

Press Release

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For immediate release

Contact persons:

- Tanh Nguyen (646-920-0209, nguyenvantanh718@yahoo.com)
- Binh Vo (650-714-7793, binhavo@yahoo.com)

Vietnamese Americans to Protest Vietnam Prime Minister's Visit to New York City – September 25, 10 AM

A large protest is to be held in front of the United Nations Headquarters on **September 25, 2007 at 10am** to protest against the Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung's visit to New York City where he will attend the opening of the 62nd session of United Nations General Assembly.

This year's UN General Assembly meeting is especially important to Vietnam because it has applied for membership of the United Nations Security Council. Despite Vietnam's efforts to integrate into the international community, Vietnamese government continues to *ignore* requests from President George W. Bush and other government's leaders to respect human rights as a condition to gain the world cooperation. "Vietnam does not deserve to be accepted into the UN Security Council due to their escalation of human rights violations" says Mr. Tanh Nguyen, head of the protest organizing committee.

Instead of improving their human rights records, Vietnamese authorities have *increased* their harassments of prominent democracy activists in Vietnam in August, among other Venerable Thich Quang Do, a 2006 RAFTO Prize laureate for Human Rights. Venerable **Thich Quang Do**, Buddhist monk, leader of the banned Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam, is currently under close surveillance and is facing continuous attacks and intimidation on state-run media. Various rights groups fear that he might soon be arrested like the case of democracy activist Catholic priest Nguyen Van Ly who is imprisoned for eight years.

On September 18, 2007 the US House of Representatives passed the **Vietnam Human Rights Act 2007** by a 414-3 vote. "This is enormous encouragement for the democracy movement in Vietnam but the Vietnamese government has to be *constantly reminded* by the international community" says Mr. Binh Vo, representative of VPAC, an organization aiming to increase the participation of Vietnamese Americans in the political process.

In September a group of young American missionaries publicized a series of daring and revealing youtube videos illustrating Vietnamese authorities' brutal persecutions of minority religious groups such as the Mennonites on the highlands of Vietnam. (please see http://www.viettan.org/article.php3?id_article=4185)

The protest is organized by **Coalition against Nguyen Tan Dung Visit to UN General Assembly**.

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