

The Right of Access to Information in the Fight Against Corruption in Vietnam

PhD. Thai Thi Tuyet Dung^a, LLM. Truong Tu Phuoc^b, ^{a,b}Ho Chi Minh City University of Law, Vietnam, Email: tttdung@hcmulaw.edu.vn, ttphuoc@hcmulaw.edu.vn

The Law on Access to Information 2016 and the Law on Anti-Corruption 2018 give regulations on exercising the right of access to information in the fight against corruption. However, corruption in Vietnam is very worrying. One of the main causes of this situation is the fact that people lack information on the activities of the subjects exercising state power. This article focuses on analysing the role of the right to access information in the fight against corruption, specific measures to exercise the right to access information in the fight against corruption, the technical barriers that we encounter and some recommendations.

Keywords: *Access to Information, Corruption*

INTRODUCTION

Corruption has long been a plague of many states, especially those where power is concentrated too heavily on one person or a group of people. The weakness of the institutions that control power and the lack of transparency in the operations of the state agencies exacerbate corruption, in an environment where discretion and indifference are common, mean that corruption develops dreadfully strongly (Declarations of IFLA). Corruption undermines basic social values, threatens the states that take the rule of law as the development goal, and undermines public confidence in political institutions. Corruption hinders development, impedes the social development of knowledge, and causes inequality in income.

One of the main causes of this situation is the fact that people lack information on the activities of the subjects exercising state power. Due to such lack of information, people cannot actively exercise the right to supervise the activities of state agencies, thus the mechanism of “control and counterbalance” between citizens and the state is not implemented. Among many ways to prevent corruption, exercising the right to access information is one of the most effective tools,

as it can be seen as “the right to protect rights”. This article focuses on analysing the role and practice of the right of access to information (RAI) in anti-corruption, as well as the technical barriers we are facing.

1. The right of access to information under Vietnamese law

After nearly 10 years since the Law on Access to Information was inserted into the law-making program, by the end of 2016, the Law on Access to Information was passed by the National Assembly. This Law regulates the citizens’ right of access to information: “... *have access to information of state agencies, except inaccessible information and accessible information with particular conditions as regulated in this Law*”. Despite not explicitly defining the citizens’ right of access to information, the Law on Access to Information clearly defines what access to information and provision of information are. Specifically, “*access to information includes the reading, watching, listening, recording, reproduction and photographing of the information*”, while “*provision of information includes the state agency’s disclosure of information and provision of information as requested by citizens*” (Clause 3, 4 Article 3 of the Law on Access to Information 2016).

Thus, pursuant to Vietnamese law, citizens can have access to information in two ways: i) to receive information publicly disclosed by state agencies; ii) to seek information by requesting state agencies. Therefore, it can be understood that the citizens’ right of access to information is the citizens’ right of reading, watching, listening, recording, reproducing, or photographing information disclosed by state agencies or information provided by state agencies when required by the citizens.

The citizens’ right of access to information greatly depends on the state's responsibility to commit, respect and protect; as well as the level of socio-economic development and the historical, geographic and religious conditions of each country. Thus the RAI has different content depending on the intent of each state, and is closely related to matters of protection of classified information and privacy.

2. The role of the citizens' right of access to information in anti-corruption activities

Right of access to information is a tool to limit corruption.

Many researches show that power over information leads to corruption just as power over people vested with state power. This power, together with the opportunity to have sources of information that a normal person cannot have access to, creates opportunities for civil servants to promote their own interests, which undermines the common interests. Therefore, states must strive to establish and maintain mechanisms that provide state agencies with flexibility and

incentive to operate for the common interests, while simultaneously curbing arbitrary acts and corruption in the department towards citizens (World Bank, 1998, p.126). Corruption seriously affects the development of each country, including Vietnam. The authors in the book *Tools to support transparency in local governance* (UN-HABITAT, Transparency International, 2004, pp. 13-14) have identified the rules of corruption under the following formula:

$$\text{Corruption} = \text{Monopoly} + \text{Discretion} - \text{Accountability}$$

