

HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS

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**ENSURING POLITICAL SECURITY IN THE
CENTRAL HIGHLANDS IN THE NEW CONTEXT**

SUMMARY OF THE DOCTORAL THESIS

MAJOR: POLITICS

Code: 9310201

HA NOI - 2026

**The dissertation is conducted at
Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics**

Chairman of the Council



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**The thesis was defended in front of the Thesis Committee at Academy
level, at the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics**

At 8:00 AM on March 31, 2026

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INTRODUCTION

1. The urgency of the theme

The Central Highlands is a highly important geo-strategic region, known as the “roof of Indochina,” with a key position in Viet Nam’s politics, economy, defense–security, and external relations. Bordering Laos and Cambodia and serving as a hub in the Vietnam–Laos–Cambodia development triangle, it is regarded as the “western defensive gateway of the Fatherland,” playing a vital role in border control, sovereignty protection, socio-political stability, and national security. Ensuring political security here is therefore crucial for both regional stability and national security in a proactive, preventive manner.

In the context of globalization, international integration, and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, intertwined traditional and non-traditional security factors have increased the complexity of political security in the region. Stability is a prerequisite for sustainable development, national unity, and safeguarding the Party’s ideological foundation and leadership, while instability would directly affect national socio-political security.

Recent years have seen important achievements: the grassroots political system has been strengthened, state governance improved, mass mobilization enhanced, and socio-political organizations more effective. Living standards, especially among ethnic minorities, have improved, and public trust in the Party and State has been reinforced, creating a solid foundation for stability.

However, political security remains complex with latent risks. Hostile forces exploit socio-economic difficulties, ethnic and religious diversity, and limited awareness among some ethnic minorities to conduct propaganda, recruitment, and destabilization activities, as seen in past incidents (2001, 2004, Dak Lak 11/6/2023). From 2011 to present, there were 35,943 violations of social order and safety, including 2,661 rural security cases [60, p.1], reflecting ongoing contradictions in land, migration, livelihoods, and grassroots governance. Extremist groups such as FULRO, “Montagnards Stand for Justice,” “Degar Protestantism,” and “Hà Mòn” continue separatist activities, now increasingly transnational and cyberspace-based, making security management more difficult.

New challenges also arise from the 2025–2030 administrative restructuring with vision to 2045, where governance gaps may be exploited if not well managed. Non-traditional security threats—climate change, resource depletion, cybercrime, and misinformation—further complicate the situation.

The Communist Party and State have issued key orientations, including Resolution No. 23-NQ/TW (2022), identifying political security and social order as prerequisites for sustainable development and emphasizing proactive prevention of hostile schemes [19, pp.5,13]. The

Documents of the 14th National Party Congress also stress maintaining political security and a stable environment for national development [44, p.381].

From a political science perspective, political security in the Central Highlands must be ensured through the integrated mechanism of Party leadership, State management, and people's mastery, although this approach remains insufficiently systematized in current research, especially regarding regional specificities.

Therefore, the topic “*Ensuring Political Security in the Central Highlands in the New Context*” is highly necessary. It contributes theoretically to clarifying political security under new conditions and practically to providing evidence-based solutions for stability, people-centered security, and sustainable national security protection.

2. Research Objectives and Tasks

2.1. Research Objective

The study aims to clarify theoretical and practical foundations, analyze and assess the current situation, forecast trends, define viewpoints, and propose solutions for ensuring political security in the Central Highlands in the new context.

2.2. Research Tasks

First, to review relevant studies and identify research gaps of the dissertation; second, to clarify theoretical and practical foundations of political security assurance in the Central Highlands; third, to analyze and assess the situation of political security assurance in the Central Highlands from 2011 to June 30, 2025, identifying achievements, limitations, and causes; and fourth, to forecast influencing factors, define viewpoints, and propose solutions for ensuring political security in the Central Highlands in the new context.

3. Research Objects and Scope

3.1. Research Object

The study focuses on activities of political security assurance in the Central Highlands in the new context from a political science perspective.

3.2. Research Scope

Content: The research examines theoretical and practical issues of political security assurance in the Central Highlands, clarifying actors, contents, mechanisms, methods, and influencing factors in the context of globalization, international integration, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, cyberspace, non-traditional security challenges, and hostile sabotage activities.

Spatial scope: The five Central Highlands provinces (Kon Tum, Gia Lai, Dak Lak, Dak Nong, and Lam Dong up to June 30, 2025), and their relationships with relevant domestic and international regions.

Time scope: From 2011 to June 30, 2025.

4. Theoretical Basis and Research Methods

4.1. Theoretical and Methodological Basis

The dissertation is based on Marxism–Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought, and the Party’s viewpoints and guidelines on national security protection and political security assurance associated with socio-economic development and the consolidation of the people-based security posture. It also draws on political science, security studies, and public governance approaches to security governance, non-traditional security, and the role of the political system and the people.

4.2. Research Methods

The study adopts an interdisciplinary approach combining document research, practical summarization, analysis and synthesis, historical–logical methods, descriptive statistics, comparative analysis, and scientific forecasting. It also uses sociological surveys involving 486 valid questionnaires across five Central Highlands provinces and in-depth interviews with nine experts to provide empirical evidence for analysis and recommendations.

5. New Contributions of the Dissertation

First, the dissertation develops an analytical framework for political security assurance in the Central Highlands from a political science perspective, clarifying the roles of the political system, the people, and operational mechanisms. Second, it provides additional empirical evidence through sociological surveys and expert interviews, clarifying emerging issues in the new context. Third, it analyzes new factors and mechanisms influencing political security in the Central Highlands and proposes a system of solutions linked to sustainable regional development.

6. Significance of the Dissertation

Theoretical significance: The dissertation contributes to enriching the theoretical foundation of political security assurance in the new context from a political science perspective, clarifying the relationship between political security, socio-political stability, and sustainable development in the Central Highlands.

Practical significance: The dissertation provides scientific evidence for policy formulation and implementation, serves as a reference for teaching and research, and proposes solutions to enhance national security assurance, socio-political stability, and governance in strategic regions.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

In addition to the introduction, conclusion, list of scientific works, references, and appendices, the dissertation is structured into four chapters and eleven sections.

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH WORKS

1.1. OVERVIEW OF RELEVANT STUDIES

1.1.1. Studies on Theoretical Foundations and Approaches to Political Security Assurance

Domestic and international scholarship has increasingly adopted a comprehensive approach to political security, shifting from traditional security paradigms toward non-traditional security, and linking political security assurance with governance, socio-political stability, and sustainable development.

International scholars such as Jürgen Habermas, Barry Buzan, Joseph J. Romm, Peter J. Katzenstein, and Lawrence Freedman emphasize the roles of social consensus, justice, institutions, culture, risk governance, and adaptive capacity in ensuring security. Many works also highlight the impact of strategic competition, globalization, digital communication, and non-military factors on national and political security.

