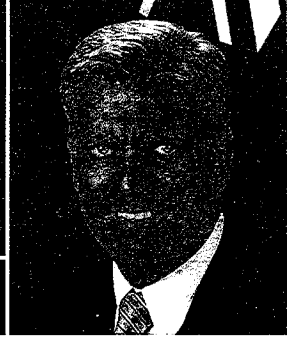




# Chris Hayes MP



FEDERAL MEMBER FOR FOWLER – GOVERNMENT WHIP

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19 MAY 2011

The Hon. Kevin Rudd MP  
Minister for Foreign Affairs  
PO Box 6022  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

Recently I met with Dr Phong Nguyen and Mr Tan Anh Nguyen who are active members of our community and associated with Viet Tan, an organisation dedicated to promoting human rights in Vietnam.

During my meeting, the Viet Tan representatives raised the matter of Mr Cu Huy Ha Vu, a Vietnamese legal scholar who was recently convicted for propaganda against the State.

Mr Vu was first arrested in 2009 after his attempt to initiate legal action following the approval of a controversial Chinese built bauxite mining project in the Central Highlands. Mr Vu attempted to argue that the project violated environmental protection, national security and cultural heritage laws.

A year later, Mr Vu was again arrested for challenging the constitutional validity of a prohibition against class actions being taken in the courts. Mr Vu attempted to argue that such a prohibition violated the constitutional guarantee of the right to "gather, form groups and protest in conformity with the law".

I am concerned that following a trial that lasted only several hours, Mr Vu was sentenced to seven years imprisonment, followed by a further three years of probation.

As Vietnam is a signatory to the International Convention of Civil & Political rights, could you advise whether the action taken against Mr Vu is inconsistent with the Convention and if so, whether Australia would voice its concerns to the Vietnamese government concerning what appears to be a serious abuse of human rights.

Yours sincerely

CHRIS HAYES MP

Electorate Office: Shop 1B, Cecil Hills Shopping Centre, Lancaster Avenue, Cecil Hills NSW 2171

Phone: (02) 8786 1004 • Fax: (02) 8786 1005 • Email: [chris.hayes.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:chris.hayes.mp@aph.gov.au) • Website: [www.chrishayesmp.com](http://www.chrishayesmp.com)

Parliament House: Phone: (02) 6277 4682 • Fax: (02) 6277 8523.