

Basic Guidelines of a Non-violent Struggle

1. **Don't sit and wait** for the regime to change on its own and relinquish power. This has never happened in the history of humankind. *The public's non-cooperation and civil disobedience creates a united force to weaken and diminish the ruling power.*
2. **Be resolute** to not only overcome the current dictatorship, but to build new social institutions and attitudes that bar any dictatorial force to emerge.
3. **Carefully choose** activities and areas of struggle where the ruling power finds it difficult to use force.
4. **Continuously innovate** new methods of struggle in order to chip away at the authority and power of the regime, while minimizing the risks to those participating in the struggle.
5. **Persuade and divide** those wavering elements of the regime to diminish the ruling machine.
6. **Faithfully maintain the discipline of non-violence and spirit of sacrifice** to appeal to the opponents, the Vietnamese public and the world.
7. **Widen the network to all parts of society** sharing the objective of overcoming dictatorship and building lasting democracy for the country.



Almost 2000 aggrieved citizens demonstrate for 27 days at the National Assembly office in Saigon – July 2007.

Where have Non-violent Struggles been successful?

Since 1980, there have been many major struggles to eliminate injustice, dictatorship and foreign occupation throughout the world. In the 20th century alone, the peoples of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Madagascar, Mali, Bolivia and the Philippines have won sweeping victories through the methods of Nonviolent Defiance (also called Nonviolent Struggle.)

As we step into the 21st century, Nonviolent Struggles continue to spread. In just five years, they led to success in removing dictatorships, preventing the invasion of foreign forces and establishing the foundation for democracy in four countries: Serbia (2000), Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004) and Lebanon (2005).

To learn more about Non-violent Struggle

Read the summary document *From Dictatorship to Democracy* by Gene Sharp. The Vietnamese translation is available free of charge at the Albert Einstein Institution: www.aeinstein.org

**We invite you to
print copies and
send them to your friends.**

**Nonviolent Struggle to overcome dictatorship
Build Civil Society to establish democracy
Mobilize the People to reform Vietnam**



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Nonviolent Struggle:

The Approach

To Overcome Dictatorship To Establish Democracy

of the 21st Century



*Labor strikes spread across Vietnam
with 100,000 workers participating in early 2006*

Reasons for a Nonviolent Struggle

Contrary to popular belief, a dictatorial regime is NEVER a united body and its power NEVER lives on permanently. It is a construction of many separate elements that lean on each other.

The regime also draws its power from the indirect complicity of the public (whether voluntarily given or coerced), the talent and intellect of those collaborating (whether voluntarily given or coerced), the country's natural resources, history's legends, methods of punishment through force, etc. These sources of power are further controlled through social institutions.

Hence, the regime's power must rely on a number of pillars, such as its police force, military, legal system, propaganda machine, administrative ranks, government-sanctioned religious organizations, etc. Each pillar is constructed with layers of participants. Each layer has a different level of allegiance with the regime, and each participant has different needs, rights and societal relations.

If the pro-democracy movement affects the right goal, in the right manner and at the right time, the needs, rights and societal relations of the people can change and they will change their allegiance to the regime and, in effect, weaken the power of the dictatorial regime.



Ghandi and the non-violent struggle of the Indian people to pressure the colonial British authority to abolish the salt tax.

Methods of Nonviolent Struggle

Each means of nonviolence that can weaken the dictatorial regime's power, increase the power and capabilities of the pro-democracy movement, or contribute to the advancement of Civil Society (through self-initiated groups or organizations to protect individual and collective rights, outside of the government's control) can be seen as a weapon in the Nonviolent Struggle.

A few examples:

- Participating in religious ceremonies despite the interdiction of governing authorities;
- Educating our children about rights, wrongs and the truth that the regime purposely hides or misrepresents;
- Declining to join organizations that the regime "suggests" or coerces participation;
- Distributing music, rhymes, poetry that speaks of the injustices of the regime;
- Collectively reducing productivity at work;
- Writing up appeals and petitions;
- Using placards to express opposition or opinion;
- Distributing news through the Internet or mobile phones;
- Identifying individuals within the governing system;
- Organizing walks and ceremonies to honor those arrested for fighting for democracy;
- Going on strikes, filing suits;
- Boycotting business ventures of members of the regime;
- Disobeying laws that are vague or imprecise;
- Calling on the business community or international aid agencies not to do contracts that only benefit those in power;
- Denying the results of unfree elections organized by the regime.

Today there are over 200 ways to carry out the nonviolent struggle, and the number is set to increase with the technological advancements of the 21st century.

It is a method of struggle that is not only aimed at overcoming dictatorship, but strives to create an environment that prevents any new dictatorial forces from

emerging as can be observed in a few former communist states.

It is a peaceful method of struggle that does not create further losses of life or waves of destruction and damages the country's capabilities to progress. This method appeals to the Vietnamese people in particular, after almost 2 centuries of devastating war.

It is a method of struggle that does not further divide the soul of the Vietnamese. To the contrary, it creates opportunities to overcome the divide, as each member of society is invited to participate in the mission to rid the country of its chains and, together, determine its future.

It is a method of struggle that does not allow the communist government to use its customary methods of violent oppression.

It is a method of struggle that unites the people of Vietnam with the overseas community and sources of international support.



The Nonviolent Struggle of the Burmese people protesting the military junta's raising of gas prices with the participation of over 100,000 people – September 2007.

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