In Viet Nam, studies by Nguyen Van Huong, Phan Duy Quang, Mai Thi Hong Lien, To Lam, and Nguyen Tuan Dung have further developed theoretical awareness of political security under conditions of renovation, international integration, and digital transformation. These works affirm that political security is not only regime protection but also proactive risk prevention and governance, closely associated with the “people-based security posture,” the role of the political system, and effective national governance.

1.1.2. Studies on the Situation of Political Security Assurance in the Central Highlands

Research on the Central Highlands focuses on ethnic, religious, cultural characteristics, grassroots political systems, and factors influencing local political security. Many studies analyze the exploitation of ethnic and religious issues by FULRO and hostile forces, as well as risks stemming from land disputes, spontaneous migration, social inequality, weak governance, non-traditional security challenges, and cyberspace impacts.

Works by Gerald C. Hickey, Tran Xuan Dung, Nong Van Luu, Hoang Cong Tu, Nguyen Van Thuan, Bui Minh Dao, Bui Quang Ba, Mai Thi Hong Lien, and Trieu Van Binh clarify the relationship between socio-economic development, ethnic and religious policy, grassroots political system building, and socio-political stability in the Central Highlands. These studies also emphasize the importance of public trust, mass mobilization, social welfare, and local governance in preventing instability from early stages.

1.1.3. Studies on Perspectives, Solutions, and Models of Political Security Assurance in the Central Highlands

This group of studies focuses on models, solutions, and approaches to building the people’s security posture, national security protection, and socio-political stability in strategic areas. The central role of the people, Party leadership, state management, and coordination across the political system is consistently emphasized.

Works by Dang Van Hieu, Bui Quang Ba, Phi Duc Tuan, Mai Quang Hien, Ksor H’Bo Khap, Nguyen Khac Khanh, and Thai Dai Ngoc highlight the integration of socio-economic

development with national defense and security, combining social prevention with professional security measures, and linking local governance with the consolidation of public trust.

These studies also propose solutions such as strengthening grassroots political systems, developing ethnic minority cadres, improving religious management, enhancing mass mobilization, countering hostile activities in cyberspace, and establishing early warning and prevention mechanisms to improve political security assurance in the Central Highlands.

1.2. VALUE OF EXISTING STUDIES AND RESEARCH GAPS

1.2.1. Contributions of Existing Studies

Existing research provides important theoretical and empirical foundations for national security, political security, and political security assurance in strategic regions such as the Central Highlands.

First, these works establish a comprehensive theoretical basis for modern political security studies.

Second, they clarify the influence of international context and geopolitical environment on political security.

Third, domestic studies contextualize political security theory in the Vietnamese setting.

Fourth, Central Highlands-focused research provides essential empirical insights into regional characteristics and security risks.

Fifth, some studies approach political security through grassroots political systems and social governance, highlighting the social foundation of political stability.

Sixth, research on models and solutions contributes practical frameworks, clarifying the roles of the Party, the State, the People's Public Security, and the population in ensuring political security.

However, most studies remain fragmented, focusing on isolated aspects such as ethnicity, religion, grassroots political systems, or people's security posture, rather than approaching political security in the Central Highlands as an integrated system in a new contextual environment.

1.2.2. Research Gaps Addressed by the Dissertation

First, there is a lack of a comprehensive analytical framework capable of fully explaining the structure and operational mechanisms of political security in the Central Highlands.

Second, the roles of actors within the political system have not been sufficiently examined in terms of their interactive relationships.

Third, modern theoretical approaches have not been systematically applied in political security research.

Fourth, there is a lack of integrated studies linking theory, practice, and solutions within a unified analytical structure.

Fifth, cyberspace-related political security issues in the Central Highlands remain under-researched, particularly regarding prevention, monitoring, and local-level information risk governance in response to hostile activities in the digital environment.

Chapter 1 Summary

Chapter 1 has reviewed domestic and international studies related to national security, political security, and political security assurance. The review is organized around three key groups: (1) theoretical foundations and approaches to political security; (2) the current situation of political security assurance in the Central Highlands; and (3) viewpoints, models, and solutions for ensuring political security in strategic regions. Overall, the reviewed studies provide an important theoretical and empirical basis for this dissertation.

In theoretical terms, existing research has contributed to expanding the understanding of political security, shifting from a traditional, state-centered and force-based approach to a more comprehensive perspective. This modern approach emphasizes human factors, society, political governance, sustainable development, and the people-centered security posture.

In practical terms, studies on the Central Highlands have clarified the region's specific features, particularly issues of ethnicity, religion, land, livelihoods, grassroots political systems, and the activities of FULRO and other hostile forces exploiting ethnic and religious issues to influence political security.

However, the review also indicates that most studies approach the issue in fragmented ways. An integrated analytical framework explaining political security in the Central Highlands as a dynamic and holistic system in the new context has not yet been fully developed. In particular, the roles of actors in the political system, coordination mechanisms among relevant forces, and the impacts of non-traditional security factors, cyberspace, and risk governance in ensuring political security in the region require further in-depth study.

Building on the value of existing research, the dissertation focuses on clarifying the theoretical foundations, practical situation, mechanisms, and requirements of political security assurance in the Central Highlands in the new context. This serves as a basis for developing appropriate viewpoints and solutions, contributing to maintaining socio-political stability, strengthening national security, and promoting sustainable development in the Central Highlands in the coming period.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL ISSUES OF POLITICAL SECURITY ASSURANCE IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

2.1. CONCEPT OF POLITICAL SECURITY ASSURANCE IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

2.1.1. Concepts of Security, National Security, and Political Security in the Central Highlands

Security and National Security

In contemporary political and social science, security is not merely understood as the absence of threats or conflict, but as a proactive capacity to anticipate, prevent, and manage risks. According to the Vietnamese Military Encyclopaedia, security refers to a stable and safe condition in which no threats affect the normal existence and development of individuals, organizations, and society [24, p.25].

The Law on National Security (2004) adopts a broader approach, linking security to stability and sustainable development and the protection of core national interests under new conditions [83].

The 14th Party Congress Documents emphasize a comprehensive security approach, combining traditional and non-traditional security dimensions across emerging domains such as cyberspace and outer space, with strong emphasis on prevention and adaptive capacity [44, pp.71–72].

Accordingly, security is understood as a stable and safe condition of individuals, organizations, the state, and society in which fundamental threats to survival and development are prevented, controlled, or eliminated under specific historical conditions. It is also a continuous proactive process conducted by actors within the political system under the leadership of the Party, state management, and people's participation, aiming to ensure socio-political stability and sustainable national development.

National security represents a specific form of security associated with the existence and development of the nation-state, focusing on safeguarding independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the political regime.

The Law on National Security defines it as the stable and sustainable development of the socialist regime and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, along with the inviolability of independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity [83, p.8]. It also defines security protection as preventing, detecting, and countering threats to national security [83, p.16].

On this basis, national security can be understood as a stable and sustainable state of national development in which core national interests are safeguarded under the leadership of the Communist Party, unified state management, and the participation of the entire political system and the people.

Political Security and Political Security Assurance

Political security reflects the stability and sustainable development of the political system. The Vietnamese Public Security Encyclopaedia defines politics as relations among classes and nations centered on state power, its acquisition, maintenance, and use [21, p.620].

The Public Security Encyclopaedia (2005) defines political security as the stable and sustainable condition of the political regime, including ideological foundation, political institutions, and Party leadership [20, p.20].

Political security is shaped by both internal factors (political system, socio-economic conditions, social trust) and external factors (globalization, strategic competition, non-traditional security, cyberspace), making it dynamic and complex.

Accordingly, political security is defined as the stable and sustainable operation of the mechanism “Party leadership, State governance, people's mastery” in exercising political power, ensuring effective implementation of Party guidelines and State policies, thereby maintaining socio-political stability and sustainable development under internal and external influences.

Political security assurance is the process of maintaining and strengthening this stable condition through coordinated actions of the political system and society. It includes prevention, detection, and response to both traditional and non-traditional threats, particularly in cyberspace, linked with socio-economic development and governance.

Thus, political security is a state, while political security assurance is a dynamic process that determines its formation and sustainability.

2.1.2. Political Security Assurance in the Central Highlands

The Central Highlands is a strategically important region in politics, national defense, security, and foreign affairs, characterized by ethnic diversity, religious plurality, and relatively difficult socio-economic conditions, along with sensitive issues such as ethnicity, religion, land, and migration.

In practice, the activities of FULRO, exile reactionary organizations, and forces exploiting ethnic and religious issues directly affect regional political stability, making political security in the Central Highlands highly complex and sensitive.

Political security in this region reflects not only the stability of the political system but also the capacity to manage, regulate, and resolve region-specific socio-political issues.

Accordingly, political security assurance in the Central Highlands is defined as a continuous and comprehensive process conducted by the political system, armed forces, and the people under the leadership of the Communist Party and unified state management. It aims to proactively prevent, detect, control, and respond to internal and external threats, while maintaining ideological foundations, political institutional stability, and the effective operation of the mechanism “Party leadership, State governance, people’s mastery,” thereby ensuring socio-political stability and strengthening national solidarity among ethnic groups..

2.2. SUBJECTS, CONTENTS, METHODS, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

2.2.1. Actors and Forces in Political Security Assurance

Political security assurance operates within the institutional framework of “Party leadership, State governance, and people’s mastery,” ensuring unified roles and coordination among actors in the political system.

In the Central Highlands, due to ethnic, religious, and socio-economic complexity, political security assurance requires coordinated participation of multiple actors:

- The Communist Party of Viet Nam: highest leadership body, ensuring political orientation and systemic unity.
- The State: institutionalizing and enforcing laws and policies.
- Local authorities: directly managing and addressing grassroots issues.
- Vietnam Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations: building social consensus and supervision.
- Armed forces, especially the People’s Public Security: core force in safeguarding political security.
- The People’s Army: protecting strategic areas and supporting socio-economic development.
- The people: central actors and beneficiaries, forming the foundation of the “people-based security posture.”

2.2.2. Core Contents

Key contents include:

- Institutional security: safeguarding Party leadership, legal frameworks, and governance efficiency.
- Ideological and cultural security: protecting ideological foundations and social trust.

- Socio-economic linkage: addressing livelihood, land, and inequality issues.
- Ethnic and religious management: ensuring equality while preventing exploitation.
- Non-traditional and cyberspace security: managing information, countering misinformation, and enhancing digital governance.

2.2.3. Methods of Implementation

Methods include:

- Party leadership and strategic orientation
- State administration and enforcement
- Armed forces coordination, with the People's Public Security as core
- Mass mobilization and people-based participation
- Communication, ideological struggle, and cyberspace governance

These methods are unified within the political system, ensuring synchronized operation among all stakeholders.

2.2.4. Evaluation Criteria

Roles and responsibilities of actors in the political system

Implementation of core security contents

Effectiveness of applied methods

2.3. FACTORS AFFECTING POLITICAL SECURITY ASSURANCE

2.3.1. Global and Regional Changes and Non-Traditional Security Challenges

Globalization, strategic competition among major powers, and supply chain restructuring increase uncertainty in the security environment. Non-traditional security challenges affect economic, environmental, and technological dimensions.

The Central Highlands economy is vulnerable due to dependence on agriculture and exports. Although GRDP reached 484.58 trillion VND and per capita income reached 78.5 million VND in 2024, uneven development may create social disparities, especially among ethnic minorities.

Environmental degradation, climate change, drought, and water shortages increase land disputes and social instability. Border-related crimes such as drug trafficking and human trafficking also pose risks. Party resolutions such as 28-NQ/TW (2013), 33-NQ/TW (2018), 51-NQ/TW (2019), and 44-NQ/TW (2023) emphasize integrated development and security.

2.3.2. Geo-strategic Position and Governance Space

The Central Highlands covers 54,548 km² with a 580 km border [120, p.104]. It is strategically vital for national sovereignty.

Natural conditions provide both opportunities and risks. Uneven terrain, natural disasters, and disparities in development contribute to inequality and potential instability.

Administrative restructuring (post-2025) may alter governance structures and social relations, potentially generating perception gaps if not properly managed.

2.3.3. Population, Ethnicity, Religion, and Migration

The region comprises 54 ethnic groups, with ethnic minorities accounting for about 38% of the population. It is home to 13 religions with over 2.25 million followers [22].

Migration has transformed social structure from isolated communities to mixed settlement patterns, increasing competition for land and resources.

Previous spontaneous migration created governance pressure, partially addressed by Government policies 132/QĐ-TTg, 33/2007/QĐ-TTg, and 39/2004/CT-TTg.

2.3.4. Socio-Economic Development and Inequality

GRDP reached 484.58 trillion VND in 2024 with per capita income of 78.5 million VND [120], but remains only about 3.5% of national GDP.

Regional GDP per capita is about 58% of the national average. Ethnic minority poverty remains high, such as 27.98% in Dak Nong [133].

Such inequality may generate grievances that can be politically instrumentalized.

2.3.5. Land, Resources, and Environment

Land issues are highly sensitive, accounting for 67.7% of complaints. The region recorded 396 complex disputes from 2001–2018 [15].

180 agro-forestry companies manage 48.59% of land, while 52,940 households lack productive land [15].

Forest loss of 312,416 ha (2016–2020) increases environmental and social risks [15].

2.3.6. Leadership, State Management, and Coordination

Effective Party leadership ensures stability; state management ensures enforcement; coordination creates synergy.

Weak grassroots governance may generate instability [139]. Coordination under Decree 03/2019/NĐ-CP has improved security effectiveness, as shown in the Cu Kuin incident (2023) [132], [133].

