



**United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors
Office of Inspector General**

Inspection of Embassy Hanoi And Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam



Embassy Hanoi

The United States' relationship with Vietnam is undergoing bilateral developments that were unimaginable when the war in Vietnam ended in 1975, and Embassy Hanoi appears determined to help spur Vietnam's transformation, as indicated by the top ranking it gave to economic growth and development in its Mission Performance Plan. Nevertheless, Vietnamese distrust of the United States is a lingering reality, notably in law enforcement cooperation.

The Ambassador enjoys the respect of a country team that deserves to feel very proud of its extraordinarily productive performance. Weak spots identified by the inspection report should not detract from the overall accomplishments of the embassy, notably in the administrative and reporting arenas. Morale in Hanoi is generally satisfactory, but the pace of work wears on some officers.

The consulate general at Ho Chi Minh City, meanwhile, is well led and enjoys upbeat morale. Although relationships between the embassy and consulate general have greatly improved, the embassy must engage in a more proactive effort to integrate the consul general into the country team.

OIG identified several other mission-wide concerns:

- Vietnam-wide consular services require improved coordination, although most work is satisfactory.
- The chancery is inadequate, overcrowded, and unsafe. For over two years, the Vietnamese government has been unable to secure the return from the Russian government of a site the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations has approved for a replacement chancery. Although Embassy Hanoi recently shifted focus to other properties, it needs to elicit fuller Vietnamese government support for acquiring a site for a new compound.
- The valuable downtown property on which the American Club is located should be appraised and sold. The official American community uses the club infrequently, and it is unsound financially.
- The embassy's improper registration and operation of official vehicles should cease.

OIG Report ISP-I-05-28A, Inspection of Embassy Hanoi, Vietnam, and Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City
The fieldwork for this report was conducted by the Office of Inspections in Hanoi between May 2 and June 1, 2005. This is an unclassified summary of a full report, which receives limited official distribution. This report summary and the inspection report reflect the conditions at post during the period of the fieldwork.

Background



Map of Vietnam

Ten years after the establishment of U.S.-Vietnamese diplomatic relations, Vietnamese exports to the United States are booming, up \$4 billion in the last four years, a result in part of the 2001 U.S.-Vietnam Bilateral Trade Agreement. Were the indirect investment of U.S. subsidiaries based in other Southeast Asian countries such as Singapore counted, the United States would be close to being the top source of foreign investment in Vietnam, and its investment is growing.

The conciliatory spirit of the Vietnamese people towards the United States is striking, and the embassy's pace of people-to-people programs and Fulbright exchanges is close to exhilarating. That so many Vietnamese want internal reconciliation between the North and South is even more remarkable.

The U.S. mission consists of 97 Americans in Hanoi and 50 in Ho Chi Minh City, and had total funding in FY 2004 of \$9.4 million. Seven U.S. agencies are represented in Hanoi and three in Ho Chi Minh City. For FY 2005 total U.S. assistance to Vietnam from all agencies will be approximately \$65 million, with President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief expected to receive \$27.6 million.

Office of Inspector General

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