

## Vietnam

As a national priority in Vietnam, the fight against illicit drugs is second only to poverty reduction. In 1999 Vietnam fought on two fronts: against the production and use of drugs as well as against cross-border trafficking of drugs. Vietnam, with 2,100 hectares under poppy cultivation and a potential of 11 metric tons of opium production, intensified efforts to eradicate poppy crops. Authorities also successfully eradicated 860 of an estimated total of 1,000 hectares used for cannabis cultivation in 1999.

The Government of Vietnam (GOV) instituted an augmented prevention campaign to reduce domestic drug use and abuse. Also in 1999 Vietnam stiffened law-enforcement campaigns against drug traffickers and toughened prosecution to achieve a record number of arrests and convictions. Authorities prosecuted 3,310 drug-related cases involving 4,952 defendants. Of cases brought to trial, 35 received a death sentence and 21 were sentenced to life imprisonment. A high-profile anti-corruption campaign was implemented and included public trials of high-ranking government and party officials involved in illicit drug and other smuggling.

Due, in part, to its location so close to the "Golden Triangle," Vietnam is a major transit point for opium and heroin. To address this problem, the GOV set up special task force units to combat drug trafficking along the borders, and police, customs and border forces arrested 19,010 drug criminals, an increase in arrests of 31 percent over last year. Drug interdictions increased by 32 percent, with seizures of 51.8 kilograms of heroin, 314 kilograms of opium, and 369 kilograms of cannabis. In its first year of operation (September 1998–September 1999), the marine police force began patrols to detect drug trafficking. Vietnam also tightened oversight and control of precursor chemicals, transferring responsibility for monitoring to the Ministry of Public Security, Ministry of Public Health, and Department of Customs, and set up a Precursor Chemical Control Force in the Ministry of Health.

In 1999 GOV began work on preparing draft counter-drug legislation to modernize organized-crime statutes and techniques, enhance law-enforcement efforts, and strengthen compliance with the 1988 UN Drug Convention, to which Vietnam is a party. Vietnam is negotiating counter-drug agreements with China and several EU countries, has cooperated with Interpol, and has worked closely with U.S. law-enforcement agencies. In April 1999 the Vietnamese Police joined the ASEANPOL Criminal Information System. UNDCP is assisting Vietnam revise its Master Plan against drugs and craft its new counter-drug legislation. Vietnam supports UNDCP projects targeting demand reduction, crop substitution and suppression of drug trafficking.

The United States and Vietnam have not yet concluded a counter-drug agreement. The GOV has not fully eradicated poppy crops, and farmers reverted to poppy cultivation in some high-poverty rural areas, bringing an additional 645 hectares under cultivation in 1999 and increasing the total to 2,100 hectares devoted to poppy crops. Vietnam's National Assembly approved penal code revisions that criminalize money laundering for the first time. The provisions will take effect on July 1, 2000. Vietnam is working with the World Bank to develop a money-laundering section in draft banking legislation.

Despite some notable shortcomings, Vietnam has made a vigorous effort to combat drug production and trafficking. There is no question that the GOV at the highest levels fully realizes the threat drugs present to their own people and society and is doing everything possible to counter the availability and use of illicit drugs.



## Presidential Documents

Presidential Determination No. 2000-17 of March 2, 2000

### **Drawdown Under Section 506(a)(2) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as Amended, To Provide Emergency Disaster Assistance in Southern Africa**

#### **Memorandum for the Secretary of State [and] the Secretary of Defense**

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by section 506(a)(2) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, 22 U.S.C. 2318(a)(2) (the “Act”), I hereby determine that it is in the national interest of the United States to draw down articles and services from the inventory and resources of the Department of Defense, for the purpose of providing international disaster assistance to Southern Africa, including Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Botswana.

Therefore, I direct the drawdown of up to \$37.6 million of articles and services from the inventory and resources of the Department of Defense for Southern Africa, including Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Botswana for the purposes and under the authorities of chapter 9 of part I of the Act.

The Secretary of State is authorized and directed to report this determination to the Congress immediately and to arrange for its publication in the **Federal Register**.



THE WHITE HOUSE,  
*Washington, March 2, 2000.*