2.3.7. Hostile Forces' Activities

Hostile forces exploit ethnic and religious issues to promote separatism and destabilization.

After 2001 and 2004 unrests, activities shifted to covert propaganda and cyberspace operations.

From 2016, digital platforms (Facebook, YouTube, TikTok) became primary tools for misinformation and incitement. The 2023 Cu Kuin incident demonstrates the combination of online incitement and physical violence, reflecting increasingly sophisticated hybrid threats.

Chapter 2 Summary

Chapter 2 establishes the theoretical and practical foundations for ensuring political security in the Central Highlands region. Based on the approaches of political science, the viewpoints of the Communist Party of Vietnam, and the legal framework of the State, the dissertation clarifies key concepts such as security, national security, political security, and the assurance of political security in the Central Highlands. It demonstrates that ensuring political security is not only a process of preventing, detecting, combating, and addressing threats and infringements, but also a comprehensive socio-political process aimed at safeguarding the ideological foundation, maintaining political institutional stability, ensuring the effective operation of the mechanism of “Party leadership, State management, and people as the masters,” thereby sustaining socio-political stability and strengthening national unity among ethnic groups in this strategically important region.

From the establishment of the central conceptual framework, Chapter 2 further clarifies the subjects, content, methods, and evaluation criteria for ensuring political security in the

Central Highlands. Accordingly, this is the responsibility of the entire political system and the people, organized from the central to the grassroots levels. The Communist Party plays the leading role; the State ensures unified management; the armed forces, with the People's Public Security as the core, perform advisory functions and directly address security threats; the Vietnam Fatherland Front, socio-political organizations, and the people contribute to social consensus building and the consolidation of the "people's security posture." The content of political security assurance is not limited to countering direct hostile activities, but also includes safeguarding institutional security, ideological security, improving governance and social management efficiency, maintaining grassroots stability, harmoniously addressing ethnic, religious, land, livelihood, and environmental issues, and proactively preventing both traditional and non-traditional security risks, especially in cyberspace.

Chapter 2 also analyzes the factors affecting political security assurance in the Central Highlands, including global and regional developments and non-traditional security challenges; geo-strategic position, natural conditions, and governance space; demographic, ethnic, religious, and migration characteristics; socio-economic development level, development disparities, and livelihood issues; land, natural resource, and environmental management; leadership quality, state management effectiveness, and inter-agency coordination; as well as hostile activities by reactionary and hostile forces. These factors interact in complex ways, both objective and subjective, direct and indirect, making political security assurance in the Central Highlands highly comprehensive, long-term, and complex.

From these analyses, it can be affirmed that external and objective factors become serious threats to political security only when the leadership, management, governance, and coordination capacity of the political system is insufficient to identify, regulate, and resolve social contradictions. Conversely, when the political system operates in a synchronized manner, maintains strong ties with the people, effectively addresses grassroots issues, and consolidates social trust, political security in the Central Highlands will be firmly ensured. This provides an important theoretical and methodological basis for Chapter 3 to further analyze the current situation, assess achievements, limitations, causes, and emerging issues in the coming period.

Chapter 3

CURRENT SITUATION OF POLITICAL SECURITY ASSURANCE IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

3.1. ACHIEVEMENTS AND CAUSES IN POLITICAL SECURITY ASSURANCE IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

3.1.1. Achievements in political security assurance in the Central Highlands

3.1.1.1. Achievements in promoting the role of stakeholders in political security assurance in the Central Highlands

The leadership role of Party committees and the governance effectiveness of authorities at all levels in political security assurance in the Central Highlands

The leadership role of Party committees and the governance function of State authorities occupy a central position, determining socio-political stability and the operation of the political system under the mechanism of "Party leadership, State management, and People's

ownership.” Resolution No. 23-NQ/TW (06 October 2022) identifies the requirement to link socio-economic development with national defense and security assurance, strengthening the grassroots political system and great national unity.

On this basis, localities have institutionalized these orientations through numerous resolutions and action programs: Lam Dong Province issued Resolution No. 14-NQ/TU (2018), Resolution No. 16-NQ/TU (2022), Program No. 48-CTr/TU (2022), and Program No. 75-CTr/TU (2024), emphasizing the integration of development with political security assurance [119, pp.3–4]; Dak Nong integrates poverty reduction policies with ethnic minority areas [134]; Dak Lak, Gia Lai, and Kon Tum focus on mass mobilization, religious affairs, and inter-sectoral coordination [132], [136, p.1], [138, p.1].

Public administration efficiency has been improved: the PAR Index 2024 reached 85.63%, increasing by 0.21 points; the governance index reached 97.72%, ranking 3rd among 6 socio-economic regions [23, pp.30–34]. The political security situation remains fundamentally stable, with no “hotspots” emerging [113, p.1].

The quality of cadres has been enhanced: 67.1% of cadres have college or university qualifications; nearly 60% are able to use ethnic minority languages; in Kon Tum, 100% of commune-level cadres meet professional standards; ethnic minority cadres at provincial level account for 38.89% [139, pp.4–5].

Survey data show: 89.2% of officials assess leadership and direction as “good” or “very good”; 88.0% evaluate policy implementation as effective; 84.1% confirm effective coordination; 84.6% assess propaganda and dissemination work as effective [A1.1–A1.6, Appendix 3].

→ Accordingly, leadership and governance capacity has been transformed into development governance capacity, contributing to political security assurance from its root causes.

The core role of the armed forces in political security assurance in the Central Highlands

The armed forces, particularly the People’s Public Security Force, play a core role in political security assurance while participating in the development of the grassroots political system and the “people-based security posture.”

Decree No. 03/2019/ND-CP establishes coordination mechanisms among the People’s Public Security Force, the People’s Army, the Border Guard, and militia forces in intelligence gathering, patrol activities, and handling of political security situations.

Army Corps 15 is a typical model: in 2024, it achieved 2,950 billion VND in production value and 2,764 billion VND in revenue, with an average income of 7.5 million VND/person/month; it created jobs for nearly 15,000 workers (including 9,330 ethnic minority workers), stabilizing more than 13,000 households [88].

Coordination effectiveness is highly evaluated: 95.6% of officials assess coordination as good or very good; 79.0% understand and implement coordination regulations [B1.4, B3.3, PL3].

→ The armed forces both ensure security and actively participate in socio-economic development, forming a grassroots foundation for political stability.

The role of the Vietnam Fatherland Front and socio-political organizations in political security assurance in the Central Highlands

The Vietnam Fatherland Front (VFF) and socio-political organizations play an important role in mobilizing the people, strengthening social consensus, and consolidating the people-based security posture.

Directive No. 09-CT/TW clearly defines the role of mass mobilization in ensuring security and order. From 2019 to 2024, VFF committees in Central Highlands provinces mobilized significant social resources: Dak Lak contributed 393.8 billion VND and over 454,000 m² of donated land; Gia Lai developed numerous community-based models; Lam Dong organized thousands of dissemination activities with 280,000 participants [29].

