

HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS

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**BUILDING THE GREAT NATIONAL UNITY BLOC
IN ACCORDANCE WITH HO CHI MINH'S
IDEOLOGY IN THE NORTHWESTERN BORDER
PROVINCES AT PRESENT**

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INTRODUCTION

1. The urgency of the theme

President Ho Chi Minh, the preeminent leader of the Communist Party and the Vietnamese nation, bequeathed an invaluable spiritual legacy: Ho Chi Minh Ideology. This constitutes a comprehensive and profound theoretical system regarding the fundamental issues of the Vietnamese revolution, within which the principles of the Great National Unity hold enduring, consistent, and pervasive value. Reflecting on the historical tradition of national construction and defense, he asserted: “Our history teaches us this lesson: whenever our people are united as one, our country enjoys independence and freedom. Conversely, whenever unity is lacking, we face foreign invasion. Thus, we must unite - unite swiftly and solidify our unity ever further.” The strength of this unity is regarded as an invincible force and a decisive factor in every victory of the Vietnamese revolution.

Within the framework of Ho Chi Minh’s ideology, “building the the great national unity bloc” is a paramount strategic content. According to his tenets, establishing this bloc requires specific strategies, principles, mottos, and mobilization methods tailored to each revolutionary stage to meet historical imperatives. History has demonstrated that by successfully constructing this bloc, the Vietnamese revolution successfully mobilized all national strengths, synergizing internal resources with the dynamics of the era to achieve the monumental victories of the 20th century.

After nearly 40 years of the Renovation process, the perception of the Party and the people regarding the values of Ho Chi Minh’s ideology on the Great National Unity has become increasingly profound, substantive, and effective. Under Party leadership, the consolidation of this bloc has rallied diverse social strata and forces within the National United Front, creating a formidable resource for national development and sovereignty protection.

In his discourse on the Great National Unity, President Ho Chi Minh placed particular emphasis on the propaganda and mobilization of ethnic minority communities regarding the Party and State’s guidelines. He directed the institutionalization of preferential policies aimed at improving the socio-economic welfare of ethnic groups to bridge the developmental gap between the highlands and lowlands. Recognizing that ethnic minorities predominantly reside in strategic mountainous and border regions with limited living conditions and educational levels, he argued that building unity in these areas must utilize practical methods compatible with local customs and cultural traditions to ensure efficacy.

The practical application and creative development of Ho Chi Minh’s ideology during the revolution - particularly the achievements of the Renovation era - reaffirm that his thoughts on building the great national unity bloc retain their theoretical integrity and profound practical relevance. It remains both a fundamental requirement and a key mission, serving as the decisive factor for the continued success of the Vietnamese revolution.

The Northwest border provinces are home to over 40 ethnic groups, with ethnic minorities accounting for nearly 80% of the regional population. Characterized by a long-standing tradition of solidarity and harmony, these communities have progressed collectively through history. Since 2015, under the leadership of Party committees, local authorities, and the entire political system, alongside central government support, various socio-economic development strategies have been implemented synchronously. Notably, prioritizing the 'strengthening of great national unity' as a core mission has enhanced public awareness and effectively mobilized collective strength for comprehensive development. Consequently, the region has witnessed a significant socio-economic transformation: living standards have improved, social sectors have progressed remarkably, and national defense and security have been firmly maintained and consolidated.

Despite these achievements, the consolidation of the great national unity bloc faces certain systemic limitations. Substantial structural barriers include adverse natural conditions, low human resource quality, and lagging socio-economic development, resulting in restricted access to social welfare and disproportionately high poverty rates. Disparities in intellectual standards and a slow adaptation to national modernization among some ethnic minority groups further complicate the landscape. Furthermore, a segment of the population lacks the intrinsic motivation for poverty reduction, exhibiting a reliance on state subsidies and local government assistance. These issues are exacerbated by linguistic barriers, migratory shifts, and persistent social vices. From a governance perspective, professional limitations among grassroots officials have led to a lack of proactivity and flexibility in policy implementation. In certain localities, the Vietnam Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations have struggled to fulfill their mandates, with operations often suffering from 'administrative formalization' (bureaucratic formalism). Consequently, the Front has not fully optimized its role in mobilizing and organizing collective strengths. Moreover, manifestations of political ideological degradation, moral decay, and corruption among a portion of cadres and party members have eroded public trust in Party organizations and authorities. This ethical decline undermines communal values and legal compliance. Concurrently, the lack of decisive measures by local governments has created loopholes for hostile forces to exploit sensitive issues of democracy, human rights, and religious freedom. Such interference aims to incite division, sabotage national solidarity, and incite ethnic tensions, thereby threatening regional political stability.

Consequently, researching the "strengthening of the great national unity bloc" in the Northwest border provinces, grounded in Ho Chi Minh's ideology, is essential for consolidating national solidarity - a matter of profound theoretical significance and urgent practical necessity in the current context. Driven by these imperatives, I have selected the research topic: ***"Building the Great National Unity Bloc in Accordance with Ho Chi Minh's Ideology in the Northwestern Border Provinces at Present"*** for my doctoral dissertation in the field of Ho Chi Minh Studies.

2. Research Objectives and Tasks

2.1. Research Objectives

The dissertation aims to analyze and elucidate Ho Chi Minh's theoretical system on building the Great National Unity bloc. It evaluates the current status of the creative application and development of Ho Chi Minh's ideology in building the Great National Unity bloc within the Northwestern border provinces. Furthermore, the study identifies emerging issues and their underlying causes, forecasts influencing factors, and proposes strategic orientations and solutions to strengthen the Great National Unity bloc in these provinces in the current context.

2.2. Research Tasks

To achieve the aforementioned objectives, the dissertation undertakes the following tasks:

Firstly, to provide a comprehensive literature review of research related to the dissertation topic, highlighting established findings and identifying research gaps that require further investigation.

Secondly, to systematize, analyze, and clarify fundamental concepts relevant to the research topic and Ho Chi Minh's ideology on building the Great National Unity bloc.

Thirdly, to survey and analyze the practical implementation of building the Great National Unity bloc in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's ideology in the Northwestern border provinces from 2015 to June 2025. This task involves identifying achievements, limitations, causes, and the pressing issues currently facing the region.

Fourthly, to forecast factors impacting the construction of the Great National Unity bloc at present, and to propose strategic orientations and solutions for further building the Great National

Unity bloc in alignment with Ho Chi Minh's ideology in the Northwestern border provinces, with an orientation toward 2030 and a vision to 2045.

3. Research Scope and Subjects

3.1. Research Subject

Research on Building the Great National Unity Bloc in Accordance with Ho Chi Minh's Ideology in the Northwestern Border Provinces of Vietnam at Present

3.2. Research Scope

Content Scope: The dissertation provides a comprehensive and systematic study of Ho Chi Minh's tenets on building the Great National Unity bloc (encompassing its roles, positions, contents, values, subjects, principles, mottos, methods, and organizational forms). It further investigates the practical implementation of consolidating the Great National Unity bloc in the Northwestern border provinces, forecasts influencing factors, and proposes strategic orientations and solutions based on Ho Chi Minh's ideology.

Spatial Scope: The research focuses on the application of Ho Chi Minh's ideology in building the Great National Unity bloc within four specific Northwestern border provinces: Lao Cai, Lai Chau, Son La, and Dien Bien.

Temporal Scope: The dissertation examines the period from 2015 to June 2025. This timeframe is substantiated by: Key Party Resolutions: Resolution No. 23-NQ/TW dated March 12, 2003 (9th Tenure) on "Promoting the strength of the great national unity for a wealthy people, a strong country, and a fair, democratic, and civilized society"; and Resolution No. 43-NQ/TW dated November 24, 2023 (13th Tenure) on "Continuing to promote the tradition and strength of the great national unity to build an increasingly prosperous and happy country." Guiding Viewpoints: The political reports and directives from the 12th and 13th National Congresses of the Communist Party of Vietnam. Local Policy Frameworks: Directives, resolutions, action programs, and projects regarding the construction of the Great National Unity bloc in the Northwestern border provinces from 2015 to 2025, with orientations toward 2030 and a vision to 2045.

4. Theoretical Basis and Research Methodology

4.1. Theoretical Basis

The dissertation is grounded in the theoretical foundations of Marxism-Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Ideology, and the formal viewpoints of the Party and State policies concerning the construction and consolidation of the Great National Unity bloc.

4.2. Research Methodology

The dissertation is grounded in the methodological foundations of Marxism-Leninism, utilizing a combination of specialized research methods: generalization, historical and logical methods, analysis and synthesis, statistics, comparison, sociological investigation, and practical review. Specifically:

- Generalization, Logical, Historical, Statistical, and Comparative Methods: Primarily applied in the Literature Review chapter to evaluate previous scholarly works. This establishes a basis for identifying established findings and defining research gaps that the dissertation aims to address.

