

# Minister talks about gay marriage in Vietnam

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## **Minister Ha Hung Cuong says prejudice against gay people is ‘unacceptable’.**

A minister in Vietnam’s government has spoken about same-sex marriage for the first time.

Vietnamese LGBT rights activist calls the Minister’s words a ‘bold step forward’.

Minister Ha Hung Cuong from the Ministry of Justice was asked about his personal opinion on same-sex marriage during an online debate yesterday morning (24 July).

‘This problem must be considered carefully, thoroughly in many aspects: cultural, legal, custom and ethical practices,’ said Ha Hung Cuong.

‘Personally, I believe that the recognition or non-recognition of same sex marriage should be based on very basic research, the credible assessment of impact on many social and legal aspects such as personal freedom, compatibility with cultural and social practices of Vietnamese families, sensitivity, social consequences of the law.’

Although Ha Hung Cuong stopped short of recommending or not recommending same-sex marriage, he said he thinks it is ‘unacceptable to create social prejudice against the homosexual community’.

Ha Hung Cuong also said that the legal rights of same-sex couples should be protected. ‘The State should also have legal mechanisms to protect the legitimate rights such as legal personality, property ownership or children (if any) of same sex couple living together,’ he said.

Le Quang Binh Director of Institute for Studies of Society, Economy and Environment (iSEE) commented on the Minister’s words:

‘It is a bold step forwards as he is the first minister to speak publicly on this topic. I believe this is really positive and it opens many doors for us continue engaging with the Ministry of Justice, mass media and LGBT communities on this law revision.’

The Ministry of Justice announced last month that it is carrying out a consultation into same-sex marriage and would bring the issue to the one-party state’s National Assembly congress in spring 2013.

**Anna Leach**, 25 July 2012

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\* <http://www.gaystarnews.com/article/minister-talks-about-gay-marriage-vietnam250712>