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HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

OF THE

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HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES BY VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 2015

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH,
GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:21 p.m., in room 2200 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Christopher H. Smith (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. SMITH. The subcommittee will come to order, and let me begin first by expressing my apologies for being late in convening the hearing.

There has been a number of crises today. One of them is in Ghana. As you know, this subcommittee is Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations and they have had serious floods. So we have been working with the Ambassador from Ghana to try to ensure that sufficient funding for those victims is provided.

So I pushed back the schedule a bit so I express my apologies to our witnesses as well as to our friends in the audience. I am truly sorry.

Let me begin with some opening comments, and Karen Bass is on her way as well as some of the other members of the subcommittee.

I would like to begin by recognizing the distinguished Vietnamese-American leaders who are visiting Washington to discuss with Members of Congress issues of concern to the community including issues of freedom and human rights in Vietnam.

Our former colleague, Anh Cao, is here. Anh was the first Vietnamese-American to be elected to Congress, did yeoman's work in Boat People SOS, as Dr. Thang notes so well.

I met him many, many years ago, a very distinguished Member of Congress. There was no greater advocate for the people of Vietnam past, present or, I would say respectfully, into the future—certainly, past and present than Anh was.

He was tenacious on human rights in general but when it came to Vietnam no one cared more and did more on this side as opposed to our witnesses in civil society.

So I want to thank you for that leadership. Also Ambassador Joseph Rees, who used to be staff director and has served in a number of capacities at the U.S. Department of State.

Ambassador Rees, as I think many of you know, was our first Ambassador to East Timor when that nation became an independent nation, and frankly, it was Joseph working with Dr. Thang in the mid-1990s when the boat people were being denied access to the United States and were housed—is probably the euphemism for the way they were being treated—they were incarcerated throughout all of Asia including in a prison in Hong Kong and were being forcibly repatriated.

It was Joseph, especially as the former general counsel for the INS, who helped lead the way along with Dr. Thang.

We had four important pivotal hearings about the Comprehensive Plan of Action put forward by the Clinton administration to forcibly repatriate Vietnamese to Vietnam, many of whom would go to reeducation camps and to prison.

And as a result of that, I offered an amendment on the floor from what we gleaned from all of that information and we put a stop, a tourniquet, to that terrible forcible repatriation.

And the ROVR Program then came into existence and something on the order of 20,000 Vietnamese made their way to the United States. It is because of that and if it wasn't for Dr. Thang and Ambassador Rees, that would not have happened. So I want to recognize them and thank them for that extraordinary leadership.

The Vietnamese-American community is celebrating its 40th year in the United States—those who came after the fall of Saigon, and of course we all remember the helicopters and the last few who made it.

My own in-laws are Vietnamese-American; my son is married to a Vietnamese-American young lady who is about to have her second child. They left during the 1975 exodus. They were the lucky ones who were not part of the boat people exodus.

And I just want to say how much all of us in Congress, both sides of the aisle, so deeply respect the contributions that have been made by the Vietnamese Americans to this country.

Very, very strong patriots, men and women who are hardworking have really made their mark on this country and have cared so deeply for their families and for their relatives and, of course, for all other Americans. Thank you for that. It is very, very important.

This subcommittee has held numerous hearings on human rights in Vietnam over the years and we have discussed a range of concerns from restrictions on religious freedom, to the jailing and torture of dissidents, from sex and labor trafficking, to the censorship of the press and the Internet.

The Vietnamese Government and Communist Party continue to be one of the worst abusers of human rights. We may want to sweep that reality under the table and many do, sadly. We may want to paper over it by promises of security cooperation and trade deals.

But that reality stares us in the face and requires us to ask whether U.S. policy really serves the people of Vietnam, people who want our liberties and our freedoms as much as our trade.

The U.S. Government must continue to press the Vietnamese Government on truly fundamental human rights issues, not only in human rights dialogues, which very often are dead-end streets, maybe they ought to be done, but in all meetings with Vietnamese

officials, especially the trade meetings and that means that the highest levels from the United States President on down.

It can't be a sidebar issue. It can't be something that's in the appendix that is brought up in a cursory way so the President can say, "Oh, I raised human rights." He needs to raise it, especially with the upcoming visit, with specificity.

Talk about individuals who are being incarcerated for their faith or because of their democracy activism and say we want these people released. The President needs to do that and he needs to do it when he meets with the head of party coming very shortly from Vietnam.

Sixty-six percent of the Vietnamese population is under 35 and some don't even remember the war except from history and from news reels. They want their lives to look like those of their Vietnamese cousins in the U.S., in Australia, as well as in Canada.

Our policies cannot be directed at the Vietnamese elite in the Communist Party but must focus on the people of Vietnam. What are in their best interests? Not the ruling clique who suppress.

They understand that if the U.S. sides with the Vietnamese Government, they will only receive crumbs from the Communist Party's table.

Our economic, security, and freedom interests must be linked. The Vietnamese Government needs U.S. security cooperation and economic benefits more than the U.S. needs Vietnam.

We have leverage to bring about concrete changes in Vietnam and we must not give up, ignore, trivialize, belittle, or squander that leverage.

If human rights issues are not explicitly linked to our economic and security interests, we risk having discussions on trade and defense moving forward while human rights conditions go in the opposite direction, backwards.

Trade between the U.S. to Vietnam has exponentially expanded since Vietnam was granted normal trade relations in 2000.

If this expansion is to continue under the Trans-Pacific Partnership, I would say, for full disclosure, voted against the fast track legislation, believing that human rights have to be a centerpiece.

And I have gone to the so-called secret room and I read the key chapters. Don't count on human rights being enforced, including labor rights, if the TPP goes into effect as currently written. It is nice language but there is no enforcement power contained in that document called the TPP.

Let me point out to my colleagues that when the State Department removed Vietnam from the list of Countries of Particular Concern as a gesture of good will, which I opposed in 2006, we once again saw backsliding.

Promises were made. Ambassador Hanford, the Ambassador for International Religious Freedom, told me and so many others that there were deliverables that the Vietnamese Government was committed to doing. None of them happened.

As a matter of fact, as soon as they got into the WTO, once we lifted our objection there was a snap back and many of the people that I had met on one of my many trips there were all rearrested and put back in incarceration.

According to the United States Commission for International Religious Freedom's annual report, and I quote a pertinent part,

> "The Vietnamese Government continues to control all religious activities through law and administrative oversight, restrict severely independent religious practice, and represses individuals and religious groups it views as challenging its authority. . . ."

I agree with the commission's conclusion that Vietnam should be designated immediately a Country of Particular Concern because of its egregious record of suppression and repression of human rights.

In Vietnam, I have met courageous religious leaders during trips there including Father Ly, the Venerable Thich Quang Do and yet they remain wrongly detained today.

There are disturbing reports that Father Ly is suffering poor health. There are over 150 prisoners of conscience in Vietnam. We should not forget them. We need to use our leverage to try to compel their release.

Since some have made the case that Vietnam has made progress in recent years because they signed the U.N. Convention Against Torture, I just want to say it is all about deeds. Anybody can sign a convention. Anybody can put it on paper and say, "We are going to do this." We want deeds and the deeds are not there.

Let me also make a point that on trafficking there is no doubt—I am the author—again, Ambassador Rees remembers so well because he worked so effectively on the Trafficking Victims Protection Act—if there was ever a country that meets the definition of a Tier 3 country, an egregious violator, with significant problem and is not taking significant actions to meet minimum standards prescribed by the TVPA of 2000 and its follow-on authorizations, Vietnam is it. Both on the labor trafficking point of view as well as from the sex trafficking point of view where Dr. Thang has testified to that many times in the past.

I have reintroduced the Vietnam Human Rights Act. It has passed the House six separate Congresses. We are hoping to have it pass again.

Maybe the seventh time will be the charm, and the Senate will take up the bill and President Obama, who right now is against it, will reverse that and support the legislation.

I would like to yield to my good friend and colleague for any comments that he might have, the gentleman from California, and then we will go to our witnesses.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. I am Congressman Alan Lowenthal. I am here and I want to thank Chairman Smith for having me join the subcommittee today and I also want to applaud the chairman for his leadership role in pointing out and drawing attention to the human rights abuses in Vietnam.

He has been the leader in the United States Congress and I am pleased to have joined him on the legislation on human rights as an original co-sponsor too.

I also want to thank and express my deepest appreciation to the witnesses, some of them who I have worked with, who I know, who have traveled here, who have so bravely shown the spotlight on the abuses of the Vietnamese Government.

There is no denying the fact that Vietnam is an oppressive one-party state that has no respect for the rights of its own citizens.

The Vietnamese Government jails those who speak out, who advocate for the right to form independent trade unions, for a free and fair press, for freedom of religion, for the ability to associate. This is really what the Vietnamese Government does.

You know, last week following up on what the chairman said we had a very important series of votes in the House on United States trade policy and specifically on whether to grant Trade Promotion Authority to negotiate the Trans-Pacific Partnership to the President of the United States.

I opposed this bill. I opposed granting TPA for a number of reasons but the one major reason is, and I did it in part because I really also want to protect American workers and including American workers that will be impacted by what takes place in Vietnam, but the major concern that I have in the trade agreements is why we are rewarding a country like Vietnam which engages in bad behavior at this moment and that we are now granting them this.

I think this is the inappropriate way to do it. Instead of working now at this moment to release prisoners of conscience, to end restrictions on racial practice to allow labor organizing in advance of Congress considering the TPA that is what if Vietnam really wanted to do would be doing.

No, Vietnam has doubled down on its bad behavior. You know, I visited Vietnam last month with Chairman Salmon on our Asia Subcommittee in our delegation and I specifically took every opportunity including some of the other members of our delegation—Chairman Salmon and also Mr. Emmer from Minnesota—to press the Vietnamese Government in respect to the rights of Vietnamese citizens.

We also met with human rights activists including Nguyen Tien Trung and the patriarch, Thich Quang Do. We left and the Vietnamese Government said, "Oh, we are going to work with you."

I was so disappointed and, frankly, absolutely shocked when just a few days after returning to the United States I learned that Nguyen Chi Tuyen, an anti-Chinese pro-environmental activist was badly beaten by five plainclothes police officers in Hanoi.

Incidents like this only serve to further call into question why the United States should be working to reward Vietnam and again, as I point out, in the face of its bad behavior.

