



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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Contact:
Duy Hoang
+1.202.470.0845

Hanoi regime convicts Vietnamese legal scholar in show trial, detains citizens for attending the proceedings

As widely expected, Vietnamese authorities today convicted legal scholar Cu Huy Ha Vu for "propaganda against the socialist state" in a closed trial lasting just several hours. The pre-determined seven year prison sentence followed by three years probation typifies the Hanoi government's disregard for human rights.

Despite a heavy police presence, thousands of Vietnamese gathered outside the courthouse in Hanoi today to show their solidarity. Those gathering included relatives of Cu Huy Ha Vu, democracy activists, members of the Thai Ha Catholic parish and many other concerned people. Rather than respecting the right of citizens to peacefully assemble, security police broke up the gathering and detained dozens of individuals.

Viet Tan strongly protests the communist authorities for violating:

- The country's criminal procedures by denying legal documents to the defense lawyers of Cu Huy Ha Vu and constantly obstructing the ability of Mr. Ha Vu's lawyers to adequately represent the defendant.
- The civil rights of Cu Huy Ha Vu by staging his initial arrest on a sexually-related crime and defaming his character, then switching the detention rationale to the political charge of anti-state propaganda.
- The right to assemble by preventing people from attending the trial and arbitrarily detaining people who tried to gather outside the court including Dr. Pham Hong Son, attorney Le Quoc Quan, blogger Duong Thi Xuan, blogger Paulus Le Son, university student Nguyen Xuan Kim, Mr. Nguyen Van Tam and Mr. Thai Van Dung. Besides illegally detaining the above individuals, security police also conducted late night searches of the homes of Dr. Pham Hong Son and attorney Le Quoc Quan to terrorize the families of these democracy activists.

Viet Tan calls on:

1/ Governments and international human rights organizations to condemn the Hanoi government's "rule by law" to abuse human rights.

2/ Human rights defenders in Vietnam and around the world to contact the office of prime minister Nguyen Tan Dung and the embassies of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to condemn the regressive polices.

3/ Vietnamese to utilize social media to continue discussing the issues that affect the future of the country which Cu Huy Ha Vu helped to raise--including the dangers of bauxite mining in the Central Highlands and Vietnamese territorial sovereignty in the East Sea.

4/ All to campaign for the freedom of Cu Huy Ha Vu and all other democracy activists arbitrarily detained in Vietnam, especially those individuals arrested during the trial of April 4, 2011.

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