

RESEARCHING THE EXPERIENCES OF SOME COUNTRIES ON ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORTS AND LESSONS FOR VIETNAM

LE VAN NAM

Military Technical Academy, Hanoi, Vietnam. Email: lenamk10@mta.edu.vn

Abstract

Corruption is a long-standing social issue present in all countries, regardless of their political system or level of development. Corruption involves individuals in positions of power and authority exploiting their positions for personal gain. Common types of corruption include political corruption, administrative corruption, and economic corruption. Economic corruption occurs in economic management activities such as production, business, services, public asset procurement, and asset management, carried out by individuals with authority in state economic management or state-owned enterprises. Manifestations of economic corruption include embezzlement of state or citizens' assets for personal gain, making illegal or biased economic decisions for personal gain, and exploiting legal loopholes or violating laws to engage in production, business, or profiteering at the expense of society. Corruption, especially when perpetrated by those in power, has serious consequences, not only in terms of economic damage and a decline in the quality of governance but also in eroding public trust in the leadership of the Party, State, and the country's international reputation. With the Party and State's close attention and guidance, and the collective effort of the political system, the anti-corruption work in Vietnam has made significant progress in recent years. From 2017 to the present, several legal documents related to anti-corruption have been enacted, such as the Anti-Corruption Law effective from July 1, 2019, and the Whistleblower Protection Law effective from January 1, 2019. In addition, various decrees, decisions, and directives have played a significant role in anti-corruption efforts in Vietnam. Despite positive legal developments, investigations since 2017 have exposed a significant number of large-scale corruption cases, particularly in areas such as banking, management, the use of public investment funds, and state-owned land. In reality, corruption has become increasingly sophisticated and complex, with perpetrators exploiting legal gaps. In recent years, many economic-related scandals have emerged, highlighting the interconnectedness between financial aspects and corruption. Therefore, evaluating anti-corruption efforts from a financial perspective and finding comprehensive solutions are essential. Studying the essence of corruption, its forms, causes, and drawing lessons from other countries' experiences in combating corruption is of utmost importance in formulating effective anti-corruption measures in Vietnam for the future.

Keywords: Corruption, Vietnam, Worldwide.

Issue: Corruption is a widespread global phenomenon. Corruption and anti-corruption efforts have been present throughout human history. Especially since the latter half of the 20th century, corruption has emerged as a malignant and escalating threat, endangering the economies, cultures, and ethics of humanity, with significant destructive and hindering effects on the development of all nations. Over the past approximately 30 years, many countries and regions have conducted research to find effective solutions, issued strong statements, and launched extensive campaigns to combat and curb corruption. However, the results have often fallen short of developmental expectations. Nonetheless, legal solutions for combating corruption in some countries still serve as shining examples for others to study. In this article, the author discusses the solutions that some countries have implemented in preventing and combating corruption, which have yielded relatively successful results in meeting the objective of

reducing corruption within their respective national boundaries.

1. The Party's Awareness and Theoretical Thinking on Corruption and Negativity

Researching the Party's regulations on anti-corruption and anti-negativity efforts, issued during the X, XI, XII, and XIII Party Congresses, reveals that the struggle against corruption has become a strong political declaration and commitment of the Party. The implementation of these policies, particularly during the XII Party Congress, under the close and precise leadership and guidance of the Politburo and the Party's leaders, has yielded significant and tangible results in practice, becoming a bright spot and a hallmark of the Party's construction, rectification, and socio-economic development.

Corruption is an inherent flaw in power, representing the most concentrated form of the "degeneration" of power. The higher the level of power, the greater the risk of corruption. Human history has shown that all states, regardless of their political systems or organizational models, have always had to confront corruption to varying degrees and extents (1). Vietnam is no exception to this pattern, especially in the context of an imperfectly oriented socialist-oriented market economy. During the country's renewal process, many issues related to state management had no precedent, requiring experimentation and adaptation.

In the course of leading the revolution, the Communist Party of Vietnam early on recognized and increasingly clarified the risks and harms of corruption, considering it as one of the existential threats to the Party and the socialist regime. Therefore, our Party has continuously shown leadership and direction in the fight against corruption, issuing numerous specialized documents related to anti-corruption efforts, reflecting the Party's growing awareness and theoretical thinking, which have paved the way for significant and noticeable changes in practice.

Through the systematic study of the Party's guidelines and policies regarding anti-corruption during the renewal period, several crucial milestones can be identified:

Firstly, the leadership role of the Party in anti-corruption efforts has been elevated to a new level. The Communist Party of Vietnam is the ruling party, leading the state and society, including anti-corruption work. However, in the face of the reality of "serious corruption and waste, many limitations, and shortcomings, low effectiveness in the fight against corruption and waste still persist in many fields and at many levels, with a wide scope and complex nature, causing negative consequences in various aspects and undermining the people's trust. It is one of the significant risks threatening the survival of our Party and our regime" (2). The Party recognized the need for higher, closer, and more regular leadership in the fight against corruption. As a result, for the first time, the Central Committee of the 10th Party Congress issued a specialized resolution on enhancing the Party's leadership in anti-corruption and anti-waste efforts. This can be considered a breakthrough with strategic significance, providing the conditions and momentum to advance and establish anti-corruption efforts as an irreversible trend. From this point on, many new and important viewpoints and solutions regarding anti-corruption were formulated and resolutely implemented in practice.

This development in awareness represents a clear commitment of the Party to its officials, members, and the public, with a high political determination to "stop corruption step by step" and build our Party as truly "ethical and civilized," worthy of being the authentic and loyal representative of the Vietnamese working people and the nation. The viewpoints, strategies, and solutions outlined in Resolution No. 3 of the 10th Central Committee continue to have value in terms of leadership, guidance, and theoretical significance in practice.

Secondly, the Party has renewed the mechanisms and leadership methods for anti-corruption efforts. Recognizing the need for a stronger leadership role of the Party, renewal efforts have been undertaken across all aspects of the fight against corruption, beginning with a reevaluation of how to answer the questions of principles and approaches that were already clear, perceptions that had matured, ideas that had formed, and how to achieve the best results.

Practical experience has shown that the Party has taken a breakthrough step in establishing and regularly strengthening and improving the specialized agencies, ensuring that they are strong enough to advise, lead, direct, coordinate, and effectively implement anti-corruption efforts in a centralized, unified, regular, efficient, and effective manner.

The establishment of the Central Steering Committee for Anti-Corruption and the reinstatement of the Central Internal Security Agency and the internal security agencies of provincial and municipal committees have marked a breakthrough in the anti-corruption struggle in Vietnam.

The Central Steering Committee for Anti-Corruption (the Committee) is directly under the Politburo, headed by the General Secretary. The Central Internal Security Agency (CIA) is the advisory agency to the Central Committee, the Politburo, and the Secretariat on major anti-corruption policies and measures.

The establishment of these two institutions has created a solid foundation for the anti-corruption struggle in Vietnam. Under the Committee's close, concrete, and decisive leadership, the Committee has been operating in a more systematic, well-organized, coordinated, and scientific manner. The CIA has also been proactive, assertive, creative, and persistent in its advice and guidance on anti-corruption work, especially in the handling of corruption cases.

The results of the anti-corruption struggle in recent years have affirmed that the establishment of the Committee and the reinstatement of the CIA are entirely correct and appropriate, meeting the urgent practical needs of the anti-corruption struggle in Vietnam.

Based on the organizational model and successful experiences of the Committee, the 13th Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam (at its Fifth Conference) decided to establish Provincial Steering Committees for Anti-Corruption and Negative Aspects, headed by the provincial or municipal party secretaries, in order to create unity and coordination from the central to the local level in leadership and guidance, to address the situation of "hot at the top, cold at the bottom," and to improve efficiency and create more significant changes in the anti-corruption struggle at the local level.

The third point is the formation of a system of new and strong principles, policies, and solutions for detecting and handling corruption.