I look forward to hearing from the witnesses. I hope all my colleagues in the House will take notice of what is occurring in this hearing today as we continue to consider Trade Promotion Authority and Vietnam's participation in the TPP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Congressman Lowenthal.

And I would like to begin now with our very distinguished witnesses, beginning first with Nguyen Van Hai of the Free Journalist Club of Vietnam, writing under the pen name Dieu Cay.

Mr. Hai is one of Vietnam's pioneering citizen journalists. Through his blog he has exposed government corruption, called for freedom of expression, and was one of the first Vietnamese to criticize China's annexation of the Spratly Islands.

He was arrested while calling for a boycott of the Beijing Olympic torch relay and was originally convicted on trumped-up charges of tax evasion. In September 2012, he was sentenced to 12 years but was released to exile in October 2014.

We will then hear from Ms. Doan Thi Hong Anh, wife of torture victim Nguyen Thanh Nam who was tortured and subsequently died of his injuries in what has become known as the Con Dau massacre in July 2010.

She is knowledgeable about the events at Con Dau, which she witnessed, but she will also speak to religious persecution going on in different parts of the country.

In order for her husband to be buried she was pressured by the government to admit that he died of natural causes.

Subsequently, she and her two children were constantly harassed and intimidated by local security agents and subsequently they had to flee to Thailand for safety.

They were recognized as refugees by the UNHCR and recently resettled in the United States, and I would note parenthetically that Anh "Joseph" Cao convened hearings on Con Dau that were truly heartbreaking to hear how the Communist dictatorship and the bullies surrounded people, even during a funeral, because they wanted the property and they didn't want the church to retain possession of that property.

It is just a another terrible indication of what dictatorship is all about.

We will then hear from Dr. Nguyen Dinh Thang. Dr. Thang, who I have known for almost 25 years came to the U.S. as a refugee from Vietnam in 1979.

After earning his Ph.D. he began volunteering for Boat People SOS in 1988. Now serving as head of Boat People SOS, Dr. Thang has worked for the past 25 years to resettle tens of thousands of boat people and he has also worked very hard on the trafficking issue and has provided this subcommittee pivotal information about not only what happens with trafficked people in the United States but brought a very specific case to our attention, which we raised via a hearing, that occurred in Russia. So I want to thank him for that very fine work that he has done.

Then we will hear from the Reverend Nguyen Manh Hung, who is pastor of the Binh Tan Mennonite Church of Vietnam and a member of the Interfaith Council of Vietnam.

He is active in promoting religious freedom, campaigning against human rights violations, and defending victims of corruption, especially those involved in government land seizures.

He is routinely harassed and threatened by the police and recently his wife and children have been subjected to similar threats as well. His congregation is also under constant threat and harassment from officials.

I would like to now begin with Mr. Hai and then each of our witnesses will follow.

STATEMENT OF MR. NGUYEN VAN HAI (DIEU CAY), WRITER, FREE JOURNALISTS CLUB OF VIETNAM

[The following testimony was delivered through an interpreter.]

Mr. HAI. Members of Congress, I am honored to be here today to present the issue of human rights in Vietnam.

Shortly before leaving Vietnam, my fellow prisoners entrusted me to relay their cries for help to the international community, to help the international community understand that the persecution of prisoners of conscience in Vietnam is systemic, to lay bare the deceit of the Vietnamese authorities who would commit to revise Vietnam's laws in order to participate in international trade agreements but do not implement such laws.

So the first thing I wanted to discuss is freedom of the press. All media in Vietnam is in the hands of the Communist regime. The people don't have a platform to raise their voice.

People do not dare to speak their views simply because any disagreement with the ruling party can get you arrested under vague laws such as Articles 258, 88, and 79 of the criminal code.

A conviction under one of these statutes can result in a dozen years in prison. It is these vague laws that allow authorities to arrest and imprison anyone with differing opinions and to maintain their dictatorship.

My case is a testament to the suppression of human rights in Vietnam when I was sentenced to over 10 years in prison simply for peacefully expressing my political views. Only when people are able to speak freely, are free to express their opinions without fear of repression can society change for the better.

Hence, we need to pressure the Communist authorities to abolish the absurd laws and to return freedom of the press and freedom of expression to the people of Vietnam.

The second issue is prisoners of conscience. I spent 6 years and 6 months in 11 Communist prisons so I know that the prisons of Vietnam are administered by circulars and regulations, not by laws.

For example, Circular 37 of the Ministry of Public Security deprives prisoners of the rights prescribed in the criminal procedures code. Based on Circular 37, Vietnam's public security has established a series of prisons within prisons to detain political prisoners. Placed in solitary confinement for months, those prisoners refused to admit guilt, leaving many to go on hunger strikes to protest.

Recently, Ms. Ta Phong Tan, a member of the Club of Free Journalists, went on a hunger strike to protest the abuse of political prisoners by officials of Prison Camp Five in Thanh Hoa Province.

Circular 37 of the Ministry of Public Security is really an instrument to punish these dissenters outside the legal code. As I mentioned, prisoners are deprived of rights stated in the law, especially when prisoners who wish to submit a complaint must first go through the jailers who, of course, never forward on the complaints but instead take revenge on the prisoners.

Oversight bodies and Vietnamese law do not provide inmates the opportunity to exercise their right to protest as prescribed in the criminal procedures code.

To ensure basic rights for all prisoners, to prevent political prisoners, as well as prisoners of criminal offenses from being treated like animals, the Vietnamese Government must abolish Circular 37

of the Ministry of Public Security and revise the criminal procedures code in accordance with international standards.

I earnestly call upon governments and international organizations to pressure the Vietnamese authorities to, first, abolish vague laws such as Articles 258, 88, and 79 of the criminal code, Decree 72 of the Prime Minister and Circular 37 of MPS.

Secondly, revise domestic laws to be in compliance with international conventions to which Vietnam is a signatory, and third, release all political prisoners. I would like to submit a list of prisoners of conscience in need of emergency assistance.

They are Ta Phong Tan, Tran Huynh Duy Thuc, Nguyen Huu Vinh, Bui Thi Minh Hang, Tran Vu Anh Binh, Vo Minh Tri (Viet Khang), Nguyen Dang Minh Man, Ho Bich Khuong, Doan Van Vuon, Doan Dinh Nam, Doan Huy Chuong, Nguyen Hoang Quoc Hung, Dang Xuan Dieu, Ho Duc Hoa.

Thank you for your attention.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hai follows:]

Congressional Hearing on Human Rights Abuses by Vietnamese Authorities
June 17, 2015

Statement by Nguyen Van Hai (Dieu Cay)
Free Journalists Club of Vietnam

Testimony delivered in translation
by Dan Hoang, spokesperson of Viet Tan

Distinguished Members of Congress,

I am honored to be here today to present to the US Congress the issue of human rights in Vietnam.

Shortly before leaving Vietnam, my fellow prisoners entrusted me to relay their cries for help to the international community; to help the international community understand that the persecution of prisoners of conscience in Vietnam is systemic; to lay bare the deceit of the Vietnam authorities when they commit to revise Vietnamese laws in order to participate in international trade agreement but do not implement such laws.

1/ Freedom of the press, freedom of speech

All media in Vietnam is in the hands of the communist regime. The people don't have a platform to raise their voice. People do not dare to speak their views, simply because any disagreement with the ruling party can get you arrested under vague laws such as Articles 258, 88, and 79 of the Criminal Code. A conviction under one of these statutes can result in a dozen years in prison. It is these vague laws that allow authorities to arrest and imprison anyone with differing opinions and to maintain their dictatorship.

My case is a testament to the suppression of human rights in Vietnam when I was sentenced to over ten years in prison simply for peacefully expressing my political views.

Only when people are able to speak freely, are free to express their opinions without fear of repression, can society change for the better. Hence, we need to pressure the communist authorities to abolish the absurd laws and to return freedom of the press and freedom of expression to the people of Vietnam.

2/ Prisoners of conscience

I spent 6 years and 6 months in 11 communist prisons, so I know that the prisons in Vietnam are administered by circulars and regulations, not by laws. For example, Circular 37 of the Ministry of Public Security deprives prisoners of the rights prescribed in the Criminal Procedures Code.

Based on Circular 37, Vietnam's Public Security has established a series of prisons within prisons to detain political prisoners--placing in solitary confinement for months those prisoners who refuse to admit guilt, leaving many prisoners to go on hunger strikes to protest. (I myself went on hunger strike twice. The first time for 28 days in Prison Camp B34, and the second time for 33 days in Prison Camp 6 of the Ministry of Public Security).

Recently, Ms. Ta Phong Tan--a member of the Club of Free Journalists--went on hunger strike on 13 May 2015 to protest the abuse of political prisoners by officials of Prison Camp 5, Yen Dinh, Thanh Hoa, especially their use of solitary confinement. Circular 37 of the Ministry of Public Security is in an instrument to punish dissenters outside of the legal code.

Prisoners are deprived of the rights stated in the law, especially when prisoners who wish to submit a complaint must first go through the jailers, who of course never forward on the complaints but instead take revenge on the prisoners.

Oversight bodies and Vietnamese law do not provide inmates the opportunity to exercise their right to protest ill-treatment as prescribed in the Criminal Procedures Code.

To ensure basic human rights for all prisoners, to prevent political prisoners as well as prisoners of criminal offenses from being treated like animals, the Vietnam government must abolish Circular 37 of the Ministry of Public Security and revise the Criminal Procedures Code in accordance with international standards.

I earnestly call upon governments and international organizations to pressure the Vietnamese authorities to:

- abolish vague laws such as Articles 258, 88, 79 of the Criminal Code, Decree 72 by the Prime Minister, and Circular 37 of the Ministry of Public Security
- revise domestic laws to be in compliance with international conventions to which Vietnam is a signatory
- release all political prisoners

I submit a list of prisoners of conscience in need of emergency assistance:

1/ Ta Phong Tan
2/ Tran Huynh Duy Thuc
3/ Nguyen Huu Vinh
4/ Bui Thi Minh Hang
5/ Tran Vu Anh Binh
6/ Vo Minh Tri (Viet Khang)
7/ Nguyen Dang Minh Man
8/ Ho Bich Khuong
9/ Doan Van Vuon
10/ Doan Dinh Nam
11/ Doan Huy Chuong
12/ Nguyen Hoang Quoc Hung
13/ Dang Xuan Dieu
14/ Ho Duc Hoa

Thank you for your attention.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you so very much, Mr. Hai.

We have been joined by Chairman Dana Rohrabacher, also of California. Any comments?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Let me just say that we are facing one of these decisions and I am happy to hear and see you here to help guide us in this decision because we are being told, like we were told with China that if we just give certain economic status to a country, even though that government is dictatorial and abuses its own people that by giving them the same type of economic status that you would give to a free country that it will lead to reform and lead to democratization and liberalization.

I have just come from a hearing just a moment ago about China and there has been no political reform in China, and from what this gentleman has just told us there has been no political reform in Vietnam. Yet, we have been opening up the floodgates.

I want to make sure that I get your advice as to what we should be doing about expanding our economic openings to Vietnam and America and whether that will help or whether that extra wealth will bolster the strength of those who oppress the people.

And in China, it has certainly not weakened the hold on the people of China. So with that said, Mr. Chairman, I have appreciated working with you over the years on issues—human rights issues in Vietnam but throughout the world and Congressman Lowenthal and I have decided that we are going to be partners in a lot of very important things and helping people in Vietnam and elsewhere, for their human rights is right on the top of that list.

So thank you all very much.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Chairman Rohrabacher.

I would like to—Mr. Clawson, do you have any opening comments?

Mr. CLAWSON. I think Chairman Rohrabacher has it exactly right. What goes on in the world over and over again is that folks use our marketplace to industrialize and to modernize their economies and their infrastructures and then sometimes some of that flows through to the folks that are making Nike shoes and electronics and toys and so their lives are better, freer and there is more social justice and human rights. And sometimes it doesn't work out that way, correct, Congressman?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well, I haven't seen it work in the latter yet so——

Mr. CLAWSON. You are not going back far enough. I also am interested. I am very much into free and fair trade but I think everybody needs to share in that wealth and in the benefits derived thereof and therefore hearing from folks like you all and what you have to say about that I think is an important day here on Capitol Hill.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much.

I would like to now introduce Ms. Doan, if you could proceed.

STATEMENT OF MRS. DOAN THI HONG-ANH (WIFE OF A TORTURE VICTIM)

[The following testimony was delivered through an interpreter.]

Mrs. DOAN. Honorable Congressmen, ladies and gentlemen, my name is Doan Thi Hong Anh, the widow of Mr. Nguyen Thanh

Nam, the Con Dau parishioner who was tortured to death that you have been informed of in the U.S. Congress hearing August 18, 2010.

After the brutal police crackdown at the Con Dau parish cemetery on May 4, 2010, and especially after the painful death of my husband by the torture of the local militia, the government found every way to prevent me from telling the truth about the real cause of my husband's death.

I had to close all doors and hid in my house for months before finding a way to escape to Thailand to protect my children and my own life.

We were accepted with refugee status and we settled in the U.S. less than a year ago. I am honored to be here today to say thank you to the Congress and the United States Government for the concern and support for my family and my parish in Con Dau in the last 5 years during the fight for justice and protect our parish assistance.

It is because of the strong voice from the Congress, especially from you, Mr. Chairman, has brought my family and more than 100 victims from Con Dau to freedom the last 2 years.

Your work and your efforts have changed many lives including thousands of Vietnam refugees in other humanitarian programs that you sponsored over the years. You are truly the champion of human rights. You are our hero and we are deeply grateful for that.

The religious persecution policy of the Communist Government of Vietnam was exposed very obviously with the persecution in Con Dau. They have used every means from intimidation, harassment, beatings, torture, imprison to land expropriation by force to take over the land and wipe out historical and all-Catholic parish.

I have witnessed and myself a victim of so many times being intimidated by government officials to sign an agreement to move out without leaving any chance to stay around the church to continue with our religious activity.

Con Dau is only one of hundreds of religious persecutions that have happened in Vietnam, especially in the far away areas. I would like to give some examples.

In the Diocese of Kontum, central Vietnam, on January 17, 2015 the government ordered to dismantle the temporary chapel of the Dak Jak Parish and expel the chaplain from the parish of more than 5,000 parishioners. In March of this year, the government of Dak To District campaigned to dismantle 22 temporary chapels in the district also with the reason of not being recognized by the government.

In the Diocese of Hung Hoa, northern Vietnam, the province government of Lai Chau, Dien Bien, and Son La in the last 70 years under Communism never allowed the establishment of any chapel at any mission station in the provinces or permit priests to come celebrate Mass per the demand of thousands of Catholics in this area.

In the Diocese of Vin, a diocese with more than 500,000 Catholics in central Vietnam the Parishes of My Yen, Tam Toa, Con Cuong and many other mission stations in the province of Quang Binh,

Nghe are still facing many difficulties in the religious activity because of the nonrecognition of the local government.

In reality, the freedom of religion in Vietnam has not been respected. That is a statement from the U.N. Special Rapporteur Heiner Bielefeldt after his visit in Vietnam July 2014.

The government has covered up or turned away from multiple violations in many places. In summary, I call you to continue raising your concern and pressure the Vietnamese Government to respect religious freedom. Strong U.S. and international pressure is necessary and makes a difference as in the case of Con Dau.

Con Dau Parish is still standing even though battered and reduced in size after so many persecutions and forced expropriation. The decision of resolving the Con Dau issue is still on the hand of Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung since September of last year.

I call on you to request the Prime Minister resolve the issue reasonably and fairly. I also call on the Congress to pass the Vietnam Human Rights Act and incorporate human rights conditions into the TPP negotiation with Vietnam.

I call on the United States State Department to designate Vietnam as CPC to force them to improve human rights generally in order for our 90 million fellow countrymen to have the opportunity to live as a human being and enjoy freedom like me today.

Thank you. God bless America.

[The prepared statement of Mrs. Doan follows:]

STATEMENT OF DOAN THI HONG ANH

JUNE 17, 2015

Translated by Mr. Tony Tran

Honorable Congressmen,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Doan Thi Hong Anh, the widow of Mr. Nguyen Thanh Nam, the Con Dau parishioner who was tortured to death that you have been aware in the US Congress hearing August 18, 2010.

After the brutal police crackdown at the Con Dau Parish cemetery May 4, 2010 and especially after the painful death of my husband by the torture of the local militias, the government found every ways to prevent me from telling the truth about the real cause my husband's death.

I had to close all doors and hid in my house for months, before find a way to escape to Thailand to protect my children and my own life. We were accepted as refugee status and resettled in the US less than a year ago.

I am honor to be here today to say thank you to the Congress and the US Government for the concern and support for my family and my parish in Con Dau the last five years during the fight for justice and protect our Parish existence.

It is because of the strong voice from the Congress, especially from you, Mr. Chairman, has brought my family and more than 100 victims from Con Dau to freedom the last two years.

Your works and your efforts have changed many lives, including thousands of Vietnamese refugees in other humanitarian programs that you sponsored over the years. You are truly the Champion of Human Rights. You are our hero and we are deeply grateful for that.

And I would like to confirm one more time the cause of my husband's death, not because I want to recall that painful memory, but to help prevent the police torture that are still happening every day in Vietnam.

The religious persecution policy of the communist government in Vietnam is exposing very obviously with the persecution in Con Dau. They have used every means, from intimidation, harassment, beatings, torture, imprisonment to land expropriation by force, to take over the land and wipe out a historical and all-catholic parish.

I've witnessed and myself a victim of so many times being intimidated to sign the agreement to move out without giving us the minimum right to stay around the church to continue with our religious activities.

Con Dau is only one of hundreds of religious persecutions that have happening in Vietnam, especially in the far away areas. I would like to give examples:

- In the Diocese of Kontum, Central Vietnam, in January 17, 2015, the government ordered to dismantle the temporary chapel of the Dak Jak Parish, and expelled the Chaplain from

this parish of more than 5000 parishioners. In March of this year, the government of Dak To district campaigned to dismantle 22 temporary chapels in the district, also with the reason of not being recognized by the government.

- In the Diocese of Hung Hoa, Northern Vietnam, the province governments of Lai Chau, Dien Bien and Son La, in the last 70 years (under communism), never allow to establish any chapel at any mission stations in these provinces, or permit Priests to come celebrate Mass per the demand of thousand catholic in these areas.

- In the Diocese of Vin, a diocese with more than 500 thousands catholic in Central Vietnam, the parish of My Yen, Tam Toa, Con Cuong and many other mission stations in the provinces of Quang Binh, Nghe An, are still facing many difficulties in their religious activities because the non-recognitions of the local government.

In reality, the freedom of religion in Vietnam has not been respected as the statement from the UN Special Rapporteur (Heiner Bielefeldt) after his visit in Vietnam July 2014. The government have covered up or turned away from multiple violations in many places.

In summary, I call on you to continue raising your concern and pressure Vietnam government to respect religious freedom. Strong US and international pressure is necessary and makes a difference, as in the case of Con Dau.

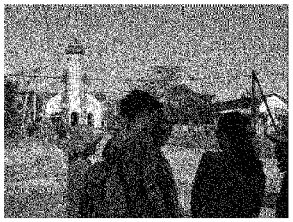
Con Dau Parish is still standing even though battered and reduced in sized, after so many persecutions and forced expropriations. The decision on resolving the Con Dau issue is still on the hand of Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung since September last year. I call on you to request the Prime Minister to resolve the issue reasonably and fairly.

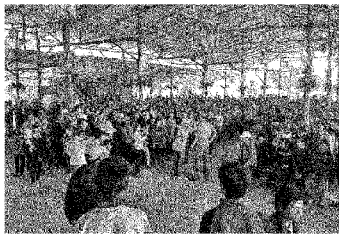
I also call on the Congress to pass the Vietnam Human Rights Act and incorporate human rights conditions into the TTP negotiation with Vietnam.

With such a human right profile, I call on the US State Department designate Vietnam as CPC, to force them to improve human rights genuinely, for our 90 million fellow countrymen to have opportunity to live as a human being and enjoy freedom like me today.

Thank you,

God Bless America
Doan Thi Hong Anh
Washington DC June 17, 2015





Mr. SMITH. Ms. Doan, thank you so very much. And again, our deepest condolences to you for your loss and know that our prayers, all of us, feel so much for you and for all of those who have suffered in that wonderful Catholic parish.

Dr. Thang.

