



The Hon Warren Snowdon MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Mr Viet Tran OAM
17 Tomkins Road
RIVERHILLS QLD 4074

Dear Mr Tran

I refer to your letter to the Prime Minister, the Hon Julia Gillard MP, which I received on 23 May 2011, concerning a proposal for a formal relationship to be developed between the Returned and Services League (RSL) of Australia and the Veterans' Association of Vietnam. As this issue falls within my portfolio responsibilities, your letter has been passed to me to respond.

This initiative was proposed by sections of the ex-service community. The RSL has taken the lead in establishing a relationship with its Vietnamese counterpart, the Veterans' Association of Vietnam and one proposal, put forward over 12 month ago, was the concept of a commemorative activity in Vietnam in 2012. The Department of Veterans' Affairs was informed by the RSL that the proposal had the support of the two major Australian Vietnam veteran organisations. Whilst this proposal is not a Government initiative, the Government has facilitated formal communications between the RSL and their Vietnamese counterparts to explore this matter.

I note your comments and respect your views and the views of the 609 signatories to your petition on this matter. While good relations between Australian and Vietnamese veteran communities is something the Australian Government welcomes, I consider that ultimately, how and when the relationship between the RSL and Veterans' Association of Vietnam develops is a matter for the associations themselves. I have been advised that the RSL has no plans for any joint Australia/Vietnam commemorative activities in the near future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Warren Snowdon', written over a large, stylized flourish.

WARREN SNOWDON

14 JUL 2011