



Viet Tan (Vietnam Reform Party)

*With a network of members inside Vietnam and around the world,
Viet Tan aims to establish democracy and reform the country through peaceful means.*

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Viet Tan Delegation Meets with Norwegian Government and International Human Rights organization

Amidst the international attention on the Olympic and Beijing's human rights violations, Norway is having human rights dialogue with Vietnamese pro-democracy forces.

The Viet Tan delegation consists of Viet Tan chairman Mr. Do Hoang Diem, Dr. Phong Nguyen member of Viet Tan Central Committee, journalist Nguyen Thi Thanh Van from Radio New Horizon and Mr. Nguyen Duc Thuan, a Viet Tan representative from Norway. The meeting started on Tuesday April 22, where Rafto Foundation welcomed the delegation at the Rafto House in Bergen. Apart from providing Rafto Foundation with a human rights update, the main focus of the discussion was how to build a strong civil society in Vietnam where international corporates could share their responsibilities in assisting this. Arne Lynngard, President of Rafto Foundation and Ms. Therese Jebsen, Director of Rafto House showed great concerns about social injustice that Vietnamese farmers and workers are facing.

On Wednesday April 23, the Viet Tan delegation met with another prominent human rights organization, the Oslo Peace Center with the presence of the former prime minister of Norway Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik. The Oslo Peace Center was founded in 2006 with the goal to promote peace and human rights in the world.

The delegation's program continued with a round table meeting with the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs at Norwegian Parliament. Representatives from a broad spectrum of Norwegian political parties including Marit Wybakk (Acting Chair of the Committee), Anne Margrethe Larsen (the Liberal Party), Alf Ivar Samuelsen (the Progression Party), Finn Martin (the Conservative Party), Oeyvin Vaksdal (the Progress Party), and Vidar Bjoernstad (Labor Party). Mr. Diem Do says "Human rights dialogues between an advanced country like Norway and Vietnam are good but far from enough. The dialogues should be reinforced by other measures, for example aid ties to human rights improvements by the Vietnamese government".

Marit Wybakk assures that Norway always uses every dialogues there are between the two countries to put pressure on the Vietnamese government on its human rights records. A concrete example is Vietnam's recent release of Nguyen Viet Trung, a Vietnamese citizen and Viet Tan associate who was arrested on November 17, 2007 along with 5 other democracy activists while distributing leaflets advocating non-violent democratic changes.

The Viet Tan delegation will continue their round table discussions and meetings tomorrow Thursday April 24. The day will start with an official reception of Viet Tan in the Norwegian Parliament, followed by a meeting with the Labor Party leaderships.

Contacts: Duy Hoang +1 (202) 470-1678