STATEMENT OF NGUYEN DINH THANG, PH.D., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, BOAT PEOPLE SOS

Mr. THANG. Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the subcommittee, I would like to thank Mr. Chairman and the subcommittee for holding this hearing at this very critical juncture in the relationship between the United States and Vietnam.

Ongoing negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, is expected soon to be concluded and President Obama will soon welcome Mr. Nguyen Phu Trong, the secretary general of the Vietnamese Communist Party, to the White House. He is not the head of state. He is the head of the Communist Party.

As the two governments celebrate the two decades of normalized diplomatic relations this year, independent religious communities in Vietnam continue to face severe persecution.

Ms. Doan Thi Hong Anh only mentioned about some incidents in Kontum. I just would like to point out some of the pictures. I am not sure whether you can see these or not but these are temporary chapels, 22 of them in just one district, that recently received the order to be dismantled.

These are temporary chapels. They are tiny. They are just sheds. They are the only places of worship of thousands of Catholics in that district of Dak To.

Why temporary chapels? Because their repeated requests to be registered as organizations, as parishes, have been ignored by the government.

Their repeated requests to build churches have been ignored by the government and the only way out for them was to erect these temporary chapels and now they are being ordered to dismantle them.

That is a very troubling trend of dismantling religious facilities so as to deny the faithful a venue to practice their faith. On February 6th of this year, the authorities in Khuoi Vinh village, Cao Bang Province, destroyed the very simple shed that followers of the Duong Van Minh sect—that is a Christian sect—built and used to store funeral objects as called for by their religious practices and traditions. They share this shed, and the funeral objects stored in this shed, because they are very poor.

They cannot buy these objects, here—accessories here in the picture, for the funeral procession so they use and they store them in the shed so all the villagers can reuse them.

These are the sheds and the government consistently, repeatedly destroyed them. So on February 6 the police came in and assaulted the villagers who tried to protect their shed and caused severe injuries to two of them that required hospitalization.

A few months later, the villagers rebuilt that shed and on May 21, that is just a few weeks ago, the authorities again demolished it. So this is the sixth time that villagers built and rebuilt the shed and it was the sixth time that the authorities destroyed it.

And then on April 14, the governor of Phu Yen Province dismantled Tuy An temple. This is the temple shown in the picture, a tiny temple of the Cao Dai, the local Cao Dai community.

That is the only place of worship for that community and now it is gone. So these Cao Dai followers are worshipping in the place of destruction—the destruction of the temples, outdoors. They have no facility anymore.

So that goes on and on. These are just a few examples of the situation on the ground—the reality in Vietnam. Reacting to international criticism, the Vietnamese Government has promised to pass its first ever law on belief and religion.

That raised a lot of expectation and hopes among observers of Vietnam. However, its latest draft that was released in late April of this year was disappointing.

This draft law would simply cement the restrictions and controls already in place under the existing ordinance on belief and religion and Decree 92, both of which are in direct violation of Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Under the draft law, all religious activities that involve a group, even those conducted in private homes, would be required to register and be preapproved by the government. Registration is a requirement, not an offer, and there appears to be no alternative legal personality for organizations who choose not to register. So they would be practically outlawed.

Registration approval are required for a broad range of activities and events including organizing festivals, ordainment and assignment of clergy, religious training, participation in overseas religious events and organizations, division or merging of affiliated religious organizations, establishment of religious formation facilities, amendments to a religious organization's charter or rules and regulations and so on.

So in summary, the draft law is designed to impede independent religious communities. It would perpetuate and even aggravate the current situation where "the rights to freedom of religion or belief of these communities are grossly violated in the face of constant surveillance, intimidation, harassment, and persecution," and these are the very words of the U.N. Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief in his recent report on Vietnam.

I would like to make a few recommendations. First of all, the U.S. Congress should take legislative actions to make trade and security partnership with Vietnam including the TPP and future transfer of lethal weapons to Vietnam contingent on significant improvement in human rights, particularly the right to freedom of religion and belief.

Second, the U.S. State Department should designate Vietnam a Country of Particular Concern and the Vietnamese Government should treat registration with the government as an offer to religious communities to enhance their rights, not as a prerequisite for religious activities.

So the points that I just presented actually reflect the opinion and the position of the majority of Vietnamese-Americans.

At this very moment, some 800 Vietnamese-American advocates joined by many American veterans of the Vietnam War are arriv-

ing in the national capital from 30 states for our fifth Vietnam Advocacy Day in 4 years.

We will be joined by numerous religious leaders tomorrow and many fellow advocates from other countries and tomorrow we will go office to office to talk to Members of Congress to advocate for greater rights of Vietnamese citizens—freedom of religion and human rights for them all.

Again, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and members of the subcommittee.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Thang follows:]

Statement of Nguyen Dinh Thang, PhD
CEO & President, Boat People SOS

Hearing on
Human Rights Abuses by Vietnamese Authorities
June 17, 2015

before the

Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights and International Organizations
House Committee on Foreign Affairs

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Subcommittee,

I would like to thank Mr. Chairman for holding this hearing to shine the spotlight on the ongoing human rights abuses committed by the Vietnamese authorities. The hearing comes at a very critical juncture in the relationship between the United States and Vietnam. The Administration has partially lifted the ban on sale of lethal weapons to Vietnam. The Trans-Pacific Partnership, of which Vietnam is a negotiating partner, is approaching the finish line. President Obama will soon welcome to the White House Mr. Nguyen Phu Trong, the Secretary General of the Vietnamese Communist Party. By embracing this quickening rapprochement, our own government may inadvertently send the wrong message to the government of Vietnam, that its relentless persecution of dissidents, its brutal repression of independent religious communities, and its suppression of indigenous rights will be met with impunity.

The trend of the past twenty years has been indeed troubling: Diplomatic relations and trade between the two countries have significantly increased while human rights conditions have steadfastly deteriorated. Most troubling is the Vietnamese government's determination to strictly control religions and restrict religious activities.

Following are cases in point:

- In January 2015, the Provincial Government of Kontum ordered the eviction of Father Tran Van Vu, the resident pastor of Dak Jak Parish and the demolition of the temporary chapel that served as the only place of worship for over 5,000 Catholics in his parish.

- In March 2015, Bishop Hoang Duc Oanh of the Kontum Diocese sounded the alarm that the Provincial Government had ordered the dismantling of all 22 temporary chapels serving as many Catholic communities in Dak To District, Kontum Province. The parishioners erected these temporary chapels for use as places of worship because their requests for registration as parishes and to build churches have been consistently ignored by the provincial authorities.

- On May 27, 2015, the Provincial Government of Tay Ninh deployed over 300 police and security agents to violently break up the gathering of some 200 members of an independent Cao Dai Sect to elect members to their Popular Council. A number of Cao Daiists suffered injuries due to police beatings. Meanwhile just 500 meters away a similar gathering convened by the government-appointed Cao Dai Administrative Council proceeded with much fanfare.

- On February 6, 2015, the authorities in Khuoi Vinh Village, Cao Bang Province destroyed the sheds erected by followers of the Duong Van Minh Sect. These sheds store funeral objects for all villagers to share, which is part of their religious traditions. The police physically assaulted villagers who attempted to protect the shed, causing two of them severe injuries that required hospitalization. Then on May 21, the authorities returned to destroy the new shed that the villagers had just built. It was the sixth time since 2007 that the villagers built their shed only to see it destroyed by the government.

- Catholicism continues to be outlawed in the three northern provinces of Dien Bien, Son La and Lai Chau. Parishes are not recognized; priests are not allowed to conduct Mass

and may not even visit followers. In many villages Catholics have not been allowed to celebrate Christmas or any religious events for the past four decades.

- Twenty five leadership members of An Dan Dai Dao, a Buddhist Sect founded in South Vietnam in 1969, are in prison. Its founder is serving a life sentence on fabricated charges of attempting to overthrow the government. All of its temples and real properties have been confiscated. Its forty thousand followers have no places to worship according to their faith and beliefs.

Responding to international criticisms, the Vietnamese National Assembly promises to promulgate the country's first ever Law on Belief and Religion. Its latest draft, however, would simply cement the restrictions and controls already in place under the existing Ordinance on Belief and Religion, and Decree 92, placing significant limitations on the right to freedom of religion or belief according to Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

Following are our primary concerns.

1. Registration as a requirement

Under the draft law, all religious activities that involve a group, even those conducted in private homes, would still be required to be registered with and pre-approved by the government. All religious organizations must register their operations with the government. Registration is a requirement, not an offer, and there appears to be no alternative legal personality for organizations who choose not to register.

The draft law, like the Ordinance, considers religion/belief the same as "religion/belief organization." This narrow definition excludes forms of religion or belief which do not have an organizational structure and are not affiliated to a recognized organization.

2. Vague and ambiguous language

The draft law contains vague references to "national traditions and cultural traits" (Article 4), "negative behavior toward the religion or belief of adherents of religious organisations which are recognized by the government" (Article 6), "sow divisions between ethnic groups and religions" (Article 6). This language is open to interpretation and manipulation, and could be abused by those prejudiced against a religion, a religious organization or an individual adherent to prevent them from exercising their right to freedom of religion or belief.

3. Heavy interference into internal matters of religious organizations

Under Article 9 of the draft law, every year, before 15 November, the representatives or the management of religious facilities must register their religious operations that will take place in the following year to the local authorities. This requirement is extremely burdensome, particularly to small religious organizations, and makes it extremely difficult for religion or belief groups to spontaneously react to the spiritual needs of their adherents.

In addition, some form of registration or approval is required for a broad range of activities and events, including first-time festivals, ordainment and assignment of clergy, religious training, participation in overseas religious events and organizations, division or merging of affiliated religious organizations, establishment of a religious formation facility, amendments to a religious organization's charter or rules and regulations, and so on (this is not an exhaustive list).

Under Article 8, Paragraph 2 of the draft law, "representatives or the management of religious facilities shall be elected or nominated by their community, *or created or approved by the government*." This article would further allow for undue and restrictive interference by the government in the internal affairs of religious organizations, and its use of synthetic religious organizations to crowd out genuine ones.

In the report on his mission to Vietnam in July 2014 Mr. Heiner Bielefldt, the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or of belief, offered a poignant observation: "[T]he rights to freedom of religion or belief of [independent religious] communities [are] grossly violated in the face of constant surveillance, intimidation, harassment and persecution."

The draft law that is being considered in Vietnam's National Assembly would not only perpetuate but aggravate that situation.