Although the Party was aware of the need to strengthen its leadership and promote the anti-corruption struggle, it did not act rashly, but ensured that the dialectical, harmonious, and scientific handling of "construction" and "prevention" was in line with the principle of "prevention is the main, fundamental, long-term; detection and handling is important and urgent.

" On this basis, many principles, policies, and solutions for detecting and handling corruption have been formed, not only creating a breakthrough in theoretical understanding but also creating a breakthrough in the practical anti-corruption struggle, contributing to the realization of the Party's political declaration and commitment to resolutely fighting to prevent and combat corruption.

The new principles, policies, and solutions for detecting and handling corruption can be summarized as follows:

- 1) Early detection and severe punishment of corruption and waste cases. If there is a case, it must be investigated and clarified. Active, urgent; clarify to where it is handled there. Regardless of who has the act of corruption, if there are signs of a crime, it must be prosecuted and investigated. If it is concluded that there is a crime, it must be prosecuted according to the law, tried. Cases that have not reached the level of criminal prosecution must be dealt with severely in accordance with the regulations of the Party and the State. Documents are certain to where they are handled there, and then investigated and handled further to create a diffusion and positive change in the detection and handling of corruption.
- 2) Words and deeds go hand in hand, no forbidden zones, no exceptions, regardless of who they are, and they do not bow to the pressure of any organization or individual.
- 3) The assessment and recognition of violations should also be placed in specific historical conditions with an objective and appropriate handling perspective.
- 4) If the functional agencies detect signs of a crime during the inspection, audit, inspection, and enforcement process, they must promptly transfer the case file to the Investigative Agency to accept, investigate, and handle according to the law, without waiting for the end of the inspection. , audit, inspection, and enforcement. During the inspection, audit, inspection, investigation, prosecution, trial, and enforcement process, if violations related to officials under the management of the Politburo and the Secretariat are found, they must be reported immediately to the Standing Committee of the Steering Committee for timely guidance and handling; at the same time, transfer relevant files and documents to the Central Inspection Commission for consideration and handling in accordance with the regulations of the Party. The Central Inspection Commission promptly and severely punishes organizations and party members with signs of violations in cases and cases under the supervision and guidance of the Steering Committee.

- 5) Conduct synchronously between Party discipline, administrative discipline of the State, mass organizations, and criminal prosecution. Party discipline must be implemented first, as a prerequisite for handling administrative discipline of the State, mass organizations, and criminal prosecution. Handling must take education, deterrence, and prevention as the main focus, combining punishment with leniency; at the same time, protecting and encouraging those who dare to think, dare to do, innovate, and create for the common cause. Discipline one person to save ten thousand people.
- 6) Fight corruption right within the agencies, units, and functional units that have the direct task of detecting and handling corruption.
- 7) Must clarify and accurately verify the property of the person who has the act of corruption; recover the maximum property from corruption; promptly apply measures to seize, temporarily detain property, freeze accounts, and handle property of corruption even during the process of inspection, audit, investigation, prosecution, trial, and enforcement; encourage criminals to voluntarily compensate and restore damage in corruption cases.

Fourth, the policy of linking anti-corruption with the prevention of negative aspects, with a focus on preventing political degeneration, morality, and lifestyle in officials, party members, civil servants, and public servants, especially leaders and managers at all levels of the political system, is marked by the issuance of the Politburo's Regulation No. 32-QĐ/TW dated September 16, 2021 expanding the functions and tasks of the Steering Committee to direct the prevention of both corruption and negative aspects.

This is a new step forward, taking the anti-corruption work to a deeper level, linking prevention more closely with the fight against corruption in accordance with the perspective that has been proposed since the 3rd Central Committee Resolution (X). This breakthrough stems from the fact that the Party is increasingly aware of the relationship between corruption and political degeneration, morality, and lifestyle.

Corruption is the most concentrated, clear, and serious manifestation of political degeneration, morality, and lifestyle in officials, party members, civil servants, and public servants; the fundamental cause of corruption is that a small number of officials, party members, civil servants, including leaders and managers, and senior officials lack self-cultivation and degenerate in terms of political ideology, morality, and lifestyle.

To effectively combat corruption, it is inevitable and objective to link anti-corruption with the prevention of political degeneration, morality, and lifestyle in officials, party members, civil servants, and public servants; preventing degeneration is to prevent the seeds of corruption from afar, as General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong has repeatedly emphasized: "Not only fighting corruption in the economic field, but more importantly, we must combat negative aspects in all fields of political ideology, morality, and lifestyle. These two are related to each other, political degeneration, morality, and lifestyle will lead to corruption, this is the root, the basic thing that needs to be fought."

2. Anti-corruption experiences of some countries

Based on the study of the legal provisions on anti-corruption of some countries around the world, which many experts believe are very valuable experiences that Vietnam can apply, there are:

First, combine prevention with strict punishment.

In South Korea and Australia, the content of anti-corruption is taught in the school system to help students understand the causes, consequences, and harms of corruption and educate the awareness of condemning corruption from an early age. In addition, the Government also promotes anti-corruption propaganda on the mass media, establishes an anti-corruption information center and establishes an anti-corruption fund.

However, when acts of corruption are investigated and clarified, severe penalties are also applied to corrupt officials, regardless of who they are. The results of the handling are made public for the people to supervise. This has created conditions for the anti-corruption campaign to be carried out strongly and widely.

In Russia, the Government has implemented the "iron fist" campaign in the fight against corruption, resolutely handling corrupt officials in the state apparatus, especially central officials, especially in the executive branch who have acts of corruption, sheltering for corruption criminals. In the anti-crime campaign "wearing military ranks" in 2007, a series of officers, including generals, were prosecuted before the law.

A number of high-ranking officials in the Party and Government apparatus were also dismissed, dismissed, and prosecuted for involvement in corruption, such as: Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation Vladimir Ustinov; Deputy Head of the Special Investigations Unit of the Moscow Execution Investigation Department Dumovets on charges of receiving 0.5 million USD in bribes to acquit two defendants charged with smuggling.

Second, organize the state apparatus on the basis of checks and balances of power.

In the United States and Western European countries, the fight against corruption is emphasized at the institutional level, that is, the organization of the state apparatus so that the branches of power can check and monitor each other and establish control from society.

Building a mechanism of power control that is strong enough to prevent abuses of power, authoritarianism, and the use of power for the purpose of maximizing personal interests.

These are the mechanisms of separation of powers to check and balance between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of power; strengthen social supervision and criticism of civil society on the state apparatus.

Therefore, state power is always guaranteed to be implemented seriously, in accordance with the law and democracy. Meanwhile, in some other developed countries in Asia such as South Korea, Singapore, the government has built a system of very tight power control institutions, which are to establish independent organizations under the executive branch and specialized anti-corruption units such as: Office of the President, Office of the Prime Minister, Audit and

Inspection Agency, Financial Supervisory Commission, Anti-Corruption Commission, Criminal Investigation Agency. Other agencies independent of the executive branch such as: the Court, the National Election Committee, citizen associations, and the media to monitor power and prevent corruption.

In addition to building tight monitoring mechanisms, to improve the institutional framework for anti-corruption, it is necessary to build and perfect a set of legal documents to strengthen prevention measures, prevent loopholes that create opportunities for corruption to arise, focusing on strengthening the effectiveness of management in all fields, especially the economy. Administrative procedures must ensure that they are concise, easy to implement, and convenient for citizens. Build a clear civil service regulations, which must clearly define the responsibilities and obligations of state agencies and civil servants, avoid creating privileges. The procedures for resolving the affairs of agencies and organizations must be open and democratic. At the same time, apply preventive measures such as monitoring the collection and regulation of asset declarations of civil servants.

Issue strict laws to punish corruption, bribery, and other crimes of office and power. Clearly define corrupt acts, severe penalties include: Criminal prosecution, administrative handling, focusing on recovering corrupt assets. In addition, there must be strong legal provisions to equip the functional agencies with great powers to be independent in investigating and handling corruption. Create mechanisms to monitor and supervise the activities of state agencies, especially economic management agencies, law enforcement agencies.

Third: Implement the principle of transparency and openness thoroughly.

Transparency and openness in the activities of state agencies is both a requirement of the objective process of exercising state power and a mechanism for controlling state power. The activities of the state are activities that carry power. The content, scope, and limitations of these activities are stipulated by law. Transparency and openness in the activities of state agencies is to ensure that the activities of the state are within the framework of the law. This is a necessary requirement for any state agency, but in reality it does not mean the publication of all the activities of state agencies, although transparency is the most obvious manifestation of the democratic process. Therefore, it is necessary to calculate the content that needs to be transparent. For many countries in the world today, the areas and contents that need to be made public to the public are: Detailed disclosure of budget revenue and expenditure; Transparency in public procurement of public property; Transparency in the construction sector; Transparency in the declaration of assets and income of officials and civil servants; Transparency in the process of receiving, appointing officials as well as issuing diplomas... because these are areas that are prone to corruption and corruption.

In many developed countries such as Germany, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Sweden, Australia, etc., thanks to the good implementation of this principle, it has contributed to preventing corruption in the most effective way. In Australia, according to the law of this country, the government is responsible for disclosing procedures and procedures, disclosing lottery draws for administrative procedures through machines, so that everyone knows each

other's turn and prevents corruption due to running away, focusing on transparency and transparency in the bidding and procurement of public property. Inspection, Audit, Police Integrity Commission are authorized to require the subject of the investigation to provide information and explanations, if found to be providing false information, they may be prosecuted for a criminal offense. Meanwhile, the laws of the United Kingdom, Germany, Sweden stipulate that all documents of the Government and state agencies from the Central to the local levels (except for documents classified as state secrets) must be published publicly in the press and on the Internet, including the salaries of the Prime Minister and the Ministers; All civil servants have the right and responsibility to provide information about the organization and activities of their agency to journalists and no one is allowed to investigate, inquire to determine the source of information that has been published in the press. Therefore, the process of implementing the law is guaranteed, and corruption has no chance to exist.

Fourth: Establish a specialized anti-corruption agency that is strong and independent in monitoring, detecting and investigating and handling objectively.

Many countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, Singapore, China, Indonesia, South Korea, etc. have established independent anti-corruption agencies directly under the President or Prime Minister, with a position independent of the executive branch and other agencies. The heads of these agencies are appointed by the President, Prime Minister or King, such as: the Singapore Anti-Corruption Commission (CPIB), which is an independent body, separate from other agencies, directly under the Prime Minister's Office, has the right to independently investigate and prevent corruption; the Indonesian National Anti-Corruption Commission (KPK) is an independent body independent of the executive, legislative, responsible to the people and not subject to any state power agency; the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of China is located in the Supervisory Ministry, responsible to the Prime Minister, has the task of compiling, planning, establishing policies and monitoring, supervising anti-corruption nationwide.

Fifth: Ensure effective public oversight mechanisms.

The experience of many countries in the world shows that to effectively combat corruption, it is not possible to rely solely on the efforts of state agencies, but it is essential to promote the role, responsibility and have the active support of the whole society; must build a social mechanism in which the press and journalists have the right to independence, autonomy in gathering information, writing articles and are protected by the law when prevented, obstructed, attacked. When there is information from society and the people, the anti-corruption fighting agency has the task of fully and promptly verifying the sources of anti-corruption information in the press and has the responsibility to protect the confidentiality of the person who reports, reports a crime. In China, reports and reports of corruption by the people are the most important source from which to detect crime. According to statistics, up to 80% of corruption cases discovered are due to reports and reports by the people and more than 90% are due to reports and reports provided by the people. If the crime of corruption is detected and handled, the person who reports and reports the crime is entitled to a percentage of the total value of the assets that the anti-corruption fighting agency recovers.

Fighting corruption must start from the top down. To root out corruption, it is necessary to start from the top, from the agencies and organizations that have the right to plan, implement, and supervise policies, and have the right to coordinate resources and finances. This is because these are the agencies and individuals that represent the power of the Party and the State, and are the closest to acts of corruption. Once the public agencies and the leadership team in the Party and Government organizations are clean, the likelihood of corruption will be less. On the other hand, if the corrupt behavior of senior leaders is handled promptly and severely, corruption cases will be eradicated. Corruption cannot be effective if those in power are not decisive or half-hearted in directing the fight against corruption.

Therefore, the first thing to effectively combat corruption requires a real determination to eliminate and prevent corruption by the Government, of the highest leaders. This requires the leaders themselves to set an example of exemplary, dedicated, steadfast, and clean leadership, as this will become the root of eliminating bribery and political protection for corruption. In Singapore, for example, the Government has shown a clear political determination in the fight against corruption, resolutely handling violators, regardless of their position, even for close associates or those who have contributed to the country.

Former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew once asserted that the supreme leader of the Government must set an example, no one is allowed to exceed the law, otherwise everyone will feel skeptical and ridicule the meaning and fairness of the law. Thanks to this strong commitment to fighting corruption, Singapore has been one of the countries with the lowest corruption rates in the world for many years.

In addition to building a truly decisive determination to fight corruption, the Government must have wise and reasonable plans, policies, and guidelines, and must be able to attract and involve citizens to actively participate, build a broad anti-corruption front, and fight against bad habits of those with positions and powers. Create a democratic mechanism for citizens to report and detect corruption. There are regulations and measures to protect those who report corrupt behavior, and a timely and appropriate reward system for those who have contributed to the detection and handling of corrupt behavior.

Sixth: Adequate salary and benefits policy for civil servants

One of the causes of corruption in recent times is that the salaries of civil servants are low, not enough to live, forcing them to find extra ways, even by using the method of harassment and extortion when they have the opportunity. Therefore, one of the measures that has been very effective that many countries have applied in the fight against corruption is to reform and adjust the salary system, the material and spiritual benefits regime for civil servants, making civil servants live on their salary.

And when that happens, if they are corrupt, they have to pay a high price if they are caught, forcing them to be more careful, because corruption is less profitable, more harmful - losing salary, losing their job, losing their main source of livelihood. If the salary is only a secondary source, they will be less concerned and pay less, so they will still risk corruption. In developed countries such as Denmark, England, Germany, etc., the reason why there is little corruption is

because the income of government officials is very high, and working as a government official is a dream and pride for everyone. In addition, the penalty for corruption is very severe, so government officials cannot accept the risk of corruption.

Seventh: Promoting the role of the press

The press is an important force in providing objective and independent information to society to fight corruption. To promote the role of the press, legal frameworks allow the press to freely access information to fulfill its role of social monitoring of the activities of the apparatus and officials. On the one hand, it represents public control, conducting independent social investigations to detect cases of corruption. On the other hand, it creates public pressure, criticizes corrupt officials and politicians, forcing the government to take action, not to avoid or ignore.

In fact, the press has not only played a major role in detecting and exposing corrupt behavior, but it is also the main force to mobilize the people, educate and raise people's awareness in the fight against corruption. It promotes anti-corruption models, typical examples, and good practices in anti-corruption. The press promptly and objectively informs the situation of corruption and anti-corruption, directly reflects cases of corruption, even cases that have not been clarified, creating public pressure, forming anti-corruption movements. Therefore, the promotion of the role of the press in the fight against corruption is of great significance. It helps competent agencies to promptly detect corrupt behavior, bring to light corruption phenomena in government agencies and businesses, convey the voice of the people, and contribute to creating public consensus to fight corruption more effectively. This is a very valuable experience that developed countries such as the United States, Western Europe and many countries in Asia have applied and achieved great success. In Denmark, the press has a lot of power, supervising all three branches of power: legislative, executive, and judicial. Danish press, on the one hand, is likened to a "watchdog" for freedom, democracy, human rights in society and the country's ecological environment. On the other hand, it is considered a "hunting dog" digging for the wrongdoings of legislators, executives, judges, and citizens; in China, the press is a vanguard force in the fight against corruption. The press not only plays a major role in promoting the Party and State's line and policy on anti-corruption, but also plays the role of an agent, promoting the anti-corruption war to develop deeply and widely, forming a total offensive across the country.

3. Anti-corruption laws of China

China has passed a series of anti-corruption laws, including the Anti-bribery Law of 1988 and the Anti-corruption Law of 1997. In addition, corruption is criminalized in China's Criminal Code, with 15 articles that define corruption crimes such as embezzlement, abuse of public funds, bribery, giving bribes, failure to turn over gifts or offerings to the public fund, failure to prove the source of property, and illegal distribution of property. The country's criminal law criminalizes a wide range of corruption offenses, including both active and passive corruption in the public sector, extortion, money laundering, and abuse of office. Corruption is considered a crime when the value of the corrupt property is 10,000 yuan or more. The maximum penalty

for corruption is death. In 1993, China enacted the Competition Law, which also regulates corruption in the private sector, stating that bribery by private companies and managers to gain an unfair advantage is illegal. According to Transparency International, China's CPI index has been ranked as one of the countries with very strong and determined anti-corruption policies.

Effective anti-corruption measures in China that need to be consulted include:

First, attaching importance to the education of morality for civil servants, preventing the conflict between private and public interests.

China considers the education of morality for civil servants to be one of the most important measures in the fight against corruption, in addition to strictly punishing corrupt acts. China has issued a series of regulations on moral education and building an honest work style. The formulation and implementation of regulations are aimed at helping civil servants avoid having to face the conflict between private and public interests (in other words, making it impossible for civil servants to take advantage of their work positions to gain private profits at the expense of public interests). Accordingly, China stipulates that: officials who leave leadership positions or retire must not engage in business in the sectors related to their previous work within three years; the wives (or husbands) and children of leading officials may not do business in the sectors managed by their husbands (or wives), parents. Since 1997, China has dissolved business units in the police, military, and customs to avoid abuse of power for corruption.

Second, regulating the declaration of assets of civil servants and considering anonymous reports related to corruption.

All civil servants at all levels must declare their assets twice a year. All sources of income from various sources must be fully declared. Leading officials must declare clearly the items such as: savings, stocks, bonds, items worth more than 10,000 yuan (about 19-20 million Vietnamese dong), cars, private houses, land, rare antique paintings... The Government's Supervisory Bureau monitors, supervises the declaration and considers and handles cases with unclear assets. Civil servants who cannot explain the source of their assets will be considered embezzlement. Article 395 of the Criminal Code of China stipulates: "Any civil servant who has assets that exceed their income and the amount of the difference is too large is required to explain the source of the assets. If that civil servant cannot prove that the property is legal, they will be sentenced to 5 years in prison and the property exceeding their income will be confiscated."

Currently, due to incomplete legal framework in China, whistleblowers still face threats. Therefore, anonymous reporting is allowed and anonymous letters are accepted. In practice, approximately 60% of whistleblower reports in China are submitted anonymously, many of which contain accurate information about corruption.

In addition, China has established various channels to collect information on corruption, making it easier for citizens to report corrupt activities. Since 1988, anti-corruption information reception centers under the supervision of the Procuratorate and the Supervision Department have been established at all levels.

Thirdly, imposing strict penalties on corrupt individuals is considered an effective tool in China's anti-corruption efforts.

According to Chinese law, individuals engaged in corrupt activities face severe punishments, including:

- Embezzlement of less than 2,000 Chinese yuan (approximately \$300 USD) results in criminal prosecution, while amounts below that threshold are subject to administrative penalties.
- Embezzlement of less than 5,000 Chinese yuan (approximately \$750 USD) but with voluntary restitution of assets to the state and evidence of remorse may lead to a reduction in criminal liability.
- Embezzlement of 2,000 Chinese yuan or more resulting in serious consequences can lead to imprisonment of up to 2 years.
- Embezzlement ranging from 2,000 to 10,000 Chinese yuan may result in imprisonment from 1 to 7 years.
- Embezzlement of 50,000 Chinese yuan or more, with detrimental effects on politics and society, can lead to the death penalty.

On February 28, 2010, the Chinese National People's Congress amended the Anti-Corruption Law, tightening regulations against corruption. The amendments increased penalties for unreported asset ownership and doubled the maximum prison sentence to 10 years for officials found to possess significant unexplained income or assets. Notably, the Chinese Anti-Corruption Law also includes criminal liability for legal entities in corruption cases, not just individuals. Consequently, organizations found to have engaged in corrupt activities may face fines, and the law also holds those in leadership positions accountable for corrupt actions.

Fourthly, the development of e-government is seen as a new measure in China's anti-corruption efforts. Chinese leaders view e-government as a crucial element of administrative reform, enhancing efficiency and accountability in government operations. Government websites provide links to all provincial and municipal governments, with approximately 100,000 government web portals in China. Most of these websites feature content written in simplified Chinese characters, with only a few, including those of major cities, available in English. Government portals have been enhanced to provide comprehensive information, integrated services across various sectors, and increased interaction between government officials and citizens.

Recognizing the seriousness of corruption, China regards anti-corruption efforts as the responsibility of the entire political system and an essential, urgent, and ongoing task throughout the process of economic and social development and state-building.

4. The Situation and Results of Anti-Corruption Efforts in Vietnam

Corruption, waste, negativity, and bribery have persisted in Vietnam for many decades, occurring in all areas of social life and at all levels. Corruption and waste have had a significant impact on the country's economic and social development, eroding people's trust in the Party and the State.

According to the 2020 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) published by Transparency International, Vietnam ranked 104th out of 180 countries with 36 points, an increase of 5 points and 15 places compared to 2014. However, it still falls below the regional average score of 45 points and is among the two-thirds of countries worldwide with serious corruption issues (scoring below 50 points).

The Report on Party Building and Rule of Law Amendment at the 13th Party Congress stated: "Corruption in some areas and localities remains serious and complex, with increasingly sophisticated manifestations; the problem of bribery involving people and businesses is still quite common, causing dissatisfaction in society... Corruption is still one of the threats to the survival of the Party and the regime." Whenever people or businesses apply for property ownership certificates, medical examinations, school enrollments for their children, investment capital, construction projects, etc., they often have to provide "grease money" or engage in corrupt practices for things to proceed smoothly. General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong referred to this form of corruption as "petty corruption," which causes frustration and discomfort for everyone and society as a whole.

There have been numerous major corruption cases involving multiple individuals, businesses, and state officials over the years. Some notable examples include the Epco - Minh Phung case from the 1980s, involving 77 defendants and 2 death sentences; the Vinashin Group case, with Pham Thanh Binh and 8 accomplices; embezzlement and intentional violations at Vietnam National Shipping Lines (Vinalines), leading to death sentences for Duong Chi Dung and Mai Van Phuc, with 8 other defendants receiving sentences ranging from 4 to 22 years in prison. Corruption is not a recent issue; even during the anti-French colonial struggle, there were cases like that of Tran Du Chau, former Director of Nha Quan nhu - the Ministry of National Defense, who was executed on September 5, 1950, in Thai Nguyen town. He was accused of "embezzling public funds, accepting bribes, and undermining the resistance movement," and he was sentenced to death, with the confiscation of 3/4 of his assets and the seizure of bribery evidence. Ho Chi Minh, when writing a pardon request for Tran Du Chau, said to his comrade Tran Dang Ninh: "With woodworms, it's the same; if killing one worm can save a whole forest, then it's necessary."

Corruption has not only persisted but also evolved in sophistication. It affects not only economic sectors but also law enforcement agencies. It involves not only low-ranking officials but also high-ranking ones. The 4th Central Resolution (11th term) assessed: "A significant number of cadres and Party members, including some holding leadership positions, have deteriorated morally, ethically, and in their lifestyles... they embrace individualism, opportunism, pragmatism, pursue personal interests, wealth, and power, engage in corruption,

waste, arbitrariness, and lack principles." Consequently, the Party and the State have been determined to enhance the effectiveness of inspection, examination, auditing, investigation, and prosecution while rigorously dealing with those who violate laws regarding corruption and waste. In particular, starting from 2016, after the 12th Party Congress, General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong, who also heads the Central Steering Committee for Anti-Corruption, launched a comprehensive and resolute anti-corruption campaign with the motto: "No matter who they are, in whatever position, there are no forbidden areas, no exceptions in the fight against corruption and wrongdoing." As a result, anti-corruption efforts have achieved positive results, and many corruption cases, from central to local levels, have been thoroughly prosecuted. This includes cases involving Central Committee members and Politburo members.

Results include: "Over 4 years (mainly during the implementation of the 4th Central Resolution), the entire Party disciplined nearly 1,400 Party organizations and more than 74,000 Party members at all levels. Among those disciplined were 82 provincial Party secretaries or equivalents and over 1,500 district-level Party secretaries or equivalents. Nearly 3,000 Party members were disciplined by being removed from their positions, over 8,700 were expelled from the Party, and more than 4,300 officials and Party members faced legal prosecution." Major General Nguyen Van Tin, Deputy Head of the Party Central Committee's Commission for Internal Affairs, stated: "From 2013 to 2020, more than 1,900 corruption cases were investigated and prosecuted nationwide, with 131,000 Party members involved, including over 110 centrally managed officials (including 27 Central Committee members, former Central Committee members, 4 Politburo members, 30 generals in the armed forces) being disciplined." In the first six months of 2021, there were 266 cases of corruption involving 646 defendants, of which 250 cases with 643 defendants were prosecuted. The Central Steering Committee for Anti-Corruption conducted disciplinary actions against 12 Party organizations and 20 Party members, including members of the Central Committee and the Secretariat (including 3 Central Committee members, former Central Committee members, 2 Deputy Prime Ministers, 1 former provincial Party secretary, 1 former deputy provincial Party secretary, and 13 generals in the armed forces).

Numerous high-profile corruption cases involving senior officials have been prosecuted, such as the PMU 18 case in the Ministry of Transport in 2006, the case at PetroVietnam Construction Joint Stock Corporation (PVC) involving Trinh Xuan Thanh and Dinh La Thang, land management violations in Danang involving 19 defendants and 2 former chairmen of Danang People's Committee, bribery in the Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs linked to the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, and cases involving law enforcement agencies like the land grab by Nova Bac Nam 79 Company and Novaland in Danang, involving two former Deputy Ministers of Public Security, the case of a police general from the High-Tech Crime Police Department (C50 Ministry of Public Security) protecting the largest online gambling ring in Vietnam, and the case of smuggling and producing 200 million liters of counterfeit gasoline in Dong Nai, with the involvement of numerous border guard officials and marine police. There have also been corruption cases in the healthcare sector, such as those at Bach Mai Hospital and Hanoi Heart Hospital, where hospital leadership colluded with private

companies to inflate prices for medical equipment to gain illicit benefits. Most recently, the Ministry of Public Security initiated an investigation into price gouging for Covid-19 testing kits by Viet A Corporation, implicating many officials from various ministries and agencies, including the leaders of the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Health, the Military Medical Academy, and officials from many provinces and cities. Two Central Committee members were expelled from the Party and temporarily detained for investigation.

The Party and the State are determined to continue strengthening anti-corruption efforts within state agencies, organizations, and businesses both inside and outside the state. Conclusion No. 21 KL/TW dated October 25, 2021, from the 4th Central Committee of the 13th Party Congress emphasized: "Vigorously and regularly implement comprehensive, synchronous inspection, supervision, auditing, investigation, prosecution, and trial activities. Actively detect and rigorously handle cases of corruption and wrongdoing; resolutely recover lost or embezzled assets in criminal cases involving corruption and economic matters."

5. Identification of Corruption

The current situation of the anti-corruption struggle in Vietnam highlights the need to clearly identify the main forms of corruption in order to have effective prevention and combat solutions:

Economic corruption: This is a very common form of corruption that occurs in all corners of social life, from high-ranking officials to low-ranking ones. It is easily recognizable as those involved use their positions and delegated authority to manipulate, extort, and create obstacles to gain money, material possessions, and more. This form can range from petty corruption, such as accepting small bribes, to large-scale corruption involving billions of Vietnamese dong, mansions, land, and cars.

Power corruption: This form of corruption involves individuals in positions of power and authority who exploit their positions to appoint their trusted relatives, friends, associates, and those who offer bribes to important positions within the party, state agencies, and political and social organizations for personal gain. This is a highly dangerous and difficult-to-detect form of corruption. When they place individuals lacking ethics and professional competence in important positions, it not only affects the immediate term but also has long-term consequences, influencing future generations and creating lasting damage.

Political corruption: This form of corruption involves individuals with power influencing decisions regarding mechanisms, policies, and major decisions of the Party and the State to benefit themselves, their families, or a group of people. They may collude with others in power to change the Party's or the State's orientations and policies to seek benefits for their sectors, regions, their own units, or groups with common interests. Examples include decisions related to tax policies, salaries, appointment standards, retirement, or major project investments such as airports, seaports, and urban areas.

6. The Communist Party of Vietnam's Resolute and Persistent Fight Against Corruption and Waste

The Communist Party of Vietnam is the sole ruling party leading the state and society. The Party plays a decisive role in the success of Vietnam's revolution. Ho Chi Minh believed that corruption, waste, and nepotism were "internal enemies," the enemies of the people. He asserted: "Corruption is theft. This crime is as serious as treason, espionage. Fighting corruption, waste, and nepotism is like fighting 'enemies from within.'" The Party and the Vietnamese state recognize that corruption and waste deeply affect economic and social development, erode people's trust, and pose a threat to the survival of the Party, the state, and the regime. Therefore, during each Party Congress, great importance is placed on Party building and building a contingent of revolutionary ethical cadre as a critical task, essential for the continued existence of the Party and the regime.

Since the 6th Party Congress, there hasn't been a single term of the Central Party Committee without a resolution on Party building. In particular, the 4th Central Committee of the 11th term issued Resolution No. 4, emphasizing the need to strengthen Party building, rectify the Party, and the political system. It resolutely prevents, pushes back, and strictly handles Party members who show signs of ideological, moral, lifestyle, and "self-evolution" and "self-transformation." These resolutions have been concretized into legal documents of the state in different periods, serving as a legal basis for state agencies and the people to implement.

Shortly after the August Revolution, on November 23, 1945, President Ho Chi Minh issued Decree No. 64, Article 1 of which stated: "The government shall immediately establish a Special Inspection Board with the authority to supervise all work and staff of People's Committees and government agencies. Article 2 clearly specifies: "The Special Inspection Board has full authority: to investigate, question witnesses, examine documents of People's Committees or government agencies necessary for supervision; to issue arrest warrants for any officials in People's Committees or the government who have committed offenses before bringing them to the Government Council or a special court for trial." This was Vietnam's first inspection and anti-corruption agency.

On November 27, 1946, President Ho Chi Minh issued Decree No. 223. The decree had 5 articles, one of which explicitly addressed penalties for bribery of officials, accepting bribes, and embezzling state funds. This decree was Vietnam's first anti-corruption law in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

On December 18, 1949, President Ho Chi Minh issued Decree No. 138B-SL/QD, establishing the Government Inspection Board, directly under the Prime Minister, replacing the Special Inspection Board mentioned in Decree No. 64. The 1992 Constitution, for the first time, mentioned anti-corruption in Article 8, stating: "State agencies, officials, civil servants, and public employees must...resolutely fight against all manifestations of bureaucracy, nepotism, corruption, and bribery."

Subsequently, the Standing Committee of the National Assembly of the Xth term issued Ordinance No. 02-PL/CTN on February 26, 1998, on anti-corruption. This was Vietnam's first anti-corruption ordinance, consisting of 5 chapters and 38 articles, defining the concepts of corruption, corrupt behaviors, preventive measures, detection, and handling of corrupt behaviors.

Following this, Ordinance No. 22/2000/PL-UBTVQH10 was issued to amend and supplement certain provisions of the anti-corruption ordinance. To enhance effectiveness, the 11th National Assembly issued the Anti-Corruption Law No. 55/2005/QH11 on November 29, 2005. The law, consisting of 8 chapters and 92 articles, regulated prevention, detection, and handling of corrupt individuals and the responsibilities of state agencies, organizations, units, and individuals in the fight against corruption.

On August 4, 2007, the 12th National Assembly issued Law No. 01/2007/QH12, amending and supplementing two articles of the 2005 Anti-Corruption Law. In 2012, the law was further revised and supplemented with Law No. 27/2012/QH13 by the 13th National Assembly on November 23, 2012. The government issued Decree No. 59/2013/NĐ-CP on June 17, 2013, providing detailed regulations on certain provisions of the Anti-Corruption Law.

In 2013, the 1992 Constitution continued to emphasize anti-corruption efforts in Article 8, stating that state agencies, officials, civil servants, and public employees must "resolutely fight against corruption, waste, and all manifestations of bureaucracy, nepotism, and bribery."

To align with the 2013 Constitution, on November 20, 2018, during the 6th session, the 14th National Assembly passed the 2018 Anti-Corruption Law No. 36/2018/QH14. This law, consisting of 10 chapters and 96 articles, supplements and improves provisions related to corrupt behaviors, the declaration of subjects and types of property and income, publicizing property and income, and the responsibilities of leaders and joint liability. These legislative efforts show the consistent determination and persistence of the Communist Party of Vietnam and the Vietnamese state in the fight against corruption and waste.

Building an Effective and Efficient Anti-Corruption Apparatus

In addition to improving the legal framework for anti-corruption efforts, the Communist Party of Vietnam and the state have paid close attention to building an anti-corruption apparatus. Apart from the internal security agencies such as the Police, Military, People's Procuracy, and People's Court, which regularly engage in protecting the Constitution, the law, and the fight against corruption, Vietnam has specialized anti-corruption agencies known as the Central Steering Committee for Anti-Corruption and its provincial-level counterparts.

The Central Steering Committee for Anti-Corruption is headed by General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong, with six deputy heads and eleven members, all of whom are members of the Politburo, Central Committee members, and concurrently hold leadership positions in various central Party committees, central government agencies, the Inspection Commission, and the Organizational Commission. The Central Steering Committee for Anti-Corruption is tasked with providing recommendations to the Politburo and the Party Central Committee on

strategies and policies related to anti-corruption efforts.

It also oversees, directs, and coordinates inspections, monitoring, and implementation of anti-corruption work. The Committee has the authority to request Party delegations, Party organizational bodies, provincial Party Committees, municipal Party Committees, and central government inspection, audit, and oversight agencies to carry out anti-corruption work and report the results according to the directives of the Central Committee. The Standing Agency of the Central Steering Committee for Anti-Corruption is the Central Internal Affairs Committee.

Several agencies are responsible for carrying out anti-corruption work in Vietnam:

The Central Internal Affairs Committee: In addition to its regular tasks, the Central Internal Affairs Committee serves as the Standing Agency of the Central Steering Committee for Anti-Corruption. It has the responsibility of supervising and coordinating with specialized agencies to inspect, monitor, and handle violations of the law, including corruption and waste.

The Central Inspection Commission and Party inspection commissions at various levels: These commissions are responsible for inspecting all Party members, including members of provincial Party Committees, when there are indications of violations of Party member standards or provincial Party Committee member standards. They also handle disciplinary measures for Party organizations and Party members within their jurisdiction, in accordance with their authority. Additionally, they oversee Party organizations and Party members in implementing the Party's guidelines, policies, and resolutions.

The Government Inspectorate: As an agency under the government, the Government Inspectorate manages state affairs related to inspection work, the resolution of complaints and denunciations, and anti-corruption efforts nationwide. It has the responsibility to direct, guide, and organize inspections to ensure compliance with the law by government agencies, organizations, enterprises, and individuals. Within the Government Inspectorate, there are specialized units responsible for anti-corruption work.

7. The Importance of Strengthening Preventive Mechanisms to Prevent Corruption and Wrongdoings

Corruption is often referred to as the "internal enemy" and poses a threat to political and social stability. It damages the reputation of the Communist Party and undermines the Party's fighting capacity and the state's governance effectiveness. Corruption widens the wealth gap, fosters conflicts of interest, and generates social resistance.

It erodes public trust and represents one of the major risks to the survival of the Party and the Vietnamese regime. Therefore, the Party and the state must continue to improve mechanisms, measures, and methods to genuinely prevent and combat corruption effectively.

A robust preventive mechanism against corruption and wrongdoing involves a comprehensive set of institutional arrangements and policies implemented by the Party, the state, and society. These mechanisms aim to create a system of laws and policies that leave no room for corruption, ensure transparency, accountability, thorough scrutiny, and strict monitoring

throughout the management processes. In accordance with the spirit of the Party's resolutions and the Anti-Corruption Law, preventing corruption and wrongdoing is a shared responsibility of the entire political system and the people, with the primary and essential role resting with Party committees and leaders at all levels, from central to grassroots.

In the fight against corruption, the guiding principle is to be proactive in prevention and resolute in the struggle, with prevention being the fundamental approach.

The National Strategy for Preventing and Combating Corruption up to 2020 (issued with Government Resolution No. 21/NQ-CP on May 12, 2009) has identified key principles, objectives, and solution groups, as well as a clear roadmap for anti-corruption efforts.

These include enhancing openness and transparency in policy-making, improving the public service regime, raising the quality of public duty performance, refining economic management mechanisms, creating a competitive, fair, and transparent business environment, and improving the effectiveness of inspection, oversight, audit, investigation, prosecution, and trial work in detecting and handling corruption. It also focuses on enhancing public awareness and the role of society in preventing and combating corruption.

Over the years, the fight against corruption and wastefulness has been conducted resolutely, following the directives of the Politburo, led by General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong, with a clear message: "Speak and act, no restricted zones, no exceptions, regardless of who the person is, without succumbing to pressure from any organization or individual.

"Among the measures aimed at continuing to improve anti-corruption efforts in Vietnam, General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong emphasized that legal education in anti-corruption is a top priority: "We must continue to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of propaganda and education to build a culture of thriftiness and anti-corruption among officials, Party members, and the people."

8. Enhancing the Mechanism for Preventing Corruption and Negative Practices in Vietnam

From 2012 to the present, the Central Committee, the Politburo, the Secretariat, and advisory bodies of the Central Committee have issued over 250 documents related to building and rectifying the Party, as well as preventing and combating corruption and negative practices in Vietnam. Many strong and resolute policies and regulations have been enacted, which have received the unanimous support and high appreciation of Party members, officials, and the people.

These policies and regulations, when implemented seriously, have brought about significant changes, such as:

- 1) Regulations on preventing and combating the degeneration of political ideology, ethics, and lifestyles within the Party, emphasizing self-transformation and self-renewal within its ranks.
- 2) Provisions on the exemplary role and responsibilities of Party members, particularly Central Committee members, Politburo members, and Secretariat members, as well as leaders at various levels and in various sectors.
- 3) Regulations on Party inspection, supervision, and disciplinary measures.
- 4) Guidelines on personnel work, dismissal, and resignation.
- 5) Measures to control power in personnel work and other critical areas.
- 6) Clarification of the responsibilities and authority of the Steering Committee and relevant agencies for corruption prevention and combating.
- 7) Mechanisms for coordinating activities related to inspection, supervision, auditing, investigation, prosecution, trial, and execution of judgments.
- 8) Guidelines for detecting, investigating, and handling corruption cases.
- 9) Provisions for protecting whistleblowers and fighting against corruption and negative practices.

Additionally, the Criminal Law of 2015 (amended in 2017) introduced four additional corruption-related offenses for non-state sectors. The Anti-Corruption Law of 2018 dedicated a separate chapter to anti-corruption activities in non-state sectors and more.

