

US - Viet Nam cooperation on Agent Orange legacy in Viet Nam

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1. Since 1982, in preparing the International Conference on long term effects of Herbicides and Defoliants used in Viet Nam during wartime held in Ho Chi Minh city in January 1983, many American scientists came to help Vietnamese colleagues to write scientific reports on Agent Orange and Dioxin on Environment and Human Health, namely:

- ❖ **Pfeiffer, Ph.D provided Herbs tape and Herbs map**
- ❖ **Arthur Westing MD, Ph.D presided the Conference**
- ❖ **James Dwyer Ph.D (Columbia University - NY) helped with the biostatistics and probability**

After the Conference, Maurine Hatch Ph.D and later, Zena Stein Ph.D (Columbia University – NY and WHO) helped to write articles on AO/Dioxin to Chemosphere, a British scientific Journal

2. Since 1984, US Veterans Association with a financial assistance from US NGOs has had a cooperation in conducting scientific research with Vietnamese scientists on Agent Orange legacy in Viet Nam:

Dr Arnold Schecter has been cooperating with Tu Du Hospital, then with many other medical institutions in many provinces in Viet Nam and especially, 10/80 committee (a Vietnamese committee which has been studying the long term effects of chemical warfare and recommending the measures to remediate these consequences)

Through that cooperation, many issues have been brought to public attention:

- persistency of dioxin in human body
- persistency of dioxin in human breast milk,
- persistency of dioxin at a high level in some “hot spots” – around former US Air Force Bases – in south Viet Nam

3. Ford Foundation also sponsored a Canadian company – the Hatfield company – to carry out a survey on the legacy of AO/Dioxin in Viet Nam (2002).

The results showed that dioxin still persists at a very high level in the environment as well as in human tissues at some hot spots like Da Nang (a former US Air Force Base) and “it is a real threat and risk for the public health”

4. Vietnam Association of Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin is the representative of more than 3 million Agent Orange survivors.

It has widespread international support from exposed veterans in South Korea, Australia and the US



American and Vietnam Veterans are friends now!

4. US Congress has approved a budget of about \$3 million for the remediation of environment and health activities for Viet Nam victims, but the clean-up needs much more than that!

5. More recently, NIEH has come and sent scientists to Viet Nam to seek a new cooperation in doing research.
6. In June 2007, an initiative of two sides after the important visit of the President of Viet Nam to US, to set up a Dialogue Group with 3 then 5 members from each side

The Dialogue Group had 2 meetings to discuss on how to alleviate war consequences, in particular, the persistence of Dioxin in hot spots and in the bodies of exposed people.

The Dialogue Group has set up 5 points:

- equipping one Dioxin laboratory with high resolution

- setting up a center for assisting and counseling AO/Dioxin victims
- cleaning up 3 hot spots – 3 former US Air Force Bases – in Da Nang, Bien Hoa and Phu Cat
- improvement of medical facilities to detect and to treat the diseases and birth defects caused by AO/Dioxin
- assisting AO/Dioxin victims and conducting research on AO/Dioxin

We hope

- the cooperation will be more concrete and fruitful!
- the initial efforts to address the legacy of AD/Dioxin in Viet Nam may usher a more realistic solution