Recommendations:

(1) The U.S. Congress should tale legislative actions to make trade and security partnership with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, including the TPP and future transfer of lethal weapons to Vietnam, contingent on the latter's significant improvements in human rights. The U.S. Department of State should designate Vietnam, which continues to commit gross violations against independent religious communities, a country of particular concern (CPC).

(2) The Vietnamese government should fully respect freedom of religion by treating registration with the government as an offer to religious communities to enhance their rights, not as a prerequisite for religious activities. Decree 92, effective January 1, 2013, prohibits religious activities by churches and other institutions that are not registered and pre-approved by the government. The draft law currently being considered in the Vietnamese National Assembly would further impede independent religious communities.

(3) The Vietnamese government should free all political prisoners and other prisoners of conscience, estimated at 150 by human rights organizations, not counting potentially hundreds of religious prisoners from ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples.

(4) The Vietnamese government should repeal all laws and administrative decrees restricting freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly – such as the laws against "propaganda against the state" and "taking advantage of democratic freedoms to injure the national unity" – and should stop arresting pro-democracy bloggers and others who use the Internet to criticize the government and release those who are imprisoned. In 2013 the Vietnamese Prime Minister issued an order (Decree 72) to further restrict

Internet freedom. Transparency and free flow of information are critical to free and fair trade.

(5) The Vietnamese government must permit the existence of a real civil society consisting of genuinely independent non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In Vietnam, no genuine NGOs are allowed to exist. Instead, the government has created dozens of synthetic NGOs that are actually controlled by the Communist Party. The "Fatherland Front" and the "Vietnam Union of Friendship Organizations" (VUFO) are the umbrella organizations through which the Communist party controls these synthetic NGOs.

(6) The Vietnamese government should respect labor rights and allow Vietnamese workers to form labor unions that are truly independent of the government and of the Communist Party. The TPP should incorporate monitoring and sanctioning mechanisms to ensure Vietnam's compliance with international standards on labor rights.

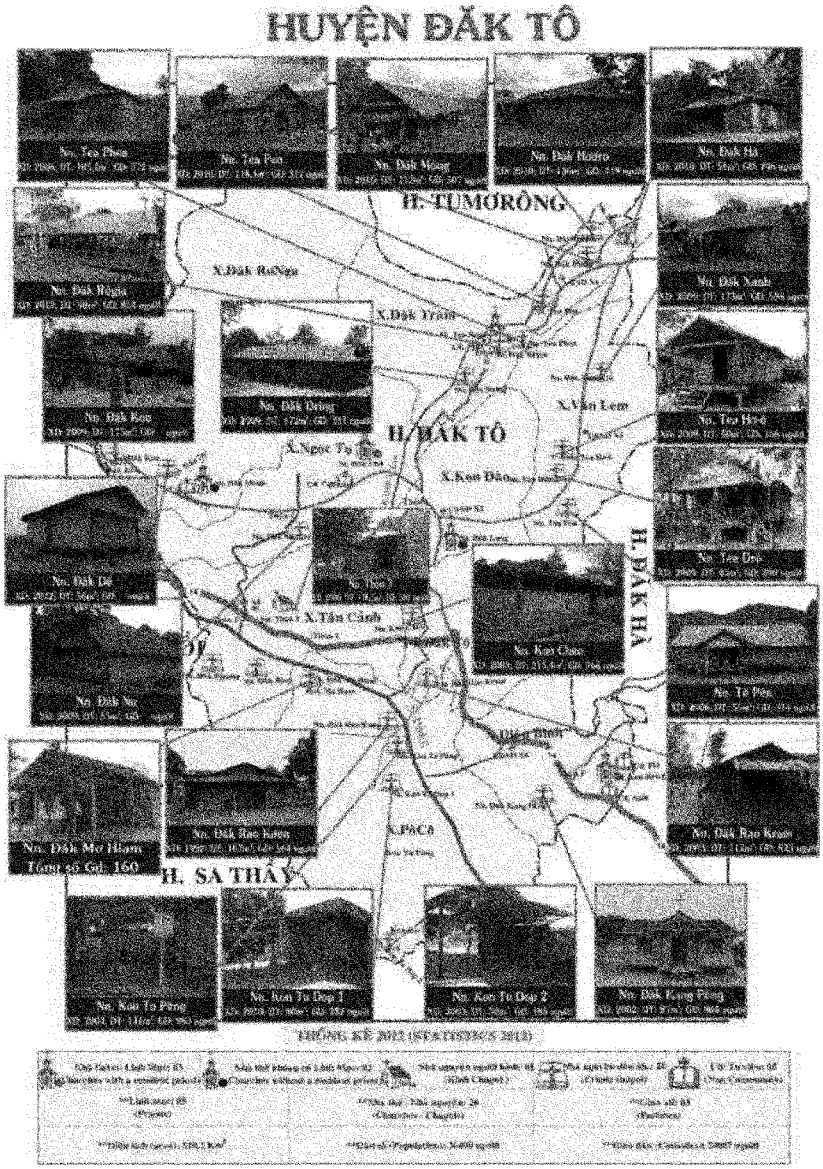
(7) The Vietnamese government should end the practice of forced labor and prosecute officials of state-owned labor export companies that are involved in fraudulent recruitment and other practices of human trafficking. The Vietnamese government is squarely behind human trafficking – subjecting hundreds of thousands of its citizens to forced labor in "rehabilitation" centers, detention centers, and prisons; sending tens of thousands of its citizens into modern-day slavery in different countries and punishing those victims who speak out.

(8) The Vietnamese government should agree to a mediation process to review claims for compensation made by U.S. citizens whose property has been confiscated. Since 1975 the Vietnamese government has illegally confiscated properties of many U.S. citizens. In 1995, under the Clinton Administration, the Vietnamese government paid $208 million in compensation for confiscated properties to 200 Americans. However, Vietnam continues its practice of illegal confiscation of real and other property of Vietnamese-Americans.

My testimony reflects the common position of the majority of Vietnamese Americans across the United States and beyond. At this very moment, some 800 Vietnamese American advocates, joined by many American veterans of the Vietnam War, are arriving in the national capital from 30 states for our fifth Vietnam Advocacy Day in four years. We will be joined by numerous religious leaders and by advocates from seven other countries. Tomorrow, our delegations will go office to office in Congress to express our concerns about the on-going violations of human rights, particularly freedom of religion, in Vietnam, and seek decisive actions from the U.S. Congress.

I appreciate the opportunity to share these same concerns to members of this Sub-committee.

Demolition of Tuy An Temple of independent Cao Dai community in Phu Yen Province, directed by the government-appointed Cao Dai Administrative Council and executed by the police, April 14, 2015


HUYỆN ĐĂK TÔ
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X.Ngọc Tụ
X.Kon Đào
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X.Tân Cảnh
X.PêCâ
H. SA THẦY
Na. Đăk Mơ Hlam
Tổng số Gđ. 160
THỐNG KÊ 2012 (STATISTICS 2012)

Mr. SMITH. Dr. Thang, you so very much.
Pastor Hung.

STATEMENT OF THE REVEREND NGUYEN MANH HUNG, VIETNAM INTERFAITH COUNCIL

[The following testimony was delivered through an interpreter.]

Mr. HUNG. The following is my statement representing the Vietnam Interfaith Council and the Cattle Shed Congregation of the Mennonite Church of Vietnam.

I am here today as a part of a campaign for prisoners of conscience in Vietnam with my colleagues, Mr. Truong Minh Tam, a former political prisoner, and Mr. Nguyen Van Loi, the father of political prisoner, Nguyen Dang Minh Man.

I am a pastor of the Mennonite Church and member of the Interfaith Council of Vietnam. My parishioners and supporters have been persecuted for expressing their faith. Before this trip, I discovered that the venerable Thich Khon Tanh Lien Tri Pagoda was threatened by security police that after TPP is approved authorities will tear down the pagoda.

This trip to America comes at a crucial moment because of the discussions on TPP and I hope to bring forth my experiences and perspectives on conditions of religious freedom in Vietnam.

The experiences of the Cattle Shed Congregation serve as evidence of the Vietnamese Government's repression of religious groups that do not accept the state's interference in their activities.

We have 100 members and provide five classes for poor children. Because the Vietnamese Communist authorities do not want us to do charity work, they seized our land, forcing us to resort to setting up our place of worship in an abandoned cattle shed.

Over the past 8 years, since moving to the cattle shed, authorities have continually looked for ways to get rid of us.

On one occasion, the Cattle Shed Congregation was organizing a ceremony and I was told that the security police had come to investigate.

When I came downstairs to see what was going on, plainclothes police came up, grabbed my neck, and choked me down to the floor as the security police stepped over my body to enter the ceremony room and disband the event.

On another occasion, plainclothes police came to my house and destroyed my property and threatened to kill me, my wife, and my son.

They use thugs and plainclothes police to brutalize our parishioners including Pastor Nguyen Hong Quang and have manipulated the law to imprison religious leaders such as Father Nguyen Van Ly, Pastor Duong Kim Khai, and Pastor Nguyen Cong Chinh.

In spite of these acts of terrorism on our spirits and wellbeing, we keep moving forward. The most pressing issues for those in the wider religious communities are as follows: The Cao Dai and Hoa Hao Buddhist groups suffered land grabs at religious sites and the members are barred from participating in large ceremonies and Catholic groups have been banned from allowing Bishop Hoang Duc Oanh to ordain seminarians and authorities are preparing to seize 22 churches of ethnic minorities in Kontum Province.

Another concern is the state's draft law on religion which is an attempt to tighten control over the affairs of faith-based organizations and stifle religious freedom.

In order to address these issues, five major religious groups have come together to form the Interfaith Council of Vietnam. With our collective voice, we speak up for religious freedom and political prisoners and engage in humanitarian efforts.

With the 20th anniversary of normalization between the U.S. and Vietnam, the ongoing TPP negotiations as well as General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong's visit to the U.S., I hope that members of the U.S. Government will first call for the release of prisoners of conscience, especially faith leaders such as Father Nguyen Van Ly, Reverend Duong Kim Khai, and Reverend Nguyen Cong Chinh.

Secondly, urge the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi to regularly visit political prisoners. I would like to request urgent attention for blogger Dang Xuan Dieu and photojournalist Nguyen Dang Minh Man, held in Prison Camp 5 of Thanh Hoa Province and community organizer Ho Duc Hoa in Nam Ha Prison in Ha Nam Province.

