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September 2, 2015

His Excellency Truong Tan Sang
President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
c/o Embassy of Vietnam in the United States
1233 20th Street NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036

Dear President Sang,

As the Socialist Republic of Vietnam releases more than 18,000 prisoners to celebrate the “70th National Day Anniversary” of the country, I am extremely disappointed to see that no political activists or prisoners of conscience are included among those receiving amnesty. I call on you to immediately release all prisoners of conscience, including Pastor Nguyen Cong Chinh, Father Nguyen Van Ly, songwriter Viet Khang, bloggers Ta Phong Tan and Tran Huynh Duy Thuc, land rights activist Tran Thi Thuy, and young activists such as Dinh Nguyen Kha, Ho Duc Hoa, Dang Xuan Dieu, and Nguyen Dang Minh Man.

It is shameful that Vietnamese citizens who have chosen to exercise their fundamental rights to freedom of expression, freedom of religion and freedom of association will continue to be imprisoned by the Government of Vietnam while those convicted of criminal offenses against property and people receive amnesty. This policy is unfair and disregards the human rights of Vietnam’s citizens. If Vietnam wants to build ties with the international community and gain favorable trading status through the Trans-Pacific Partnership, it must demonstrate that it is serious about upholding international norms and values.

Vietnam cannot continue to arrest and imprison its own citizens for exercising their fundamental rights while claiming a commitment to human rights. Once again, I respectfully request your immediate release of ALL prisoners of conscience and thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress