

In foreign countries, there are always big cities that play important roles in the economy and act as a dynamic of the economic, social, cultural and technical development of a zone or even the whole economy. Some of them are New York and Chicago in the States; Shanghai in China; Montreal and Toronto in Canada or Sydney in Australia.

At present, and in the coming years, HCMC is still one of the most important industrial, trading and cultural centers of the country, especially to southern provinces, the South Vital Economic Zone and the Mekong Delta as well.

So HCMC needs a statute of its own to play well its role as a big economic center and maintain the inner dynamic of its development. In my opinion, to work out such a statute, we should concentrate on the following three principal issues that could be considered as bases for further developments of this city.

lead to corruption and bribery.

This situation leads to a need to delegate some rights to HCMC, including rights to make economic policies, administrative decisions and regulations of its own to adjust the structure of industry and keep macroeconomic balances based on specific conditions of its developments. For example, the HCMC could enjoy more autonomy in zoning, making development plans and deciding on new investments.

The master development plan for HCMC should be worked out by itself and when the plan is approved by the central government, the HCMC government has full autonomy in realizing it according general policies and certain policies exclusively designed for HCMC.

In this spirit, HCMC government should have full autonomy in making its blueprints for town planning, locating or relocating industries, carrying out these blueprints and making adjustments to them if need be.

In addition, to relocate industries in the city, the HCMC government should be delegated to control state-owned companies in the role as a representative of the State. As for investment projects, the Chairperson of the HCMC People's Committee could be assigned to study and decide on investment projects to make sure that they are suitable to approved plans regardless of the size of capital and area of land needed. To carry out this mechanism, the central government should determine industries and fields in which investment projects should be approved by governmental bodies at ministerial level or ministries themselves, otherwise the decision depends on the HCMC government. Moreover, the HCMC government needs more autonomy in appointing and recruiting its personnel when performing this right to develop its human and social capital.

2. Budget and financial management

At present, the HCMC budget authorities control only 12% - 13% of total budget income; 60% of this amount is used for covering regular expenditures and the rest for investments (mainly in infrastructure projects). This percentage is too small to meet the demand. To increase the HCMC public investment, especially in high-tech industries and infrastructure, the HCMC government should be allowed to retain and employ a bigger portion of its total budget income, and mobilize all possible sources of finance beside grants-in-aid.

3. Education service

The quality of education service determines the performance of all sectors and efficiency of all activities in a big city. The HCMC government needs a statute of its own for this field, especially in:

- increasing public investment in the education service and cultural activities.
- expanding and forming universities and research institutes according to local conditions and requirements posed by the development process.
- designing education and training programs, even in graduate and post graduate education, in order to make them suitable to the market demand.

In short, a statute for HCMC development has to include and deal properly with those three issues if the central government wants HCMC to keep playing an important role in the development of southern provinces ■

MAIN BASES FOR A STATUTE FOR HCMC MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

by Prof. Dr. HỒ ĐỨC HÙNG

1. Administrative management

In recent years, some improvements have been made but the management system from the central to local levels still includes too many middle managing bodies that hinder the tasks of regulating economic activities and controlling the administrative machinery, and at the same time, limit the autonomy of the HCMC government.

At present, the central government keeps HCMC, and all cities and provinces of the country as well, under its supervision without discrimination but this supervision isn't defined and supported by necessary laws. Many central governmental bodies still do their jobs as if they were under the centrally-planned mechanism and they only give when somebody ask. In addition, the ways these bodies inspect or supervise local governments include some loopholes that can easily

