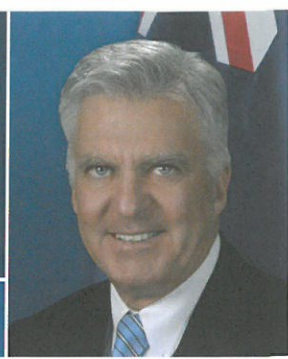




Chris Hayes MP



FEDERAL MEMBER FOR FOWLER

Ref: DiemD-Imm141106-1549.Doc/YN
7 November 2014

The Hon Julie Bishop MP
Minister for Foreign Affairs
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Minister

I write to bring to your attention another significant matter demonstrating the Vietnamese government's ill-treatment of its citizens and its disregard for basic human rights. On this occasion, it concerns Mr Dang Xuan Dieu, a human rights activist currently locked up in solitary confinement at Camp 5 Prison, Yen Dinh district in Thanh Hoa Province. In fact, this is just another typical case amongst hundreds of others concerning prisoners of conscience in Vietnam

Mr Dang was arrested in July 2011 together with 15 other defendants in Ho Chi Minh City for their affiliation with the Catholic Church and strong advocacy work in the area of education for children living in poverty, aid for people with disability and the government's suppression of religious practice.

Detained for close to two years, Mr Dang and his co-accused were not officially brought to trial until January 2013, whereby they were charged under Article 79 of the Vietnamese Penal Code for "attempting to overthrow the government". They were given sentences ranging from 3 to 13 years imprisonment with Mr Dang receiving the full 13 years with a further 5 years under house arrest.

Since his incarceration, I am advised that Mr Dang has been subjected to extreme abuse and humiliation by prison officials, physically assaulted and forced to live in filthy conditions. Mr Dang has held a number of hunger strikes to protest this inhuman treatment however, he continues to face harsh brutality whilst in custody.

I have been advised that Mr Dang's health is deteriorating rapidly and his family have been prevented from visiting him.

Given that Mr Dang's basic welfare is at great risk, I respectfully request the Australian Government urgently take an active interest in his case.

Yours sincerely



CHRIS HAYES MP
Federal Member for Fowler
Chief Opposition Whip