2. The Economic, Social, Cultural, Educational, Science, Technology and Environmental Regulations in the 2013 Constitution

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Abstract: This article provides an in-depth analysis of the factors affecting the compilation of the economic, social, cultural, educational, science, technology and environmental chapter and assesses the representation of the internal and external factors in the content of such regulations in the 2013 Constitution.

Keywords: 2013 Constitution, Vietnam, assess, internal factors, external factors, impact, affect; economic, social, cultural, educational, science, technology and environmental, etc.

Question

In the constitutional history of Vietnam, the 2013 Constitution is the fifth constitution since the founding of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (now known as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam).¹ Each constitution is associated with a development period in the country. The 2013 Constitution is associated with the period of comprehensive promotion of national reform and international integration. The 2013 Constitution, which includes 11 chapters and 120 articles, was approved by the XIII National Assembly during its 6th session on November 28th, 2013 (hereinafter the 2013 Constitution). The economic, social, cultural, educational, science, technology and environmental issues are promulgated in Chapter III (from Article 50 to Article 63). The regulations on economic, social, cultural, educational, science, technology and environmental issues are the combination of the analysis and assessment of practical demands in the comprehensive national reform period. They also adapt to the requirements of international integration and selectively learn from the legislative experience of other nations.

I. The position of the economic, social, cultural, educational, science, technology, and environmental chapter in the 2013 Constitution

The economic, social, cultural, educational, science, technology, and environmental chapter is an important chapter in the constitution of any country. This chapter declares the economic model that a country is pursuing, building, and developing; the treatment policy towards different economic sectors;

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¹ Since the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam on September 2nd, 1945 (now the Socialist Republic of Vietnam), the Vietnamese National Assembly has approved five constitutions in 1946, 1959, 1980, 1992 and 2013.

and the social, cultural, educational, science and technology as well as environmental policy. Based on this declaration in the Constitution, the state shall pass specialized legislation promulgating those matters. The fact that the economic chapter was often placed right after the political regime chapter in the 1946, 1959, 1980 and 1992 Constitutions has confirmed its important position. In the 2013 Constitution, the economic, social, cultural, educational, science, technology, and environmental chapter is Chapter III, after Chapter I. Political regime and Chapter II. Human rights, citizen' basic rights and duties. This does not mean that the economic chapter is not as important as before. Chapter III is a combination of 'Chapter II. Economic regime' and 'Chapter III. Culture, education, science, technology' from the 1992 Constitution, which means that Chapter III of the 2013 Constitution promulgates the above five issues in addition to social and environmental issues. Thus, this chapter shows the close relationship between economic development, ensuring social justice, environmental protection, and cultural, educational, and science development. According to the Summary Report of people' opinion on the Draft amendment to the 1992 Constitution by the Vietnamese Fatherland Front published on March 30th, 2013, Chapter III received 603,539 opinions, which is the most out of any chapter in the 2013 Constitution. Having a separate economic, social, cultural, educational, science, technology, and environmental chapter seems to be a characteristic of Vietnam. This chapter demonstrates the direction the country is moving towards, ensuring a close association between multi-sector economy with sustainable development, linking economic development with cultural development, promoting social justice and environmental protection. "With the view that economic development must be closely and harmoniously associated with cultural, educational, science and technology development as well as social progress and justice, environmental protection is institutionalized in the same chapter, the contents of this chapter shall be comprehensive and stable in terms of objectives, directions and basic polices as the highest legal foundation for fast and sustainable development across all socio-economic, cultural, educational, science, technology and environmental sectors." The 2013 Constitution was passed during the 30 year reform period with recognized economic, cultural and social achievements as well as global challenges such as environmental pollution, climate change, and the impact of the 4.0 Industrial Revolution. One of the theoretical bases for the formulation of Chapter III is the ideas and direction of the Vietnamese Communist Party. This was reflected in the resolutions of the Party assembly and especially the Resolution on transforming the country toward socialism (supplemented and developed in 2011), building a rich, strong, democratic, fair, and civilized Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Therefore, one of the objectives of the 2013 Constitution

