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Wayne Marston

Member of Parliament for Hamilton East–Stoney Creek

May 24, 2011

His Excellency
Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung
c/o Embassy of Vietnam
470 Wilbrod Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6M8

Dear Prime Minister Dung:

I am writing on behalf of seven land rights activists who will be brought to trial on May 30, 2011 in Ben Tre Province.

1. Pastor Duong Kim Khai
2. Ms. Tran Thi Thuy
3. Mr. Nguyen Thanh Tam
4. Mr. Pham Van Thong
5. Mr. Nguyen Chi Thanh
6. Ms. Pham Ngoc Hoa
7. Mr. Cao Van Tinh

It is my understanding that they are peaceful activists whose only "crime" is to have advocated on behalf of aggrieved farmers who have, among other things, been victims of local land seizures.

Their current status raises deep concerns: all have been held incommunicado since July 2010 despite requests from family and defense lawyers for access. The security police have reportedly used violence against some of the defendants and their families.

Charged with subversion under Article 79 of the penal code based on their involvement with a pro-democracy party, their persecution is a grave miscarriage of justice. As Vietnam is a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in which freedom of association is guaranteed, it is the activists' basic right to support or be associated with Viet Tan (Vietnam Reform Party).

I urge you to cease using any violence against these peaceful activists and their families and to immediately release them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Wayne Marston".

Wayne Marston, M.P.
Hamilton East- Stoney Creek