Obama approves additional \$12 mln for Da Nang dioxin cleanup

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US President Barack Obama has approved US\$12 million for an ongoing project aimed at cleaning up dioxin that has contaminated the soil and water in and around the Da Nang Airport.

The announcement was made by congressman Eni Faleomavaega (D-American Samoa) on August 26, during a three-day visit to Vietnam.

Faleomavae ga's visit was aimed at discussing the two countries' relationship, including cooperative efforts to mitigate Agent Orange contamination in Vietnam. Last year, the Obama administration dedicated \$3 million to dioxin cleanup efforts in the central city of Da Nang, where the airport was listed by scientists as one of several "hotspots" throughout the country.

Da Nang Airport was once used by the US Air Force as

a base of operations. During the war, US forces untold quantities of defoliant chemicals loaded on to planes to be sprayed over the ∞ untryside.

It is believed that US forces sprayed over 12 million gallons of defoliats in Vietnam throughout the course of the war.

The chemicals were meant to deprive Vietnamese forces of "food and cover." The campaign ended up having long-term effects on US soldiers and millions of Vietnamese civilians.

The substance has been linked to increased instances of birth defects and at least 12 chronic diseases - including Spinal Bifidia and several types of cancer.

Source: Thanh nien