² Nguyen Sinh Hung (2014), the revised Constitution is to ensure a solid political and legal framework so that the entire Party, people and army can unanimously move forward in the new era - Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam - The political and legal foundation for the comprehensive renovation of the country in the new period compiled by the Legislative Research Journal under the Legislative Research Institute under the National Assembly Standing Committee, Labor and Social Publishing House, Hanoi, p. 19 -20.

expressed in Chapter III is ensuring economic reform and completing the socialist-oriented market economy regime.³

- II. The drafting process of the 2013 Constitution and the economic, social, cultural, educational, science, technology, and environmental chapter and the impact of economic, cultural, social and international integration factors.
- 1. The drafting process of the economic, social, cultural, educational, science, technology, and environmental chapter and the requirements⁴

The 1992 Constitution was promulgated in the early years of the country's effort to institutionalize the Reform policy, diversifying and multilateralizing international relations initiated by the Communist Party of Vietnam at the The Sixth National Party Assembly (1986) and the National Transition to Socialism Credo in 1991. The 1992 Constitution played an important role in the political, economic, cultural and social development of the country. However, in the 21st century, Vietnam faces challenges that the 1992 Constitution could not have foreseen.⁵ The actual operation of the government also revealed several shortcomings such as cumbersome organization, overlapping functions, unclear authority and responsibility, and low levels of effectiveness and efficiency. The unsynchronized legal system did not create enough necessary legal framework to serve the reform. The enforcement was not strict, which led to complicated corruption, wastefulness, bureaucratic issues, etc.⁶ Facing that situation, the consolidation of the entire system and the construction of a socialist rule of law state was an urgent requirement to continue promoting the reform. On the other hand, to meet the requirements of the country's development in the new situation, the 11th National Assembly of the Party (from 12 to 19 January 2011) approved the Credo for building the country in the transition to socialism (added and developed in 2011), which identified the objectives and developing directions for the new period, aiming towards the eight characteristics of the socialist regime in Vietnam (compared to two characteristics in the 1991 Credo). These characteristics include: i) Rich people, strong country, democracy, justice and civilization; ii) Owned by the people; iii) Having a highly developed economy based on modern productive forces and public ownership of the main means of production; iv) Having an advanced culture imbued with national

³ Bui Xuan Hai (2014), Regulations on economy, society, culture, education, science, technology, and environment in the 2013 Constitution - Scientific commentary on the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam by the Institute of Public Policy and Law under the Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations, Labor and Social Publishing House, Hanoi.

⁴ The content of this section is referenced from the Human rights, basic rights and duties of citizens in the Constitution of Vietnam book by the Standing Office for Human Rights & Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics (coordinated), Hanoi, 2015.

⁵ See Committee for Drafting Amendments to the 1992 Constitution, Final Report on the Implementation of the 1992 Constitution, dated 1 October 2012, p.1

⁶ Final Report on the Implementation of the 1992 Constitution, pg. 1

⁷ Final Report on the Implementation of the 1992 Constitution, pg. 1

identity; v) People have a prosperous, free and happy life and have conditions for comprehensive development; vi) Ethnic groups in the Vietnamese Community are equal, unite, respect and help each other develop; vii) There is a socialist rule of law state of the people, by the people, for the people led by the Communist Party; viii) Having friendly and cooperative relations with people of countries around the world. Thus, despite the fact that the 1992 Constitution was amended in 2001, it was no longer suitable. The demand for a new constitution to institutionalize the directions and objectives of the 2011 Credo for building the country in the transition to socialism and other resolutions of the 11th National Assembly of the Party arose. To "...ensure synchronous reform in both economic and political terms, build a socialist Vietnam of the people, by the people and for the people, perfecting the socialist-oriented market economic, better ensure human rights, basic rights and duties of citizens; building and defending the country; actively and proactively international integration." To achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the amendment of the 1992 Constitution in general and the amendment of the economic, social, cultural, educational, science, technology, and environmental chapter (hereinafter the socio-economic chapter) in particular must meet the following basic requirements: 10

First, continue to affirm and clarify the basic contents of the regime's nature as stipulated in the 1992 Constitution, including promoting socialist democracy, the people's right to own, and ensuring the leadership of the Communist Party, developing a socialist-oriented market economy, building and perfecting the Vietnamese socialist state of the people, by the people, for the people.

