

IGE signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Vietnam-USA Association (VUS) in September 2006 which solidified our partnership, cooperation, and resolve to encourage progress in mutual understanding and religious freedom, strengthening the bilateral relationship between our two countries as a result. Our implementation of the components and initiatives of this MOU includes:

## Top-down Engagement



*Information Exchange.* IGE participates in exchanges of analysis about religious discrimination reports with relevant Vietnamese representatives, in order to obtain clarity and maintain accountability.

*Reciprocal Visits.* IGE and VUS establish partnerships between Vietnamese and American communities to promote mutual understanding and deepening dialogues on religious freedom in various environments in Vietnam and the US. IGE and VUS cosponsor and host reciprocal visits of Vietnamese and American government, academic, and religious representatives. These visits foster a constructive environment for dialogues on religious freedom and holistic development for Vietnam.

*Annual Religion and Rule of Law in Southeast Asia Conference Series.* IGE partners with the Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences (VASS) to promote open discussions on the implementation of the rule of law within the context of religion in Vietnam. In September 2006, IGE, VASS, Brigham Young University Law School's International Center for Law and Religion Studies, and Emory Law School's Center for the Study of Law and Religion cosponsored a dialogue on "Religion and Rule of Law in Southeast Asia: Beginning the Conversation" in Hanoi. The second conference took place in Hanoi in November 2007-a follow-on conference to deepen this unique regional forum. In addition to participating in this conference series, representatives of the Vietnamese government participated and presented a paper at the 2008 conference in Beijing, China, in June 2008.

## Bottom-up Engagement

*Community-to-community Relations.* IGE and VUS signed a protocol (component four of the 2006 MOU) in November, 2007, that governs how a church-based, humanitarian NGO from Texas-Glocal Ventures, Inc., from Northwood Church-expands its community development projects to more regions in Vietnam, demonstrating that church-based efforts serve society. GVI is planning preliminary work in Gia Lai, a Central Highland province in 2009.



*Provincial Training Facilitation.* IGE and VUS signed a protocol (component six of the 2006 MOU) in October, 2008. This protocol stipulates how IGE will work with the Vietnamese government's Committee for Religious Affairs (CRA) in developing pilot seminars that train provincial authorities and religious leaders together about Vietnam's religion ordinances and decrees. (These pilot seminars focus on Vietnam's religious regulations and the importance of compliance with them.) This cooperation makes IGE the first NGO to work with the Vietnamese government's ongoing training programs in religious freedom. Such progress is only possible through the long-term work and continued efforts towards building relationships of trust and mutual respect.

## Questions or Comments

Building on the progress we have made together, IGE firmly believes our relationships and partnerships with friends at all levels in Vietnam are only going to deepen in the years to come.

If you have any questions or would like to receive regular updates on our Vietnam Program, contact IGE at [info@globalengage.org](mailto:info@globalengage.org)