

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN VIETNAM (1946 - 2000) IN COMPARISON WITH CHINA'S AND THE UNITED STATES' SYSTEMS

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Abstract

Based on the research and analysis on the concept of local governments in the United States (U.S.) and China, the author provides comments and arguments relating to Vietnamese local governments under the 2013 Vietnam Constitution. Hence, the article would confirm the necessary of researching the history of Vietnam local government since 1946 until now. First of all, the paper gives an overview about Vietnam local government over the historical period since 1946 until now. Last but not least, with the comparisons between Vietnam, the U.S. and China local governments, the author points out the differences between these systems and provide the comments on the 2015 Vietnam's Organization of Local Government Act.

Keywords: local governments, Vietnam, China, the United States (U.S.)

Introduction

Strong local governments make a strong central government. This truth is very well known all over the world, including Vietnam. The Vietnamese government has spent a lot of efforts to build up a strong local government system, for example, the issuance of the Law on Organization of Local Governments in 2015 or the current draft resolution to pilot a ward-level government without people's councils in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh city which will be debated by the National Assembly in this November.

However, the author believes that a strong local government should act independently. The central government should spend more efforts on increasing independence level of local governments in Vietnam. In this article, I would like to provide you an overview of the Vietnamese local government concept with a comparison with the systems in China and the U.S.

Summarily, Part I examines the local government concept in Vietnam. Part II provides a brief on the history of Vietnam local governments from 1946 until now. Part III explains how the local government in China works. Part IV investigates the changes of local legislation and the reforming of local governments in the U.S. from 1990 until now.

I. THE CONCEPTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN VIETNAM (1946 - 2000)

A. International common definition of “local government”:

According to Black’s Law Dictionary Free Online Legal Dictionary:

“Local Government are city, town, county, or state level government. The administrative body for this small geographic jurisdiction. Electing officials, enacting taxes, and doing many things a national government can do is within its jurisdiction. The local government typically only controls its specific geographical region, unable to legally pass or enforce laws beyond its legal jurisdiction”¹.

B. Current Conception about “local government” in Vietnam:

1. Conception about “local government” under Vietnam Constitution 2013

The author believes that the most significant innovations under the Constitution of Vietnam in 1992 amended in 2013 (“Vietnam Constitution 2013”) is Chapter IX on “Local Government” including seven Articles. Accordingly, Vietnam Constitution 2013 defines “*local government level includes People’s Councils and People’s Committees which are organized in line with the characteristics of rural and urban areas, islands, and special administrative units by law*” (Section 2 of Article 111, Vietnam Constitution 2013). Article 110 to Article 116 of Vietnam Constitution 2013 provides the structure of Vietnam local government, as below:

“1. The administrative unit of the Republic of Socialist Vietnam is distributed as follows:

The country is divided into provinces and central cities;

The province is divided into districts, district-level towns and provincial cities. The central city is divided into districts, towns and equivalent administrative unit;

The district is divided into communes and commune-level towns; district-level towns and provincial cities divided into wards and communes; district divided into wards.

Administrative special economic units shall be established by National Assembly.

2. The establishment, dissolution, merger, division, or adjust of the boundaries of administrative units should consult local people and comply with the order and procedures prescribed by law.”

2. Conception about “local government” in Local Government Act 2015

To guide the above-mentioned articles of the 2013 Vietnam Constitution, on June 19th, 2015, Vietnam National Assembly passed the Act No. 77/2015/QH13 on Organization of Local Government (hereafter referred to as “Local Government Act”) which has had eight chapters and 143 articles. To define local government in Vietnam, Local Government Act provided:

“Article 2. Administrative unit

Administrative units of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam shall include:

1 Black’s Law Dictionary Free Online Legal Dictionary 2nd Ed Law Dictionary: <http://thelawdictionary.org/local-government/#ixzz2pETYYUwE> accessed on 16:45 02/01/2014.

1. *Municipalities and provinces (hereinafter referred to as province or provincial level);*
2. *Suburban, urban districts and provincial cities, and municipality-controlled cities (hereinafter referred to as district or district level);*
3. *Communes, wards or commune-level towns (hereinafter referred to as commune or communal level);*
4. *Special administrative – economic units.”*

“Article 4. Organization of local governments at administrative units

1. *The local government level shall include the People’s Council and the People’s Committee organized at administrative units of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam as stipulated in Article 2 hereof.*
2. *Rural local government shall include the local government of provinces, rural districts and communes.*
3. *Urban local government shall include the local government of municipalities, urban districts, district-level towns, provincial cities, municipality-controlled cities, wards and commune-level towns.”*

Before this Act passed, I have suggested some comments detailed in Part IV hereafter.