Second, institutionalize the major views and guidelines stated in the Credo for National Construction in the Transition Period to the Socialist Republic in 1991 and other documents of the 11th National Party Congress.

Third, perfecting constitutional techniques, ensuring that the Constitution is really a fundamental, stable and long-term law in the country's legal system.

On the basis of these objectives and requirements, the 1992 Constitution was amended and supplemented (including the socio-economic chapter) based on the following key views:

- Based on the summary of the implementation of the 1992 Constitution and related laws; based on the orientations and contents of the Credo for national construction in the transition to socialism in 1991 and other documents of the 11th National Party Congress; inheriting the provisions of the 1992

⁸ See Le Huu Nghia, Characteristics showing the superiority of socialism that our people are building, discussed at the morning meeting on January 14th, 2011 at the XI Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam. See the full text of the Platform at http://www.taydungdang.org.vn/Home/PrinStory.aspx?distributrion

⁹ See Report No. 194/TTr - UBDTSDHP dated 19 October 2012 on the 1992 Constitution Draft Amendment by the 1992 Constitution Draft Amendment Committee, p.1.

¹⁰ See Report No. 194/TTr - UBDTSDHP dated 19 October 2012 on the 1992 Constitution Draft Amendment by the 1992 Constitution Draft Amendment Committee, p.2.

Constitution and other relevant previous Constitutions; amending and supplementing issues that are really necessary, issues that are clear, proven to be true in practice, have sufficient grounds, receive high consensus and are suitable for the new situation.

- Continuing to affirm the nature and overall model of the political system and state apparatus as defined in the Credo for building the country during the transition to socialism in 2011 and the 1992 Constitution, specifically: the State of Vietnam is the socialist state of the people, by the people, for the people; all state power belongs to the people; State power is unified, with assignment, coordination and control among state agencies in the exercise of legislative, executive and judicial powers.
- Affirming that the Communist Party of Vietnam is the vanguard of the working class, at the same time the vanguard of the working people and of the Vietnamese nation, a faithful representative of the interests of the working class and the people and the whole nation according to Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh's ideology, and is the leading force of the state and society.
- Developing a socialist-oriented market economy; economically and politically synchronously reforming for the purpose of building a socialist Vietnam with rich people, strong, democratic, fair and civilized country.
- Respect human rights and citizens' rights; implement socialist democracy; strengthen discipline; building a great national unity.
- Amending the Constitution is an important project that must be carried out strictly and scientifically under the leadership of the Party with the participation by the experts, scientists, managers; organize the public consultation of the people and agencies and organizations; focus on information and propaganda work, ensure the right orientation and not let bad individuals and hostile forces take advantage to fight and distort.

The compilation of the 2013 Constitution and the socio-economic chapter began in 2011 with the implementation summary of the 1992 Constitution by the National Assembly as well as the establishment of the Committee on Amendment to the 1992 Constitution. After over a year, the National Assembly decided to gather public opinions on the Draft amendment on January 2nd, 2013. The original deadline for public commentary was March 31st, 2013, but it was extended until the end of 2013. It was mainly carried out by conferences, seminars, internet comments and household surveys. According to the report by the Committee on Amendment to the 1992 Constitution, as of May 17th, 2013, there were 26,091,000 public comments and over 28,000 conferences, seminars. On November 28th, 2013, the XIII National Assembly

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¹¹ Committee on Amendments to the 1992 Constitution, Report No. 287/BC-UBDTSĐHP dated 17 May 2013 on the explanation, absorption and revision of the Draft Amendment to the 1992 Constitution on the basis of the people's opinions.

passed the 2013 Constitution with 97.59% (486/488) approval by the presented representatives. The 2013 Constitution came into effect on January 1st, 2014.

2. The factors that impact the compilation of the economic, social, cultural, educational, science, technology, and environmental chapter in the 2013 Constitution

(1) Internal factors

As mentioned above, the drafting of the 2013 Constitution and the socio-economic chapter were affected by several factors. The main internal factors are as follows:

First, the Party's viewpoints and guidelines on building an integrated socialist-oriented market economy in harmony with the requirements of society, culture, education, science, technology, and environment to ensure sustainable development are recognized in the Credo for building the country in the transitional period to socialism (amended and supplemented in 2011) and other resolutions of the 11th National Party Congress (2011).

