Vietnam Still Requires International Assistance

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On June 10 at the United Nations' 2008 high-level meeting on AIDS, Vietnam's Deputy Prime Minister Truong Vihn Trong reported that the Vietnamese government has made dramatic improvements in addressing the epidemic, rallying the efforts of ministries, agencies, political and social organizations and civil society, according to a report on VietNamNet (english.vietnamnet.vn, 6/10). The country has adopted legislative acts and regulations on HIV/AIDS prevention (most notably the Law and Decree on combating HIV/AIDS). And, it now offers comprehensive prevention education at both the national and local levels. Access to ARV treatment and harm reduction programs have been significantly expanded.

However, Deputy Prime Minister Trong also said that some challenges—such expanding needle-exchange programs and the distribution of condoms, as well as increasing access to treatment—require bigger financial support from international donors suggesting that the Southeast Asian country, while making headway in the fight against AIDS, still requires international assistance.

"We are convinced that, with continued international cooperation and assistance, Vietnam will improve its capacity to overcome the said challenges, thus making significant contributions to the common efforts to prevent the HIV/AIDS epidemic," Deputy Prime Minister Trong concluded.

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