Another identification tool based on the formula of C. Stephan (2012) is as follows:

$$\text{Corruption} = \text{Monopoly} + \text{Discretion} - \text{Transparency} - \text{Morality}$$

The above formulas indicate that one of the causes of corruption is “the lack of information transparency”. Hence, one of the important anti-corruption measures is to ensure the implementation of the right of access to information. Publicity and transparency are among the most important factors in fighting corruption. Transparency is inversely proportional to corruption. Once activities of the public power are made public and transparent, they are faced with the judgment of the public and of society. Wrongdoings will significantly decrease because of their “shamefulness” in front of the public, and vice versa, the public has the chance to consider and execute the wrongdoings.

The right of access to information helps the state to operate better, proactively detect and execute corruption

The right of access to information can be seen as a stronghold of democratic freedoms, which plays a particularly important role in ensuring the implementation of other rights such as the right of complaints, denunciation, and supervision of state activities. In order to ensure that the state is truly democratic, all state agencies and civil servants must work in the spirit of being public servants, accountable to the people, and especially under the supervision of the public – the people who trusted and vested them with the power of society management. The public’s supervision of the authorities can never be possible if the public is not informed of the activities of public authorities. When the government operates effectively, the country will flourish, on the contrary, a corrupt government will exacerbate the country’s situation. Lack of information also directly affects the job efficiency of state agencies, as well as the capacity of executing public authorities’ activities, leading to inconsistent law application, inequality, and growing corruption.

Therefore, when effectively implemented, the RAI will create a ground for citizens to exercise their rights, which will contribute to the fight against corruption (Central Coordinating Council for Legal Dissemination and Education (2016), Special Journal of Law Propaganda: Law on Access to Information, No. 07/2016, p. 16). This will prevent the situation of taking advantage

of privileged positions to profit from the provision of information that causes inequality and inequity in the society. Hence, when the right of access to information is exercised, it will step by step prevent individuals or interest groups from interfering with the media to draw people's attention to information that benefits them (A. Eide, 1989, pp. 35-37).

This is also confirmed in the International Convention Against Corruption (enacted in 2003), which was ratified by Vietnam in 2009, and has much content on the transparency of information and the implementation of the RAI, such as Article 9 on public procurement and management of public finances, Article 10 on public reporting, Article 13 on participation of society, of which point b Clause 1 defines "Ensuring that the public has effective access to information", and a separate chapter on technical assistance and information exchange (Chapter 6). Throughout this convention, the matters regarding the access to information are mentioned as an effective method of implementation, since without information, it is impossible to construct any arguments against corrupt practices. At the regional level, the RAI is regulated in the American Convention on Human Rights, and in the Anti-Corruption Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific, ensuring that the public and the media are able to freely receive and disseminate information on corruption in a manner complying with domestic law (Institute of Human Rights, 2007, p. 30). Moreover, the top criterion for ranking countries' corruption is the level of publicity and transparency in activities of the state agencies. From the above awareness, the Anti-Corruption Law of Vietnam has made information disclosure and transparency the first anti-corruption solution, accounting for nearly ¼ of the provisions of this law.

3. Specific measures to implement the right on access to information in anti-corruption

Currently, there have been many relevant documents, however, the directly governing ones are the Law on Access to Information 2016, Decree No. 13/2018/ND-CP detailing the Law on Access to Information, Circular No. 46/2018/TT-BTC and most recently, the Law on Anti-Corruption 2018. Nonetheless, after the Law on Access to Information has been in force for one year, the right of access to information has not been exercised in practice.

3.1 Stipulate the responsibility of state agencies to disclose information and provide information

**** Disclosure of information***

Clause 1, Article 17 of the Law on Access to Information specifically regulated the types of information that must be disclosed to the general public, focusing on corruption-related information such as:

Information on state budget estimates; reports on state budget implementation; final accounts of the state budget; estimates and implementation and final accounts of budgets for state-funded capital construction investment programs and projects; state budget procedures.