The success rate of mediation activities exceeds 80%, contributing to the prevention of “hotspots” [28].

Survey results show: 74.4% of officials assess VFF performance as good; 68.0% of citizens evaluate positively; 73.2% recognize the role of village elders; 72.8% assess religious dignitaries positively [C1.1–C1.4].

→ The VFF increasingly participates in social governance, interest regulation, and early prevention of political risks at the grassroots level.

The role of the people, village elders, reputable persons, and religious dignitaries in political security assurance in the Central Highlands

The people are the foundational subject of the people-based security posture and play a decisive role in political security assurance at the grassroots level [44, p.78].

Local security models include: Dak Lak with 2,797 security groups conducting 48,716 patrol sessions; Gia Lai with 871 community security groups and 1,457 mediation groups; Kon Tum with 756 groups [32], [33].

The people provide important intelligence sources: Kon Tum recorded 551 reports, of which 486 were valuable, contributing to the detection of 101 cases [32].

→ The people are both subjects and objects of protection, forming the core of the “people-based security posture.”

3.1.1.2. Achievements in the substantive content of political security assurance in the Central Highlands

First, institutional security assurance in the Central Highlands

Institutional security assurance aims to maintain the stability, unity, and operational effectiveness of the political system, protecting the leadership role of the Party and the governance effectiveness of the State.

Implementation is carried out under Resolution No. 23-NQ/TW (2022) and administrative restructuring policies. Lam Dong has successfully maintained socio-political stability while completing organizational restructuring [119].

Survey results show: 88.4% of officials assess leadership as good; 93.6% evaluate coordination as effective; 97.0% assess socio-political stability as high.

→ Institutional security is strengthened through organizational streamlining, effective coordination, and high stability.

Second, ideological security assurance in the Central Highlands

Ideological security is associated with protecting the Party's ideological foundation and strengthening political trust in accordance with Resolution No. 35-NQ/TW (2018).

Implementation is conducted through Resolution No. 4 (XII, XIII), Directive No. 05-CT/TW, and Conclusion No. 01-KL/TW.

Survey results: 86.9% of officials assess ideological struggle as effective; 90.9% evaluate propaganda work positively.

→ Ideological security is maintained through a combination of “building and combating.”

Third, socio-economic stability linked to political security assurance in the Central Highlands

Socio-economic development is the foundation of political stability.

86.0% of officials and 59.2% of citizens confirm its stabilizing role.

Program 135 in Kon Tum achieved 94.57% implementation, supporting more than 100,000 households [137].

→ Socio-economic development directly reinforces political stability.

Fourth, ethnic and religious security assurance in the Central Highlands

The Central Highlands is a multi-ethnic and multi-religious region with approximately 2.3 million religious followers (38.5% of the population), and 13 out of 16 recognized religions.

Authorities dismantled 158 illegal “Dega Protestantism” networks and mobilized more than 30,000 individuals to return to lawful religious practices [22].

→ Ethnic and religious security remains fundamentally stable.

Fifth, political security assurance against hostile forces, non-traditional security threats, and cyberspace-related issues

Cyberspace has become a key strategic domain of political security.

Survey results: 75.7% of officials assess cybersecurity assurance as good; 72.8% evaluate fake news prevention as effective.

→ Political security assurance increasingly relies on digital governance, cyber capacity, and information resilience.

3.1.1.3. Achievements in methods of political security assurance in the Central Highlands

First, leadership and direction methods of the Party and management methods of the State

Survey results: 88.0% of officials assess policy implementation as good or very good; 89.2% evaluate leadership and direction positively.

→ A shift from reactive administration to proactive governance has been observed.

Second, inter-agency coordination methods within the political system

Survey results: 95.6% of officials assess coordination effectiveness as good or very good.

→ Coordination mechanisms among armed forces and relevant agencies are increasingly institutionalized.

Third, mass mobilization methods and promotion of the role of the people

Community self-management and reconciliation models have been widely implemented, contributing to social consensus and grassroots stability.

Fourth, communication, ideological struggle, and information management in cyberspace

A multi-channel communication system is developed: television (64.8%), social media (59.6%), press (53.6%), and community activities (50.8%) [A4].

Fifth, science–technology application and digital transformation in political security assurance

Digital transformation is forming a new governance method.

Kon Tum has digitized 100% of documents and integrated 73.31% of administrative procedures into the National Public Service Portal.

Sixth, integration of socio-economic development with political security assurance

Socio-economic development is a root-based solution for political stability, directly addressing the causes of insecurity.

3.1.2. Causes of achieved results in political security assurance in the Central Highlands

First, comprehensive leadership of Party committees and effective State governance is the decisive cause.

Second, the core role of the armed forces is a direct factor ensuring political security.

Third, consolidation of the grassroots political system enhances local-level security assurance capacity.

Fourth, socio-economic development linked with security assurance is a fundamental foundation of stability.

Fifth, promotion of the people-based security posture is a sustainable social foundation.

Sixth, innovation in security assurance methods toward proactive, integrated, and modern governance is a key factor.

3.2. LIMITATIONS AND CAUSES IN POLITICAL SECURITY ASSURANCE IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS

3.2.1. Main limitations in political security assurance in the Central Highlands

3.2.1.1. Limitations in stakeholders of political security assurance

Capacity among stakeholders, especially the grassroots political system, remains uneven; approaches are still administrative and reactive rather than preventive.

Serious incidents (2001, 2004; Ea Tieu, Ea Ktur 2023) reflect limitations in forecasting and early response capacity.

→ Key issues: uneven capacity, weak coordination, insufficient resources.

3.2.1.2. Limitations in the content of political security assurance

Institutional security remains inadequate in sensitive areas such as land, religion, and complaints.

Economic development is not commensurate with potential; ethnic minority poverty rates remain high.

→ Development gaps and accumulated social issues create pressure on political security.

3.2.1.3. Limitations in methods of political security assurance

Methods remain heavily administrative and reactive, with insufficient transition toward risk-based governance.

3.2.2. Causes of limitations

3.2.2.1. Subjective causes

Limited awareness of political security assurance; weak capacity of grassroots cadres; lack of synchronization in implementation; outdated communication methods.

3.2.2.2. Objective causes

Large and fragmented territory; long borderlines; ethnic diversity; unresolved historical issues; impacts of globalization, cyberspace, and non-traditional security threats.

3.3. ISSUES ARISING IN POLITICAL SECURITY ASSURANCE IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS IN THE COMING PERIOD

3.3.1. Issues related to the effectiveness of stakeholder roles in political security assurance

3.3.2. Issues related to linkage between socio-economic development and political security assurance and social stability

3.3.3. Issues related to risk control in land, natural resources, and other sensitive sectors

3.3.4. Issues related to innovation of political security assurance methods under increasing non-traditional security threats and cyberspace expansion

3.3.5. Issues related to cadre quality and supporting conditions for political security assurance activities

CHAPTER 3 SUMMARY

Chapter 3 analyzes the current situation of ensuring political security (PS) in the Central Highlands in relation to geo-political characteristics, ethnic and religious composition, socio-economic development level, and the evolving context. The findings show that significant achievements have been made in PS assurance. The leadership role of the Communist Party, the state management function of the government, and the core role of the armed forces continue to be affirmed. The Vietnam Fatherland Front, socio-political organizations, village elders, reputable persons, religious dignitaries, and the people have increasingly participated, contributing to the formation of a PS assurance mechanism suited to the specific conditions of the Central Highlands, combining state governance with mass mobilization, dialogue, reconciliation, and the building of a “people-based security posture.”

In terms of content, PS assurance has been implemented across multiple dimensions, including institutional security, ideological security, ethnic and religious security, socio-economic security, countering hostile forces, responding to non-traditional security threats, and addressing issues arising in cyberspace. In particular, the relationship between socio-economic development and PS assurance has become clearer; economic growth, poverty reduction, and social welfare policies have helped strengthen public trust and reduce root causes of instability.

However, several limitations remain. The capacity of some stakeholders, especially at the grassroots political system level, is uneven. Land management, ethnic affairs, religious issues, and migration still face numerous challenges. In some areas, PS assurance methods remain administratively oriented and slow to shift toward risk governance, prevention, and forecasting. In addition, the impact of cyberspace and non-traditional security challenges has increased the complexity, speed, and controllability of destabilizing factors.

These findings indicate that PS assurance in the Central Highlands in the coming period should adopt an integrated governance approach, with prevention as the core; improve the quality of the grassroots political system; promote the role of the people; effectively control sensitive sectors; closely link socio-economic development with socio-political stability; and innovate PS assurance methods in the context of increasing cyberspace risks and non-traditional security challenges. This provides an important practical basis for Chapter 4 to propose orientations and solutions for ensuring political security in the Central Highlands under new conditions.

CHAPTER 4

ORIENTATIONS AND SOLUTIONS FOR ENSURING POLITICAL SECURITY IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS IN THE NEW CONTEXT

4.1. FORECAST OF FACTORS AFFECTING THE ASSURANCE OF POLITICAL SECURITY IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS IN THE NEW CONTEXT

4.1.1. Forecast of international situation and trends affecting political security in the Central Highlands

The world continues to experience fluctuations under the trend of multipolarization, with strategic competition expanding into technology, data, cyberspace, and value systems. Issues related to democracy, human rights, and religion may be exploited as tools of interference and pressure in sensitive areas.

Economic instability and disruptions in global supply chains directly affect livelihoods, agricultural prices, and employment in the Central Highlands, thereby increasing risks of complaints and social instability.

Non-traditional security challenges (climate change, water security, epidemics, migration, and high-tech crime) are becoming increasingly severe and tend to accumulate into political-security risks, especially in relation to land, forests, ethnic relations, and religion.

Cyberspace has become a direct environment influencing political security, with risks of misinformation, distortion, and incitement that may deepen social divisions and weaken public trust.

International integration brings both opportunities and risks, requiring stronger capacity for early and remote forecasting, prevention, and risk control.

4.1.2. Forecast of domestic situation affecting political security in the Central Highlands

New development orientations in science and technology, institutional reform, market economy, culture, and digital transformation generate both development momentum and new requirements for political security assurance.

Digital transformation changes governance models but also increases risks of cybersecurity threats, fake news, and the digital divide, especially in ethnic minority areas.

Legal system improvement, if coherent, strengthens social trust; however, inconsistencies and weak enforcement may trigger local hotspots in land, religion, and complaints.

Economic development creates opportunities for poverty reduction, but inequality may increase if not managed equitably. Cultural development contributes to strengthening the “people-based security posture”.

Administrative restructuring may improve governance efficiency but also risks disruption if continuity is not ensured.

Overall, domestic factors present intertwined opportunities and challenges, requiring close integration of development, stability, and trust-building.

4.1.3. Forecast of trends in transforming political security assurance methods in the Central Highlands

First, shift from “maintaining stability” to socio-political risk governance, focusing on early identification of conflicts in land, livelihoods, religion, migration, and cyberspace.

Second, shift from reactive handling to early prevention, dialogue, and mediation, linked with accountability and policy communication.

Third, strengthen cyberspace governance, enhance fake news detection, public opinion orientation, and social trust consolidation.

Fourth, move from single-sector to inter-sectoral, inter-regional, and cross-border coordination in handling interconnected security issues.

Fifth, promote data-driven governance and digital transformation for forecasting and early warning, ensuring cybersecurity and citizens’ rights protection.

Sixth, promote the role of citizens and community institutions such as village elders and reputable figures in grassroots mediation and situational awareness.

Seventh, closely integrate political security assurance with socio-economic development and people’s livelihoods, considering sustainable development as the foundation of political stability.

4.2. ORIENTATIONS FOR ENSURING POLITICAL SECURITY IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS IN THE NEW CONTEXT

4.2.1. Political security in the Central Highlands must be placed under the absolute, direct, and comprehensive leadership of Party committees, combined with unified and effective state management and administration

4.2.2. Political security must be implemented in a comprehensive and synchronized manner, closely linked with socio-economic development and the harmonization of ethnic and religious issues

4.2.3. Political security must be proactive, early, and preventive, avoiding passivity and surprise in all situations

4.2.4. Political security must promote the combined strength of the entire political system and the active role of the people

4.2.5. Political security must be approached in an integrated manner combining traditional security, non-traditional security, and digital space governance

4.3. SOLUTIONS FOR ENSURING POLITICAL SECURITY IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS IN THE NEW CONTEXT

4.3.1. Improving leadership, management mechanisms, and effectiveness of actors in political security assurance

4.3.1.1. Improving the leadership and direction capacity of Party committees and

organizations in political security tasks in the Central Highlands in the new context

First, innovate leadership thinking toward risk governance and proactive prevention from the grassroots level.

Second, improve the quality of resolution issuance and implementation with the principle of being “grounded, problem-focused, responsibility-defined, and result-measurable.”

Third, integrate political security leadership with socio-economic development, national defense and security, and major Party orientations in the new era.

Fourth, improve the quality of leadership cadres, especially at the grassroots level.

Fifth, strengthen inspection, supervision, and accountability in political security leadership.

4.3.1.2. Improving the effectiveness of management and administration of authorities at all levels in implementing political security tasks in the Central Highlands

First, reform management of sensitive sectors toward transparency, dialogue, and protection of legitimate rights and interests of the people.

Second, improve professional competence, governance capacity, and public service ethics of grassroots cadres.

Third, modernize state governance associated with digital transformation, data security, and cyberspace management in line with Resolution No. 57-NQ/TW (2024).

Fourth, strengthen inter-sectoral coordination in handling complex and sensitive cases.

Fifth, establish early warning mechanisms for political security risks at the grassroots level.

