



Cộng Đồng Người Việt Tự Do Úc Châu Vietnamese Community in Australia

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OPEN LETTER

TO PRIME MINISTER JOHN HOWARD AND LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION KEVIN RUDD

HUMAN RIGHTS MUST BE DISCUSSED AT APEC LEADERS' SUMMIT

Dear Mr. Howard and Mr. Rudd,

Since hosting APEC 2006 and its admission to WTO, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) has committed many more serious human rights violations, including the arrest and imprisonment of numerous peaceful democracy advocates such as Rev. Nguyen Van Ly, young human rights activists like lawyer Le Thi Cong Nhan (pictured), workers' rights advocates, and the current violent crackdown on ordinary people demanding their rights and justice. As a signatory to many United Nations Human Rights Covenants, the SRV must comply with its obligations.

And as the host of APEC 2007, and a model democratic country that benefits from APEC economies, Australia also has an obligation to speak up for victims of human rights violation within the region.

We respectfully request you to challenge the SRV President Nguyen Minh Triet to end human rights abuses and carry out democratic reforms.

The SRV should be reminded that sustainable economic developments are not possible without genuine respect for human rights and a transparent legal and financial system, and that Australia's relationship, trade and foreign aid are well-founded on those principles.

Australia's long term interest will be better served if Vietnam becomes free and democratic, because it would be a more reliable and transparent partner, ensuring security, stability and long term profitability for businesses.

Australia's international standing will also be greatly enhanced should we not overlook human right values in exchange for trade with dictatorial regimes such as communist Vietnam.

Authorised by Dr Tien Nguyen, Federal President of the Vietnamese Community in Australia – www.ausviet.net