Information on the allocation, management and use of official development assistance funds and non-governmental aid according to regulations; information on the management and use of social relief and subsidies; management and use of the People's contributions and funds of all types;

Information on the lists of public investment and procurement projects and programs and the management and use of public investment capital, the situation and results of implementation of public investment plans, programs and projects; information on bidding; information on land use master plans and plans; land prices; land recovery; plans on compensation, ground clearance and resettlement related to projects and works in localities;

Information on the investment, management and use of state capital at enterprises; assessment reports on the performance and classification of enterprises; reports on supervision of the disclosure of financial information of enterprises and state agencies acting as representatives of the owner of enterprises; information on the organization and operation of state enterprises;

Information that must be publicised on portals and websites of the agency or organisation includes: information about lists of public investment and public procurement projects/programs, results of public investment and procurement execution, the management and use of public investment funding and sources of loan capital; financial statements; information about the statistics on sectors under the state management; information about lists of scientific programs/topics and results thereof.

According to the authors' survey on the websites of state agencies, only a few agencies have implemented this regulation, for instance, the General Department of Logistics and Techniques under the Ministry of Public Security has publicly disclosed information on the concentrated procurement of the people's public security in 2018, or switched to bidding invitation, which is also an indirect way of publicising, but the results are not publicised on the website¹. Information related to the state budget's situation, national reserves, total foreign debt, revenues from tax, local contributions, national resources such as oil and gas, coal, gold, and

¹ Even the Government Inspectorate's page <http://www.thanhtra.gov.vn> has an anti-corruption section, an information section on investment, bidding, and public procurement of the inspection agency, yet such information is too little, not enough for the press and the people to take part in supervising.

payments for public works is being searched for and is of interest to many people, yet they still cannot get the accurate information or have difficulties in the access thereto, even if they are National Assembly deputies (Le, 2012). Recently, people are paying much attention to the information about BOT road projects and the revenue therefrom, however, finding such information is very difficult and almost impossible, thus the press has to put pressure on the state agencies to disclose information (Bao Ngoc, 2019b). Therefore, the non-disclosure of information by companies with revenues coming from the people will create favourable conditions for more abuse of power and corruption.

The lack of publicity or the “ambiguity” in the financial disclosure of some agencies², and the weakness and negative aspects of financial checking and inspection have created favourable conditions for corruption. The fact that a series of groups and corporations use state capital and suffer from losses is a concrete evidence for the lack of publicity and supervision of state money spent by these companies. And due to non-disclosure of information, many small and medium-sized enterprises are now “bankrupt” together with state-owned enterprises, because they neither have information about the financial situation of such enterprises, nor receive payments for projects or items that they took a lot of effort to obtain.

With respect to information on land, this is the type of information that citizens seek the most regarding land acquisition, land clearance compensation, incentive projects and land use planning; however, the possibility to meet these requirements of state agencies is very little. A lot of information is not disclosed, or not fully disclosed, leading to ambiguity, resulting in negative aspects, corruption, and complaints. Once the information is only provided to a group of people and covered up with the rest of the society (Nguyen, 2012, p.44), those who take the opportunity to suppress the information in policy making activities become rich in no time; this is the abuse of power, as well as corruption.

**** Responsibility to provide information upon request***

The Law on Access to Information stipulates a broad range of subjects who have the right to request the provision of information, particularly, citizens have the right to request competent authorities to provide information as follows:

State agencies shall provide information they generate, except for the cases regulated in Article 6 of the Law on Access to Information; as for the cases regulated in Article 7 of such Law, the provision of information is carried out if relevant conditions have been satisfied as regulated. Communal people’s committees shall provide information they generate and those they receive to directly execute their functions, tasks and powers, except for the cases regulated

² <http://dnnn.hochiminhcity.gov.vn/Pages/default.aspx>, This website publishes SOEs' finances, yet the numbers are general, making it difficult to monitor.

in Article 6 of the Law on Access to Information; as for the cases regulated in Article 7 of such Law, the provision of information is carried out if relevant conditions have been satisfied as regulated. The scope of information provided upon request is within the information generated by state agencies which is not the type of information that must be publicly disclosed as prescribed in Article 23 of the Law on Access to Information. Specifically, information subject to mandatory disclosure as regulated in Article 17 of such Law may be provided upon request in the following cases: the information is not yet released within its disclosure period as regulated; the information whose disclosure period expires as regulated by the law; the information which is being disclosed publicly but the applicant for such information fails to access it due to the force majeure. Information concerning trade secrets, personal secrets and privacy or family secrets shall be provided upon request if conditions relating to the provision of such information have been satisfied as regulated in Article 7 of the Law on Access to Information.