4.3.1.3. Reforming inspection, supervision, and disciplinary work toward governance-based, early preventive approaches

First, shift from case-based inspection to risk-based inspection.

Second, link the responsibility of leaders with local stability and problem-solving effectiveness.

Third, ensure synchronization between Party discipline, administrative discipline, and legal enforcement.

Fourth, monitor post-inspection remediation based on public trust and citizen satisfaction.

Fifth, promote science, technology, and digital transformation in inspection and supervision.

4.3.2. Linking political security assurance with sustainable socio-economic development and improving grassroots governance, addressing sensitive social issues early and from the grassroots

4.3.2.1. Strengthening the linkage between political security assurance and sustainable socio-economic development

First, integrate political security requirements into planning, programs, and socio-economic projects.

Second, focus on removing bottlenecks in land, forests, natural resources, and livelihoods.

Third, link socio-economic development with grassroots democracy, policy transparency, and public trust consolidation.

Fourth, promote the private sector in job creation, livelihood expansion, and narrowing development gaps.

Fifth, consider human security and the people-based security posture as the long-term foundation of political stability.

4.3.2.2. Improving social governance quality and addressing emerging issues from the grassroots level

First, establish proactive social governance mechanisms to detect and handle issues early.

Second, standardize procedures for receiving, classifying, and resolving citizens' petitions and complaints.

Third, promote community institutions in mediation, mobilization, and consensus building.

Fourth, enhance commune-level cadre capacity in dialogue, situational handling, and risk governance.

Fifth, innovate grassroots governance associated with accountability and sustainable development.

4.3.2.3. Controlling risks in ethnic, religious, land, resource, migration, and complaint-related issues

First, integrate ethnic and religious affairs into overall socio-economic, cultural, and national security strategies.

Second, ensure transparent and phased resolution of land, forest, resource, and prolonged complaints.

Third, implement inclusive, self-reliant, and sustainable ethnic policies.

Fourth, manage spontaneous migration, labor inflows, and related social issues with humane, flexible, but strict measures.

Fifth, establish inter-sectoral, inter-level, and inter-regional coordination mechanisms.

4.3.3. Reforming political security assurance methods toward proactive, modern, data-based, and cyberspace-adapted governance

4.3.3.1. Improving situation analysis, forecasting, and strategic advisory capacity

First, adopt multi-source, multi-layer, and interconnected situational monitoring.

Second, develop data-based strategic forecasting capacity.

Third, standardize strategic advisory processes with clarity, feasibility, and accountability.

Fourth, clearly define roles and responsibilities in forecasting and advisory work.

Fifth, ensure adequate resources and implementation roadmap.

4.3.3.2. Strengthening early detection and timely response mechanisms

First, establish early warning systems based on specific risk indicators.

Second, define risk thresholds and grassroots response measures.

Third, unify command and coordination mechanisms for complex situations.

Fourth, prioritize dialogue and mediation while ensuring legal order.

Fifth, conduct mandatory post-incident reviews to improve governance.

4.3.3.3. Ensuring cyberspace security associated with improving public awareness in the Central Highlands

First, shift from isolated handling of misinformation to integrated cyberspace governance.

Second, proactively provide timely and transparent official information.

Third, improve digital literacy among ethnic minorities and vulnerable groups.

Fourth, promote the role of village elders, reputable persons, religious dignitaries, and grassroots cadres in online orientation.

Fifth, build a safe cyberspace community associated with national cybersecurity.

4.3.4. Promoting the combined strength of the political system, armed forces, and the people

4.3.4.1. Strengthening coordination among stakeholders in political security assurance

First, clearly define responsibilities of each actor under unified Party leadership.

Second, shift from case-based coordination to regular, location-based, and issue-based coordination.

Third, standardize coordination mechanisms with accountability and measurable criteria.

Fourth, enhance regional and inter-local coordination in identifying and handling risks.

Fifth, promote digital technology and practical review to improve coordination mechanisms.

4.3.4.2. Promoting the role of the Vietnam Fatherland Front, mass organizations, and reputable persons

First, innovate communication and mobilization methods in a people-centered and practical direction.

Second, promote village elders, reputable persons, and religious leaders in mediation and public orientation.

Third, link mobilization with timely resolution of legitimate citizen concerns.

Fourth, expand mobilization into cyberspace.

Fifth, strengthen the “people-based security posture” through socio-economic and cultural development.

4.3.4.3. Innovating the mass movement for protecting national security

First, use grassroots political stability as the key evaluation criterion.

Second, design movement models suitable for each locality and sensitive issue group.

Third, replicate self-management models linked to land, ethnicity, religion, migration, and public opinion issues.

Fourth, integrate the movement with socio-economic development, national defense-security, culture, and integration.

Fifth, develop the movement in cyberspace.

4.3.5. Improving the quality of cadres and personnel in political security assurance

4.3.5.1. Improving cadre planning, training, and ethnic minority cadre development

First, reform cadre planning in line with political security requirements and practical local conditions.

Second, reform training based on job positions and regional characteristics of the Central Highlands.

Third, recognize ethnic language, culture, and customs as key criteria in cadre evaluation and utilization.

Fourth, proactively develop long-term ethnic minority cadre sources.

Fifth, assign cadres appropriately based on competence, role, and locality.

4.3.5.2. *Strengthening practical training, rotation, discipline, ethics, and digital capacity*

First, intensify cadre rotation in key and strategic areas.

Second, strengthen discipline, administrative order, and public service ethics.

Third, improve dialogue, mediation, and sensitive situation handling capacity at the grassroots level.

Fourth, enhance digital skills and cyberspace information handling capacity.

Fifth, improve cadre evaluation based on actual grassroots effectiveness.

4.3.5.3. *Improving policies, resources, and working conditions for personnel directly engaged in political security tasks*

First, establish protection mechanisms for cadres and officers who dare to think, act, and take responsibility.

Second, improve remuneration and incentive mechanisms to retain high-quality personnel in difficult areas.

Third, increase investment in infrastructure, equipment, and data systems.

Fourth, ensure welfare, livelihood support, and long-term engagement of personnel in the field.

Fifth, reform reward and evaluation mechanisms based on practical effectiveness.

Chapter 4 Summary

Chapter 4 establishes a system of orientations and solutions for ensuring political security in the Central Highlands in the new context, based on the theoretical and practical findings of the preceding chapters as well as emerging issues identified throughout the study.

First, the chapter provides forecasts of factors influencing political security in the Central Highlands from three perspectives: the international environment, domestic conditions, and the trend of transforming approaches to political security assurance. These forecasts indicate that the Central Highlands is simultaneously affected by strategic competition, non-traditional security challenges, cyberspace, digital transformation, international integration, socio-economic development, and administrative spatial restructuring. Notably, following the administrative boundary changes after July 2025, the Central Highlands has been spatially expanded and more strongly interconnected with coastal areas, urban centers, seaports, logistics hubs, economic zones, and interregional networks. This has increased complexity and placed new governance demands on political security assurance.

