



Robert Oliphant

M.P. for Don Valley West
Député de Don Valley-Ouest



September 23, 2010

His Excellency Nguyen Tan Dung
Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
c/o The Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
470 Wilbrod Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N1

Dear Prime Minister Dung:

In my ongoing concern about fostering the best possible relations between Canada and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, I want to express my deep personal concern over the arrests of Pham Minh Hoang, Duong Kim Khai, Tran Thi Thuy and Nguyen Thanh Tam. These four people have allegedly expressed dissent with the government because of their expressions of concern for the oppressed and for the cause of social justice in their country.

I urge you to investigate their situation personally and urge you to take appropriate actions to ensure that they are treated fairly and that they are returned to their communities as soon as possible.

As I expressed to you this summer, I congratulate Vietnam's positive economic development since its WTO accession. The best way to further this development and to promote both unity in your country and trade relationships with other countries is to ensure the highest standards of human rights are being met by your government. In my opinion, the extension and expansion of human rights within any country is directly related to strong economic development and cultural growth.

Very specifically, I would like to advocate for the immediate release of:

Mr. Pham Minh Hoang, 55, Lecturer, Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology, arrested on August 13, 2010, in Saigon;

Pastor Duong Kim Khai, 52, Mennonite Church of Vietnam, arrested on August 10, 2010, in Saigon;

Ms. Tran Thi Thuy, 39, a business woman, arrested on August 10, 2010, in Dong Thap.

Mr. Nguyen Thanh Tam, 57, a farmer, arrested on July 18, 2010, in Ben Tre.

As you are very well aware, as a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the international community expects Vietnam to respect and uphold civil and political rights of individuals, including the most basic of rights—freedoms of speech, press, expression, religion, and assembly.

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I am always open to speaking to officials in your Embassy here in Ottawa regarding this or other issues of mutual concern.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Oliphant". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Robert Oliphant, M.P.
Don Valley West