



September 18, 2013

His Excellency Le Sy Vuong Ha
Ambassador of Vietnam to Canada
Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in Canada
55 Mackay Street
Ottawa, ON K1M 2B2

Your Excellency:

I write to you today as the Official Opposition of Canada's Critic for Human Rights. In particular, I am concerned with the arbitrary arrest and imprisonment of prominent blogger and human rights lawyer Le Quoc Quan.

According to Human Rights Watch, Mr. Quan was most recently arrested by Vietnamese authorities in December 2012 on allegations of tax evasion.

His case represents, unfortunately, just one in a series of recent government prosecutions of bloggers and activists. It follows the May convictions and harsh sentences of Nguyen Phuong Uyen and Dinh Nguyen Kha for circulating leaflets critical of the government and the arrests of popular bloggers Truong Duy Nhat and Pham Viet Dao in May and June.

Bearing this in mind, I would respectfully point out that freedom of expression is guaranteed by both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which your country is a signatory. Mr. Quan's present situation demonstrates a violation of his freedom of expression, among other basic human rights, and speaks to much larger issues.

Therefore I request that the Vietnamese authorities consider releasing Mr. Le Quoc Quan's immediately and unconditionally. This matter is important not just to my office, but to many human rights-based international organizations which, like myself, follow the case closely. I therefore urge you to address the issues raised in this letter as soon as possible.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wayne Marston". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Wayne Marston, Member of Parliament
NDP Critic for Human Rights and Consular Affairs
Deputy Labour Critic