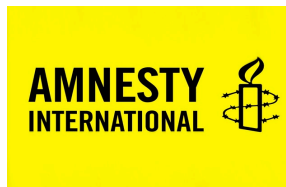


Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada

NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
Promoting human rights by protecting those who defend them
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BY AIRMAIL

His Excellency Trương Tấn Sang
President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
35 Ngo Quyen
Hoan Kiem District, HA NOI
VIETNAM

Thursday, 30 August, 2012

Re: Mr. Le Quoc Quan

Lawyers Rights Watch Canada¹ Lawyers for Lawyers² and Amnesty International Netherlands³ (the **Signatory Organizations**) are concerned to learn that one of Vietnam's well known lawyers, Mr. Le Quoc Quan, has been severely injured due to a violent attack that occurred on Sunday, 19 August 2012.

According to our information Mr. Le Quoc Quan was attacked near his home in Hanoi and was struck by a steel baton on his knee, thigh and back. As a result Mr. Le Quoc Quan had to recover in the hospital for a number of days.

Mr. Le Quoc Quan is a prominent lawyer and human rights defender. Although he can no longer formally exercise his work as a lawyer following his disbarment, he continues to fight for and defend civil rights in Vietnam through his blogs and other actions.

Like many Vietnamese human rights lawyers, bloggers and activists, Mr. Le Quoc Quan has regularly been subject to arbitrary arrest and has been on constant surveillance. The Signatory Organizations have reason to believe that this recent violent attack on Mr. Le Quoc Quan as well as the previous arbitrary arrests and constant harassment are directly linked to Mr. Le Quoc Quan's work in the defence of human rights.

This conduct is contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which contains international principles adopted by the United Nations and which remains the cornerstone of the UN human rights system. More specific for the role of human rights defenders and lawyers we endorse article 6⁴ and 12 paragraph 2⁵ of the

¹ **Lawyers Rights Watch Canada** is a committee of lawyers who promote human rights and the rule of law through research, education and cooperation with other human rights organizations. LRWC has Special Consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

² **Lawyers for Lawyers** is an independent Dutch foundation operating on a worldwide scale. The foundation has a board of directors consisting of (former) lawyers, human rights specialists and a managing director.

³ **Amnesty International** is an independent non-governmental organization that strives to protect all human rights as described in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The organization operates from over 80 countries worldwide. The Dutch section has a membership of 300.00 citizens.

⁴ This article reads: "Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others to study, discuss, form and hold opinions on the observance, both in law and in practice, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms."

UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders and 23⁶ of the Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, instruments that are universally applicable. Moreover, this conduct is contrary to article 9⁷ of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which treaty Vietnam has ratified, and by which Vietnam is therefore legally bound.

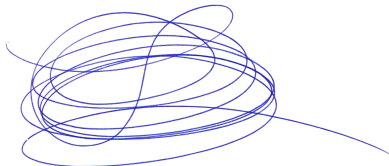
In view of the above, the Signatory Organizations urge and call upon Your Excellency, in compliance with the international human rights obligations of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, to:

- conduct a credible investigation into this violent attack on Mr. Le Quoc Quan and hold accountable anyone that is responsible;
- take all necessary measures to guarantee the physical and psychological integrity and security of Le Quoc Quan and his family; and
- more generally, put an end to all forms of harassment against human rights defenders in Vietnam, and ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments applicable to Vietnam.


In addition to our request, we would like to stress the following. The government of Vietnam has recently indicated its intentions to run for a seat on the UN Human Rights Council. As a first step to show its commitment to human rights principles, the government of Vietnam should end its conduct as described above. Unless it does so, it will not be able to fulfill the membership criteria of upholding the highest human rights standards and cooperating with the council.

We thank you for your attention to our concerns. The Signatory Organizations are confident of your good will and sense of justice and will monitor this case closely.

Sincerely,



Gail Davidson,
LRWC Executive Director



Adrie van de Streek,
Executive Director Lawyers for Lawyers



Eduard Nazarski,
Director Amnesty International Netherlands

⁵ This article reads: "The State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration."

⁶ This article reads: "Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the right to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization. In exercising these rights, lawyers shall always conduct themselves in accordance with the law and the recognized standards and ethics of the legal profession."

⁷ This article reads: "Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention. No one shall be deprived of his liberty except on such grounds and in accordance with such procedure as are established by law."

Copied to:

His Excellencies

Mr. Nguyễn Tấn Dũng, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

Mr. Hà Hùng Cường, Minister of Justice of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

Mr. Vu Dung, Permanent Representative of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam to the UN

Mr. John Hendra, UN Resident Coordinator in the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

Mr. Joop Scheffers, Ambassador of the Royal Kingdom of the Netherlands to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam