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Background Briefing:

Vietnam: Military Reform – Five Suggestions

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We are looking for five suggestions of reform of Vietnam's military leadership, structure, doctrine, etc. As it is presently totally unreconstructed since the US-Vietnam War, this is good time for debate and positive suggestions.

RESPONSE:

My five suggestions:

1. Reduce the size of the standing army and build up the air defense-air force and navy as separate services with sufficient maintenance, repair and logistics support.
2. Revamp Vietnam's system of military education to promote joint operations among the three services (army, air-defense-air force, navy) from basic to high-level. Send more officers and senior officers to attend military courses in advanced countries with a priority focus on joint operations (among services) and combined operations (with foreign militaries). Set advanced professional military education and training criteria for the minister of national defense, chief of the general staff, deputy chiefs of the general staff, service commanders and regional military commanders.
3. Enhance the revolution in military affairs by ensuring the interoperability of air and naval platforms in terms of C4ISR – command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance – through technology transfer, co-production and a strong national defense industry.
4. Initiate a broad based program of bilateral and multilateral military exercises with foreign counterparts to test Vietnam's combat capabilities in priority areas such as air defense and maritime security.
5. Develop a comprehensive whole-of-government national security and defense strategy to guide the development of service doctrines, strategies and tactics and interoperability of the services.

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