- Analysis, Synthesis, Comparison, and Inductive-Deductive Methods: Employed to clarify relevant terminology, particularly in constructing the central conceptual framework of the research.

- Logical and Historical Methods: Utilized to systematize and elucidate the core tenets of Ho Chi Minh's ideology regarding the construction of the Great National Unity bloc.

- Statistical, Comparative, Analytical, Synthetic, Systematic, and Generalization Methods: Extensively applied in the empirical analysis chapter to ensure an objective and accurate assessment of the research subjects.

- Sociological Investigation Method: This method is used to collect primary data via questionnaires distributed to local residents and cadres involved in building the Great National Unity bloc in the Northwest border provinces. Quantitative Survey: Two types of questionnaires were designed for two distinct target groups: Group 1 (Citizens) [Appendix 01] and Group 2 (Cadres) [Appendix 02]. Data Collection: Surveys were administered via Google Forms using random sampling across the four provinces, focusing on border communes. Data Processing: Collected data were processed using Google Forms and Microsoft Excel, incorporating descriptive analysis and reliability assessments to substantiate the dissertation's findings and conclusions.

5. New Contributions of the Thesis

Firstly, the dissertation contributes to further elucidating the content and enduring values of Ho Chi Minh's ideology concerning the construction of the Great National Unity bloc.

Secondly, based on empirical investigation, the study synthesizes and evaluates the current state of the Great National Unity bloc in the Northwest border provinces, identifies the causes behind achievements and limitations, and highlights emerging issues.

Thirdly, the dissertation forecasts key factors impacting the consolidation of the Great National Unity bloc in the region. It proposes strategic orientations and primary solutions, providing a scientific and practical basis for strengthening the Great National Unity bloc in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's ideology through 2030, with a vision to 2045.

6. Theoretical and Practical Significance

Theoretical Significance: The dissertation supplements and elucidates the theoretical and empirical foundations for reviewing a decade (2015-2025) of consolidating the Great National Unity bloc in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's ideology within the Northwestern border provinces. The research findings serve as a scholarly reference for Provincial Party Committees, People's Committees, and relevant specialized agencies - including the Departments of Ethnic and Religious Affairs, the Vietnam Fatherland Front, and local socio-political organizations. Furthermore, the study contributes to the propagation and dissemination of Ho Chi Minh's principles on national solidarity among ethnic minority communities in the Northwestern border regions.

Practical Significance: The research outcomes provide a structured framework for study, pedagogy, and reference within academic institutions, government bodies, the VFF, and socio-political organizations. It assists these entities in fulfilling their mandates to build and consolidate the Great National Unity bloc based on Ho Chi Minh's ideology. By doing so, it enhances the collective strength of the entire nation in the service of national construction, socio-economic development, and the safeguarding of national sovereignty, with a particular focus on the strategic Northwestern border provinces.

7. Structure of the Thesis

Apart from the introduction, conclusion, list of references, and appendices, the thesis is structured into 4 chapters with a total of 11 sections.

Chapter 1

OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH RELATED TO THE TOPIC AND ISSUES REQUIRING FURTHER INVESTIGATION IN THE DISSERTATION

1.1. REVIEW OF RESEARCH RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION TOPIC

1.1.1. Studies on Ho Chi Minh's Ideology on Great National Unity

The Great National Unity Among the diverse research projects approached from various perspectives, numerous works directly address Ho Chi Minh's ideology on the Great National Unity. Prominent authors include Phan Huu Dat; Le Ngoc Thang, Nguyen Quoc Pham, Hoang Chi Bao, Phan Hai Duong và Le Van Quang, Be Viet Dang, Nguyen Dinh Tan, Dau Tuan Nam, Be Truong Thanh, Nguyen Dang Thanh, scholars of the Institute of Ethnology such as Bui Xuan Dinh, Nguyen Ngoc Thanh, Lo Quoc Toan, Nguyen Lam Thanh, Vi Hong Nhan, Luu Minh Thu, Le Kim Binh, Hoang Thi Huong, Phan Xuan Son and Luu Van, Thao Xuan Sung, Pham Minh The, Nguyen Phu, Nguyen Thi Thu Thanh, Hoang Thi Trang, Tran Thi My Huong, Nguyen Thi Thuy Ha, Nguyen Tu Anh, Do Muoi, Le Quang Dao, Truong My Hoa, Huynh Dam, Dang Quang, Bui Thi Ngoc Lan, To Lam. . . . A synthesis of these studies reveals that the construction of the Great National Unity bloc has been approached from multiple dimensions. These works not only provide valuable scientific arguments but also elucidate the factors influencing the cohesion of national unity in the current context. This body of literature constitutes a vital theoretical and empirical foundation for the dissertation to inherit and apply in comprehensively evaluating the current state of unity in the Northwestern border provinces. Building upon these findings, the dissertation will clarify practical issues and propose orientations to consolidate and develop unity in the region, meeting the requirements for sustainable development and maintaining socio-political stability in the new situation.

1.1.2. Research on Ho Chi Minh's Ideology regarding the Construction of the Great National Unity Bloc

Research by authors such as Le Ngoc Thang, Nguyen Khanh Bat, Le Mau Han, Phung Huu Phu, Tran Minh Truong, and Giang Seo Phu. . . has clarified the core tenets of unity during both the national liberation revolution and the cause of defending Socialism. A prominent commonality among these studies is the emphasis on the strategic and pervasive role of the Great National Unity bloc, identifying it as the primary impetus and the foundation for all revolutionary victories. Furthermore, these studies provide an in-depth analysis of the Vietnam Fatherland Front as the core organization responsible for mobilizing collective strength and building the Great National Unity bloc. These works clearly demonstrate the flexible and creative application of Ho Chi Minh's ideology by the Party across different historical periods to adapt the construction of the Great National Unity bloc to contemporary conditions.

1.1.3. Studies on the Application of Ho Chi Minh's ideology in Building the Great National Unity Bloc

A number of studies by scholars and institutions such as Van An, Pham Ngoc Anh, Truong Minh Duc, the Lao Cai Provincial Party Committee, Duong Van Manh, Le Thi Ha, the Ho Chi Minh Institute, Nguyen Thi Kim Dung, Tran Thi My Huong, Nguyen Thi Nga, Cam Chi Kien, Doan Minh Due, Pham Van Duc, Ngo Quoc Hai and Nguyen Binh Minh, Lai Quoc Khanh, Nguyen Xuan Trung, among others, have examined the application of Ho Chi Minh's ideology in the construction of the great national unity bloc. These works consistently affirm that research into Ho Chi Minh's ideology on national unity, and its application in contemporary practice, has made important contributions to consolidating the great national unity bloc as a fundamental political foundation of the Vietnamese revolution. However, the application of Ho Chi Minh's ideology to the building of the

great national unity bloc in specific geopolitical and socio-political contexts - particularly in the northwestern border provinces - has not yet been systematically or comprehensively examined at the regional level for the period from 2015 to the present. This gap indicates the absence of an in-depth political-science analysis that links national unity with border governance, ethnic relations, political stability, and national security in this strategically significant area.

1.2. OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH RESULTS RELATED TO THE TOPIC AND ISSUES REQUIRING FURTHER EXAMINATION IN THE DISSERTATION

1.2.1. Achieved Results

Scientific works and research articles on national unity in general, and on the building of the great national unity bloc in the northwestern border provinces in particular, though approached from different perspectives and analytical levels, constitute a rich and valuable body of reference materials for this dissertation. The findings of previous studies provide important insights, data, methodological approaches, and analytical frameworks relevant to various aspects of the research topic. An analysis of the existing literature shows that most studies approach the building of the great national unity bloc as a prerequisite for clarifying broader theoretical issues of national unity. Some works address the question of national unity at the national scale or across different regions; however, no study has yet conducted a focused and systematic analysis of building political consensus and unity in the border provinces. On this basis, it is possible to identify more clearly which aspects have been addressed by previous research - particularly theoretical foundations, assessments of practical conditions, and proposed solutions - and which issues remain unresolved. These unresolved issues constitute the core research problems that this dissertation seeks to further investigate and address from a political science perspective.

Existing studies approach the paradigm of national unity from diverse analytical perspectives, with research on the Great National Unity bloc forming the most prominent thematic group. Key areas of focus include: the historical and political necessity of unity within the Vietnamese revolutionary process; the theoretical foundations of the Great National Unity bloc across various nations and historical epochs; its formation and evolution; and the strategic lessons derived from its historical successes and setbacks. Within this body of literature, theories of national unity have been rigorously examined through multiple multidisciplinary lenses. However, research specifically dedicated to constructing the Great National Unity bloc in the Northwestern border provinces remains underdeveloped. Current scholarship often addresses this region through fragmented lenses or isolated case studies that lack broader regional synthesis. Consequently, there is a conspicuous absence of a systematic framework and a coherent methodology for translating general theories of national unity into the practical consolidation of the Great National Unity bloc within this specific border context. This gap is particularly evident in the lack of comprehensive research covering the period from 2015 to the present.

