



## JOINT PRESS RELEASE

### **Vietnam and European Union successfully conclude their ninth Joint Commission**

**Hanoi, 26 March 2014** - The 9th EU-Vietnam Joint Commission was held in Hanoi on 26 March 2014, co-chaired by Mr Nguyen The Phuong, Vice-Minister for Planning and Investment, and by Mr David O'Sullivan, Chief Operating Officer, European External Action Service.

Vietnam and the EU welcomed the opportunity for open and in-depth exchanges on a broad range of bilateral issues, and took stock of the diversified and strengthened cooperation since the signing of the EU-Vietnam Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) in 2012. Both sides exchanged views on Vietnam's economy and reform process and on developments in EU's integration and economic outlook.

The EU and Vietnam expressed their satisfaction with the positive developments and perspectives for bilateral trade and investment and discussed progress in the negotiations of a Free Trade Agreement, following the 7<sup>th</sup> round held the previous week. Both sides also discussed the state of implementation of bilateral development cooperation. The EU confirmed the increase of EU assistance for the period 2014-2020 and referred to the general orientations of development cooperation discussed with Vietnam in Brussels the previous week.

David O'Sullivan informed Vice-Minister Nguyen The Phuong on progress towards ratification of the EU-Vietnam PCA by EU Member States. Both sides discussed the early implementation of jointly agreed articles of the PCA, notably human rights (and the follow-up of the last enhanced Human Rights Dialogue held in September 2013), administrative reform, security and crisis management and migration. The EU also informed of cooperation activities in other areas such as education and training; science and technology; environment, disaster management, natural resources and climate change; transport; tourism and SME policy and energy. The EU responded positively to Vietnam's proposal for the early implementation of articles on urban and regional planning and labour and employment and social affairs,.

Both sides concluded the discussions on a highly optimistic note for the future of the EU-Vietnam relations and expressed hope that the next such meeting will be the first EU-Vietnam Committee under the PCA.

Background: Pending ratification of the EU Vietnam Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, the 1995 Framework Agreement provides the legal basis for the Joint Commission. The last Joint Commission was held on 11 October 2011 in Brussels.