

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 17, 2015

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

During this year's Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit, taking place this week, we strongly urge you to convey our serious concerns about the Vietnamese government's ongoing arbitrary detention of human rights activists and repression of freedom of expression.

In July, you met with the General Secretary of the Vietnamese Communist Party, Nguyen Phu Trong, to mark the 20th anniversary of the normalization of U.S.-Vietnam diplomatic relations. As you mentioned, the relationship between our two countries has grown, but human rights violations and freedom of religion in Vietnam are still a significant concern. We hope that you will use the ASEAN Summit as an opportunity to publicly call for concrete, measurable improvements in Vietnam's human rights record--beginning with the release of all political prisoners.

Over 140 prisoners of conscience are currently being held by the Vietnamese government for peacefully expressing their political views. We urge you to make it a priority to call for the immediate and unconditional release of all of prisoners of conscience, including those on the enclosed list.

The Vietnam National Assembly will soon consider a draft Law on Belief and Religion which significantly restricts the right to freely practice one's religion in Vietnam. Article 18(3) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Vietnam is a state party, provides that freedom of religion will be subject "only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others." The restrictions placed on freedom of religion by the draft law go much further than what could ever be even argued is necessary for public safety. It is simply a means for the government to place onerous registration requirements on religious groups, create a means for the government to interfere in the affairs of religious organizations, and enact ambiguous and overbroad language that will give government officials authority to discriminate against religious minorities.

While the United States is moving forward with giving Vietnam preferential access to our markets in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), Vietnamese authorities are continuing their practice of jailing activists, increasing police violence against activists and their families, and attempting to censor the Internet and block access to websites. Since the beginning of last year, government officials have restricted freedom of movement by arbitrarily confiscating passports of over 50 Vietnamese activists and banning them from travel outside the country. The troublesome human rights situation illustrates the Vietnamese government's disregard for the basic rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Vietnam is a party.

We call on you to address the current human rights situation in Vietnam on your upcoming trip to Asia and to insist that the Vietnamese government must release all prisoners of conscience immediately and unconditionally. We appreciate your serious and prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



Loretta Sanchez
Member of Congress



Dana Rohrabacher
Member of Congress



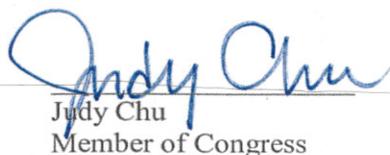
Joe Pitts
Member of Congress



Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



Mike Honda
Member of Congress



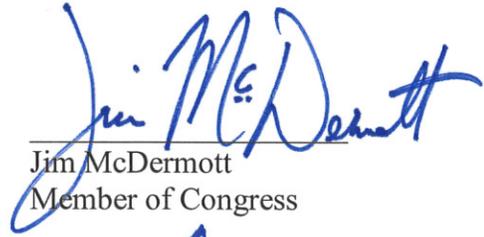
Judy Chu
Member of Congress



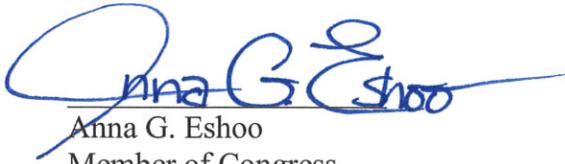
Dan Kildee
Member of Congress



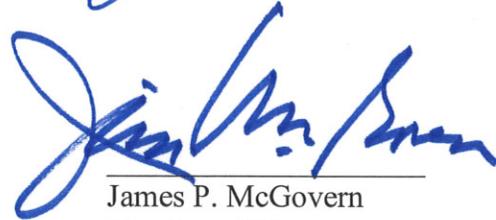
Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress



Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress

We request that you facilitate the immediate release of the following individuals:

1. A Kuin (Bã Chăn)
2. Ngu (Bã Săn)
3. Bùi Thị Minh Hằng
4. Nguyễn Văn Minh
5. Nguyễn Thị Thúy Quỳnh
6. Điều B'ré (Bạp Bum)
7. Điều By Ó
8. Điều Đông
9. Dương Văn Thành
10. Vừ A Sừ
11. Lý Văn Hào
12. Đinh Yum
13. Rơ Mah Plă
14. Siu Tinh
15. Run
16. Chi
17. Đinh Lý
18. Đinh Ngo
19. Thạch Thuol
20. Liêu Ny
21. Ngô Hào
22. A Tách
23. Jơnh (aka Chình)
24. A Hyum (aka Bã Kôl)
25. Byuk
26. Đinh Lứ yrs
27. Đinh Hrôn
28. Y Gyin
29. Đinh Nguyên Kha
30. Phan Văn Thu
31. Lê Duy Lộc
32. Vương Tấn Sơn
33. Đoàn Đình Nam
34. Nguyễn Kỳ Lạc
35. Tạ Khu
36. Từ Thiện Lương
37. Võ Ngọc Cư
38. Võ Thành Lê
39. Võ Tiết
40. Lê Phúc
41. Đoàn Văn Cư
42. Nguyễn Đình
43. Phan Thanh Ý
44. Đỗ Thị Hồng
45. Trần Phi Dũng
46. Lê Đức Động
47. Lê Trọng Cư
48. Lương Nhật Quang
49. Nguyễn Thái Bình
50. Trần Quân
51. Phan Thanh Tường
52. Bùi Văn Trung
53. Hồ Đức Hòa
54. Đặng Xuân Diệu
55. Nguyễn Đặng Minh Mẫn
56. Nguyễn Đình Cương
57. Trần Vũ Anh Bình
58. Võ Minh Trí
59. Nguyễn Kim Nhân
60. Phan Ngọc Tuấn
61. Nguyễn Công Chính
62. Hồ T Bích Khương
63. Nguyễn Ngọc Cường
64. Phạm Thị Phương
65. Trần Thị Thúy
66. Phạm Văn Thông
67. Rơ Mah Pró
68. Phùng Lâm
69. Ksor Y Dú
70. Ng. Hoàng Quốc Hùng
71. Đoàn Huy Chương
72. Tr. Huỳnh Duy Thức
73. Nguyễn Văn Lý
74. Nguyễn Hữu Cảnh
75. Phạm Minh Vũ
76. Đỗ Đình Dũ
77. Kpuih Khuông
78. Rmah Khil

79. Rmah Bloanh
80. Nguyễn Doãn Kiên
81. Điều X'ri
82. Nguyễn Văn Kiệt
83. Trịnh Minh Khánh
84. Thạch Phum Rít
85. Rung
86. Tráng A Chớ
87. Giàng A Lồng
88. Lý A Di
89. Hâu A Giàng
90. Kpuil Mel
91. Kpuil Lẽ
92. Nay Y Nga
93. Siu Thái
94. Siu Hlom
95. Siu Nheo
96. Siu Brom
97. Rah Lan Mlih
98. Rah Lan Blom
99. Kpã Sinh
100. Rơ Mah Klít
101. Rmah Hlach
102. Siu Koch
103. Nhi (Bã Tiêm)
104. AmLinh(Bả Blung)
105. Yurh (Bã Nar)
106. Siu Ben (Ama Yôn)
107. Rơ Lan Jú (Ama Suit)
108. Siu Jã (Ama Hyen)
109. Nơh
110. Rôh
111. Pinh
112. Rơ Mah Pôl
113. Rơ Mah Then
114. Siu Wiu
115. Ksor On
116. Brong
117. Khe
118. Y Kur BĐáp
119. Y Ang Knul
120. Y Jim Êban
121. Hlun
122. Y Tlúp AĐrong
123. Y Kuơ Byă
124. Siu Kheh
125. Siu Lit
126. Siu Glôl
127. Kpuih Bô
128. Y Pher H'Druê
129. Giàng A Tinh (a.k.a Giàng Pà Tinh)
130. Vàng A Phừ (a.k.a Ly Lềh)
131. Thào A Vàng
132. Vàng A Phừ (a.k.a Vàng A Tò)
133. Mùa A Sinh (a.k.a Mùa A Phùng)
134. Vàng A Già (a.k.a Vàng A Dia)
135. Thào A Vàng (a.k.a Thào Chứ Vàng)
136. Phàng A Vàng (a.k.a Phàng Giồng Vàng)
137. Vàng A Sừ (Dúa Sừ): 8 years
138. Giàng A Vàng (Giàng Nềh Vàng)
139. Vàng A Lử
140. Vàng A Lồng
141. Giàng A Chua
142. Cừ A Vàng (a.k.a Cừ A Vềh)
143. Vàng A Phừ
144. Hờ A Chu
145. Vàng A Vềh (a.k.a Vàng A Vành)
146. Lý A Vàng
147. Vàng A Phình
148. Lý A Phừ (a.k.a Lý A Tủa)