Second, the compilation of the socio-economic chapter shall be based on the inheritance and development of achievements of the 1946, 1959, 1980 and 1992 Constitution, which have been proven to be correct and practical.

Third, the achievements, new challenges and demands on socio-economic development in the formulation of the socialist-oriented market economy as well as international integration.

(2) External factors

Besides the internal factors, the compilation of Chapter III was also affected by a few external factors, including:

First, the current impact of the 4th Industrial Revolution on the production process of mankind in general and on the Vietnamese economy in particular. The application of artificial intelligence and new technologies like cloud computing, Big Data, and 3D printing in the production sector has significantly improved productivity. The formulation and development of a digital society are taking place at a global level and in Vietnam. This is an important foundation for the formation of a sharing economy and the transition towards a digital economy with the appearance of new businesses such as technology taxis, online sales, meetings, and online teaching. The world is seeing more and more billionaires in technology. The 4th Industrial Revolution (or 4.0 Industrial Revolution) has profoundly changed the entire life of humankind. Reality shows that developed countries are countries which focus on science, technology advancement and application. Nowadays, countries mainly compete in science, technology advancement and application. Vietnam is among the countries with a low average income. Therefore, to become a developed country with high average income, investing in science and technology to improve productivity

is inevitable. For that reason, the 2013 Constitution promulgated that: "1. Developing science and technology is the top national policy and plays a key role in the socio-economic development of the country; 2. The State prioritizes and encourages organizations and individuals to invest in research, development, transfer and effective application of scientific and technological achievements; guarantees the right to scientific and technological research; and protects intellectual property rights; 3. The State facilitates everyone to participate in and enjoy the benefits of scientific and technological activities." ¹²

Second, the growing impact of international integration. International integration is an irreversible and inevitable trend. All countries, whether an economic powerhouse or an underdeveloped country cannot stay out of this process. This process keeps the economy of different nations close together and creates a global value-added chain. Vietnam's economy is a part of the world economy and is an economy with high growth rate and heavily oriented toward export, thus, the impact of international integration on socio-economic, culture, education is very clear. That being said, based on public commentary on the Draft 2013 Constitution, an independent economy is still supported by society to prevent and respond to the challenges of international integration.

Third, the socio-economic chapter was still drafted using elite legislative foundation and selective reference to the legislative and constitutional experience and achievements of other countries. This is especially clear for developed countries like the United States, Germany, United Kingdom, France, and Japan as well as countries that have transformed into market economies like China while still considering the condition, context, history, political regime, and cultural tradition of Vietnam.

III. The impacts on the compilation of the economic, social, cultural, educational, science, technology, and environmental chapter in the 2013 Constitution

1. Positive impacts

First, the formation of the socialist-oriented market economy and the socio-economic achievements of almost 30-years of comprehensive reforms resulted in the successful eradication of hunger and a reduction in poverty; steadily solving the national food security, rice, and agricultural product export problems; and significantly improving people's living standards. This not only created trust and consensus among the people impacted by the socio-economic development guidelines initiated by the Communist Party of Vietnam, but also facilitated the compilation of Chapter III in the 2013 Constitution.

Second, the intensive damage to life and productivity caused by environmental pollution, climate change, and the growing appearance of extreme weather conditions on a global scale and in Vietnam not only made people recognize the important role of environmental protection and the association between

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¹² Article 62 of the 2013 Constitution

environmental protection and economic development, but also changed the State's perception on environmental issues and sustainable development in national governance. This is one of the reasons why the Drafting committee combined Chapter II and Chapter III of the 1992 Constitution into Chapter III in the 2013 Constitution.

Third, the impact of the 4th Industrial Revolution on improving the productivity and competitiveness of economies between countries in general and Vietnam in particular made leaders, people, and enterprises realize the role of science, technology, and education in the development of the market economy. It is difficult to successfully develop the economy if there is little to no investment in education, science and technology. The successes of countries in East Asia like Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Hong Kong are based on the development of education, science, and technology as well as the promotion of traditional cultural values, patriotism, and national pride. This is the reference model and valuable experience for the Drafting committee of Chapter III.

Fourth, beside the achievements, issues like social injustice, unemployment, wealth inequality, and environmental pollution are some of the shortcomings and disadvantages of market economies in rich countries like the U.S, the U.K, France, and Germany, which was revealed by the Covid-19 pandemic. This shows that focusing only on economic development will not solve social injustice, unemployment, social security, poverty, and environmental pollution, which are the problems that developed countries are dealing with. Therefore, to avoid facing similar problems in building and developing a socialism-oriented market economy, the integration of economic regulations with social, cultural, educational, science, technology and environmental regulations in Chapter III is very persuasive.

2. Challenges

First, promoting economic growth and environmental protection to guarantee sustainable development.

Although sustainable development is the main approach, it is not possible to harmonize economic growth and environmental protection at any given time. Some areas, especially low-income provinces, only focus on attracting investment for economic growth while neglecting environmental protection. The Formosa project environmental incident in Vung Ang - Ha Tinh changed the leaders' perception to "not exchange the environment for economic growth" at all costs. However, it is still a tremendous challenge for Vietnam to harmonize economic growth with environmental protection in strategic planning and actual implementation.

Second, understanding the structure and the determining criteria of socialist-oriented economy.

This is not a popular economic model among countries and since there is no precedent, there is no experience or practice for reference to build and develop a socialist-oriented economy. Therefore, Vietnam must create a legal framework for the economy to operate smoothly while testing and summarizing to build a theoretical system at the same time which is very difficult and challenging. On the other hand, the 2013 Constitution needs to limit the level of State governance so that it does not interfere too much with economic relations and not let production and business to operate under the objective rules of a market economy. At the same time, disregarding State governance and letting the economy operate spontaneously can also negatively affect growth quality.

Third, institutionalizing the view that all economic sectors are important components of the national economy. All entities of each economic sectors are equal, cooperative and compete according to the law while the state economy still plays the dominant role. It is not easy to harmonize guaranteeing freedom of business, healthy competition among different economic sectors, and preventing the monopoly trend of the state economy in the regulations of the 2013 Constitution.

Fourth, resolving the incompatibility between the public ownership of land and the multi-sector market economy development in the context of international integration.

- Legislators must resolve the conflicts between the development of a multi-sector economy where all economic sectors are equal in terms of land and the fact that this most important mean of production is owned by the people.
- A vast majority of countries that are trade and economic partners with Vietnam have established different forms of land ownership while Vietnam only has a single model of ownership: Land is owned by the people and the State is the owner representative.

These challenges were necessary to deal with during the drafting of the 2013 Constitution to ensure the public ownership of land and to not hinder the process of international integration in general. bilateral, and multilateral trade and economic relations with other countries, regional organizations, and international organizations in particular.

IV. The recognition of impacting factors in the compilation process and the content of the economic, social, cultural, educational, science, technology, and environmental chapter in the 2013 Constitution

First, the 2013 Constitution recognized the sustainable development view of the United Nations by identifying and integrating economic development with environmental protection and social justice in Chapter III alongside the global challenges of environmental pollution, climate change, and poverty. On the other hand, international is an inevitable and irreversible trend and Vietnam is being increasingly

integrated into the global chain. This is reflected in Article 50 of the 2013 Constitution on building an independent and self-reliant economy, promoting internal resources, international cooperation while developing culture, social quality, environmental protection, industrialization, and modernization.

Second, the views of the Communist Party of Vietnam expressed in the Credo for national construction in the transitional period to socialism (amended and supplemented in 2011) and in the resolutions of the 11th, 12th, 13th National Congresses of the Party (especially the Resolution of the 5th Central Committee of the 12th term on perfecting the socialist-oriented market economy institution; Resolution No. 10-NQ/TW dated 3 June 2017 of the 12th Executive Central Committee on developing the private economy to become an important driving force of the socialist-oriented market economy) are affirmed by the 2013 Constitution: "I. Vietnam's economy is a socialist-oriented market economy with many forms of ownership and economic sectors while State economy plays a key role; 2. All economic sectors are important components of the national economy. Entities of all economic sectors are equal, cooperative and compete according to the law; 3. The State encourages and facilitates entrepreneurs, enterprises and other individuals and organizations to invest, produce and do business, and at them same time promotes sustainable development of economic sectors, contributing to build the country. Lawful assets invested, produced by individuals and organizations are protected by law and shall not nationalized."¹³