The practice of enhancing a robust prevention mechanism to combat corruption and negative practices in Vietnam aims to concretize the guiding principle: "All power must be strictly controlled by mechanisms; power must be bound by responsibility; wherever there is power, there must be corresponding responsibility. The higher the power, the greater the responsibility. Anyone who abuses or exploits power for personal gain must be held accountable and subject to sanctions." Therefore, in recent years, the efforts to prevent and combat corruption and negative practices have achieved significant results, including:

Firstly, raising awareness among Party members, officials, and the people about the prevention and combat of corruption and negative practices. There is continued consensus and support for these efforts.

General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong affirmed that "the work of information, propaganda, and education on corruption prevention has been strengthened and renewed." According to the social public opinion survey conducted by the Institute of Social Opinion, the vast majority of the people (93%) express trust in the Party's leadership in the fight against corruption. This has made any distortions or sabotage attempts by hostile forces appear futile and laughable. This is a significant success in our anti-corruption efforts.

Secondly, the Party and the State have resolutely and coherently implemented many important measures in preventing and combating corruption and negative practices:

Detection and handling of corruption cases are now carried out coherently and effectively. There has been a breakthrough in this aspect of anti-corruption work, affirming the high determination of the Party and the State to combat corruption. No areas are considered off-limits, and no individuals are shielded from pressure.

Alongside the intensified focus on detecting and handling corruption, work on building and improving the institutional framework for economic and social management and corruption prevention has also been strengthened. Gradual improvements in the mechanism for preventing corruption have been made, ensuring that corruption becomes impossible, unfeasible, unwanted, and unnecessary.

Transparency and openness have been emphasized in the work of officials, administrative reform, and accountability. There has been concentrated leadership and direction to implement preventive measures against corruption, yielding positive results.

Information, propaganda, and education on corruption prevention have been strengthened and rejuvenated. The role of elected bodies, the Fatherland Front, the people, and the media in anti-corruption efforts has been more effectively utilized.

Emphasis has been placed on comprehensive organizational reform, improving the quality and efficiency of activities, and enhancing coordination among functional agencies for corruption prevention.

International cooperation has been actively pursued, and anti-corruption efforts have gradually expanded beyond the state sector.

Thirdly, the results of corruption prevention and combat continue to improve:

Over the past 10 years (2012-2022), Party Committees and Inspection Commissions at all levels have disciplined over 2,700 Party organizations and nearly 168,000 Party members, including more than 7,390 Party members disciplined for corruption.

The Central Committee, Politburo, Secretariat, and Central Committee Inspection Commission have disciplined more than 170 senior officials at the central level, including 33 Central Committee members and former Central Committee members of the Party and more than 50 general-rank officers in the armed forces.

Asset recovery efforts related to corruption have shown positive progress. Civil enforcement agencies at various levels have recovered VND 61 trillion, achieving a rate of 34.7% (in 2013, this rate was less than 10%). In cases overseen and directed by the Steering Committee, nearly VND 50 trillion has been recovered, with a rate of 41.3%. Local efforts to detect and address corruption and misconduct have been intensified, gradually rectifying the situation of "hot at the top, cold at the bottom."

Over the past 10 years (2012-2022), more than 8,445,300 people have declared their assets, reaching 99.5%.

Various ministries, sectors, and localities have conducted checks on transparency in 78,108 agencies, organizations, and units, discovering and correcting violations in 1,068 units. More than 80 organizations provide internet-based payment services, while 44 organizations offer mobile phone-based payment services.

Over 90% of business tax payments are made through banks, and 42% of medical facilities have implemented cashless medical service payments. Moreover, 42% of people receiving pensions and 39% of unemployment and social insurance beneficiaries nationwide receive payments through personal accounts.

The international community increasingly appreciates Vietnam's efforts in corruption prevention and improving the administrative and business environment, enhancing the country's national competitiveness. Particularly, through legal education and awareness-raising efforts, the people have become more aware of the importance of corruption prevention and the harm of corruption to the nation's development.

A significant portion of the population actively resists corruption and firmly refuses to support corrupt activities. This has been demonstrated by the improved corruption perception index of Vietnam from 2006 to 2021.

9. Objectives of the Anti-Corruption Strategy in Vietnam to 2030

The general objective of the Anti-Corruption Strategy to 2030 is to prevent and combat corruption, contribute to building a democratic, disciplined, and honest society; maintain political stability and economic and social development.

- The specific objectives of the Anti-Corruption Strategy to 2030 are:
- To address loopholes and shortcomings in policies and laws in the economic and social fields, especially in areas prone to corruption and negative aspects;
- To build a streamlined and effective public administration with a professional, disciplined, and honest civil service;
- To strengthen prevention measures; promptly detect and severely punish all acts of corruption and negative aspects, recover property that has been embezzled or lost;
- To promote the role of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and its member organizations, the media, and the community in anti-corruption and negative aspects;
- To strengthen international cooperation in anti-corruption, linking to the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

10. Five groups of tasks of the Anti-Corruption Strategy in Vietnam to 2030

- To improve policies and laws on economic and social management and anti-corruption.
- To streamline the public administration, perfect the civil service regime, build a team of civil servants with honesty; improve the effectiveness of law enforcement.
- To strengthen inspection, supervision, inspection, auditing, investigation, prosecution, trial, and enforcement.
- To raise awareness, promote the role and responsibility of society in anti-corruption.
- To actively participate and improve the effectiveness of international cooperation on anti-corruption, fully fulfilling the rights and obligations of a member state of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

11. Implementation roadmap of the Anti-Corruption Strategy in Vietnam to 2030

The National Anti-Corruption Strategy to 2030 is implemented in two phases:

(i) Phase 1 (from 2023 to 2026)

- In this phase, the implementation of all tasks and solutions will be coordinated, focusing on researching, reviewing, amending, supplementing to address the loopholes and shortcomings of laws on economic and social management and anti-corruption to propose specific tasks in the legislative program of the National Assembly of the 15th and 16th terms; focusing on improving capacity and effectiveness in preventing, detecting, and handling acts of corruption and negative aspects.
- Complete specific tasks in the period 2023-2026 (with a plan attached) and summarize the implementation in 2026.

(ii) Phase 2 (from 2026 to 2030)

- Building on the achievements made in the first phase. Based on the summary, based on the requirements of anti-corruption work and the actual situation, a specific plan will be developed to implement the Strategy in the period 2026-2030 and to promote the implementation of all groups of tasks and solutions in order to complete the objectives of the Strategy.
- Summarize the implementation of the Strategy in 2031.

12. Constraints of anti-corruption law in Vietnam that need to be improved

The level of corruption in Vietnam, its intractability, is explained by the limitations of the institution, the decline in the quality, morality, and lifestyle of many officials and civil servants in the apparatus, even corruption in judicial activities, in investigation, prosecution, trial, and execution. According to the author, the effectiveness of the anti-corruption struggle in Vietnam is still not high because the regulations of anti-corruption law in Vietnam still have many limitations; the "dosage" of anti-corruption solutions is still not strong enough, not aimed at the

breakthrough point. This content is reflected in the following issues:

First: The regulations on transparency and disclosure of assets and incomes of subjects subject to declaration are not comprehensive and lack assurance measures. In the current context, private enterprises are seen as a great resource for the development of the country. However, the legal representatives of these types of enterprises are not subject to asset and income declaration. And in fact, not a few major bribery cases were carried out by these subjects. In addition, the current law has not clarified the principles, forms, contents, and responsibilities for transparency and disclosure. Those who are responsible for declaring assets are not honest, because the leaders, heads of that agency are not honest in declaring, so it is certain that the declaration at the agency, unit is only formal.

