



Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-4302

July 31, 2015

The Honorable John F. Kerry  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We welcome your raising human rights concerns at the recent meeting with Mr. Nguyen Phu Trong, Secretary General of the Vietnamese Communist Party. It is time for the Vietnamese leadership to act and demonstrate their good faith by releasing all prisoners of conscience as part of their Independence Day (September 2<sup>nd</sup>) amnesty.

Through the Defending Freedom Project of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, I have officially adopted Pastor Duong Kim Khai, a Protestant pastor sentenced to 8 years in prison because of his faith. The Congress has granted Trade Promotion Authority to the Administration, which contains a provision making freedom of religion an objective of trade negotiations, including TPP. I therefore would greatly appreciate your advocating for the immediate and unconditional release of Pastor Duong.

For twenty years the United States government has cultivated a close relationship with the government of Vietnam, yet Vietnam remains a one-party state which treats of its own citizens—particularly those who share the U.S. commitment to freedom and democracy—in ways that systematically transgress the minimum standards expected of any government that wishes to be treated as a member of the community of civilized nations. I look forward to seeing the Vietnamese leadership acting in good faith at least in the area of religious freedom.

Sincerely,

Ted Poe  
Member of Congress  
TEXAS