They have been mistreated, placed in solitary confinement and in the case of Ho Duc Hoa denied the right to practice his Catholic faith in prison.

And thirdly, call on the Vietnamese Government not to enact the draft law on religion. Thank you for your time.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hung follows:]

Congressional Hearing on Human Rights Abuses by Vietnamese Authorities
June 17, 2015

Statement by Rev. Nguyen Manh Hung
Vietnam Interfaith Council & Cattle Shed Congregation (Mennonite Church of Vietnam)

Testimony delivered in translation
by Dan Hoang, spokesperson of Viet Tan

Greetings,

I am here today as part of a campaign for prisoners of conscience in Vietnam with my colleagues Mr. Truong Minh Tam, a former political prisoner, and Mr. Nguyen Van Loi, the father of political prisoner Nguyen Dang Minh Man.

I am a pastor of the Mennonite church and member of the Interfaith Council of Vietnam. My parishioners and supporters have been persecuted for expressing their faith.

Before this trip, I discovered that the Venerable Thich Khong Tanh's Lien Tri Pagoda was threatened by security police that after the TPP is approved, authorities will tear down the pagoda. This trip to America comes at a crucial moment because of the discussions on TPP and I hope to bring forth my experiences and perspectives on the conditions of religious freedom in Vietnam.

The experiences of the Cattle Shed Congregation serve as evidence of the Vietnamese Government's repression of religious groups that do not accept the state's interference in religious activities. We have 100 members and provide 5 classes for poor children. Because the Vietnamese Communist authorities do not want us to do charity work, they seized our land, forcing us to resort to setting up our place of worship in an abandoned cattle shed.

Over the past 8 years, since moving to the cattle shed, authorities have continually looked for ways to get rid of us. On one occasion, the Cattle Shed Congregation was organizing a ceremony and I was told that the security police had come to investigate. When I came downstairs to see what was going on, plainclothes police came up, grabbed my neck, and choked me down to the floor as the security police stepped over my body to enter the ceremony room and disband the event. On another occasion, plainclothes police came to my house and destroyed my property and threatened to kill me, my wife, and my son.

They use thugs or plain clothed police to brutalize our parishioners, including pastor Nguyen Hong Quang and have manipulated the law to imprison religious leaders such as Father Nguyen Van Ly, Pastor Duong Kim Khai, and Pastor Nguyen Cong Chinh. In spite of these acts of terrorism on our spirits and well being, we keep moving forward.

The most pressing issues for those in our religious community are as follows:

- Cao Dai and Hoa Hao Buddhist groups suffer land grabs at religious sites such as Tuy An in Phu Yen, barring members from participating in a large ceremony.

- Catholic groups were banned from allowing bishop Hoang Duc Oanh to ordain seminarians. Authorities are preparing to seize 22 churches of ethnic minorities in Gia Lai, Kontum.

Another concern is the state's draft law on religion, which is an attempt to tighten control over the affairs of faith-based organizations and stifle religious freedom.

In order to address these issues, five major religious groups have come together to form the Interfaith Council of Vietnam. With our collective voice, we speak up for religious freedom and political prisoners, and engage in humanitarian efforts.

With the 20th anniversary of normalization between the US and Vietnam, the ongoing TPP negotiations, as well as General Secretary Nguyen Phu Trong's visit to the US, I hope the members of the US Government will:

- Call for the release of prisoners of conscience, especially faith leaders such as Father Nguyen Van Ly, Reverend Duong Kim Khai, and Reverend Nguyen Cong Chinh.

- Urge the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi to regularly visit political prisoners. I'd like to request urgent attention for blogger Dang Xuan Dieu and photojournalist Nguyen Dang Minh Man held in Prison Camp 5 (Thanh Hoa province) and community organizer Ho Duc Hoa in Nam Ha Prison (Ha Nam province). They have been mistreated, placed in solitary confinement and, in the case of Ho Duc Hoa, denied the right to practice his Catholic faith in prison.

- Call on the Vietnamese government not to enact the draft law on religion.

Thank you for your time.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Hung, thank you very much for your testimony and for your leadership.

Let me just begin with a few questions. Mr. Hai, you made a very powerful opening and all of your statements were very powerful.

But you noted that your fellow prisoners entrusted you to relay their cries for help to the international community and you have done that, as you all have, to help the international community understand that the persecution of prisoners of conscience in Vietnam is systemic—that it is ongoing, it is pervasive and it is part of the system.

It is not an aberration. And also, to lay bare the deceit of the Vietnam authorities when they commit to revise Vietnamese laws in order to participate in international trade agreements but do not implement such laws.

I would take it a step further and say even the laws they write, as Dr. Thang pointed out, the new religious law is likely to compound and make worse the already existing Decree 92, which is already a terrible onerous burden on people of faith.

So that deceit that you speak about, and all of you might want to speak to this, we have been here before. We have seen this movie.

It almost is like deja-vu from 15 years ago in 2000 and again a half a dozen years later when the WTO was the issue, all of this seeming movement toward easing, only to be followed by a snap back.

As a matter of fact, Pastor Hung, you pointed out that a religious leader was informed by authorities that when TPP is approved his pagoda would be torn down. When are we going to learn? Why won't the administration hear?

One of the leaders in the administration wrote an op-ed recently saying how this good thing is happening and this prisoner is being released.

We saw that before only to see, again, a very serious repressive move by the Government of Vietnam against its own people. This will be the third time. First time, shame on you. Second time, shame on me.

Third time, are we being foolish? Are we naive? And yet, the same cynical notion is seemingly having an impact positively at the White House and among Members of Congress.

So let me just ask you if you could speak to that issue, starting with Pastor Hung, about the pagoda. Elaborate on that. While you are translating, I remember I made a trip to Vietnam—several—but one of them I met with a large number of leaders from the Buddhist Church.

I met with the Venerable Thich Quang Do, like my friend, Mr. Lowenthal, like many of my colleagues. Father Ly, Father Loi, so many others and a lot of Protestant pastors. Many of them were rounded up after the trade benefit was provided and even people who had signed Bloc 8406 found themselves targeted by the repressive Vietnamese Government.

So if you could answer how naive are we as a government here in the United States, thinking that somehow things will improve?

And I will just add one last thing. Having read the key chapters of the TPP, which is under lock and key right now—we can't even discuss it openly—I am absolutely not persuaded that human rights would be advanced.

Just the opposite. There is no enforcement, even of ILO standards. It has some nice language about the international labor laws, but no enforcement mechanism.

So if you could all address that, then I will yield to my friend, Mr. Lowenthal, for any questions he might have.

Mr. HUNG. Lien Tri Buddhist Temple for many years has a place in a place for people who have been disadvantaged who suffered injustices and has been a place to help the handicapped including the wounded veterans of the former Republic of Vietnam.

Because of these humanitarian efforts by the Lien Tri Pagoda, the Vietnamese authorities have really focused on targeting to shut down this Buddhist temple.

So last August, the authorities came out with an announcement that they would take administrative measures against the pagoda in September. So the Interfaith Council, which I am a member of, we organized a petition that got thousands of signatures to oppose that and fortunately the government backed off from those plans.

And recently the Vietnamese Redemptorists were prevented from organizing their own activities at the Ky Dong Church and in Saigon and because of that the Redemptorists partnered with the Buddhist temple at Lien Tri and because of that the authorities are further focusing on the Lien Tri pagoda.

And so before I came to the U.S., the Venerable Thich Khong Tanh, the abbot of Lien Tri pagoda, said that fellow Buddhists of that pagoda have heard from government officials to remove all their artifacts from the temple including cremated remains of the relatives because the temple would be closed down after TPP.

And so now the authorities are pressuring the Lien Tri temple to basically take a settlement—a very reduced sale of the temple, of the land—so then the government can take over the land.

So Venerable Thich Khong Tanh has refused that cash settlement as well as the Vietnam Interfaith Council has refused that and so now we are waiting for the response from the Vietnamese authorities.

Thank you.

Mr. THANG. Yes. The Vietnamese Government now has sent some signals to our Government that it may be ready to make concessions on legal rights as part of TPP.

However, I don't think there is any benchmark or mechanism to enforce their commitments, to monitor their compliance, or to sanction them in case there is noncompliance.

We have seen a precedent before back in 2006 when the Vietnamese Government promised to respect the right to freedom of religion in order to be taken off the CPC designation.

So we hurriedly took Vietnam off that list and immediately there was a brutal bloody crackdown against religions that we have documented through pictures—actually, the violence against people of faith including religious leaders.

These are very graphic and I would like to point out a few pictures only. This is a picture of Pastor Nguyen Cong Chinh serving

a long-term sentence in prison right now, a picture of Father Ly, a Buddhist monk here—he was beaten and had to be hospitalized. Father Ngo The Binh, a Catholic priest, also beaten up and he had to be hospitalized.

This person was beaten to death, a Khmer Krom Christian Protestant. Ms. Ken a female Catholic, so on and so forth until this day. There continues to be violent against people of faith.

So we have no mechanism from our own Government when we accepted the promise and commitment by the Vietnamese Government that they would improve. If they fail to do so, we have no mechanism, no benchmark to measure that. There are no deliverables, as Mr. Chairman just mentioned. So I am just afraid that we are back in the same situation again with the Vietnamese Government's promise to respect the workers' rights, to form or join independent and free labor unions. So I am very concerned about that.

Mr. SMITH. On that point I did ask an administration witness at a previous hearing what happens when labor rights activists and other human rights activists and religious freedom prisoners and especially since labor rights are at least signaled in the TPP included in it, when they are beaten, when they are incarcerated and given long jail sentences and their efforts at organizing are completely thwarted, what does that trigger?

They said, we will get back to you. They still haven't gotten back to me. I have now read the secret proposed treaty called the TPP, or executive agreement, and I didn't see any enforcement.

Mr. Lowenthal.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Thank you.

I want to follow up on—and first of all, I am finding the very informative, the hearing, and I thank, again, the witnesses.

I assume that all of you are, and I want to hear from you—I guess it is my assumption after listening—if you were advising us you would advise us, given the present circumstances, to vote against the TPP?

Does each of you make that statement to us that you see that the gains would be offset tremendously by the negative aspects of the TPP? I am trying to hear—would you advise us to vote against the TPP, given the circumstances of where we are?

