

## VIET NAM

**Date of Elections:** 19 April 1987

### **Purpose of Elections**

Elections were held for all the seats in Parliament. General elections had previously taken place in April 1981.

### **Characteristics of Parliament**

The unicameral Parliament of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, the National Assembly, comprises 496 members elected for 5 years.

### **Electoral System**

All Vietnamese citizens at least 18 years old are entitled to vote, with the exception of the insane and persons deprived of this right by law or court decision.

Electoral registers are revised before each election. Voting is not compulsory. Persons confined to hospitals or to their homes because of illness or paralysis are permitted to vote in their place of confinement.

All qualified electors are eligible for election to the National Assembly. The parliamentary mandate is not deemed incompatible with any other function or office. Candidates appear on lists presented by the Viet Nam Fatherland Front.

Deputies are elected in 167 constituencies on the basis of absolute majority, with each elector voting for as many candidates as there are seats to be filled in his constituency and crossing out names of those listed on the ballot paper whom he does not favour. If, within a constituency, not enough candidates to fill the available seats obtain an absolute majority of the valid votes cast on the first ballot, or if less than half of the total number of registered electors have voted, a second ballot is held within 15 days.

By-elections are held to fill seats of the Assembly which become vacant between general elections.

### **General Considerations and Conduct of the Elections**

The 1987 elections were preceded by the sixth congress of the ruling Communist Party of Viet Nam (CPV) in December 1986 and an extensive reshuffling of the Council of Ministers in February 1987. The latter was apparently effected with a view, *inter alia*, to the implementation of economic reforms. Shortly before the polling, a comprehensive pro-

gramme of such reforms aiming to reduce central control of the economy and give incentives to private enterprise was agreed upon at a meeting of the Communist Party's Central Committee.

For the first time, candidates for the National Assembly were nominated by the Viet Nam Fatherland Front (comprising the political parties, trade unions and mass organizations) at public meetings, where they underwent questioning and criticism by the electorate. Voters were offered 829 names (including 187 women) for the 496 Assembly seats and urged to pick a more dynamic legislature to carry out the new reformist policies advocated by the Party. A total of 613 candidates had run in the previous (1981) elections.

Voter turnout on polling day was reportedly high as many new and younger Deputies were chosen. At its first session in June 1987, the Assembly elected Mr. Vo Chi Cong as President of the Council of State (collective presidency) and Mr. Pham Hung as Chairman of the Council of Ministers (Prime Minister), replacing Mr. Pham Van Dong.

Statistics

*1. Distribution of Deputies according to Professional Category*

Intellectuals . . . . .	123
Farmers . . . . .	105
Political officials . . . . .	100
Workers . . . . .	91
Members of the armed forces . . . . .	49
Craftsmen . . . . .	19
Democratic and religious personalities	_9
	496

*2. Distribution of Deputies according to Sex*

Men . . . . .	408
Women . . . . .	_88
	496