In practice, many state agencies have not complied with the above regulations. Many of which still rely on the spokesperson mechanism to delay or avoid the provision of information, or provide inaccurate information, for example, the case where the office of the People's Committee of Soc Trang province issued a press release on 12 June 2019 in which Mr. Le Van Hieu – the vice chairman of the provincial People's Committee – rejected the information that some provincial officers travelled abroad with the expenses paid by Mr. Trinh Suong (an owner of an enterprise who was violating the law) even though earlier in a press conference, Mr. Hieu had confirmed this information (K. Tam, 2019). This incident shows that, when the information is not beneficial to the violators, it can be concealed by other techniques.

The Law on Anti-Corruption 2018 emphasises that “Press agencies and journalists are entitled to request competent authorities to provide information about corrupt activities”, however, it has never been easy to be provided with such information. As a general rule, corrupt activities tend to be concealed and intervened since the majority of corrupt people are government officials, who thus want to be punished internally. A number of state administrative agencies are not willing to provide information to reporters, so when reporters contact them, they “have to meet with a spokesperson”. For this reason, when journalists are restricted from access to information sources, or are denied information from official sources, they have no other choice but to resort to accessing and getting information from other sources, thus the content of many articles are imprecise and not multidimensional. The avoidance of provision of information can be manifested in many ways. For example, when a reporter calls to contact the person who has the obligation and authority to provide information, the reasons for refusal are given: “do not know”, “busy”, “it is an internal matter that cannot be announced (yet)”, or the responsibility to respond is passed to other people or agencies (Mai Huong, Mai Hoa, 2018).

In the case of an exemption from providing information, it is referred to the Law on the Protection of State Secrets 2018 and its guiding documents. Currently, many administrative

agencies have used “confidential” as an excuse, making it difficult for anti-corruption forces. In some places, the “confidential” list set by the head of the agency has made it difficult for inspectors to access, and it can be even harder since they cannot bring confidential documents to the public for inspection.

There are many cases where the confidential seal was put on the inspection conclusion, which was later found out by the press and the public that there was no information containing state secrets and that it violated Article 39 of the Law on Inspection and Article 63 of the Law on Anti-corruption 2018 on publishing of inspection conclusions. The habit of viewing state documents as confidential documents has hindered the RAI of people, blocked public opinion, and seriously violated the provisions of law (Anh Phuong, 2018). The provisions of the Law on the Protection of State Secrets have been thoroughly abused by state agencies to cover up and “conceal information” on their wrongdoings so as to avoid public supervision. That is the cause of the increasing negative issues and corruption.

After more than 2 years since the effective date of the Law on Access to Information 2016, the provision of information upon request has not yet been implemented. This issue stems from two aspects: the people have not actively exercised their rights; and on the State side, although many emails have been sent in compliance with the procedures to request information, they seem to be “ignored and forgotten” since there is no reply. Even many reporters have sent emails and make phone calls to competent authorities to request provision of information upon request but ended up facing many difficulties and barriers. Hence, it is certainly difficult for the people to exercise their rights as prescribed by laws or decrees.

3.2. Regulations on the procedures for exercising the right to request provision of information

The Law on Access to Information 2016 has 2 chapters on the procedures to exercise the right of access to information. This is a very important measure to ensure citizens’ right to seek information. The law requires that the applicants directly, or by granting another person authorisation, comes to the headquarter of the state agency to request a provision, or sends the request form electronically, by post or fax to the provider. The information request form must clearly state the name of the document/record/paper; method of providing information; reasons and purposes of requesting information. If the requested information is not within the ambit of the functions and tasks of the agency receiving the request, it must notify and guide the applicant to contact the agency responsible for providing such information. Upon the receipt of a valid request for information, the state agency shall inform the applicant of time-limit, location and method of providing information; actual fees for printing, duplicating, photocopying, sending requested information by post or fax (if any), and method and period for making such payment of fees; and the time-limit for providing information. It is worth noting that this regulation has the following problems:

(1) The cases for refusal of request for information include the circumstance where: “the requested information is beyond the capacity or causes adverse influence on normal activities of the state agency”. This is one of the technical barriers and is the reason that can be taken advantage of to refuse to provide information, especially information related to anti-corruption.

