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Embassy of Canada to Vietnam in Hanoi  
31 Hung Vuong  
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Vietnam

RE: Imprisonment and release of Chau Van Kham by Vietnamese Authorities

I recently met with the Viet Tan Canada delegation regarding the current imprisonment of Chau Van Kham, an Australian citizen who is currently detained in Vietnam. Chau Kham was detained in January 2019 on charges of illegally entering the country of Vietnam, and has been detained since due to a 'national security concern', as determined by the Vietnamese Authorities.

Further information provided by the Viet Tan delegation informs that Chau entered Vietnam from Cambodia to conduct first-hand research about the human rights situation in Vietnam. Before detainment, Chau met with Nguyen Van Vien, a civil society activist and member of the Brotherhood for Democracy, an organization working on training and educating people about their fundamental – and democratic rights. At this time, Mr. Chau is being detained by the Vietnamese government for attempting to "overthrow the state". Simultaneously, the same government has labelled the peaceful and non-violent Viet Tan group as a 'terrorist' organization within the country.

Mr. Chau is not the first Viet Tan member to be arrested on similar charges in the past, however his detainment has held the longest imprisonment of any other group member. In October 2010, a Melbourne-based Activist, Hong Vo, was detained for 10 days and interrogated each day until release.

As a former Member of the Canadian Committee on Justice, Human Rights, Public Safety, and Emergency Preparedness, I urge the Vietnamese government, Australian Government, and all other parties to work to a conclusion on this matter as quickly as possible. It is my understanding that Mr. Chau entered Vietnam without any attempt to disrupt, undermine, or overthrow the current political processes in play. Mr. Chau is scheduled to have his hearing on November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019. To the knowledge of this office, he has not had access to a lawyer as it is of the opinion of the Vietnamese authorities that access to a representative would be a breach of the 'confidentiality' of the trial.

Therefore, this letter is in support of the release of Chau Van Kham for his unlawful detainment in Vietnam on his human rights issue. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff if there are any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Hon. Judy A. Sgro, Privy Council, MP  
Humber River-Black Creek  
Toronto, Ontario  
Canada

