



Viet Tan (Vietnam Reform Party)

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

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From Hanoi, Viet Tan members affirm Vietnam's sovereignty

Amidst a crackdown by the Vietnamese Communist Party to silence patriotic voices, a group of Viet Tan members gathered in central Hanoi today to continue asserting Vietnam's maritime claims.

Outside the historic Ngoc Son temple on Hoan Kiem lake, Viet Tan members distributed t-shirts and hats emblazoned with the letters **HS.TS.VN** signifying the Paracel (Hoang Sa) and Spratly (Truong Sa) islands and Viet Nam. This was the chant of Vietnamese students and youth in demonstrations outside the Chinese embassy and consulate in December 2007 which were later banned by authorities. These were also the words displayed on banners hung on overpasses in Hai Phong in August 2008 by Vietnamese democracy activists who were recently sentenced to long prison terms.



The purpose of today's public event was to:

- **Declare** that Vietnam's territorial integrity is an issue of utmost national importance and cannot be traded away.
- **Affirm** that patriotism and expressing one's patriotism is the right of all Vietnamese; and that speaking out against threats to the nation's borders, territorial waters, islands and forests is the responsibility of all Vietnamese.
- **Publicly express** our deepest gratitude to all Vietnamese servicemen who gave their lives defending the Paracels in 1974, the northern border since 1979 and especially in the Truong Sa battle of March 14, 1988 against the Chinese navy.



Peaceful expression is a fundamental right which no regime can restrict. No legitimate government would persecute its citizens for vocalizing concerns over national issues.

Through nonviolent actions, Viet Tan will continue to support free expression in Vietnam and the country's sovereignty.

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