



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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On the Arrest of Viet Tan Members in Vietnam

On November 17, 2007, Vietnamese security police detained members and supporters of Viet Tan in Saigon. Those arrested and taken away included:

Viet Tan members

- Dr. Nguyen, Quoc Quan, American citizen
- Ms. Nguyen, Thi Thanh Van, French citizen
- Mr. Truong, Leon (Van Ba), American citizen

Other individuals

- Mr. Nguyen, The Vu, Vietnamese citizen
- Mr. Nguyen, The Khiem, Vietnamese citizen
- Mr. Khunmi, Somsak, Thai citizen

With the exception of Dr. Nguyen Quoc Quan whose place of detention is currently unknown, all the individuals were arrested at a residence on Ton That Hiep street, ward 13, district 11, Saigon. They were taken initially to the public security office in district 10 and then reportedly to the main detention center in Saigon.

Before their arrest, they participated in discussions with other democracy activists on promoting peaceful democratic change. Specifically, they aspired to publicize information on successful nonviolent struggles from around the world and to use these lessons to help empower the Vietnamese people.

While it has been over 48 hours since the arrests, the families of the local residents and the embassies of the non-Vietnamese citizens have yet to be notified. Viet Tan expresses our deep concern for the safety of these six individuals. Clearly, communist Vietnam lacks the most basic judicial system and opportunity for a fair and open trial.

Information on the arrested



- **Dr. Nguyen Quoc Quan**, born 1953, was a high-school teacher in Kien Giang province, Vietnam. He emigrated to the United States in 1981 and graduated from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, in 1987 with a Ph.D. in Mathematics. He specialized in research on Machine Translation from English to Vietnamese. A co-founder of the Vietnamese Professionals Society, he is married with two children and a resident of Sacramento, California.



- **Ms. Nguyen Thi Thanh Van**, born 1956, was a university student in France and settled there after the communist takeover of Vietnam in 1975. She is active in the overseas Vietnamese-language media, having served on the editorial staff of the monthly *Viet Nam Dan Chu* (Vietnam Democracy). Under the pen name Thanh Thao, she is a key correspondent for Radio Chan Troi Moi, Viet Tan's nightly broadcast inside Vietnam. She is married and a resident of Paris, France.



- **Mr. Truong Van Ba**, born 1953, emigrated to the United States in 1979. He operated a food catering truck while devoting most of his time as a community activist. He has two children living in the United States and two grown children in Vietnam. He is a resident of Honolulu, Hawaii.

- **Mr. Nguyen The Vu**, born 1977, is a citizen of Vietnam and employed as a sales executive. The arrest on November 17, 2007 occurred at his home in district 11, Saigon. He is married.
- **Mr. Nguyen The Khiem**, born 1989, is a citizen of Vietnam and college student. He is the younger brother of Nguyen The Vu and was arrested for sharing the same residence in Saigon.
- **Mr. Somsak Khunmi**, born 1949, is a Thai citizen residing in Ubon, Thailand.

While these individuals may have different backgrounds and reside in different countries, they are Vietnamese patriots who share a common dream to establish democracy and reform the country. Their activities and those of all Viet Tan members center on principles of nonviolent struggle to mobilize the power of the people against a dictatorship that uses violence as a means of suppression.

In the face of these arrests, Viet Tan calls on:

- Vietnamese inside and outside the country, in the spirit of unity and shared goal, to pressure the communist government to cease the acts of repression, terror, and imprisonment against peaceful democracy activists from inside and outside the country.
- The Vietnamese communist government to honor international covenants and immediately provide to the embassies and families of the arrested their exact whereabouts and condition.
- The Vietnamese communist government to respect the values of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, especially freedom of speech, and immediately release all the above individuals as their only activity was to peacefully express their support for freedom and democracy.
- The American, French and Thai embassies to request the Vietnamese authorities to provide information on the whereabouts and personal safety of the respective nationals of these countries, and to visit these nationals while they are in jail to ensure their safety and well-being.

For the last two decades, Viet Tan has faced countless challenges. Committed to establishing democracy and reforming the country, our members are resolute before this most recent challenge. Viet Tan will continue to be an active participant in Vietnam's democracy movement and to work for the freedom of all political prisoners in Vietnam.