While some studies offer broad solutions oriented toward major political actors - such as the Communist Party, the State, and the Vietnam Fatherland Front - there is a profound shortage of context-specific strategies tailored to the Northwestern border provinces. Existing literature tends to focus on discrete sectors - such as ethnic policy, socio-economic welfare, or grassroots defense - rather than providing an integrated approach. While the roles of political subjects and the agency of the people are frequently mentioned, the analytical depth regarding the application of Ho Chi Minh's ideology in this strategically sensitive region remains insufficient in both volume and theoretical rigor.

Furthermore, although numerous scholarly articles examine the implementation of Ho Chi Minh's ideology in grassroots governance and community development, these works largely adopt descriptive or practice-summarizing approaches. They prioritize policy outcomes over in-

depth theoretical inquiry into the specific modes of ideological application. Specifically, current research lacks a sophisticated analysis of how Ho Chi Minh's tenets on unity intersect with modern social governance and ethnic dynamics in the Northwest. Evaluations of effectiveness and the development of replicable models remain fragmented, lacking the necessary synthesis and comparative analysis across localities for the 2015-2025 period.

Ultimately, existing research reflects only the nascent stages of integrating Ho Chi Minh's ideology into the developmental practices of the Northwestern border provinces. To date, no specialized, comprehensive study has systematically addressed the construction of the Great National Unity bloc in this strategically vital region. This constitutes a significant scholarly gap that necessitates further investigation. This dissertation seeks to fill that void by clarifying theoretical values and formulating concrete policy orientations and solutions uniquely suited to the contemporary conditions of the Northwestern border provinces.

1.2.2. Key Issues the Dissertation Needs to Address

First, the dissertation systematically examines and elucidates the core tenets and theoretical significance of Ho Chi Minh's ideology regarding the construction of the Great National Unity bloc. It rigorously analyzes the application of these principles to the unique context of the Northwestern border provinces. This task involves synthesizing the distinct socio-political characteristics of the region, defining the central conceptual framework in a contemporary setting, and substantiating the strategic necessity of strengthening the Great National Unity bloc. Special attention is given to the region's geopolitical sensitivity as a frontier territory with a predominant ethnic minority population (nearly 80%), which serves as the foundation for concretizing the research scope.

Second, the dissertation provides a comprehensive and systematic assessment of the practical consolidation of the Great National Unity bloc in the Northwestern border provinces from 2015 to 2025. By employing a multidimensional approach, the study identifies and evaluates the underlying political, socio-economic, institutional, and cultural determinants that have shaped both the achievements and systemic limitations during this period. This analysis is instrumental in identifying the core bottlenecks and unresolved problems that constitute the primary focus of this research.

Third, based on a strategic forecast of the opportunities and challenges impacting national solidarity in the current juncture, the dissertation formulates a series of strategic orientations and practical solutions. These recommendations are designed to optimize the efficacy of building the Great National Unity bloc within the Northwestern border provinces, providing a scientific roadmap for the period leading to 2030, with a long-term vision toward 2045.

Chapter 1 Summary

To date, a considerable body of research has addressed key issues related to the great national unity and the building of the great national unity bloc. Many of these studies, conducted by scholars and researchers, have examined the subject in depth from multiple perspectives and analytical dimensions. As such, these works constitute a valuable corpus of research on great national unity, offering both high theoretical significance and practical relevance. They provide the author with an important knowledge base and methodological insights for critically examining, assessing, analyzing, and interpreting specialized issues, as well as for applying Ho Chi Minh's ideology on building the great national unity bloc to the contemporary realities of the northwestern border provinces.

In order to conduct an in-depth study and ensure effective practical application, it is necessary to approach this issue from both theoretical and empirical perspectives. This dual approach forms a sound theoretical foundation for accurately assessing the current situation and

for proposing feasible and policy-relevant solutions to strengthening great national unity in the northwestern border provinces. Theoretical arguments, empirical data, and practical evidence presented in previously published scientific works are rich, diverse, up-to-date, and reliable, and are well aligned with contemporary realities. These studies therefore serve as important reference materials with broad applicability, contributing to the conceptual grounding and orientation of the research process. On this basis, the dissertation author is able to inherit and further develop existing arguments in order to address issues directly related to the research focus in the northwestern border provinces.

In the current context, it is evident that the research topic “*Building the Great National Unity Bloc in Accordance with Ho Chi Minh’s Ideology in the Northwestern Border Provinces at Present*” has not yet received sufficient scholarly attention, particularly in terms of in-depth analysis of how Ho Chi Minh’s ideology on the great national unity is applied in these specific border localities. Therefore, the author’s selection of this topic is significant not only for systematizing relevant theoretical and empirical knowledge, but also for its practical value in analyzing achievements as well as emerging challenges in the process of building and developing the great national unity bloc in the northwestern border provinces today.

Chapter 2

THEORETICAL ISSUES CONCERNING THE BUILDING OF THE GREAT NATIONAL UNITY BLOC IN ACCORDANCE WITH HO CHI MINH’S IDEOLOGY IN THE NORTHWESTERN BORDER PROVINCES

2.1. SOME RELATED CONCEPTS

2.1.1. Nation

2.1.2. Unity, Great Unity, and Great National Unity

2.1.2.1. Unity

The concept of unity has been approached from different perspectives across various academic fields; consequently, existing studies and reference materials provide definitions that are not entirely uniform.

According to the *Concise Dictionary of Politics*, “unity refers to the consolidation of many individuals into a solid bloc, sharing common will and purpose; the support for movements, organizations, or individuals based on similar or convergent viewpoints and interests; and the coordination of activities and actions.”

The *Comprehensive Dictionary of the Vietnamese Language* defines unity as “the formation of a unified bloc of will, without contradiction or opposition.”

From a political science perspective, unity can thus be understood as a process of mobilizing and organizing specific social forces, involving clearly defined subjects, methods, and objectives, in order to form a cohesive whole oriented toward shared aspirations, ideals, goals, and interests.

2.1.2.2. Great Unity

According to several dictionary definitions, “*great unity*” denotes the large-scale aggregation and consolidation of diverse components and social strata into a unified bloc, based on consensus in pursuing common objectives. In this sense, great unity may be understood as “the cause of the entire people, constituting the fundamental source of strength and the primary driving force behind all victories in the revolutionary process, as well as in national construction and defense.” In political terms, great unity represents “a strategic approach to mobilizing, building, consolidating, expanding, and strengthening revolutionary forces in the struggle for national liberation, class emancipation, and human liberation.” Ho Chi Minh emphasized that great unity

must first and foremost be based on unity among the overwhelming majority of the people, who, in the Vietnamese context, are workers, peasants, and other working people. He identified this social foundation as the root and core of great unity.

2.1.2.3. Great National Unity

The great national unity refers to the political and social cohesion of all social strata, ethnic groups, religions, and classes within Vietnamese society under the leadership of the Communist Party, to generate comprehensive national strength for the construction and defense of the Fatherland. Great national unity is the cause of the entire nation; nurturing, safeguarding, and strengthening this unity bloc is the responsibility of the political system as a whole, as well as of every citizen. Within this framework, unity within the Party constitutes the core and nucleus for building unity within the political system and for consolidating the great national unity bloc. This unity serves as the fundamental source of strength and the principal driving force of the Vietnamese revolution.

2.1.2.4. Ho Chi Minh's Ideology on Great National Unity

In studies of Ho Chi Minh's ideology, although he did not formulate an explicit or formal definition of "great national unity," his theoretical writings, as well as his practical leadership and directives, allow the concept to be clearly identified. *Accordingly, Ho Chi Minh's ideology on the great national unity may be understood as a coherent system of viewpoints concerning the leading subject and participating forces of the great national unity bloc; the principles, guidelines, and methods of organization and mobilization; and the objective of uniting broad social forces within the united national front to generate national strength in service of the revolutionary cause.*

Expressed in another way, Ho Chi Minh's ideology on great unity constitutes "a comprehensive system of perspectives on the position, role, content, principles, methods, and organizational forms for mobilizing and structuring revolutionary forces, to maximize both national strength and the strength of the times in the cause of national liberation and socialist revolution."

