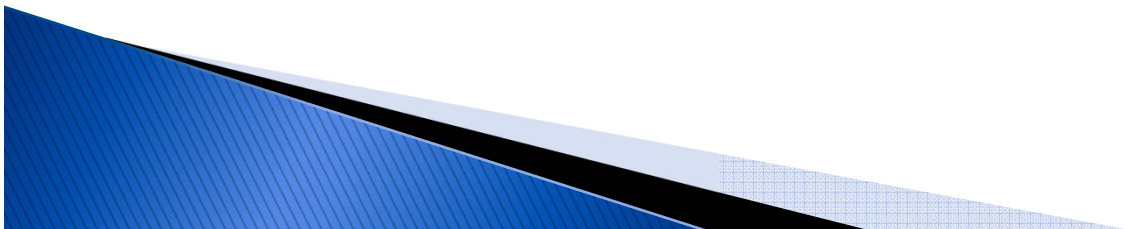


# Freedom of Religion or Belief in Vietnam: examples of violations



## What is freedom of religion or belief?

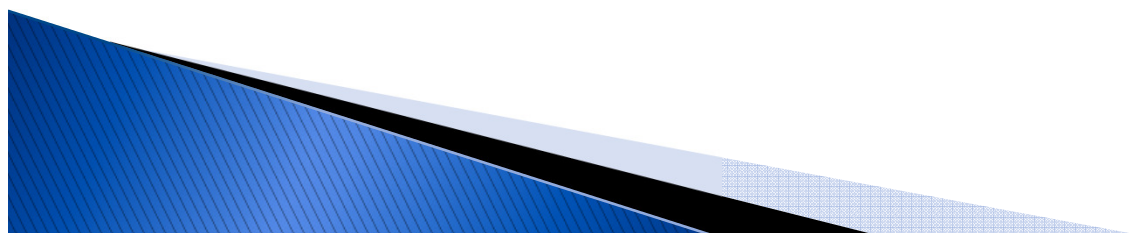
- ▶ Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- ▶ Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in *worship, observance, practice and teaching*.



## What is freedom of religion or belief?

This means that:

- ▶ The right to *have* a religion or belief is an absolute right;
- ▶ The right to *change* a religion or belief is an absolute right;
- ▶ The right to *teach, practice, worship* and *observe* can only be limited under certain conditions prescribed by law.



## How does it apply in Vietnam, locally?

- ▶ *The right to have a religion or belief*

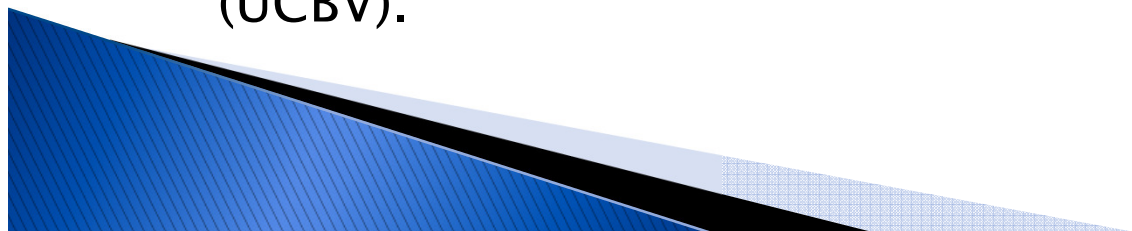
Whether or not a religion is legally recognised by the Vietnamese Government, you have the right to have that religion.

- ▶ *The right to adopt a religion or belief*

Example of violation: people who have converted to Protestant Christianity have been forced to leave their homes or have been warned not to go to church.

- ▶ *The right to worship*

Example of violation: Many Buddhists have been prevented from visiting pagodas of the United Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UCBV).





# How does it apply in Vietnam, locally?

- ▶ *The right to observe*

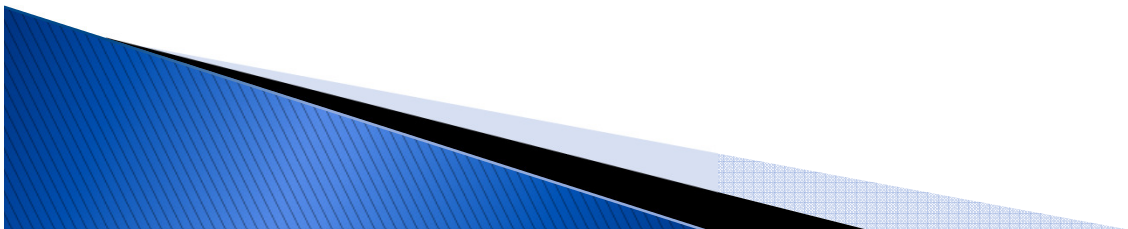
Example of violation: Cao Dai followers have been told that it is illegal to set up altars in their homes rather than state-approved temples.

- ▶ *The right to practice*

Example of violation: Catholic Christians have been prevented from celebrating Mass, attending confession, and operating social welfare projects such as orphanages.

- ▶ *The right to teach*

Example of violation: Hoa Hao Buddhists have been arrested and imprisoned for distributing books, CDs and DVDs of teachings of the founder, Huynh Phu So



- ▶ Exercise: Identify specific abuses of freedom of religion of belief in the example case
- ▶ Discussion point: what are the most common violations against religious freedom in Vietnam?