Third, even though Vietnam is building a socialist-oriented economy, it is still essential to follow the objective rules of a market economy. Particularly in the process of international integration, Vietnam does consult and selectively recognize the experiences of countries developing market economies. This was reflected in Article 52 of the 2013 Constitution: "The State builds and completes the economy institution and regulates the economy on the basis of market rules by assigning, decentralizing in state governance and promoting regional economic linkage and guaranteeing the unity of the national economy."

Fourth, all nations recognize land as an important natural resource in people's lives. Furthermore, the land market is also an investment channel for development. The experience from developed countries shows that one of the reasons for success is a comprehensive, synchronous, and unified legal framework to protect land ownership rights. To recognize this factor, the 2013 Constitution stated that: "1. Land is a special and important national resource for development and must be managed by the law; 2. The State shall assign, lease land to organizations and individuals and recognize land use right. Land users can transfer land use right, execute the rights and duties according to the law. Land use right is protected by the law; 3. The State only reacquire land in case of absolute necessary for national defense, security;

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¹³ Article 51 of the 2013 Constitution

socio-economic development for national and public interest. The reacquisition must be public, transparent and compensated according to the law; 4. The State only obtain land in case of absolute necessary as prescribed by the law for national defense, security or in case of war, emergency, national disaster."¹⁴

Fifth, compared to previous versions, the 2013 Constitution remarkably expressed the sustainable development perspective in building a market economy through Articles 56 to 63 by:

- Delivering the message of harmonizing economic development with social justice, social security policy, and environmental protection and not letting anyone fall behind in the development process.
- Affirming the relation between education and economic growth: Producing a high quality labor force through education and training to promote economic growth, which in return creates material resources to improve education and training quality.
- Confirming and emphasizing the importance of science and technology as a top national priority in socio-economic development, and, at the same time, declaring the State's policy in prioritizing and encouraging investment in research and development. This effectively transfers and applies scientific and technological achievements and protects the rights to research and intellectual property.
- Identifying the relationship between socio-economic development and the preservation and promotion of Vietnamese traditional and progressive values. Accordingly, culture is the objective and motivation for socio-economic development, guaranteeing the promotion of traditional values will not "dissolve" in the international integration process. In return, socio-economic development will create important and necessary material conditions to build, preserve and promote those values. Moreover, those values help advance education, improving the international image and position of Vietnamese people in all aspects.
- Confirming the environmental protection policy in a socialist-oriented economy, the State shall:
 i) provide environmental protection policies; effectively and sustainably manage and utilize natural resources; preserve nature and biodiversity; actively prevent and adapts to natural disasters, climate change; ii) encourage environmental protection, develop and use new, renewable energy; iii) recognize and institutionalize the principle that "environmental polluters are responsible for restoration and compensation."

¹⁴ Article 54 of the 2013 Constitution

V. Conclusion

1. Like in any other constitution, the economic, social, cultural, educational, science, technology, and environmental chapter is the basic chapter of the 2013 Constitution. This chapter not only inherits ideas from previous the versions in 1946, 1959, 1980 and 1992, but also advances their goals on the basis of the comprehensive reform over the past 30 years and the guidelines of the Communist Party of Vietnam in building a socialist-oriented market economy of the Credo for national construction in the transition to socialism (amended and supplemented in 2011) and resolutions of the 11th National Party Congress.

2. Recognizing a sustainable development view of the word and the achievements in developing market economy as well as the impact of the 4th Industrial Revolution; combining Chapter II on economy and Chapter III on culture, society, science and technology of the 1992 Constitution; and adding education and environmental protection. This is not simply combining two chapters, it also demonstrates the State's goal to integrate and affirm the importance and the exchange between economy, society, culture, education, science, technology and environment in the process of transforming Vietnam into a developed country by 2045.

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