Second: The regulations on accountability are not appropriate, still narrow and not regular. Specifically, according to current regulations, the explanation can only be carried out when there is a decision of the competent authority. At the same time, the explanation is not comprehensive at present; the procedures, procedures, and contents of the implementation of the accountability responsibility are still unclear, not feasible, not linked to the implementation of other prevention measures. Especially the measure on transparency and disclosure is only confined to the internal of the agency, unit. And with this regulation, how can the people and political organizations with the function of supervision know to perform their duties as well as their tasks? It is precisely this limitation that the voters who hold the ballot to elect the National Assembly and People's Councils at all levels cannot know how the representatives for them have assets and incomes. And once the voters do not know, they cannot supervise.

Third: The regulations on the handling of the responsibility of the head of an agency, organization, unit when allowing corruption to occur in the agency, organization, unit are still general, not specific, not clear. In reality in recent years, there have been many agencies and units where the deputy of the head of the agency commits corruption while performing the assigned tasks, but the head is almost innocent, if there is only a lack of need to seriously learn from experience. Although it is known that the principle of applying criminal law is that whoever does it will suffer, the responsibility of the head cannot be innocent. Moreover, with the regulations as in the current law, it is difficult to encourage the initiative of the head in preventing and detecting acts of corruption. Only when the law clearly stipulates the mechanism for clearly determining the responsibility of the head, the effectiveness of anti-corruption in the agency, unit will achieve high efficiency.

Fourth: The regulations on transparency of assets and incomes do not help to control fluctuations in income. Especially for individuals with preferential shares and individuals who trade on the stock market. In the current law, there is no mechanism for handling assets and incomes that cannot be explained reasonably. In particular, the law still lacks mandatory regulations on the deadline for persons subject to asset and income declaration to perform their obligations to declare or explain their assets and incomes.

Fifth: The regulations on reporting and handling of reports on acts of corruption still lack assurance measures, especially the measures to protect the reporter, reward those who have merits in reporting corruption. That is why the effectiveness of the anti-corruption work in the past has not been high. Because in the agency, unit, if there is corruption occurring, one person also knows the other, but they are afraid of being retaliated against, being oppressed, or they also have interests in it.

13. Solutions to further improve the prevention mechanism to prevent corruption and negative

In the coming time, it is necessary to continue to implement well the spirit of the Central Committee's direction, headed by General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong, on the measures to prevent corruption and negative, especially the contents on improving the prevention mechanism to prevent corruption and negative, specifically:

First, officials, party members, and leaders must be exemplary; set an example and take the lead in preventing corruption and negative; officials with higher positions must be clean, exemplary, pioneering, and take the lead in preventing corruption and negative.

Second, continue to build, improve the overall institutional system and building, rectifying the Party, managing the economy - society and preventing corruption and negative; promptly address shortcomings, plug the "gaps", "loopholes"; improve the effectiveness of organizing the implementation of the institution to "cannot" corrupt, negative.

In particular, pay special attention to improving policies and laws on land management and use; management of state capital in state-owned enterprises; management of exploitation of natural resources, minerals; management of the use of state budget capital for investment in economic and social infrastructure, etc.

Third, continue to improve and strictly implement regulations on transparency, accountability, transparency in the activities of agencies, organizations, and units; effectively control the property and income of people with positions and powers. Administrative reform; building a team of officials with sufficient qualifications, capabilities, and prestige, commensurate with the tasks in the new period and strengthening the monitoring of the exercise of power.

Fourth, continue to consolidate the organizational structure; improve the capacity and effectiveness of the operation of agencies and units with the function of preventing corruption and negative from the central to local levels. Expand and improve the effectiveness of international cooperation, effectively implement the prevention of corruption and negative activities in the non-state sector.

Fifth, implement synchronously between Party discipline, administrative discipline and criminal prosecution; focus on handling weak links, difficult tasks. Promote information and propaganda work on corruption **prevention and negative**.

References

- 1) Despite being a developed country, South Korea is ranked as one of the top 10 most corrupt countries according to the 2017 Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) by Transparency International (TI). Over the years, five Presidents of South Korea have faced prosecution for corruption, most recently former President Park Geun Hye in 2017. (Source: phaply.net.vn, October 3, 2018). In the United States, corruption continues to occur in many states. According to the University of Illinois-Chicago (UIC), the state of Illinois incurs at least \$550 million in economic losses due to corruption each year. In 2010, a significant scandal occurred in the city of Bell, part of Los Angeles, where city officials were found to have unusually high incomes. In 2021, the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) in Hong Kong reported receiving 2,264 complaints about corruption, an increase of nearly 20% compared to 2020, similar to the statistics from 2019.
- 2) Resolution No. 04-NQ/TW, dated August 21, 2006.
- 3) Conclusions of the Fifth Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party (No. 21-KL/TW, dated May 25, 2012) on continuing the implementation of the Third Plenum of the Central Committee of the Party (Tenth Tenure) on strengthening the Party's leadership in the fight against corruption and wastefulness.
- 4) Decision No. 162-QD/TW, dated February 1, 2013, by the Politburo.
- 5) Decision No. 158-QD/TW, dated December 28, 2012, by the Politburo.
- 6) Decision No. 163-QD/TW, dated February 1, 2013, by the Politburo; Decision No. 159-QD/TW, dated December 28, 2012, by the Politburo.
- 7) Report No. 238-BC/BCĐTW, dated December 22, 2020, by the Central Steering Committee for Anti-Corruption, summarizing the work of anti-corruption in the period 2013-2020, directions, tasks, and solutions for the coming time.
- 8) Conclusion No. 10-KL/TW, dated December 26, 2016, by the Politburo on the continued implementation of the Third Central Resolution (Tenth Tenure) on strengthening the Party's leadership in the fight against corruption and wastefulness.
- 9) Documents of the Thirteenth National Party Congress, Nxb. CTQG-ST, 2021, Vol. 2, p. 252.
- 10) Concluding remarks by Comrade General Secretary at the National Conference on Anti-Corruption in 2014.
- 11) Directive No. 50-CT/TW, dated December 7, 2015, by the Politburo on strengthening the Party's leadership in detecting and handling corruption cases; Conclusion No. 10-KL/TW, dated December 26, 2016, by the Politburo on the continued implementation of the Third Central Resolution on strengthening the Party's leadership in the fight against corruption and wastefulness.
- 12) Concluding remarks by Comrade General Secretary at the Permanent Central Steering Committee meeting on anti-corruption on March 18, 2021.
- 13) Concluding remarks by Comrade General Secretary at the National Conference to Summarize Anti-Corruption Work in the Period 2013-2020 (December 12, 2020).
- 14) Concluding remarks by Comrade General Secretary at the National Conference on Anti-Corruption in 2018.
- 15) Conclusion No. 05-KL/TW, dated June 3, 2021, by the Party Central Committee on the continued implementation of Directive No. 50-CT/TW of the Politburo in the work of detecting and handling corruption cases.
- 16) Concluding remarks by Comrade General Secretary at the National Conference to Summarize Anti-Corruption Work in the Period 2013-2020 (December 12, 2020).
- 17) Concluding remarks by Comrade General Secretary at the National Conference on the Inspection and Supervision Work of the Twelfth Party Congress.

- 18) Concluding remarks by Comrade General Secretary at the National Conference on Anti-Corruption in 2014, the National Conference of political organizations to implement the resolutions of the Thirteenth Party Congress (September 15, 2021); Directive No. 50-CT/TW, dated December 7, 2015, by the Politburo on strengthening the Party's leadership in detecting and handling corruption cases; Conclusion No. 10-KL/TW, dated December 26, 2016, by the Politburo on the continued implementation of the Third Central Resolution (Tenth Tenure) on strengthening the Party's leadership in the fight against corruption and wastefulness.
- 19) According to reports from party committees at various levels and organizations, during the Twelfth Party Congress term, 87,210 party members were disciplined, with more than 49,400 party members disciplined for issues related to ideological, moral, and lifestyle degradation (accounting for 56.64%); over 3,260 officials and party members were disciplined for corruption, and over 5,200 officials and party members were criminally prosecuted (an 18.48% increase compared to the Eleventh Party Congress term).
- 20) Excerpt from the concluding remarks by Comrade General Secretary at the Permanent Central Steering Committee meeting on anti-corruption on March 18, 2021.