(2) The provisions on procedures cause difficulties: the applicant is required to specify the name of the document/record/paper in the information request form (Clause 2 Article 24). This is a difficult requirement for the people, because not everyone has the capacity to get such information. Moreover, what the people really care about is only the main content of the information, that is, the abstract of the documents and papers. Consequently, these regulations may directly prevent the right to request information.

3.3. Regulations on the procedures for denunciation and lawsuits related to the right on access to information of citizens

In the case of an infringement of the RAI, only the state, as the subject of public power, can protect citizens against such abuse. When citizens believe that their legitimate rights and interests are violated because of a state agency’ not disclosing information in accordance with the law, refusal of requests for information without legitimate reasons, late provision of information, provision of incorrect, false, unsolicited, inadequate information or requiring the applicant to pay unreasonable fees, they then have the right to denounce or bring a lawsuit against such state agency.

Measures for taking actions against violations of information access include administrative penalties, disciplinary action and criminal prosecution. However, Vietnamese law has not regulated specific violations to be taken action against, or methods and measures to be taken against state agencies violating the regulations on disclosure of information and provision of information. Article 11 of the Law on Access to Information 2016 only stipulates the prohibited acts, yet such provision is general, and does not specifically provide sanctions. This leads to a situation in which legal provisions on the RAI, though exist, can never or hardly come into practice. Because there have not been appropriate sanctions to ensure the implementation of the RAI, especially those applied to state agencies that refuse to provide information, situations where state agencies do not respond in writing or refuse to provide information without legitimate reason when receiving requests are still common.

In light of the above analysis, the following comments can be made:

The implementation of the RAI of citizens depends significantly on the intent of the state because the subjects in this relationship are always unbalanced in respect of their position and power. No matter how preminent the scope of the RAI is defined or how favourable the procedure to exercise such right is, when a state agency does not satisfy the people’s RAI, they

are immediately put in a situation where it is difficult to exercise their rights and will struggle in requesting that state agency to fulfill its obligation to provide information. And when citizens are well informed, they can participate in supervising the activities of state agencies to help limit the abuse of power. When the people exercise their right to “control” the activities of state agencies that directly affect their lives, the need to be informed about state activities has to be affirmed as a counterweight (Pradeep Sharma, 2004).

4. Corruption situation in Vietnam in the period from 2017 to 2019

Corruption has been identified as a national problem in Vietnam, and as one of the four threats that undermine the people’s confidence in the State and the socialist regime. Anti-corruption has been determined as an enduring, difficult, and complex struggle. One of the biggest challenges Vietnam is facing in its development process is corruption. This challenge was raised and recommended to be addressed by the group of sponsors of the European Union (besides problems like climate change, financial crisis). Measures to prevent corruption such as bringing in regulations on transparency in the operations of agencies and organisations; on public bidding; on declaration and disclosure of property and income; and on receiving and returning gifts have not yet showed high effectiveness. Detecting corrupt acts by self-examination of agencies and organisations is still a weak measure. The number of corruption cases detected through examination, inspection and investigation is still small, and most of which is detected by the media and the press.