3. Common conception about “local government” in Vietnam

Generally, based on the ideology which recognizes the State as “*the political machine to oppress the classes*”¹, in Vietnam, since 1976 until now, the local government has been considered as an authority being under the central government and directly providing public services to the people. Currently, in Vietnam, the local government is organized into three levels: (1) Provincial government, including the provinces and cities directly under the Central Government; (2) The district authorities; and (3) The commune authorities. The local government is often seen as the system of state agencies in the locality. Specifically, in Vietnam, the common conceptions of local authorities are:

(A) Local government is the only common concept of all state agencies (having state power) in the localities.

(B) The local government consists of two bodies: the first one holds the administrative power at local (People’s Committees) and the other is parliament agencies at local (People’s Council).

(C) Local government consists of 4 modules corresponding with 4 modules at the central level (including National Assembly/Parliament, the Government, the Supreme People’s Court, Supreme People’s Procuracy). These 4 local modules include an agency of state power at the local (People’s Committee), parliament bodies in local government (People’s Council) and justice agencies (people’s courts at all levels) and procuratorial bodies (people’s procuratorate at all levels)².

1 . Tân Chi, *Nhà nước của Nhân dân Việt Nam* [The State belonged to the People of Vietnam], (Hà Nội: Phủ thông, 1975), 12.

2 . Tổng cục Thống kê Việt Nam [Vietnam General Statistics Office], *Việt Nam 20 năm đổi mới và phát triển 1986-2005* [Vietnam 20 years of innovation and development from 1986 to 2005], (Hà Nội: Thống kê, 2006), 105.

These definitions are different far from international ones, especially the U.S definition discussed in Part III hereafter.

II. BRIEF HISTORY OF VIETNAM LOCAL GOVERNMENT SINCE 1946 UNTIL NOW

1946 Constitution

After August Revolution, on January 1st, 1946, Vietnamese people voted nationwide for a Constitutional Congress, which was the first democratically constitution in Vietnam.

As provided in Article 58 of the 1946 Constitution, due to war conditions, Vietnam was divided into three regions of management as *Bắc bộ* (the North), *Trung bộ* (the Central), and *Nam bộ* (the South). Each region divided into three-tiers as province, district, and commune local authorities¹.

In Viet Minh's area

During the First Indochina War, 1946-1954, in the rural regions controlled by Viet Minh (*Việt Nam Dân chủ cộng hòa* - Democracy Republic of Vietnam - DRV), local authorities were divided into zones (*khu*) and interzones (*liên khu*)², which were divided into provinces.

In State of Vietnam (Quốc gia Việt Nam)

In other side of the First Indochina War, in May 1948, the French and its followers with representatives from (1) Chính phủ lâm thời Nam Việt Nam (Contemporary Government of South Vietnam); (2) Hội đồng An Dân Bắc Việt Nam (Council of North Vietnam); (3) Hội đồng An dân Trung Việt Nam (Council of Central Vietnam); and (4) the political factors in three regions authorized General Nguyen Van Xuan (President of Contemporary Government of South Vietnam) to establish the National Government³.

After Ha Long Accord, Bao Dai returned to lead the State of Vietnam ("*Cửu Hoàng hồi loan*" in Vietnamese) as the Head of State⁴. His Decision (*Dụ*) No.1 dated July 1st, 1949 which Lê Đình Chân called "*Bao Dai Constitution*" and recognized the "*de facto*" Constitution of the State of Vietnam⁵.

The State of Vietnam, headed by Bao Dai which controlled the cities, especially Hanoi (the capital of the North), Saigon (the capital of the South) and Huế (the capital of the Central). So that, according to Article 2 of *Quốc trưởng* (Head of State)'s Decision (*Dụ*) No.2 on July 1st, 1949, in State of Vietnam (*État du Viet Nam* in French) which French armed forces and Bao Dai's government controlled, local authorities were divided into three regions (*phần*): Nam Viet (Southern Region), Bac Viet (Northern Vietnam/Northern Region) and Trung Viet (Central Region). Each region had its public legal entity and head of each the region was "*Thủ hiến*" (Premiers in English and *préfet*

1 . Phan Thi Lan Huong, *Reforming local government in Vietnam: Lesson learned from Japan* (Doctoral Dissertation), (Nagoya: School of Law Nagoya University, 2012), 48.

