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federal member for cowan

local plans
local action



29th January 2010

Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung
Socialist Republic of Vietnam
Hoang Van Thu Street
HA NOI
VIET NAM

Dear Prime Minister,

I have been approached by my Australian-Vietnamese constituents regarding your Government recent sentences imposed on four democracy activists, namely Le Cong Dinh, Nguyen Tien Trung, Tran Huynh Duy Thuc and Le Thang Long. They further raise concern regarding the upcoming trials of Ms Pham Thanh Nghien and writer Tran Khai Thanh Thuy.

Nghien was arrested and charged in 2008 for attempting to stage a peaceful protest. And in October 2009, writer Tran Khai Thanh Thuy was arrested while travelling to support other activists on trial hanging pro-democracy banners and peacefully expressing their opinions on government policies through the internet. She was physically assaulted by plain clothes police officers in the arrest.

The Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Vietnam is a signatory, state that all citizens enjoy freedom of opinion, freedom of speech, freedom of religion. Therefore, their actions do not constitute imprisonment but as a right of all citizens and should be protected by the Constitution.

I was also informed that both Nghien and Thuy have been denied all visitation rights and that Thuy's health has deteriorated with worsening diabetes and tuberculosis. I therefore, write to you express my strong support for an immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners. I understand that, Ms Nghien and Ms Thuy require immediate medical attention and should be allowed that help.

Once again, I call upon your Government to oblige to the international commitments in protecting human rights and religious freedom.

Yours sincerely,

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Member for Cowan

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