industrialization of Vietnam. As a state leader in the field of S&T, I know that investment into human resources is the most important and strategic element with a decisive role to the success of the modernization, industrialization, and socio-economic development of Vietnam. In that spirit, it is my sincere wish that you will always be proactive to recommend ideas and initiatives to research organizations and state management agencies in S&T; that you will develop a network for both domestic and international communication exchange and human resources; that you will invite international experts to Vietnam and develop research teams of excellence, with the orientation towards centers of excellence. If you can do so, you will gain great results and success, contributing a great deal to the development of your country, your Father land.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear friends,

On the occasion of the Conference and on behalf of managers who work for the development of high quality S&T human resources in Vietnam, I would like to again express my sincerest thanks to the VEF Board of Directors and all of you, conference participants, for your invaluable support to Vietnam as always.

Last but not least, I wish you health, success and happiness for the future. I hope that all of you Fellows and Scholars will attain the best study and research results and excellent skills so that you will be the great connectors between the S&T community of Vietnam and the world in order to reach the ultimate goal of Vietnam’s S&T development to be at the highest level together with our other friends in the region and the world.

May the Conference have great success. Thank you./.