

2185 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0540  
(202) 225-4111  
FAX: (202) 226-0335

1110 E. CHAPMAN AVENUE  
SUITE 207  
ORANGE, CALIFORNIA 92866  
(714) 744-4130  
FAX: (714) 744-4056

www.royce.house.gov

UNITED STATES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



EDWARD R. ROYCE  
Fortieth District-California

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September 23, 2009

President Nguyen Minh Triet  
Socialist Republic of Vietnam  
Office of the State  
1 Bach Thao  
Hanoi, Vietnam  
Via facsimile: +84 4 823-1872

Dear President Triet,

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the planned trials in Vietnam this week to punish peaceful democracy activists.

According to press reports, your government will try eight Vietnamese citizens (writer Nguyen Xuan Nghia, university student Ngo Quynh, former communist party member Nguyen Manh Son, essayist Nguyen Van Tinh, land rights activist Nguyen Van Tuc, electrician Nguyen Kim Nhan, high school teacher Vu Hung, and engineer Pham Van Troi) on charges of "propaganda against the socialist state."

I understand that these individuals published articles on the internet and planned to display banners advocating for human rights. Freedom of expression is a fundamental right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and it is one that is protected under the Vietnamese Constitution. As you prepare to address the United Nations General Assembly this week, I hope that you are mindful that your government has detained scores of Vietnamese who have exercised rights guaranteed by the United Nations Declaration.

Blogging on topics such as the environment should not be criminalized. I call on you to release these political prisoners.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ed Royce".

EDWARD R. ROYCE