



# 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.*

*[www.viettan.org](http://www.viettan.org)*

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**Contact:**

Duy Hoang  
+1.202.470.0845

## **Vietnam: Where democracy is deemed subversion**

Four democracy activists were sentenced to long prison terms in another closed trial in Vietnam. If the Hanoi regime had popular support, it would not fear citizens who discuss and advocate for political reforms.

The convictions of Le Cong Dinh, Nguyen Tien Trung, Tran Huynh Duy Thuc, and Le Thang Long for subversion demonstrate the extent to which the current system is holding back the country.

Tran Huynh Duy Thuc and Le Thang Long helped found an information technology company involved in launching Vietnam's stock market. They came to see political change as necessary to stamp out government corruption. Nguyen Tien Trung studied abroad and was an active blogger commenting on vital issues. Le Cong Dinh, perhaps Vietnam's most prominent lawyer, represented leading multinational firms as well as Vietnamese dissidents.

Le Cong Dinh in particular was charged with attending a seminar on nonviolent activism organized by Viet Tan. Strategic non-violent struggle is about using peaceful means to encourage civic engagement, building civil society and thereby leading to peaceful democratic change. Le Cong Dinh did nothing wrong by studying the successful experiences of Gandhi, the American Civil Rights Movement, and Eastern European activists.

Viet Tan is committed to empowering the people of Vietnam to effect social changes through peaceful, nonviolent means. We condemn the arbitrary convictions today in Saigon, as well as other legal actions taking place in Hanoi and Hai Phong this month.

In a country where the legal system is an extension of the ruling communist party, charges and trials against democracy activists are nothing but a crackdown on political freedom and Vietnam's progress.

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