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Statement by High Representative Catherine Ashton on the recent sentencing of Pham Minh Hoang in Vietnam

Catherine Ashton, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission, made today the following statement:

"I am seriously concerned about the sentencing of Professor Pham Minh Hoang, a French and Vietnamese national, to three years imprisonment followed by three years of probation under house arrest at the trial that took place on 10th August in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

This sentence, which follows the imprisonment of other democracy activists in the past weeks, is not consistent with the fundamental right of all persons to hold opinions and freely and peacefully express them, in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Vietnam is a party.

I call on Vietnam to respect the right to freedom of expression, in accordance with its international obligations, and to release Professor Hoang, a citizen of the EU, and other detained human rights defenders immediately."

P R E S S

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