

Report on IUPAP visit to Vietnam 30 and 31 October 2015

We (Bruce and Kwek) arrived in Hanoi on Oct 30, 2015, and met up with Nguyen Dai Hung (Institute of Physics, Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology, VAST and President, Vietnam Physical Society, VPS), Nguyen Thanh Binh (Institute of Physics, VAST) and other senior physicists of VAST research institutes.

Dai Hung informed us that VAST has already put up a proposal to the Vietnamese Government (Prime Minister Office, PMO) for funding to join IUPAP earlier on in March 2015, when a directive from the PMO decreed and approved a program of development in the field of Physics in Vietnam by 2020. In short, Vietnam is eager to join IUPAP although the details concerning the funding for the membership shares will be decided later.

The IUPAP delegation was also briefed the numerous events that has been organized for 2015 and also the activities that have been planned for the 2016 Calendar. The VPS will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary (1966-2016) on November 2016. The main celebration will be held in conjunction with the 8th National Conference on Physics.

As well as its active involvement in Physics Olympiad training, VPS also organizes an ASEAN Conference on Natural Science for Young Scientists from ASEAN Countries (CASEAN) every two years as well as the Vietnam School of Physics (Rencontres du Vietnam) every year.

Bruce provided an overview of the activities of IUPAP, and pointed out the possible advantages of Vietnam becoming a member of IUPAP

- With the move of our office to Singapore it is time for IUPAP to focus on strengthening and developing physics in Asia
- Vietnam has a strong tradition of involvement with physics in Asia, including membership of AAPPS and APCTP. It has used this connection to run international conferences
- Vietnamese physics has strong traditional links with physics in France, and has the series of Rencontres de Vietnam conferences building on that connection.
- Is it time to expand those links by Vietnam becoming a member of IUPAP, to run conferences and workshops which fit in the IUPAP series and to have a say in how and where those conferences happen?
- Vietnam is #60 in the list of publishers of physics in 2014, between IUPAP members New Zealand and Cyprus. It should have a place with the 60 members of IUPAP, and have a say in how international physics is done.
- This will help get physics in Vietnam internationally recognised by making young Vietnamese physicists eligible for the IUPAP Young scientist prizes — each of the Commissions awards one a year.

It was pointed out that the level of physics activity and the 60th place in

physics publications seem incompatible and the parent discrepancy deserves investigation.

We have had another discussion with Le Hong Khiem, Director, IOP, VAST and our host Nguyen Dai Hung in the evening discussing the research landscape in Vietnam.

The IUPAP delegation left the next morning at 9.30 am from Hanoi.