2.1.2.5. Ho Chi Minh's ideology on Building the Great National Unity Bloc

Ho Chi Minh's ideology on building the great national unity bloc can be defined as *a system of viewpoints on the content, principles, guidelines, and methods of organizing and mobilizing forces to construct and consolidate unity among all ethnic groups within the great family of the Vietnamese nation. The ultimate objective of this process is to generate national strength as a driving force for realizing the strategic goal of "national independence associated with socialism."*

2.1.2.6. Building the Great National Unity Bloc in the Northwestern Border Provinces in Accordance with Ho Chi Minh's ideology

Based on the requirements, tasks, content, and objectives of building the great national unity bloc in the northwestern border provinces, the concept may be defined as follows: *Building the great national unity bloc in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's ideology in the northwestern border provinces is the creative application and development of his system of viewpoints on leadership subjects and participating forces; on the content, principles, methods, and organizational forms of mobilization and aggregation, to establish and mobilize internal driving forces to serve socio-economic development as well as national defense and security in the northwestern border provinces.*

In terms of objectives, this process seeks to consolidate the people's trust in the Party and the State, promote the combined strength of the community in comprehensive socio-economic development, preserve cultural identity, and ensure national defense and security, thereby

contributing to the firm safeguarding of national border sovereignty. At the same time, through the practical process of building great national unity, it aims to foster patriotism, self-reliance, and resilience, thus creating a solid socio-political foundation for industrialization and modernization in the northwestern border region. This also represents a concrete realization of Ho Chi Minh's view that internal strength constitutes the fundamental basis for the sustainable development of the Vietnamese revolution.

About leadership, Ho Chi Minh's ideology affirms that the leading subject in building the great national unity bloc is the Communist Party of Vietnam—the only political force possessing sufficient political resolve, intellectual capacity, and prestige to unite and lead the people. In the Northwestern region, where multiple ethnic groups coexist, the Party's leadership is particularly significant in orienting, organizing, and mobilizing the power of unity. Accordingly, in Ho Chi Minh's ideology, the Party is both the leading subject and the nucleus of unity, playing a decisive role in the construction and development of the great national unity bloc in the Northwestern border provinces. The Party exercises leadership through the political system, especially the Vietnam Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations, in order to connect ethnic groups, respect customs and traditions, improve people's livelihoods, and consolidate confidence in the Party's line and policies. At the same time, the Party promotes the role of the political system and the people - particularly village elders, community leaders, and prestigious individuals - to generate consensus within local communities.

In terms of forces, consistent with Ho Chi Minh's principle that "great unity means uniting all those who can be united," the forces constituting the great national unity bloc in the northwestern border provinces encompass the entire population, regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, or social stratum. Among these, ethnic minority communities constitute a core force, directly linked to the cause of development and the protection of the nation's frontier. Mobilizing the combined strength of these forces represents the process of transforming the spirit of unity into substantial socio-political resources, serving the goal of sustainable development in the border region.

In terms of principles: According to Ho Chi Minh, the construction of the great national unity bloc must be grounded in the principles of equality, mutual respect, sincere and long-term solidarity, and the primacy of the shared national interest. When applied to the Northwestern border region, these principles are manifested in ensuring ethnic equality in socio-economic development, respecting cultural identities and customary practices, and resolutely combating all forms of ethnic division and discrimination. Upholding these principles contributes to consolidating the people's trust in the Party and the State, thereby fostering unity of will and action throughout the border region.

In terms of methods: In Ho Chi Minh's ideology, the method of building the great national unity bloc must be people-centered, combining mobilization and education with struggle, while properly handling relations among social forces. In the current context of the Northwestern border provinces, this task should be carried out through a balanced integration of three interacting dimensions: revolutionary forces, intermediate forces, and counter-revolutionary forces. For revolutionary forces, the core method lies in consolidating political confidence and promoting the pioneering and exemplary role of cadres, Party members, village elders, and community leaders in propaganda and mass mobilization. For intermediate forces, it is essential to strengthen mass mobilization and persuasion, helping them to clearly recognize the interconnection between individual, communal, and national interests, thereby drawing them into the unity bloc. With regard to counter-revolutionary or oppositional elements, resolute struggle and re-education are required, combining legal measures with political education in order to maintain socio-political stability while preventing attempts at ethnic division or externally instigated separatism. This

method vividly reflects Ho Chi Minh's conception of unity closely linked with struggle, and the dialectical unity between national, democratic, and socialist objectives in the process of building a stable, secure, and comprehensively developed Northwestern border region.

In terms of organizational forms: According to Ho Chi Minh, the highest organizational form of the great national unity bloc is the United National Front, built upon the alliance of workers, peasants, and intellectuals, placed under the comprehensive leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam, and operating on the principle of democratic consultation. In the Northwestern border provinces today, this form is institutionalized through the consolidation and enhancement of the role of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations within the grassroots political system. At all levels, the Vietnam Fatherland Front functions as a central coordinating body, uniting diverse ethnic groups, religions, and social strata around the common goals of sustainable development, strengthened national defense and security, and the protection of national borders. Under the Party's leadership, the Fatherland Front in these provinces has proactively expanded the scope of national unity, intensified dialogue and democratic consultation, and listened to and articulated the aspirations of ethnic minority communities. This process embodies the essence of "democracy-unity-consensus," transforming Ho Chi Minh's ideology on the United National Front into tangible political strength, thereby contributing to the maintenance of political stability and the consolidation of a firm the great national unity bloc in the border areas.

2.2. THE CONTENT OF HO CHI MINH'S IDEOLOGY ON BUILDING THE GREAT NATIONAL UNITY BLOC

2.2.1. The Position, Role, Purpose, and Requirements of Building the Great National Unity Bloc

2.2.1.1. Position and Role

The great national unity constitutes an issue of strategic significance and represents the fundamental determinant of all victories of the Vietnamese nation. It is not merely a political slogan but a core political strategy and a decisive factor ensuring the success of the revolutionary cause. In Ho Chi Minh's ideology, building and consolidating the great national unity bloc is the foremost task of the revolutionary Party, directly shaping the political capacity of the nation to mobilize social forces and maintain national cohesion.

2.2.1.2. Purpose and Requirements

In terms of purpose: The great national unity must serve the overarching objectives of national independence, national sovereignty, and freedom, while ensuring that the people enjoy material well-being and a dignified, happy life.

In terms of requirements, Ho Chi Minh emphasized that great national unity is initially a means to achieve revolutionary goals; however, at a higher level, it becomes a fundamental objective and a primary mission of the revolutionary Party itself. The construction of the great national unity bloc constitutes the most powerful determinant of revolutionary success, functioning as a comprehensive and endogenous source of strength in the cause of national construction and defense. Accordingly, building the great national unity bloc in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's ideology means fostering and institutionalizing the strongest internal political and social forces, enabling Vietnam to advance steadily toward socialism.

2.2.2. The Leadership Subject of the Great National Unity Bloc

In Ho Chi Minh's ideology, the great national unity bloc represents the most powerful force for accomplishing all revolutionary tasks. However, for this bloc to be organized, properly oriented, and effectively mobilized, it must be led by a pioneering political force - the Communist Party of Vietnam. The Party's leadership is the decisive factor in transforming the immense

potential strength of the people into concrete political power and coordinated collective action in pursuit of common national goals. Thus, according to Ho Chi Minh, the Communist Party of Vietnam is the only political subject possessing the requisite qualities, capacity, and legitimacy to lead, unite, and fully activate the power of great national unity.

2.2.3. The Forces Constituting the Great National Unity Bloc

In Ho Chi Minh's conception, the forces involved in building the great national unity bloc encompass the broadest possible social spectrum: solidarity among social classes and strata; unity among ethnic groups; religious solidarity; unity among all Vietnamese citizens at home and abroad; and unity within the Party, among the people, and within the cadre contingent. More specifically, this includes unity among all Vietnamese people regardless of residence, solidarity among classes and social groups, inter-ethnic and inter-religious unity, internal unity within the Party and the cadre corps, and the inseparable unity between the Party and the people. This comprehensive approach underscores the inclusive and integrative nature of the great national unity as a political foundation of the Vietnamese revolutionary process.

2.2.4. Principles for Building the Great National Unity Bloc

2.2.4.1. The construction of the great national unity bloc must be grounded in the unity between the fundamental interests of the nation-state and the legitimate rights and interests of social classes and strata

2.2.4.2. Building the great national unity bloc requires unwavering trust in the people, reliance on the people as the central political subject, and persistent efforts to safeguard and advance the legitimate interests of the people

2.2.4.3. The great national unity bloc must be formed voluntarily while being institutionalized through organization and leadership.