On that basis, the chapter articulates five core guiding viewpoints, emphasizing the absolute and direct leadership of the Communist Party; unified and effective state management; the promotion of people's mastery; the central role of the People's Public Security force, together with coordination with the People's Army, armed forces, the Fatherland Front, and

socio-political organizations. At the same time, political security assurance must be comprehensive and synchronized, closely linked with socio-economic development, and oriented toward harmonizing ethnic, religious, land, and migration-related issues. It must be proactive and preventive (“early and from afar”), combine traditional security with non-traditional security and cyberspace governance, and promote the combined strength of the political system and the people.

From these viewpoints, the chapter proposes a synchronized system of solutions with clear priorities and a roadmap toward 2030, with a vision to 2045. These solutions focus on improving leadership and governance mechanisms; integrating political security with sustainable development; strengthening grassroots governance capacity; innovating political security assurance methods toward modernization and data-driven approaches; promoting the combined strength of the political system and the people; and enhancing the quality of the human resources, especially grassroots cadres, ethnic minority cadres, and frontline security personnel. These solutions implement the Party’s new resolutions while addressing key practical bottlenecks in the Central Highlands such as grassroots governance, livelihoods, land, forests, ethnic and religious issues, migration, cyberspace challenges, and cadre quality.

Thus, Chapter 4 contributes to defining an orientation for ensuring political security in the Central Highlands in a proactive, sustainable, modern manner, grounded in development, the rule of law, data governance, culture, and the “people-based security posture.”

CONCLUSION

Ensuring political security is a critically important requirement for national stability and sustainable development. For Viet Nam, political security is directly associated with the leadership role of the Communist Party, the effectiveness of State governance, the stability of the political regime, public trust, and the great national unity bloc. In the context of rapid global change, deep international integration, strong digital transformation, and the increasing impact of non-traditional security challenges and cyberspace, ensuring political security has become a comprehensive political task of the entire political system.

The Central Highlands holds a strategic position in national defense, security, foreign affairs, ecology, and socio-economic development. It is also a distinctive socio-political space characterized by the interweaving of ethnic, religious, land, forest, migration, livelihood, and cyberspace-related issues. Following administrative boundary adjustments, the Central Highlands has been spatially expanded and more closely linked with the South Central Coast, incorporating maritime factors, urban areas, seaports, logistics hubs, and new development corridors. This creates development opportunities while also increasing complexity and raising higher requirements for political security assurance, as risks can rapidly spread from the grassroots level to interregional, intersectoral, and cyberspace domains.

From the perspective of Political Science, the dissertation affirms that ensuring political security in the Central Highlands is a process of maintaining the stable operation of the mechanism: Party leadership, State management, people as masters, with the People’s Public Security force as the core. Political security is the outcome of leadership, governance,

prevention, and the building of social consensus, and is only sustainable when actors within the political system coordinate effectively and the people actively participate.

Based on the literature review, the dissertation inherits prior research on national security, political security, and Central Highlands development, while identifying a research gap in the absence of a unified Political Science approach to political security in the Central Highlands as an integrated whole. Therefore, the study adopts an approach based on development governance, risk governance, and the construction of a “people-based security posture.”

Theoretically, the dissertation clarifies the concepts, actors, contents, methods, and evaluation criteria of political security assurance in the Central Highlands, viewing it as a comprehensive activity aimed at preventing, detecting, and addressing threats while maintaining the political foundation and operational effectiveness of the political system.

Practically, the dissertation records important achievements: strengthened Party leadership, improved state governance effectiveness, and enhanced roles of the People’s Public Security, the People’s Army, and other armed forces as the core forces. The Fatherland Front, mass organizations, village elders, reputable persons, and the people have also actively participated. However, limitations remain in grassroots governance capacity, inter-agency coordination, and the handling of land, forest, migration, and religious issues, as well as impacts from cyberspace and regional development disparities.

The dissertation draws an important conclusion: risks to political security do not arise solely from external influences but also from deficiencies in development governance and social issue management. If not addressed promptly, social grievances may be exploited and transformed into political security risks; conversely, effective governance and strong social consensus can firmly safeguard political security from the grassroots level.

Accordingly, the dissertation emphasizes a shift from a reactive, incident-based approach to a preventive, risk-governance approach focused on early detection and root-cause resolution of social contradictions, along with enhanced interregional, intersectoral coordination and data integration in the context of the expanded Central Highlands.

On that basis, the dissertation proposes five groups of solutions: (1) improving leadership and governance mechanisms; (2) linking political security with sustainable socio-economic development; (3) innovating political security assurance methods toward modernization, data-driven governance, and cyberspace adaptation; (4) promoting the combined strength of the political system and the people; and (5) improving the quality of human resources, especially grassroots cadres and frontline personnel.

These solutions aim at early and preventive intervention, improving the effectiveness of the political system, strengthening social consensus and the people-based security posture, and integrating development with stability. Thus, the dissertation has achieved its research objectives, contributing to both theoretical and practical foundations for ensuring political security in the strategically important Central Highlands, with reference value for policy formulation toward 2030 and a vision to 2045.

LIST OF PUBLISHED WORKS BY THE AUTHOR RELATED TO THE THESIS

1. **Trinh Quoc Hung** (2025), *“Building the People's Security Disposition to Maintain Political Security in the Central Highlands Today”*, Youth Magazine, <https://thanhnienviet.vn/>, ISSN 2734-902.
2. **Trinh Quoc Hung** (2025), *“Impacts of Globalization on Political Security in the Central Highlands Today”*, Youth Magazine, August 15, 2025, <https://thanhnienviet.vn/>, ISSN 2734-902.
3. **Trinh Quoc Hung** (2025), *“Building Strong Two-Level Local Governments to Contribute to Maintaining Political Security in the Central Highlands”*, State Management Review, <https://www.quanlynhanuoc.vn/>, ISSN 2815 - 5831.
4. **Trinh Quoc Hung** (2025), *“Ensuring Water Security to Contribute to Socio-Economic Stability and Development in the Central Highlands”*, Proceedings of the National Scientific Conference “Efficient and Sustainable Management, Exploitation, and Utilization of Resources in an Integrated Economy”, co-organized by National Economics University and University of Mining and Geology, November 2024, p. 138.
5. **Trinh Quoc Hung** (2025), *“Factors Affecting Political Security in Vietnam Today”*, Journal of Political Theory, pp. 73 - 81, No. 572 (October 2025), ISSN 252-2585.
6. **Trinh Quoc Hung**, *“Building the People's Security Disposition in Association with the All-People Defense Disposition in the Central Highlands”*, State Management Review, <https://www.quanlynhanuoc.vn/2026/03/10/xay-dung-the-tran-an-ninh-nhan-dan-gan-voi-the-tran-quoc-phong-toan-dan-tren-dia-ban-tay-nguyen/>