And if not, what should we be doing as Members of Congress? Dr. Thang.

Mr. THANG. That is a very tough question because on the one hand we would like to see Vietnam be prosperous. We would like to see Vietnam be democratic, to be a stable and reliable partner of the United States.

However, there are no preconditions right now to make those things happen. And therefore, we are pushing for conditions to make Vietnam a trusted party and deserving party of the TPP and that means that they must truly respect human rights.

They must allow their citizens the basic rights, the basic freedoms—and there are three of them—freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly, and freedom of association. Those are the cornerstones of civil society. And we would like to see those things demonstrated before Vietnam joins the TPP.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Okay. So I am not going to ask the others because I think it could put you into a difficult situation what to do. So I hear that you are saying that there are preconditions.

What you would like, Doctor, is that these conditions be addressed first before they do and you have not seen—and you said you see some signs but you're not sure that these are really moving forward.

What signs do we really need to see? What do we really need to see now in terms of the conditions?

Mr. THANG. For instance, there ought to be a decision at the highest level to release all prisoners of conscience. Secondly, there ought to be laws to truly legalize the formation of free and independent labor unions, and we don't want a repeat of the ordinance on belief or religion because that ordinance has actually been used as a tool to control and suppress religions and not to promote religion at all.

And thirdly, we would like to see that there will be sanctions provisions as part of the negotiation, as part of TPP. Maybe we should give Vietnam 5 years to get there, to be fully a partner in TPP.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. And then I am going to ask Mr. Hai. What you are saying is that we should, especially with Vietnam, slow down the process, not say not to join or to join, but to specifically see some very specific changes whether in religious freedom, labor law, right to associate before they become a partner in this—that you are not opposed economically in the future for Vietnam to be prosperous but we should not grant that right away.

We should be really holding their feet to the fire and letting them demonstrate not after they become part of the TPP, but before they do that and not to send a message you are against it, but you want them to demonstrate these very specific changes in laws and other practices.

I wonder if Mr. Hai has the same feeling about that. What would you advise us to do?

Mr. HAI. So we all recall that before Vietnam joined the WTO they made many promises of which they have not fulfilled. So one of the big questions is whether TPP will actually bring economic benefits to people in Vietnam, in particular, Vietnamese workers.

In Communist countries, not just Vietnam, in China too, they suppressed worker wages as a way to, you know, spur trade and investment so therefore the competition that happens in Vietnam is not something that is productive.

So American businesses may bring their operations to Vietnam to take advantage of the artificially low wages and the lack of environmental protections.

So Vietnamese authorities will profit from these operations in taxes and so forth but Vietnamese workers won't receive their proper wages and when those operations shift from the U.S. to Vietnam then, of course, American workers will lose their work—their jobs.

So therefore I don't want to see TPP be achieved at the expense of human rights. So if Vietnam joins TPP, I would like to see Vietnamese workers have the right to form their own independent labor organizations to defend and protect their own rights because

the government-sponsored labor group doesn't work for the Vietnamese workers and in its history of 80 years it has never organized a strike on behalf of Vietnamese workers.

And Vietnamese activists who have organized to protect workers have been persecuted, as you may have heard, cases such as Bui Thi Minh Hang and Nguyen Hoang Quoc Hung. So the lessons experienced with WTO is apparent to us and we should apply that for TPP.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. So what you are saying is you don't want promises. You would like to see real change before the——

Mr. HAI. Yes. I would like to see enforceable measures including, with TPP, things that can be done if they do not abide by the promises in the letter of the agreement.

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Thank you. Thank you, and I yield back.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Chairman Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. When are we ever going to learn? They are Communists who control Vietnam. I mean, these are people who believe in an atheist dictatorship and they have been pushing it ever since the beginning of the Cold War.

I am sorry. You are not going to make deals with these Communists that are going to make them not Communists, and the fact that there is still repression going on now, Mr. Chairman, religious repression in Vietnam after all of this time which shows you they are committed to their philosophy which atheist dictatorship will create a better world.

And, obviously, this idea that we are going to try to—they are going to make an agreement to make things better and thus we are going to let them into a better trade relationship with us, I am sorry.

It didn't work in China and it is not going to work in Vietnam. The only thing that is going to work in Vietnam and in China is if the people of the United States and other freedom-loving people around the world decide we are not going to let them be treated like they are a free country. That is the only hope we have.

If we treat gangsters like we do people who are a democratic political people, don't expect the gangsters to become like political people. They will think we are a bunch of suckers.

Why do they have to change? The last thing we want to do is give TPP—a trade status—to any Communist dictatorship until after they change, not an agreement that they will change.

Let me put it this way. The Vietnamese are very freedom-loving people and that they are still trying to build churches and suffering the repercussions is something consistent with what I have seen about the Vietnamese people.

I spent some time in Vietnam in 1967 up in Pleiku and the Vietnamese I was working with—they were Montagnards and these guys were very small and they were willing to take on the entire North Vietnamese Army with these little crossbows.

And then I was down in Saigon working with some students who were trying to promote democracy in Vietnam and there would be rallies and the Communists would blow up—they would have these bicycles loaded with explosives and they would put them into the middle of the rallies and blow everybody to hell.

But the students didn't give up and they were still for freedom and democracy, just like the people in Central Highlands didn't give up.

And today we have got to make sure we don't give up. We gave up once before and I think we betrayed the fail that was put into us and now who is going to benefit in faith the United States by reaching out to the Communist Government of Vietnam?

It is a clique of capitalists who will make money and then the Communist dictators and the gangsters that run Vietnam will make money and the American people won't be any better off.

We will be worse off because we will be less secure. We will be relying on a gangster regime. But certainly, the people of Vietnam aren't going to be better off.

They are not going to—out of the goodness of their heart make sure that this—that the resources that they are producing with their hard work are compensated justly for it because then they couldn't take their share.

I think it is time for us to, instead of looking for ways to basically cozy up and think that we are going to be nice to the dictatorship in Vietnam and it is going to reform, we have to put those days behind us.

We are always open to that but we should be open until they make the steps first.

The fact that they are still persecuting religion indicates to us that they still believe in this monstrously evil atheist dictatorship that the Communists tried to impose on the world for 50 years.

So with that said, I will certainly be against TPP if they include a Communist dictatorship as one of the countries we should treat as friends. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Chairman Rohrabacher.

Regrettably, there is a series of votes on the floor but I do have a few final questions I would like to ask, and if I do have to run over, please continue and the hearing will adjourn when you are done with your remarks.

First of all, Mr. Hai, you made a number of very important points about abolishing Circular 37 and you said to ensure basic human rights for all prisoners to prevent prisoners of conscience, political prisoners, as well as prisoners of criminal offenses from being treated like animals and maybe elaborate on that.

You point out that Circular 37 must be abolished and you also pointed out when there is a complaint from a incarcerated person—a political prisoner, for example—that there is a retaliation taken against that person by the—by the prison guards and by the warden.

You might want to respond to that as well. Did that happen to you?

To you, Dr. Thang, as you pointed out, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion and belief offered a very, very important observation when he said the rights to freedom of religion or belief of the independent religious communities are grossly violated in the face of constant surveillance, intimidation, harassment, and persecution.

That was July 2014, and unfortunately there are many in Washington who are acting as if somehow things had matriculated from

severe repression in Vietnam to emerging democracy, which it has not. If you want to elaborate on that.

And you also pointed out, and I think this is very important, that the Vietnamese National Assembly is promising to promulgate its first law on belief and religion.

Now, there are a lot of people here on Capitol Hill who are gullible, who will accept that they are in the process of reforming and you in your testimony many a very strong point that this simply cements the restrictions and controls already in place under the ordinance of Decree 92.

So, you know, another sham reform effort and yet unfortunately it will have its buyers here in the capital who will say they are redoing their religious—maybe you want to speak to that as well.

And Ms. Doan, again, thank you for your courageous stand on behalf of those who have lost their lives, including your husband, and of course those who lost their homes and a parish that lost its ability to thrive as it did so well.

Your courage is deeply appreciated. And of course, Pastor Hung, thank you for your leadership as well and for your very concrete recommendations.

Mr. Hai, if we could start with you.

Mr. HAI. So Circular 37 was issued by the Ministry of Public Security in 2011 and the contents of that circular have never been published and they are held in secret.

According to the criminal procedure code of Vietnam there is no mention of all the measures that people have experienced under Circular 37. It is something that is not in the legal code.

For instance, Article 42 of this code, the legal code, talks about Vietnamese prisoners being held in public areas in groups who are not in solitary confinement.

But in Article 37 the jailers have many prisons where they hold people separately, sometimes behind three sets of doors.

Each cell will hold from one to two political prisoners and that the doors never open and these people are held in de facto solitary confinement.

I am a victim of this Circular 37 and in June 2013 they read an order to hold me under solitary confinement but they never gave me the written order.

I was held in solitary confinement for 3 months even though the actual laws permit something like that to happen for 10 days. So this is an example of a regulation that is below the laws but supersedes the laws.

Two very appalling and recent cases are of the blogger Dang Xuan Dieu and also Nguyen Dang Minh Man, who are both held in such circumstances.

On the issue of issuing appeals, in June 2013 I issued an appeal. According to the laws, the authorities have 24 hours to respond to my appeal but then I had to go on a hunger strike for 33 days before the authorities made any attempt to resolve the matter.

During my hunger strike was the visit by the state chairman, Truong Tan Sang, to the United States two summers ago and it was only when Truong Tan Sang returned to Vietnam that the pressure led to the resolution by the authorities.

In conclusion, rather than authorities, you know, resolving my case within 24 hours as the law stipulates, I had to go on a hunger strike for 33 days and because when I want to protest my mistreatment I have to write it out and give the paperwork to the people who are mistreating me. That is why there is such abuse in the Vietnamese prisons.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you. Please don't hurry your response. I am going to have to leave. Without objection, your full comments will be a part of the official record and when you have concluded the hearing is adjourned because it is so important that we hear what you have to say.

So Dr. Thang, I do have to run to the vote. But thank you and thank you all for your extraordinary testimony, which we will make sure that other Members of Congress hear it, House and Senate, because again, your bravery and your insights are absolutely amazing and I thank you for it on behalf of my subcommittee.

Dr. Thang.