The current situation of corruption is also alarming when a series of senior officials are disciplined and prosecuted for corruption-related crimes³ (Bao Ngoc, 2019a). Surveys on anti-corruption submitted to the National Assembly in 3 years in Vietnam (Bao Yen, Trong Quynh, 2019) show as follows:

	2017	2018	2019
Prosecuted	202 cases, 438 suspects	279 cases, 554 suspects	232 cases, 531 suspects
Damages	16,501 billion VND; 5,037 ha of land	more than 4,764 billion VND, over 300,000m ² of land	over 1,028 billion VND and 22,069 m ² of land;

³ In 2018, more than 650 Party members were disciplined for corruption and/or deliberate wrongdoing. It was proposed to recover and dispose the main assets amounting up to nearly 108 trillion VND, over 1,000 hectares of land, it was also proposed to punish 2080 groups and many individuals; 101 cases were transferred to investigation agencies.

Recovered	8,765/16,501 billion VND (amounting to 54%) 4,369/5,037 ha of land (accounting for 86%)	over 2,267 billion VND and many assets	Over 615,06 billion VND and 11,867 m ² of land; distrained over 795 billion VND
Undergone first instance trial's procedures	205 cases with 433 defendants accused of corruption charges (5.7% increase in the number of cases).	340 cases with 827 defendants (09 death sentences and life imprisonment)	279 cases, 614 defendants (10 death sentences, life imprisonment)

The above data shows that the number of corrupt people being punished is growing more and more, which proves that the corruption situation in Vietnam is increasingly complicated. In addition to the above 3-year data, in Vietnam, in addition to the prevalence of petty corruption as showed in many reports, the amount of corruption among people holding high positions in society is increasing, with large amounts of money, such as the case where Mr. Nguyen Bac Son took a bribe of \$3 million USD to make sure the deal to sell AVG to the State-owned telecom corporation MobiFone went ahead smoothly (Chi Lan, 2019). This issue, when put in the context of the economy in Vietnam where Vietnam's per capita income in 2018 was 58,5 million VND⁴, or 2,587 USD/year, clearly shows how much the dissatisfaction of the people is, and that the requirement for transparency of information for the purpose of supervision is a legitimate requirement.

5. Some motions to improve the implementation of citizens' right of access to information in the context of anti-corruption

The information revolution has made access to information more tangible, feasible, and effective; and at the same time, has provided a greater opportunity to control corruption. Although the idea of the right of access to information is highly valued, only when the state and the society have practical potential and capacity will that right be implemented, and then will it be possible to prevent corruption. In Vietnam nowadays, to promote this right, it is necessary to:

First, to complete the regulations on information classification, because the current regulations still have many shortcomings, inconsistencies and do not cover all types of information. Under the current regulations, information is divided into 3 groups: i) information confidential under

⁴ Information published annually on the website of the General Statistics Office: www.gso.gov.vn.

the law; ii) information to be made public, iii) information to be provided upon request. The amount of information in the third group is not small, however, there has not been specific regulations affecting the exercise of the RAI. For instance, are asset declaration, income tax confirmation, list of real estates in the data of notary organisations belonging to cadres, civil servants or public employees the type of information that must be disclosed when examining the anti-corruption information? If they are to be disclosed, to what extent should they be disclosed, since this is very corruption-related information. This gap is the cause of the disruption of the RAI of citizens, and ineffective anti-corruption.

Second, it is necessary to abolish the procedures for exercising the right of access to information that cause difficulties as analysed above, so that such rights can be exercised in practice, such as, refusal of provision of information if “the requested information is beyond the capacity or causes adverse influence on normal activities of the state agency” or refusal in the case where the name of the document, record, or paper in the information request form is not clearly specified.

Third, it is necessary to improve the cultural and legal life of the people so they can fight for fairness and justice. To change negative habits, such as bribing in transactions, it is necessary to raise the awareness of the RAI for state officials and civil servants and build proper awareness and the mindset about the role of this right today, especially the recognition that we need information to fight corruption.

Cadres and civil servants should be trained in how to exercise their rights and obligations to provide information to the public. This requirement is particularly important and needs to be emphasised in developing countries, where public officials themselves often tend not to voluntarily perform this obligation, for the simple reason that they are afraid of, or do not want, “disclosure” in public, especially sensitive information related to signs of corruption.

Fourth, it is necessary to promulgate regulations on the coordination in providing information among state agencies, so as to prevent the situation that state agencies are not willing to disclose information because they are afraid of affecting other agencies, especially information unfavourable to other agencies.