2 . Nguyễn Như Phát et al, *Một số vấn đề lý luận và thực tiễn cơ bản về sửa đổi Hiến pháp ở Việt Nam hiện nay* [Some theoretical issues and practical basics of Vietnam amending the current Constitution], (Hà Nội: Khoa học Xã hội, 2012), 203.

3 . Lê Đình Chân, *Luật Hiến pháp* [Vietnam Constitutional Law], (Sài Gòn: Đại học Luật khoa Sài Gòn, 1972), 121 .

4 . Philippe DeVillers, *Histoire du Vietnam (1940-1952)*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 3rd edition, 1952, 357.

5 . Lê Đình Chân, *Ibid.*, 123

in French) which was assigned by the Head of State of Vietnam (Article 3). Also, according to this Decision, Hanoi, Hai Phong, Tourane and Saigon Cholon cities were under mayor or district chief (Article 9)¹.

B. 1954 - 1975

The North of Vietnam

During the Second Indochina War, 1954-1975, in North Vietnam (DRV), according to the 1959 DRV's Constitution and the Law on Organization of People's Councils and Administrative Committees at all levels in 1962, the Vietnam administrative units include (i) provinces, autonomous regions and cities directly under the Central Government; (ii) the province is divided into districts, towns, cities, and (iii) the district is divided into communes and towns. A municipality of Vietnam was divided into neighborhoods. In each above administrative unit was organized into the People's Council and People's Committee².

Article 78 Chapter VII of the 1959 DRV Constitution regulated the local government hereafter:

“The administrative unit of DRV is regulated hereafter:

The country divided into provinces, autonomous regions, cities under the central government;

Provinces divided into districts, cities and towns

Districts divided into towns,”³

Note that the autonomous region is abolished under the 1980 Vietnam Constitution. From 1962 to 1980s, in the DRV, there was only one autonomous region (“*Khu tự trị Tây Bắc*” – The West North autonomous regions) included Son La, Lai Chau and Nghia Lo provinces.

The South of Vietnam

According to Genève Accord dated July 20th, 1954 which Le Dinh Chan called the “honour” withdrawal for the French armed forces⁴, within two years, the government had to hold the general election nationwide in Vietnam.

Before the 1956 referendum to dethrone Bao Dai, the local government of the State of Vietnam was governed by the Head of State's Decision which is mentioned in Paragraph A above.

In **Đệ nhất Cộng hòa** (The First Republic) time, from 1956 to 1963 (ended by the coup d'état by the generals and their killings of President Ngo Dinh Diem and his brother Ngo Dinh Nhu), the local government of *Việt Nam Cộng hòa* (Republic of Vietnam – ROV) was stipulated by the 1956 Constitution.

In **Đệ nhị Cộng hòa** (The Second Republic) time, at the same time with DRV, in the South of Vietnam, according to Article 70 to Article 74 of the 1966 Constitution of Republic of Vietnam, local governments were divided into four levels including **Đô Thành** – the Capital (Saigon), Provinces, Town and Counties. Each level of local government had the public legal entity which provided by

1 . Trương Tiến Đạt, *Hiến pháp chú thích* [A Note of 1967 Constitution], (Sài Gòn: Author self published, 1967), 367.

2 . Nguyễn Như Phát et al, “Một số”, 202.

3 . Tân Chi, “Nhà nước”, 113.

4 . Lê Đình Chân, “Luật Hiến pháp”, 128

law¹. The Capital headed by the Đô Trưởng (Chief of Saigon) who was ROV 's Armed Force generals.

C. 1976 until Now

Under the 1980 Constitution and the Law on Organization of People's Council and People's Committee in 1983, amended in 1989, the Vietnam government was divided into three levels consisting of (i) provinces and cities under the central authority; (ii) the district, city and town in the provinces; and (iii) communes, wards and commune-level towns. All administrative units were considered as basic administrative units. The government's structural organization was completed, including the People's Council in each administrative unit.

Under the 1992 Constitution (amended in 2001) and the Law on Organization of People's Council in 1994 (amended in 2003), basically, the local governments were organized structurally similar to the government under the Constitution in 1980 and the Law on Organization of People's Council and People's Committee in 1983 (amended in 1989). However, the 1992 Constitution (as amended in 2001), did not specify categories of administrative units equivalent to provinces and cities under the central government, did not determine the basic administrative unit, organized as the completed authorities under the 1980 Constitution².

III. LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN PEOPLE REPUBLIC OF CHINA (PRC)

According to Susan V. Lawrence and Michael F. Martin:

“Provincial leaders are powerful players in the Chinese political system. Six of them, all Party Secretaries, sit on the Party's Politburo, making them among two dozen most powerful officials in the Country. Provincial leaders also hold two fifth of the seats in the Party's broadest leadership group, the Central Committee, and share at least the same bureaucratic rank as central government ministers”³.

People Republic of China (PRC) officially claims 34 provincial – level government. This includes 23 provinces, five geographic entities that China calls “autonomous regions”, which have large ethnic minority populations (Tibet, Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia and Guangxi); four municipalities that report directly to the central government (Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and Chongqing); and the two special administrative regions of Hong Kong and Macau⁴.

Table 1. Levels of Administration in the PRC⁵

Central Government
Province Government (23); Autonomous Region (5); Municipalities under the Central Government (4); Special Administrative Region (2)
Municipalities

1 . Trương Tiến Đạt, Hiến pháp chú thích, 368.

2 . Nguyễn Như Phát et al, “Một số”, 203.

3 . Susan V. Lawrence, Michael F. Martin (2012), *Understanding China's Political System*, Congressional Research Service, R41007, pp 4.

4 . Susan V. Lawrence, Michael F. Martin (2012), *Ibid*, pp 5.

5 . Susan V. Lawrence, Michael F. Martin (2012), *Ibid*, pp 5.

Counties, County – Level Cities
Township, Town

Local governments, according to the Constitution and the related law, are divided into 3 main types: local governments at different levels, autonomous governments of nationality regions and governments of special administrative regions. Since September 1954, the number of levels has changed to 5 levels: province, city (prefectures, league and autonomous prefecture), county (autonomous county, banner and district under the jurisdiction of the city), district and village (people's commune, town and autonomous country). At present, the organizational system of local government is divided into 4 levels:

Provincial level: These include Provincial, Autonomous Region and Municipal Governments, which are the highest levels of local government. In 1996, China had 31 provincial-level administrative units, including 23 provinces, 5 autonomous regions and 3 cities;

City level: This category includes cities under the jurisdiction of the province, prefectures, autonomous prefectures as well as leagues and districts under the jurisdiction of the apex municipalities;

County level: This level includes country, autonomous county, county-level city, banner, autonomous banner, special zone, forest districts, industrial and agricultural districts, districts of the city under the jurisdiction of province, sub districts of the apex municipalities, etc.;

Village (town) level: These include county, autonomous village, town, and sub district (excluding those of the municipality) and are the lowest levels of local government.

The autonomous government of nationality, region: China is a multinational country. To carry out the autonomous system of nationality in each region is the nationality policy of China. In 1954, the Chinese Constitution divided the autonomous nationality regions into 3 levels: autonomous regions (provincial level), autonomous prefectures (prefecture and city level) and autonomous counties (county level) according to their administrative levels. By the end of 1992, mainland China had 5 autonomous regions, 30 autonomous prefectures and 124 autonomous counties (leagues).

Special administrative district: In 1982 the Chinese Constitution wrote that the state would set up special administrative districts whenever deemed necessary. On 1 July 1997, China resumed exercising sovereignty over Hong Kong and set up the special administrative district of Hong Kong. In 1999, Macao returned to China and a new special administrative district was set up. The special administrative district is the product of the conception of "one country, two systems" which means that mainland China carries out a socialist system and Hong Kong, Macao a capitalist system¹.

IV. LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN THE UNITES STATES

According to Professor Ellis Katz:

"Government" in the United States includes not only the federal government in Washington, D.C., but also the governments of the 50 American states and the 30,000 governments in cities and

1 . United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (2014), *Local Government in Asia and the Pacific: A Comparative Study*, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific website, see <http://www.unescap.org/huset/lgstudy/country/china/china.html> on 9:30 10/01/2014.

other local communities (to say nothing of the governments of the 3,043 counties and nearly 50,000 schools and other special districts). Given this vast number of governments—over 87,000 in total—it is not surprising that they are characterized more by their differences than by their similarities¹.