2.2.4.4. The construction of the great national unity bloc must be conducted with sincerity, frankness, and mutual respect, and must be closely linked to the practice of self-criticism and criticism

2.2.5. Methods of Building the Great National Unity Bloc

In the process of building the great national unity bloc, Ho Chi Minh articulated a comprehensive and flexible system of methods, ensuring that unity becomes a substantive source of power rather than a mere slogan. Three fundamental methods consistently employed by him include:

2.2.5.1. The Method of Propaganda, Education, and Persuasion

2.2.5.2. Building the great national unity bloc requires the effective organization of social forces through institutional mechanisms, transforming dispersed individuals and groups into a coherent, coordinated, and goal-oriented political force

2.2.5.3. The Method of Managing and Resolving Social and Political Relations

2.2.6. Forms of Building the Great National Unity Bloc

Ho Chi Minh concretized the great national unity into a material and organized social force through the establishment of the United National Front. The United National Front represents the broadest organizational form for mobilizing patriotic forces, irrespective of ethnicity, religion, social origin, or class, with the supreme objective of national reunification and the advancement toward socialism. Depending on historical periods and the specific requirements of each revolutionary stage, the United National Front has assumed different names, contents, organizational forms, and modes of operation. Nevertheless, its essential nature remains consistent as the vivid institutional expression of the great national unity bloc. In building the United National Front, Ho Chi Minh emphasized two fundamental requirements: first, the Front must be founded on the alliance of the working class, the peasantry, and the intelligentsia; second, it must be placed under the leadership of the Party of the working class.

2.3. THE VALUE OF HO CHI MINH'S IDEOLOGY ON BUILDING THE GREAT NATIONAL UNITY BLOC

2.3.1. Theoretical Value

2.3.1.1. Theoretical Value for the Vietnamese Nation

The fundamental theoretical values of Ho Chi Minh's ideology on building the great national unity bloc are manifested in the following aspects:

First, it creatively inherited and further developed Marxist-Leninist theory concerning the role of the popular masses in revolutionary processes, affirming the people as the primary subject and decisive force of the revolution.

Second, it advanced revolutionary theory on strategies for mobilizing and consolidating social forces, providing a systematic framework for uniting diverse classes, strata, and social groups under common political objectives.

Third, it achieved an organic and dialectical integration between theory and practice, ensuring that revolutionary theory was continuously tested, enriched, and refined through concrete historical conditions in Vietnam.

Fourth, it contributed to the formation of the theoretical foundation for the construction and institutionalization of the United National Front model in Vietnam as a key political mechanism for national unity.

Fifth, Ho Chi Minh's ideology on the great national unity laid the groundwork for the continued development of theoretical perspectives on building and consolidating the great national unity bloc across all historical periods of the Vietnamese revolution.

2.3.1.2. Theoretical Value of Ho Chi Minh's ideology on Building the Great National Unity Bloc in Relation to Practice in the Northwestern Border Provinces

First, Ho Chi Minh's ideology on building the great national unity bloc represents a creative application and development of Marxism-Leninism in the sphere of revolutionary force-building, tailored to the specific requirements and tasks of the Vietnamese revolution, particularly in strategically sensitive regions.

Second, this body of thought serves as a guiding theoretical compass for the Party and the State in formulating and directing policies and strategies, as well as in organizing and implementing measures to mobilize, consolidate, and develop revolutionary forces in the northwestern border provinces.

Third, Ho Chi Minh's ideology affirms and promotes the pivotal position and role of the United National Front as a representative institution of broad social strata, religious communities, political parties, and socio-political organizations, with the Communist Party serving as the core and leading force.

Fourth, Ho Chi Minh's ideology provides a crucial theoretical foundation for the formulation and implementation of social policies - particularly those prioritizing socio-economic development in mountainous, remote, border, and island areas - thereby creating conditions for preserving ethnic cultural values and promoting cultural identity as a core factor in strengthening the great national unity bloc.

Fifth, Ho Chi Minh's ideology on building the great national unity bloc constitutes an important theoretical basis for overcoming inferiority complexes, prejudices, and narrow-minded attitudes in relations between the ethnic majority and ethnic minority communities in the northwestern border provinces, thereby fostering political trust, social cohesion, and sustainable national unity.

2.3.2. Practical Value

2.3.2.1. For the Vietnamese Nation

First, the application of Ho Chi Minh's ideology on building the great national unity bloc, under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam, enabled the organization and

mobilization of the entire people into a unified front within the United National Front. This consolidation generated decisive political and social strength, contributing directly to the victories of the Vietnamese revolution.

Second, the creative application and further development of Ho Chi Minh's ideology on the great national unity and the construction of the unity bloc have been concretized through policies on ethnic equality, freedom of belief and religion, cultural preservation, the enhancement of educational standards, and prioritized socio-economic development in ethnic minority areas. These policies constitute the institutional and material foundations for consolidating the great national unity bloc in the spirit of Ho Chi Minh.

Third, Ho Chi Minh's ideology on building the great national unity bloc provides the ideological and political basis for mobilizing the broadest possible national strength, including individuals who previously made mistakes, provided that they possess patriotism and are oriented toward the shared national objectives. This process led to the formation and consolidation of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and a wide network of socio-political organizations, thereby establishing a firm "people's confidence front" as a cornerstone of political stability.

Fourth, Ho Chi Minh's conception of building the great national unity bloc has contributed to the formation of a prosperous, cohesive society, creating favorable conditions for the realization of substantive democracy, social justice, and the aspiration to build a civilized nation in concrete social practice.

2.3.2.2. For the Northwestern Border Provinces

The provinces of Lao Cai, Lai Chau, Dien Bien, and Son La occupy a particularly strategic position in terms of socio-economic development, political stability, cultural-social life, and national defense and security. These provinces are also home to a large proportion of ethnic minority communities, including the Nung, Mong, Thai, Dao, Ha Nhi, and Tay, among others. Given their historical tradition of solidarity in defending the Fatherland, as well as the requirements of the current period of renewal, the continued creative application of Ho Chi Minh's ideology on building the great national unity bloc holds especially profound and practical significance across multiple dimensions:

First, it provides a fundamental basis for comprehensively developing the great national unity bloc in ethnic minority areas, overcoming inferiority complexes, and narrowing socio-economic and cultural gaps among ethnic groups.

Second, Ho Chi Minh's ideology on building the great national unity bloc continues to be concretized through the close integration of individual, community, and national interests, thereby strengthening social cohesion and political consensus.

Third, in the sphere of national defense and security, this thought serves as a core foundation for developing robust "people's national defense" and "people's security" postures, reinforcing the political-security architecture of the northwestern border region.

Fourth, the construction of the great national unity bloc acts as a driving force for sustainable socio-economic development, contributing to improvements in both the material and spiritual living standards of the population.

Fifth, drawing on Ho Chi Minh's ideology on building the great national unity bloc, the northwestern border provinces have continued to enhance awareness and application among local Party committees, authorities, the Vietnam Fatherland Front at all levels, socio-political organizations, and the people themselves. This has promoted a heightened sense of political responsibility, initiative, and active participation in consolidating national unity, political stability, and regional development.

Chapter 2 Summary

Vietnam is currently confronting both significant opportunities and complex challenges that exert continuous and direct impacts on the great national unity bloc. Under present conditions, new advantages as well as emerging problems and challenges have arisen at both the regional and international levels, particularly in relation to the evolving situation in the East Sea. In this context, continuing to deepen awareness of and to promote the tradition of the great national unity on the theoretical foundation of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh's Ideology is essential for accurately recognizing and assessing the strategic role of the strength of the great national unity bloc.

The inheritance and further development of theoretical perspectives on building the great national unity bloc in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's ideology in the current context must be conducted in a systematic, rigorous, comprehensive, and profound manner across all domains of domestic socio-economic life, while also taking into account the multidimensional impacts of the international environment. Firmly grasping and creatively applying Ho Chi Minh's ideology on the great national unity is not only an objective requirement of the country's renovation process but also a decisive factor for its success. In new conditions, Ho Chi Minh's conception of building the great national unity bloc needs to be continuously concretized and innovated in terms of leadership subjects, participating forces, content, methods, organizational forms, and implementation principles, to adapt to the dynamic transformations of practice, particularly in the northwestern border region. This represents a process of selective, flexible, and creative application of the core values embedded in Ho Chi Minh's ideology. Studying and following his example in building the great national unity bloc not only contributes to enhancing political capacity and revolutionary ethics but also constitutes a regular, long-term, and strategically significant task for the entire Party, the whole political system, and the people as a whole. Historically, Ho Chi Minh's strategy for building the great national unity bloc in each period generated immense political and social power, effectively mobilizing all resources for the tasks of national independence, resistance against foreign aggression, and socialist construction. Today, this strategy continues to underpin Vietnam's steadfast commitment to the socialist path of development, oriented toward the overarching goals of the people and the nation: "a prosperous people, a strong country, democracy, equity, and civilization."

Chapter 3

THE CURRENT SITUATION OF BUILDING THE GREAT NATIONAL UNITY BLOC IN THE NORTHWESTERN BORDER PROVINCES (VIEWED FROM HO CHI MINH'S IDEOLOGY) AND EMERGING ISSUES

3.1. AN OVERVIEW OF NATURAL CONDITIONS, CULTURAL TRADITIONS, HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY FACTORS AFFECTING THE BUILDING OF THE GREAT NATIONAL UNITY BLOC IN THE NORTHWESTERN BORDER PROVINCES AT PRESENT

3.1.1. Natural Characteristics

First, topographical features; second, river systems; third, climatic conditions; and fourth, the transportation and infrastructure systems of the provinces.

