

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

August 3, 2015

The Honorable John F. Kerry  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry:

I appreciate 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 two labor union organizers, Doan Huy Chuong and Nguyen Hoang Quoc Hung, who are serving seven and nine years in prison respectively. Their only crime was to assist a number of workers in organizing themselves into independent trade unions. President Obama recently reasserted the Administration's position that Vietnam has to fully respect workers' freedom to form unions in order to take part in the Trans-Pacific Partnership. I therefore would greatly appreciate your advocating for the immediate and unconditional release of these two young labor union organizers at your meetings with the Vietnamese leadership on Friday.

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 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,



Chris Van Hollen  
Member of Congress