Furthermore, according to Pham Quang Huy and Pham Ngoc Lam Giang:

The United States of America is organized in the form of a federal structure made up of independent sovereign states. The determination of the relationship between central and local state agencies is the determination of authority among such agencies, which demonstrates the interaction between central state agencies and localities and vice versa².

A. Changes in Local Legislation

According to the U.S Constitution, “*The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of the Government*” (Section 4 Article 4)³, the States have the constitutional right to make their own Constitution. On the other hand, “*a Republican Form of the Government*” means “the government in which the people elect representatives to govern”⁴. Furthermore, the Tenth Amendment specifies that “powers are not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, not prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the People”. According to the explanation of Professor James Q. Wilson, “*that importance was evident in the debates over the ratification of the Constitution and the insistence of many that a Bill of Rights be added to it that would, in part, reaffirm the special place of the State*”⁵. So that, according to this Article of Constitution, the local government has the autonomy rights, for an example, in Katrina super storm case, without the local government’ request, the federal government should not involve to handle the disaster⁶.

During the first half of the 20th century, state legislatures generally met every other year for a limited number of legislative days. Individual legislators were poorly paid and had little or no staff support. Since the 1960s, however, many states have provided for annual legislative sessions, increased legislative payment, added professional staff support, and created more streamlined legislative procedure.

Two changes, both adopted in response to popular pressure, are especially noteworthy. First, many states adopted the “ballot initiative,” a system under which voters, by collecting signatures on a

1 . Ellis Katz (2003), *Response to change by State and Local Government –Contemporary in the Laboratories of Democracy*, from *State and Local Government: Adapting to Change*, An Electronic Journal of the U.S Department of State, Volume 8, Number 2, October 2003, pg 6. See <http://photos.state.gov/libraries/vietnam/8621/translations/ej102003.pdf>

2 . Pham Quang Huy and Pham Ngoc Lam Giang, “Model of the State Governments in the United States and Suggestions for Decentralization of State Organizations in Vietnam”, *VNU Journal of Science: Legal Studies*, [S.l.], v. 33, n. 4, dec. 2017. ISSN 2588-1167. Available at: <https://js.vnu.edu.vn/LS/article/view/4122>, date accessed: 18 Feb, 2020

3 . International Information Program (2004), *The Constitution of the United States of America with Explanatory Notes*, adapted from The World Book Encyclopedia, International Information Program, Department of State of the U.S, pg73.

4 . International Information Program (2004), *Ibid*, pp73.

5 . James Q. Wilson (1992), *American government: Institutions and Policies* (5th Edition), D.C.Heath and Company, Massachusetts, the U.S, pp 641-642.

6 . George W. Bush (2010), *Decision point*, Crown Publishers, Washington D.C, pp 301.

petition, can place an issue directly on a ballot to be voted upon by the citizenry in the next election. At least 21 states have some system of direct legislation, and many important laws are enacted in this manner. Second, 17 states now have “term limits,” under which the number of years an individual can serve in the legislature is strictly limited, usually to eight years. Sixteen of these 17 systems of term limits was enacted by the ballot initiative process¹.

B. Reforming in Local Government

In the process of self-reform to adapt the new situation, especially in the 1990s, local governments in the United States has transformed itself into an effective administration model with an entrepreneurial spirit. An extremely typical example of this model is in the budget of the local government to be a flexible transition from the previous year (if unused) to next year instead of budget cuts due to the budget not paid out any previously known as “*a results-oriented budget system*”². Explained further, Charlie Tyer and Jennifer Willand pointed out that “*a results-oriented budget system*” was to hold governments accountable for results rather than focus upon inputs as traditional budgets and management did. Cost-savings and entrepreneurial spirit would be rewarded³. According to the author, because the local governments in the United States act like enterprises, they have operated very efficiently. In the name of “reinventing government,” many local services were privatized, new labour agreements were negotiated and fees for governmental services were increased to meet the real costs of the service⁴.

David Held pointed out that the “democracy autonomy” model⁵ will be the future state model. According to David Held, in principle, “*the local administrations and the central organization that could include direct participation (DP) with requests combined with the demands of “local beneficiary”*”⁶ are “*individuals [which] are entitled to the same rights, and corresponding to it, are equally obliged to shape the political framework - sources of and limit the opportunities available to them; i.e. meeting must be free and fair in the course of discussions about their living conditions and to determine those conditions, provided that they do not have to use that framework to deny the rights of others*”⁷. According to this author, the local authority should have a flexible autonomous, but over all, the direct involvement of citizens in the decision making process of the local community.