3.1.2. Cultural Characteristics and Historical Traditions

First, cultural characteristics: (1) rich and distinctive cultural traditions; (2) a long-standing tradition of building and consolidating the great national unity bloc; and (3) unique and diverse cultural heritages of the northwestern border provinces.

Second, characteristics of historical traditions.

3.1.3. Socio-Economic Conditions and Population Structure

3.1.3.1. Socio-economic characteristics

3.1.3.2. Population characteristics

3.1.4. National Defense and Security Conditions

In summary, the northwestern border region occupies a position of special strategic importance in terms of economic development, national defense and security, and external relations. Characterized primarily by high and rugged mountainous terrain, sharply differentiated climatic conditions, and underdeveloped transportation infrastructure, the region nonetheless possesses abundant natural resources and a high degree of cultural diversity. It is also the long-established living space of numerous ethnic minority groups, each of which has nurtured strong traditions of patriotism, solidarity, and close attachment to the broader Vietnamese national community. At the same time, the region contains many latent complexities arising from its vast and fragmented territory, uneven levels of education and social development, persistent socio-economic constraints, and the influence of ethnic, religious, and non-traditional security issues. Sharing borders with China and Laos, provinces such as Lao Cai, Lai Chau, Son La, and Dien Bien not only constitute a critical defensive belt along Vietnam's northwestern frontier, but also represent a focal area where the tasks of ensuring national defense and security, maintaining political stability, and building the great national unity bloc are closely intertwined. Under new conditions, promoting the strength of the great national unity bloc is not merely a key solution for accelerating socio-economic development, but also a fundamental prerequisite for safeguarding national sovereignty and preserving the integrity of the country's territory in an increasingly complex security environment. The principles of building the great national unity bloc articulated by Ho Chi Minh's ideology serve as a guiding framework for this task in the northwestern border region. This mission arises not only from the objective requirements of local development practice but also constitutes a long-term strategic task of profound significance for firmly protecting the Fatherland in the current period of deep international integration.

3.2. THE CURRENT SITUATION OF BUILDING THE GREAT NATIONAL UNITY BLOC IN ACCORDANCE WITH HO CHI MINH'S IDEOLOGY IN THE NORTHWESTERN BORDER PROVINCES FROM 2015 TO JUNE 2025

3.2.1. Overview of the Current Situation of Building the Great National Unity Bloc in the Northwestern Border Provinces

3.2.2. Achievements and Their Causes

3.2.2.1. Achievements

First, the leadership and direction exercised by the Party and the State in building and consolidating the great national unity bloc.

Second, the effective implementation of ethnic equality across various sectors and fields in the northwestern border provinces.

Third, the promotion of the role and collective strength of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations in building the great national unity bloc in the northwestern border region.

Fourth, the active role of people of all ethnic groups as the principal subjects in the process of building the great national unity bloc in the northwestern border provinces.

Fifth, the contingent of cadres working in the northwestern border provinces has effectively fulfilled its responsibilities in consolidating and strengthening the great national unity bloc.

Sixth, the strict and consistent implementation of ethnic and religious programs and policies, thereby making an important contribution to reinforcing the great national unity bloc in the northwestern border provinces.

3.2.2.2. Causes

First, the close attention, leadership, and guidance of Party committees and local authorities at all levels.

Second, the timely promulgation of resolutions, decisions, and action plans that are appropriate to the specific conditions of each province and sub-region.

Third, the increasingly significant role of the Viet Nam Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations in mobilizing, uniting, and organizing the people.

Fourth, the effective promotion of the people's role as the central and decisive subject in the construction of the great national unity bloc.

Fifth, the rigorous and consistent implementation of ethnic and religious policies has contributed to consolidating social consensus, strengthening political stability, and reinforcing the great national unity bloc in the northwestern border provinces.

3.2.3. Limitations and Causes of Limitations in Building the Great National Unity Bloc in the Northwestern Border Provinces

3.2.3.1. Limitations

Despite the achievements attained, ethnic affairs and the work of building the great national unity bloc in the northwestern border provinces still reveal several shortcomings and constraints:

First, Party leadership, direction, and the organization of implementation in building the great national unity bloc have not always received adequate attention in recent years, resulting in uneven effectiveness across localities.

Second, limitations remain in the implementation of programs and projects under national target programs, particularly in terms of coordination, resource allocation, and policy effectiveness.

Third, the quality of human resources in the northwestern border provinces remains relatively low. This is reflected in demographic characteristics and ethnic structure; production practices and economic conditions; limited vocational training and labor skills; constraints in healthcare and population quality; and an unbalanced employment structure with low labor productivity.

Fourth, mass mobilization and political communication have not been conducted in a manner fully consistent with the objectives, content, and methods required for building the great national unity bloc, thereby reducing their overall effectiveness.

Fifth, public trust in the Party, in the regulatory and governance capacity of the State, and in the political regime has not yet been fully consolidated, particularly in certain remote and disadvantaged areas.

Sixth, Party leadership and direction in ethnic, religious, and mass mobilization affairs aimed at consolidating the great national unity bloc still face multiple unresolved issues, affecting political cohesion and social consensus.

3.2.3.2. Causes of the Limitations in Building the Great National Unity Bloc in the Northwestern Border Provinces

*** Objective Causes**

First, harsh natural conditions, rugged terrain, and underdeveloped infrastructure have posed significant constraints on socio-economic development and on the effective implementation of policies aimed at consolidating national unity.

Second, shortcomings and inconsistencies in the implementation of mechanisms, policies, and land management practices have negatively affected social stability and the livelihoods of ethnic minority communities.

Third, the erosion and decline of traditional cultural values have weakened cultural cohesion and reduced the endogenous social capital that underpins the great national unity bloc.

Fourth, hostile and reactionary forces have continuously employed increasingly sophisticated political plots and tactics to undermine national unity, incite division, and destabilize the northwestern border provinces.

** Subjective Causes*

First, awareness and understanding among some Party committees, local authorities at different levels, sectoral agencies, and a segment of cadres and Party members regarding the strategic significance of building the great national unity bloc remain limited.

Second, activities related to political education, propaganda, and mass mobilization aimed at consolidating the great national unity bloc have been insufficient in both scope and effectiveness.

Third, a segment of the ethnic minority population lacks a strong sense of self-discipline in building unity, as well as self-reliance and proactive motivation to overcome poverty and improve livelihoods.

Fourth, policy implementation remains slow and insufficiently innovative, with a lack of synchronization and coherence in mechanisms and policies designed to support the people, thereby reducing their overall impact on strengthening the great national unity bloc.

3.3. ISSUES ARISING IN THE BUILDING OF THE GREAT NATIONAL UNITY BLOC IN ACCORDANCE WITH HO CHI MINH'S IDEOLOGY IN THE NORTHWESTERN BORDER PROVINCES AT PRESENT

3.3.1. The increasingly urgent requirement to continuously improve the material and spiritual living standards of ethnic communities and to develop a prosperous and stable border region, while investment in building the great national unity bloc in the northwestern border provinces continues to face numerous constraints

3.3.2. The limited level of political awareness among the people in the northwestern border provinces, while the task of building the great national unity bloc in this region requires deeper, more substantive, and more effective implementation

3.3.3. The rising demands on the leadership capacity and governance competence of Party organizations, local authorities, the Fatherland Front, and socio-political organizations - the principal actors in building the great national unity bloc - while the contingent of cadres has not yet adequately met these requirements

3.3.4. The requirement for strict adherence to the principles of building the great national unity bloc in the northwestern border provinces, while practical implementation remains inconsistent, lax, and at times flawed

3.3.5. Issues concerning mass mobilization work and the contingent of cadres engaged in mass mobilization in relation to the task of building the great national unity bloc in the northwestern border provinces

Chapter 3 Summary

During the 2015-2025 period, the construction of the Great National Unity bloc in the Northwestern border provinces, grounded in Ho Chi Minh's ideology, yielded substantial achievements. Public awareness regarding the strategic imperative of national solidarity was significantly enhanced and increasingly institutionalized into concrete political actions aligned with local governance mandates. Through the systematic dissemination and rigorous implementation of Party guidelines and State policies, the mobilization of ethnic groups became more synchronized and efficacious. Notably, by optimizing the agency of key political actors and mobilizing the collective strength of the entire political system, a high degree of socio-political consensus was fostered. Guided by the principles of mutual respect and solidarity, local authorities integrated unity-building objectives across socio-economic, cultural, and national

defense-security domains. These concerted propaganda and mobilization efforts successfully consolidated public confidence in the institutional framework of the Great National Unity bloc.