Mr. THANG. Yes, Mr. Chairman. I think that the prime reason for the situation that we have found ourselves in is that the Vietnamese Government has made multiple promises to the U.S. Government and the free world that it would change, it would improve human rights conditions in Vietnam, it would become more tolerant of religious freedom. It is of concern that there is a lack of political will in our own administrations throughout many presidencies.

For instance, Vietnam did promise to come out with a law that would respect religious freedom and it did come out with the ordinance on belief and religion. However, the Vietnamese Government has surely used that law to control religions, to restrict religious activities, and also to create synthetic organizations to crowd out the real ones.

For instance, in many situations relating to Cao Dai religion, the Hoa Hao Buddhist religion, the Unified Buddhist religion, the Khmer Krom Buddhism, et cetera, and many Protestant denominations, the government aided the synthetic organizations to take over the facilities and the assets of the real religious organizations.

So we are seeing that the Government in Vietnam is using its law that on the one hand it claims to be progress in dealing with the outside world. But on the other hand, it is using its law to further suppress religious activities in Vietnam.

Now, back to the report by the U.N. Special Rapporteur, Mr. Heiner Bielefeldt. If we take that report at its face value then, clearly, there is no other option but for the State Department to designate Vietnam as a Country of Particular Concern.

The threshold for CPC designation is that there is ongoing egregious violations of freedom of religion. And systematic. And it is systematic because this is the law—there is a legal framework that allows the government to do this—to act that way and it is ongoing because, clearly, in my testimony we have demonstrated that even as of today there are egregious violations of freedom of religion in Vietnam.

There is, clearly, a lack of political will on the part of the administration to do exactly what it should have been doing according to the law passed by Congress.

[Whereupon, at 3:52 p.m. the committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

Material Submitted for the Record

SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128

Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations
Christopher H. Smith (R-NJ), Chairman

June 17, 2015

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held by the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations in Room 2200 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at http://www.ForeignAffairs.house.gov):

DATE: Wednesday, June 17, 2015

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: Human Rights Abuses by Vietnamese Authorities

WITNESSES: Mr. Nguyen Van Hai (Dieu Cay)
Writer
Free Journalists Club of Vietnam

Mrs. Doan Thi Hong-Anh
(Wife of a torture victim)

Nguyen Dinh Thang, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Boat People SOS

The Reverend Nguyen Manh Hung
Vietnam Interfaith Council

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON *Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations* HEARING

Day *Wednesday* Date *June 17, 2015* Room *2200 Rayburn HOB*

Starting Time *2:21 p.m.* Ending Time *3:49 p.m.*

Recesses [*0*] (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____)

Presiding Member(s)

Rep. Chris Smith

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session [✓]
Executive (closed) Session [ ]
Televised [✓]

Electronically Recorded (taped) [✓]
Stenographic Record [✓]

TITLE OF HEARING:

Human Rights Abuses by Vietnamese Authorities

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. Curt Clawson, Rep. Dana Rohrabacher

NON-SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: *(Mark with an * if they are not members of full committee.)*

Rep. Alan Lowenthal

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes [✓] No [ ]
(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*

Photographs of sheds for storing funeral objects and victims of associated violence, submitted by Rep. Chris Smith
Photographs of police brutality against people of faith, submitted by Rep. Chris Smith

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
or
TIME ADJOURNED *3:49 p.m.*

Gregory B. Simpkins
Subcommittee Staff Director

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Pictures of Sheds for Storing Funeral Objects (SSFO)

Pic 1: SFFO in Coc Nghe Hamlet, Bac Kan Province

Pic 2: SFFO in Khuoi Sat Hamlet, Bac Kan Province

Pic 3: SFFO in Kha Ban Hamlet, Cao Bang Province

Pic 4: SFFO in Lung Tu Hamlet, Cao Bang Province

Pic 5: SFFO in Ban Ten Hamlet, Thai Nguyen Province

Pic 6: SFFO in Lien Phuong Hamlet, Thai Nguyen Province

Pictures of SSFOs before and after their destruction

Pic 7: SFFO in Khuoi Boc Hamlet, Tuyen Quang Province BEFORE the destruction on May 9, 2015

Pic 8: SFFO in Khuoi Boc Hamlet, Tuyen Quang Province AFTER the destruction on May 10, 2015

Pic 9: SFFO in Lè Hamlet, Tuyen Quang Province BEFORE the destruction on May 26, 2015

Pic 10: SFFO in Lè Hamlet, Tuyen Quang Province AFTER the destruction on May 26, 2015

Pic 11: SFFO in Ngoi Sen Hamlet, Tuyen Quang Province BEFORE the destruction on May 22, 2015

Pic 12: SFFO in Ngoi Sen Hamlet, Tuyen Quang Province DURING the destruction on May 22, 2015

Violence during the destruction act

Pic 13: A woman defends the SFFO in Ngoi Sen Hamlet, Tuyen Quang Province on May 22, 2015

Pic 14: Anti-Riot Police left the location after the destruction in Ngoi Sen Hamlet on May 22, 2015

Pic 15: A patrol wagon carried perpetrators in plain-clothes after their work in Ngoi Sen Hamlet on May 22, 2015

Pic 16: Building materials of SSFO in Ngoi Sen Hamlet were confiscated on May 22, 2015

Pic 17: Mrs. Duong Thi Cho was attacked and fainted in Ngoi Sen on 22/05/2015

Pic 18: Mrs. Duong Thi Cho in emergency care at district's hospital Hàm Yên on May 22, 2015

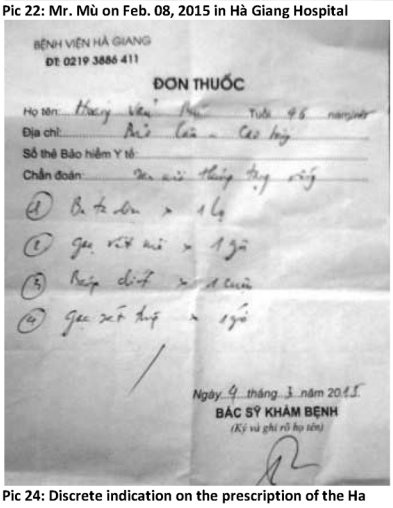
Pic 19: SFFO in Tan An Hamlet, Tuyen Quang Province, built on May 7, 2015

Pic 20: Ruin of SFFO in Tan An Hamlet, Tuyen Quang Province, AFTER the destruction on May 10, 2015

Pic 21: Mr. Duong Van De was attacked when he questioned why the police didn't carry his fainted mother to the hospital after the SSFO destruction in Tan An Hamlet, Tuyen Quang Province, on May 10, 2015

Pic 22: Mr. Mù on Feb. 08, 2015 in Hà Giang Hospital

Pic 23: Mr. Mù after the first surgery on Feb. 08, 2015



BỆNH VIỆN HÀ GIANG
ĐT 0219 3886 411

ĐƠN THUỐC

Họ tên: Hoàng Văn Mù Tuổi 46 nam/nữ
Địa chỉ: Bản Lùa - Cao Bồ
Số thẻ Bảo hiểm Y tế:
Chẩn đoán: Sau mổ thủng dạ dày
1. Betadin × 1 lọ
2. Gạc vô khuẩn × 1 gói
3. Băng dính × 1 cuộn
4. Gạc sát khuẩn × 1 gói

Ngày 4 tháng 3 năm 2015
BÁC SỸ KHÁM BỆNH
(Ký và ghi rõ họ tên)

Pic 24: Discrete indication on the prescription of the Ha Giang Hospital on Mar 4, 2015: visceral perforation

Pic 25: Mr. Mù after the 2nd surgery on May 11, 2015

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Human Rights Abuses in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Police Brutality Against People of Faith

Prepared by BPSOS and Advisory Committee on Religious Freedom for Vietnam

June 13, 2015

Khmer Krom Buddhist monks assaulted by the security police, Soc Trang, Feb 2007

Sentenced to 8 years in prison, Catholic Priest Nguyen Van Ly was not allowed to speak at his own trial, Mar 30, 2007.

Pastor Nguyen Cong Chinh,
Gia Lai Province, Jul 2008

Ven. Thich Thai Thuan of the
Unified Buddhist Church of
Vietnam, Jun 29, 2009

Father Ngo The Binh,
in Tam Toa Parish, July
28, 2009

Thach Tha No, member of the Khmer Krom Church of Christ in Tra Vinh, beaten to death by the police, April 4, 2009

Brother Anthony Nguyen Van Tang of the Redemptorist Order, in Dong Chiem Parish, Jan 20, 2010

Ms. Ken, in Dong Chiem, Jan 2010

Vu Hoang Quang, Catholic College Students Association of Vinh in Ha Noi, March 15, 2010

Nguyen Thanh Nam, member of the Catholic Parish of Con Dau, Da Nang, tortured to death, Jul 2, 2010

Oct 23, 2011 – Member of the Compassion Baptist Church in Quang Ngai

Ms. Hoang Thi Sinh in Thai Ha Parish, Ha Noi, Dec 2, 2011

Sanh No Vang, a Hmong Christian in Kala Bong, Dak Lak, shot dead by the police on December 12, 2011

Father Nguyen Quang Hoa of the Kontum Congregation, beaten by "thugs" on Feb 23, 2012

Tran Van Luong, a Catholic in Quy Chau, Vinh Province, beaten by "thugs" accompanied by the police, June 11, 2012

Father Nguyen Van Binh of the Yen Kien Parish, beaten by the police who came to demolish his orphanage, Apr 4, 2012

Ms. Ngo Thi Thanh, a Catholic in Con Cuong, Vinh Province, beaten by the police during Sunday Mass, July 1, 2012

Hoang Van Ngai, Hmong Deacon at Bui Tre Protestant Church in Dak Nong, tortured to death at the police station on March 17, 2013

Hoang Van Sung, Hmong Protestant, shown with his two sons the day before his arrest and subsequent death in police custody on April 13, 2014

Venerable Thich Thien Tam assaulted by police at Phuoc Buu Temple on November 22, 2014

Pastor Nguyen Hong Quang assaulted on January 18, 2015

Mrs. Ly Thi Thao of the Duong Van Minh religion assaulted on February 6, 2015

Mr. Hoang Van My of the Duong Van Minh religion on February 6, 2015

Mr. Mu of the Duong Van Minh Sect on February 8, 2015

Pastor Nguyen Hong Quang on June 6, 2015

Contact: bpsos@bpsos.org
Additional information: www.dvov.org

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