Since the effective reform of local government in the 1990s, the United States made the E-Government (electronic government) since 2000s until now. For an example, in 84 percent of U.S. state web portals, citizen services are now being organized based on the needs Americans most often face in their day-to-day lives. For example, the Commonwealth of Virginia state portal provides a “Find it Fast” page that provides links to over 35 citizen services most often accessed by the public⁸.

1 . Ellis Katz (2003), Ibid, pp7.

2 . Ted Gaebler, David Osborne (1997), *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector* (Vietnamese version), National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, pp 25.

3 . Charlie Tyer and Jennifer Willand (1997), *Public Budgeting in America: A Twentieth Century Retrospective*, Journal of Public Budgeting, Accounting and Financial Management in Vol. 9, No.2 (Summer 1997).

4 . Ellis Katz, 2003, Ibid, pp10.

5 . David Held, Pham Nguyen Trung translation, Các mô hình quản lý nhà nước hiện đại [*Models of democracy*], (Hà Nội: Tri Thức, 2013), 437-473.

6 . Ibid.

7 . Ibid.

8 . Sharon Crouch Steidel (2003), *Using E –Government, Effects of the Digital Revolution*, from *State and Local*

Conclusion

At its ninth meeting in 2015, XIII Vietnam National Assembly (Vietnamese Parliament) held discussions on the Local Government Bill¹. On June 19th, 2015, Vietnam National Assembly passed the Act No. 77/2015/QH13 on Organization of Local Government which has eight chapters and 143 articles. Before this Act passed, the author had provided some recommendations to the law hereafter².

Following are the author's three suggestions for amending this Act.

A. Legal Entity of Local Government:

"The State has a large role in deciding whether to pursue the institutional arrangements by which the market can flourish or not. The State is not only the arbiter of the rules; through its activities, the state created the business environment and other activities of the economy"³, therefore, the State has a vital role in the social life. Generally, the face of the State is the local government levels. People daily require the public services at the local government level nearest to them.

So that the local government, which serves as a public legal entity will increase accountability of local governments in Vietnam under Vietnam Constitution 2013. This requires the establishment of local government models with a certain flexibility level depending on the economic, political and cultural situation of the local society. Some departments, which are not necessary, have to be removed to downsize local governments and reduce the cost burden.

B. Local Government in Entrepreneurial Spirit:

In Vietnam, the author proposes changes in the budget management model of the local government towards such a business activity. Accordingly, this year's budget will be transferred to the subsequent fiscal year if the local government spends less than the budget. This method will avoid the government trying to spent exhaustion of the budget. At the same time, the head of the local government should have the right to be the legal representative and the account holder, and responsible for revenue and expenditure in the local government's budgets by law.

C. Applies "Mass Initiative" in Commune Authorities

As mentioned, in the United States, voters have the legal right to directly contribute comments to the local government in a process stipulated by law. According to the author, the legislator should think about this idea when amending the Vietnam Local Government Act. Hence, voters will collect the local community's comments to affect to the local government decision. On the other hand, voters

Government: Adapting to Change, An Electronic Journal of the U.S Department of State, Volume 8, Number 2, October 2003, pg 14. See <http://photos.state.gov/libraries/vietnam/8621/translations/ej102003.pdf>.

1 . Website of Vietnam Government (2015), "*Discussions on Local Government Bill*", <http://baodientu.chinhphu.vn/Ky-hop-thu-9-Quoc-hoi-khoa-XIII/Quoc-hoi-thao-luan-Luat-to-chuc-Chinh-quyen-dia-phuong/228300.vgp>, accessed on 09/6/2015.

2 . Pham Quang Huy [2014], "Local governments in Vietnam, China, Sweden, the United States and a number of recommendations", *Nghien Cuu Lap Phap (Legislation Study)* 24/2014 No.24 (280), pp 57-63, see http://www.nclp.org.vn/kinh_nghiem_quoc_te/chinh-quyen-111ia-phuong-o-viet-nam-trung-quoc-thuy-111ien-hoa-ky-va-mot-so-kien-nghi accessed on 15/01/2016.

3 . World Bank (1998), *The State in a world in transition: report on the development of the world in 1997*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi, pp. 46.

will directly involve in the agenda of the Council of People/commune People's Committee and/or participate in the decision making process of commune authorities.

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