However, certain systemic limitations persist, primarily attributable to subjective factors at the local administrative level. These include sluggish and occasionally perfunctory policy implementation, a lack of innovative approaches in specific localities, and the insufficient proactivity of actors tasked with fostering unity. In several instances, mass mobilization and persuasive communication strategies aimed at engaging ethnic communities in economic production and socio-cultural development lacked the necessary resonance to generate broad social diffusion. These shortcomings have hindered the optimal consolidation of the Great National Unity bloc and diminished the transformative potential of local solidarity initiatives.

The practical realities of the region necessitate a more strategic and disciplined approach to governance. First, it is imperative to elevate political responsibility and ideological awareness among Party organizations, State agencies, and social mass organizations to rectify perceptual and behavioral discrepancies. Second, there must be a seamless integration between comprehensive regional development tasks and the strategic objective of building the Great National Unity bloc to prevent policy fragmentation. Third, the principle of ethnic equality must be implemented substantively, ensuring rigorous and consistent mutual respect among all ethnic groups. Fourth, mass mobilization strategies must be revitalized to empower the proactive and creative agency of ethnic communities, thereby reinforcing socio-political stability and safeguarding national sovereignty.

In the subsequent period, building the Great National Unity bloc in the Northwestern border provinces must be pursued through a strategic, comprehensive, and sustainable lens. Priority must be accorded to deepening the trust of ethnic communities in the Party and State, treating this "political faith" as the bedrock of national stability. Simultaneously, strategic investment in socio-economic development must be inextricably linked to sustainable poverty reduction to provide tangible incentives for civic participation. Furthermore, enhancing the capacity of the ethnic minority cadre system at the grassroots level is essential; improving their professional competence and governance skills will ensure they can effectively address the complex developmental and security challenges unique to the frontier regions.

Chapter 4

ORIENTATIONS AND SOLUTIONS FOR BUILDING

THE GREAT NATIONAL UNITY BLOC IN THE NORTHWESTERN BORDER PROVINCES AT PRESENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH HO CHI MINH'S IDEOLOGY (TOWARD 2030, WITH A VISION TO 2045)

4.1. FORECAST OF FACTORS AFFECTING THE BUILDING OF THE GREAT NATIONAL UNITY BLOC IN THE NORTHWESTERN BORDER PROVINCES (TOWARD 2030, WITH A VISION TO 2045)

4.1.1. Impacts of the International Situation

Changes in the global and regional context are unfolding rapidly, in complex, unstable, and unpredictable ways, intertwining both opportunities and challenges for the building of the great national unity bloc. Foremost among these is the dual impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Industry 4.0). Hostile and reactionary forces have intensified their plots and activities aimed at undermining national unity through increasingly sophisticated and dangerous methods, sowing hatred, provoking contradictions, and fomenting social conflict. The international situation continues to evolve in a volatile, complex, and uncertain manner.

At present, global economic, political, and socio-cultural issues continue to generate national and ethnic conflicts, many of which have become increasingly complicated. Major powers

compete for markets; localized wars and conflicts over economic interests persist; ethnic tensions are inflamed; religious divisions are incited; and political interference by powerful states in economically underdeveloped or dependent countries remains evident. Terrorism continues to pose serious threats across continents and regions. Strategic adjustments, pivots, and shifts in focus toward Asia further shape the international landscape. These dynamics exert significant influence on Viet Nam, particularly on the northwestern border provinces, where ethnic minorities constitute the majority, levels of education remain limited, living standards are low, economic development is slow, and natural disasters such as floods and storms occur frequently - conditions that make these areas more vulnerable to manipulation and incitement by hostile forces.

4.1.2. The Domestic Context

Viet Nam is currently undergoing a process of integration, development, and comprehensive renewal. In reality, the country stands at a crossroads marked by significant opportunities for advancement, alongside major challenges to the cause of socialist construction.

First, historical laws and the accumulated experience of previous generations demonstrate that national success is achievable only when the combined strength of the nation is fully mobilized and harmonized with the power of the times.

Second, in the new context, it is imperative to continue promoting the spirit of national autonomy and self-reliance.

Third, Viet Nam faces numerous challenges and complex developments, as hostile forces persist in their schemes to alter the country's political regime.

Fourth, the task of building the great national unity bloc is carried out in the context of administrative unit consolidation and the implementation of a two-tier local government model in the northwestern border provinces. The merger of administrative units and the deployment of the two-level government model (provincial-communal) in Lao Cai, Lai Chau, Dien Bien, and Son La constitute a fundamentally favorable condition for consolidating the great national unity bloc.

In summary, as the world undergoes complex and unpredictable transformations, the imperative to maximize endogenous strength has become increasingly urgent for Viet Nam. Within this framework, the building of the great national unity bloc plays a pivotal and foundational role, serving as the most powerful resource for effectively responding to challenges and seizing development opportunities. The strength of the great national unity bloc, grounded in Ho Chi Minh's ideology, continues to function as a central driving force and a decisive factor enabling Viet Nam to realize its aspiration for development and national advancement.

4.2. ORIENTATIONS FOR BUILDING THE GREAT NATIONAL UNITY BLOC IN THE NORTHWESTERN BORDER PROVINCES AT PRESENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH HO CHI MINH'S IDEOLOGY

4.2.1. Building the Great National Unity Bloc in the Northwestern Border Provinces as a Fundamental, Long-Term Strategic Task

First, the building of the great national unity bloc constitutes a strategic task of the revolution.

Second, in the northwestern border provinces, the building of the great national unity bloc is both a long-term strategic undertaking and an urgent, immediate political task.

4.2.2. Building the Great National Unity Bloc in the Northwestern Border Provinces on the Principles of Equality and Mutual Respect, in Combination with Socio-Economic Development and the Improvement of People's Livelihoods

First, in accordance with Ho Chi Minh's ideology, the building of the great national unity bloc must be grounded in the principles of equality, mutual respect, and mutual assistance for shared development.

Second, the building of the great national unity bloc must be closely linked with socio-economic development and the improvement of the material and spiritual living standards of the people.

4.2.3. Building the Great National Unity Bloc While Constantly Enhancing Vigilance and Resolutely Combating, Preventing, and Addressing Manifestations of Disunity

4.3. SOLUTIONS FOR BUILDING THE GREAT NATIONAL UNITY BLOC IN THE NORTHWESTERN BORDER PROVINCES AT PRESENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH HO CHI MINH'S IDEOLOGY

4.3.1. A Set of Solutions to Enhance the Leadership Capacity of the Party and the Political System, and to Promote the Role of the People in Building the Great National Unity Bloc in the Northwestern Border Provinces

4.3.1.1. Enhancing the Leadership Capacity of Party Committees as the Core of Building the Great National Unity Bloc

Building clean, strong, and effective Party organizations and local governments is a fundamental requirement of political governance. It is necessary to intensify the fight against corruption and other negative practices; to prevent, deter, and strictly discipline cadres, civil servants, and Party members who show signs of political-ideological degradation, moral decay, and manifestations of “self-evolution” and “self-transformation”; and to rigorously enforce the accountability of heads of Party committees, Party organizations, and local administrations at all levels. Cadres and Party members must genuinely act as role models; only when exemplary conduct is demonstrated can public trust in the Party be strengthened, enabling the people to accept its leadership and voluntarily participate in the great national unity bloc, thereby generating a powerful collective force for local development.

Strengthening unity and cohesion within the Party should be regarded as a firm political foundation for building the great national unity bloc. The responsibilities of Party committees and the role of local governments must be enhanced to meet practical governance demands and protect the legitimate rights and interests of local people, while steadfastly upholding the Party's role as the core leadership nucleus in preserving and promoting the traditions and strength of the great national unity bloc.

It is necessary to strictly institutionalize and implement regular mechanisms for meetings and dialogues with the people, ensuring that Party and government leaders directly engage with citizens, attentively listen to public opinions, and promptly address grievances, difficulties, and social tensions. At the same time, inspection and supervision over the implementation of programs and policy projects at the local level should be strengthened in order to enhance accountability, improve governance effectiveness, and reinforce political legitimacy.

4.3.1.2. Enhancing the Role and Performance of Local Governments

It is necessary to continue building and refining the two-tier local government system under the leadership of the Party. Law enforcement must be conducted in a strict, consistent, and transparent manner, ensuring legality while safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of the people. The organization and operation of local authorities should be grounded in practical realities and the aspirations of the population, thereby protecting and promoting the people's right to mastery. All activities of local government agencies must be people-centered, taking public well-being and happiness as both the ultimate objective and the primary criterion for evaluating governance effectiveness, especially in addressing issues of direct concern and social tension. At the same time, ethnic and religious policies must be implemented accurately and consistently.

Local governments should formulate and implement comprehensive socio-economic development strategies, with sustained attention to improving living standards. Priority should be

given to the effective implementation of social security policies and sustainable poverty reduction programs, closely linked to National Target Programs, particularly in border areas facing severe socio-economic disadvantages. Both local authorities and society at large need to strengthen support mechanisms for vulnerable groups and disadvantaged regions, thereby ensuring social security. Effective coordination mechanisms should also be established to create favorable conditions for the Vietnam Fatherland Front, socio-political organizations, and mass associations to articulate and reflect the opinions, aspirations, and interests of the people.

4.3.1.3. Innovating the Activities of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and Socio-Political Organizations in Mobilizing the People to Participate in Building the Great National Unity Bloc

First, attention should be given to developing the Vietnam Fatherland Front in the provinces as a genuine voluntary alliance of social organizations that represents, protects, and promotes the legitimate rights and interests of the people.

Second, the roles and responsibilities of provincial-level Vietnam Fatherland Front committees and socio-political organizations should be further strengthened in consolidating and developing the great national unity bloc.

4.3.2. Groups of Solutions for Organizing the Implementation of the Great National Unity Building in the Northwestern Border Provinces

First, Party committees, two-tier local authorities, socio-political organizations, the Vietnam Fatherland Front, and the people must fully recognize the theoretical and practical value of Ho Chi Minh's ideology on the great national unity and its significance in building the great national unity bloc.

Second, propaganda and mass mobilization efforts should be intensified, with renewed and diversified forms and methods of education on the tradition of great national unity.

Third, particular emphasis should be placed on strengthening and maintaining the close relationship between the people and the Party and State, to promptly grasp public aspirations and formulate appropriate grassroots-level solutions.

Fourth, priority must be given to consolidating unity within the Party itself, as this constitutes a decisive and vital condition for building the great national unity bloc.

Fifth, the implementation of sustainable poverty reduction is a crucial factor in ensuring people's livelihoods and strengthening the great national unity bloc; this is both an urgent and long-term task.

Sixth, the preservation and promotion of cultural values should be closely linked to the process of building the great national unity bloc.

Seventh, national defense and security must be firmly safeguarded in conjunction with building the great national unity bloc. As a strategically important region, the Northwestern border area requires that unity-building efforts go hand in hand with enhancing defense and security awareness among both cadres and the population.

4.3.3. Systematic and Effective Implementation of Party and State Resolutions on Building the Great National Unity Bloc in Alignment with Social Welfare Improvement in the Northwestern Border Provinces

It is imperative to maintain the rigorous execution of Central resolutions and directives through timely, synchronized, and concrete institutionalization adapted to the unique conditions of each locality. The formulation of provincial resolutions, strategic projects, and action programs must be profoundly aligned with local socio-political characteristics to fully leverage comparative advantages and endogenous resources. This strategic approach aims to generate a broad political consensus and foster a synergistic relationship between the state and the citizenry, thereby optimizing the comprehensive effectiveness of building the Great National Unity bloc in the Northwestern frontier.

4.3.4. Strategic Solutions to Enhance the Role of Forces Participating in the Construction of the Great National Unity Bloc

The development and empowerment of the various forces involved in constructing the Great National Unity bloc must be identified as a pivotal mission for maximizing national strength in the contemporary era. Party committees and local authorities must continue to mobilize all social strata, fully unleashing their creative potential as a fundamental impetus for Vietnam's development and international integration.

Each social force, notwithstanding its distinct socio-economic and political position, serves as a vital component in the consolidation of the Great National Unity bloc. Within the strategic alliance of the working class, the peasantry, and the intelligentsia, the working class maintains its vanguard role, making decisive contributions to socio-economic growth and the reinforcement of national solidarity.

Strategic attention must be directed toward the entrepreneurial community; political socialization and education for the youth must be intensified; the transformative role of women should be promoted; and the contributions of war veterans and the elderly must be highly valued for their experience and prestige. Crucially, the position and agency of ethnic minority communities must be further empowered, and the activities of religious organizations must be managed through appropriate legal and political guidance. Furthermore, efforts must be intensified to consolidate unity with the Vietnamese diaspora residing and working abroad, integrating them into the national development framework.

4.3.5. Solutions for Reforming the Methods and Organizational Forms of Building the Great National Unity Bloc in the Northwestern Border Provinces

4.3.5.1. Reforming the methodologies and organizational structures of patriotic emulation movements toward a more substantive and results-oriented framework to catalyze broad civic engagement

4.3.5.2. Enhancing the efficacy of ethnic affairs to provide a foundational contribution to the stability and strength of the Great National Unity bloc in the Northwestern border provinces

4.3.5.3. Intensifying the practice of grassroots democracy and fostering the proactive initiative of the citizenry as the primary subject in building and safeguarding the Great National Unity bloc

Chapter 4 Summary

A more profound internalization of Ho Chi Minh's tenets on the construction of the Great National Unity bloc is imperative in the current juncture. At present, the consolidation of the Great National Unity bloc is regarded as the fundamental root, the primary source of revolutionary strength, and the essential political platform for mobilizing popular power in national development. Adhering to Ho Chi Minh's ideology on national solidarity continues to serve as the core theoretical foundation, the enduring guiding principle, and the indispensable political force enabling Vietnam to advance toward socialism.

After nearly four decades of Renovation, under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam, the construction of the Great National Unity bloc in the Northwestern border provinces has been steadily fortified. The political agency of ethnic communities has been effectively mobilized to fulfill local governance mandates, thereby actualizing the vision of national unity in alignment with Ho Chi Minh's ideology. This process is deeply embedded in local practice through the promotion of grassroots democracy, the enforcement of political discipline, and the strategic mobilization of endogenous resources. Consequently, the synergy between national strength and the spirit of the times has been harnessed to seize strategic opportunities, navigate emerging challenges, and generate new momentum for reinforcing the Great National Unity bloc.

In the contemporary global and domestic landscape, characterized by complex emerging challenges, the entire Vietnamese nation - transcending social strata, classes, religions, and geographic boundaries - shares a unified aspiration: the successful construction of socialist democracy, the safeguarding of national sovereignty, and the realization of a prosperous, strong, and unified Vietnam. The primary impetus for strengthening the Great National Unity bloc lies in awakening the collective responsibility, initiative, and creativity of the populace and the entrepreneurial community. This must be inextricably linked to the legitimate interests of each individual and organization, ensuring a dialectical unity between civic rights and obligations. By harmonizing individual interests with national imperatives and integrating traditional solidarity with contemporary dynamics, the Great National Unity bloc remains the decisive factor for sustainable national progress.

CONCLUSION

Ho Chi Minh's ideology on constructing the Great National Unity bloc performs a decisive role, serving as both the primary impetus and the strategic objective in the cause of national construction and defense. Grounded in objective reality, the consolidation of the Great National Unity bloc is an indispensable and continuous mandate to be upheld across all socio-political circumstances. It carries profound significance in reinforcing political steadfastness, cultivating revolutionary ethics, and fostering a sense of civic duty and self-discipline in the implementation of the Renovation trajectory.

Ho Chi Minh's conceptualization of the Great National Unity bloc represents a master revolutionary strategy and the fundamental source of strength underlying all victories of the Vietnamese revolution, while simultaneously contributing to the global revolutionary movement. This constitutes a creative theoretical advancement that transcends the initial frameworks of Marxism-Leninism. By enriching the theory of national solidarity, Ho Chi Minh elevated it into a comprehensive political doctrine. The historical and contemporary trajectory of the Vietnamese revolution consistently validates the enduring vitality and practical efficacy of his ideology on the great national unity.

In the current era of development, Vietnam's sole viable path is the steadfast advancement toward socialism. Consequently, the internalization of Ho Chi Minh's ideology must be coupled with the continuous innovation of its content and methodologies to remain compatible with specific local conditions, domestic socio-economic shifts, and the exigencies of international integration. The inheritance and creative adaptation of this ideology remain an essential component of the ongoing *Đổi mới* process.

Regarding the Northwestern border provinces, the consistent application of Ho Chi Minh's ideology has enabled these localities to affirm the strategic role of the Great National Unity bloc. Nevertheless, the region remains susceptible to significant structural challenges, including developmental disparities, low standards of living, and complex ethno-religious dynamics, alongside external pressures targeting national cohesion. In the context of deepening global integration and intensifying geopolitical competition, the promotion of the Great National Unity bloc in the Northwest has become a matter of both immediate urgency and long-term strategic significance. To address these imperatives, it is necessary to further strengthen the enlightened and effective leadership of local Party committees and to build a streamlined, responsive governance system capable of addressing emerging socio-political issues and protecting popular interests. Priority must be accorded to the capacity-building of cadres specialized in national unity; the effective management of ethnic and religious affairs; and the seamless integration of socio-economic development with the preservation of cultural identities. Ultimately, constructing a stable and secure frontier is not merely a regional priority but a fundamental contribution to consolidating national strength and ensuring Vietnam's successful transition to socialism.

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