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WESTERN AUSTRALIA



26 November 2007

Nguyen Tan Dung
Prime Minister of Vietnam
2-Hoang Van Thu
Hanoi
VIETNAM

Dear Prime Minister

I am writing to express my deep concern at the recent action of security police in arresting members and supporters of the Vietnam Reform Party.

The arrest of these people, who support the establishment of democracy in Vietnam by peaceful means, has been raised with me by constituents of mine who are concerned for their safety.

My constituents have informed me that those arrested were:

- Dr Nguyen Quoc Quan, an American citizen;
- Ms Nguyen Thi Thanh Van, a French citizen;
- Mr Trong Leon (Van Ba), an American citizen;
- Mr Khunmi Somsak, a Thai citizen

together with two Vietnamese citizens, Mr Nguyen The Vu and Mr Nguyen The Khiem.

There is no justification and can never be any justification for arresting people for participating in discussions on the values of democracy. Such action constitutes a violation of their basic human rights.

As you would be aware, Vietnam is a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees freedom of opinion and expression.

Accordingly, I urge you to take immediate action to ensure the release of all those who have been detained while doing nothing more than exercise their basic human rights.

Any failure on your part to act on this matter would only leave Vietnam open to criticism for a breach of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. I would hope you do not want this to occur.

Yours sincerely

Ray Halligan MLC
Shadow Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests

cc Australian Ambassador to the Social Republic of Vietnam
8-Dao Tan Street, Ba Dinh District, Hanoi, Vietnam