Fifthly, it is necessary to ensure the infrastructure conditions to exercise the right of access to information, such as creating a website to give guidance on the contents and methods of exercising this right in the prevention of corruption, especially the information on the finance of organisations using state budget capital, so that people can track, comment and supervise.

REFERENCES:

- A Eide (1989), "Realization of social and economic rights and the minimum threshold approach", *Human Rights Law Journal*, No. 43.
- Anh Phuong (2018), 'Overusing "confidential" sign limited the result of anti-corruption, making the people distrust', [Online] (updated 13 November 2018). Available at: <http://www.sggp.org.vn/lam-dung-dau-mat-da-han-che-ket-qua-chong-tham-nhung-lam-mat-long-tin-nhan-dan-558728.html> [accessed on 26 June 2019].
- Bao Ngoc (2019a), '650 party members were disciplined in 2018'. [Online] (updated 21 January 2019). Available at: <https://tuoitre.vn/ky-luat-650-dang-vien-tham-nhung-trong-nam-2018-20190121153904823.htm> [accessed on 26 June 2019].
- Bao Ngoc (2019b), 'Make the revenues public before thinking about increasing BOT fees'. [Online] (updated 09 June 2019). Available at: <https://tuoitre.vn/cong-khai-khoan-thu-truoc-khi-nghi-den-tang-phi-bot-20190609082326838.htm> [accessed on 26 June 2019].
- Bao Yen, Trong Quynh (2019), 'Inspector-General: the anti-corruption work is strengthening and be more effective'. [Online] (updated 12 September 2019). Available at: <http://quochoi.vn/tintuc/pages/tin-hoat-dong-cua-quoc-hoi.aspx?ItemID=41810> [accessed on 26 June 2019].
- Chi Lan (2019), 'AVG deal: Former minister Nguyen Bac Son takes \$3 million of bribery'. [Online] (updated 03 September 2019). Available at: <https://vietnamnet.vn/en/society/avg-deal-former-minister-nguyen-bac-son-takes-3-million-of-bribery-564565.html> [accessed on 20 October 2020].
- Declarations of International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) dated 3 December 2008 on transparency, proper governance, and non-corruption.
- Institute of Human Rights (2007), *International documents and laws of some countries on information access*, Ha Noi: People's Public Security Publishing House.
- Khac Tam (2019), 'The leader of Soc Trang did not travel with money from Trinh Suong?', [Online] (updated 12 June 2019). Available at: <https://tuoitre.vn/lanh-dao-soc-trang-khong-du-lich-bang-tien-cua-dai-gia-trinh-suong-20190612191808817.htm> [accessed on 26 June 2020].
- Le Nhung (2012), 'Controlling powers to fight against corruption'. [Online] (updated 06 November 2012). Available at: <http://vietnamnet.vn/vn/chinh-tri/95588/kiem-soat-quyen-luc-de-chong-tham-nhung.html> [accessed on 26 June 2020].
- Mai Huong, Mai Hoa (2018), 'Avoiding the press is irresponsible', [Online] (updated 01 February 2018). Available at: <https://tuoitre.vn/ne-tranh-bao-chi-la-thieu-trach-nhiem-20180201182553957.htm> [accessed on 26 June 2020].
- Nguyen Ngoc Dien (2012), 'Completing the legal tools to prevent and fight corruption: ensuring the transparency of assets and information', *Journal of Legislative Studies*, No. 18(226).
- Pradeep Sharma (2004), *Civil society and Right to Information – a Perspective on India's experience*, UNDP, Oslo Governance Center.
- Stephan, Constantin (2012), *Industrial Health, Safety and Environmental Management*, 3rd edition. MV Wissenschaft: Muenster.



UN Convention on Anti-corruption.

UN-HABITAT, Transparency International (2004), *Tools to support transparency in local governance*. [online] Available at: <https://unhabitat.org/books/tools-to-support-transparency-in-local-governance/>, (accessed on 01 July 2020).

World Bank (1998), *The State in a transforming world*, World Development Report, Hanoi: The National Political Publishing House.