



ARTICLE 19



PRESS STATEMENT 17 June 2013

A broad coalition of NGO's requests John Kerry to take action to free the Vietnamese human rights defender Mr. Le Quoc Quan.

Mr. Quan is currently arbitrarily detained due to having exercised his right to freedom of expression, his right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, as well as his activities as a human rights defender.

Mr. Quan is a qualified lawyer and active blogger. On his popular blog, he exposes human rights abuses commonly ignored by Vietnamese state media. Prior to being disbarred in 2007, Mr. Quan defended human rights cases in court. Upon his return from the United States, he was arrested in 2007 and detained for 100 days. In April 2011, he was arrested again and ultimately released without charges. In August 2012, Mr. Quan was severely injured because of a violent attack, by – he believes – State agents. On 27 December 2012, Mr. Quan was arrested and charged for what he believes are false charges of 'tax evasion'. He has been detained incommunicado in a Hanoi prison for the first two months. At this moment, Mr. Quan is still imprisoned. His trial will take place on 9 July 2013.

US Secretary of State John Kerry will attend the ASEAN conference later this months. By letter dated 17 June 2013, the signatory organisations have requested him to seize the opportunity to request the Vietnamese Government to release Mr. Quan.

More detailed information about information about Mr. Quan and the unlawful interference with his human rights is set forth in a recent Letter of Allegation sent to the Special Rapporteurs of the United Nations: <http://www.advocatenvooradvocaten.nl/wp-content/uploads/Le-Quoc-Quan-Letter-of-allegation-FINAL.pdf>

SIGNATORY ORGANISATIONS

Article 19, Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), English PEN, Freedom House, Frontline Defenders, Lawyers for Lawyers (L4L), Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada, Media Defence South East Asia, Media Legal Defence Initiative (MLDI), National Endowment for Democracy (NED), Reporters Without Borders, World Movement for Democracy

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