

Example cases

<b>Case No.</b>	1	<b>Date</b>	31 July 2013	<b>Location</b>	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
<b>Description</b>					
<p>On the morning of 31 July, Catholics praying for the resolution of land disputes outside Notre Dame Cathedral in Ho Chi Minh City were forcibly removed and beaten by police and security agents.</p> <p>An unknown number of people praying in front of the statue of Our Lady, just outside the Cathedral's main entrance, were dragged onto buses by police. Those who resisted were brutally beaten and had their mobile phones taken away. Following the assault, several people are being treated in hospital. In photographs of one young woman beaten by police, her face is swollen and bruised and her mouth filled with dried blood.</p> <p>The petitioners had reportedly come to the church from their homes in the South-eastern and South-western provinces to pray for the resolution of land disputes after their land and property was seized by the local authorities.</p>					

→ *Identify specific human rights abuses in the example case, and list related articles (session 1a)*

<b>Case No.</b>	2	<b>Date</b>	January – March 2013	<b>Location</b>	Kon Tum, Vietnam
<b>Description</b>					
<p>This case concerns five ethnic minority Christian families from the Central Highlands of Vietnam. The families converted to Protestant Christianity in early 2012.</p> <p>In January 2013, unknown assailants began to attack the families' property. Over the next three months, the attackers damaged buildings and farmland and destroyed crops and livestock, as well as beating several family members. Sources close to the families say the aim of these attacks was to pressure the families to recant their faith.</p> <p>Their houses were attacked and damaged with bricks, roof tiles and wooden clubs, and their household utensils were smashed to pieces and destroyed. Later on, unknown assailants attacked them physically, severally beating several of the Christians. Finally, the families were forced to escape into the forests.</p> <p>The Christians sent several petitions to the authorities during the period of the attacks but received no response.</p> <p>The attackers are mostly neighbours but also include off-duty or retired police and officials.</p>					

→ *Identify specific abuses of freedom of religion of belief in the example case (session 1B)*

Case No.	3	Date	September 2013	Location	Tay Ninh, Vietnam
<b>Description</b>					
<p>On 12 September 2013, Cao Dai followers and clergy members gathered for a ceremony to erect an altar at the home of Ms Nga. Ms Nga had written to the People’s Committee and the Fatherland Front village branch to ask permission, but the authorities said that she must ask the Ceremony Unit of the local office of the Cao Dai Administrative Council to officiate, or she would not be allowed to erect the altar. Ms Nga viewed this as government interference, forcing her to follow the state-sanctioned Cao Dai Administrative Council instead of independent clergy.</p> <p>She proceeded with the ceremony. At 11:30am, police, local government officials in plain clothes and government-sanctioned Administrative Council members surrounded her home. A number of them wore face masks. Thugs blocked Cao Dai practitioners from entering Ms Nga’s home to start the ceremony and snatched clergy members’ camcorders, phones and some cash.</p> <p>Those already in the house locked the door and proceeded with the ceremony. After the ceremony, as they exited the house, they found themselves surrounded by the police and thugs. Some of those leaving the house were assaulted by the thugs in plain view of the police. People in the house made phone calls to the Committee for Religious Affairs, the Office of Interior Affairs of Tay Ninh Province, and the police, but none of them responded. Eventually, at 8pm, the local police arrived and videotaped and photographed the victims and interviewed them about the incident.</p> <p>A report detailing what had happened was filed with the police and other authorities.</p>					

→ *In the example case, briefly answer the 5 questions: where, when, who, what, why (session 3A)*

Case No.	4	Date	6-7 January	Location	Hue
<b>Description</b>					
<p>Police and security forces harassed and intimidated monks, nuns and lay-followers of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV) to prevent them from organizing a Memorial Day commemoration at the Long Quang Pagoda in Hue on 10 January 2014.</p> <p>Over 100 Security Police surrounded Long Quang Pagoda, and the internet at Long Quang Pagoda was cut.</p> <p>On 7 January, leader Thich Thanh Quang was summoned for interrogations by Security Police in Danang and forbidden to attend the commemorations in Hue. Another leader was subjected to “working sessions” (interrogations).</p> <p>Monks and nuns from 18 UBCV Provincial Committees all over southern and central Vietnam were also intercepted and placed under surveillance in their pagodas.</p> <p>Many members of the Buddhist Youth Movement were also intercepted and prevented from attending the traditional Memorial ceremony for founders of the BYM in Vietnam on 7 January at the Phuoc Thanh Pagoda in Hue. Whereas this annual event usually draws hundreds of participants, only 70 BYM leaders managed to circumvent Police controls. Key members of the BYM were subjected to harassment, surveillance and Police “working sessions”.</p>					

→ *Complete the form using the example case (session 4 review)*

<b>Case No.</b>	7	<b>Date</b>	2006 - 2012	<b>Location</b>	Phuoc Hung, An Phu District, An Giang
<b>Description</b>					
<p>In 2006, Mr Trung built a Hoa Hao recital minaret in Phuoc Hung, An Phu District, An Giang, to allow local Hoa Hao Buddhist adherents to congregate and study the Church's teachings, pray, and engage in celebrations and other religious rituals.</p> <p>The government ordered Trung to close the minaret on the pretext that he had no official permit. Each time the believers gathered there, public security agents and their hired thugs surrounded the site, blocked its entrance, beat up believers, used fire trucks to hose water on them, and/or threw rocks and rotten food into the minaret. Once Trung had to threaten self-immolation when the police raided the minaret and harassed participants during a group prayer.</p> <p>In July 2012, the police arrested Trung's son, without a warrant. In September he was tried and sentenced to two years and six months in prison for "opposing the state." On October 30, 2012 Trung himself was arrested. In January 2013, he was sentenced to four years in prison on charges of "opposing officials performing their duty."</p>					

→ *In the example case, what potential problems are there with the source? (session 2B)*

#### ADDITIONAL CASE

<b>Case No.</b>	6	<b>Date</b>	4 September 2013	<b>Location</b>	My Yen parish, Nghi Loc District, Nghe An
<b>Description</b>					
<p>On 4 September 2013 Catholics from My Yen gathered to peacefully protest the arrest of Nguyen Van Hai, 43, and Ngo Van Khoi, 53, also from My Yen parish, who were detained after being involved in a previous incident on 22 May 2013. On that date the two men were part of a crowd of Catholics visiting a shrine and attending Mass at a church in Nghi Phuong Commune. Three men later revealed to be plainclothes police officers were stopping and searching people on the road to the church. The men did not show any identification, and there was confusion among the crowd as to their identity. Arguments broke out as a result of the tension and confusion.</p> <p>Nguyen Van Hai and Ngo Van Khoi were formally arrested on 27 June 2013 and were accused of coordinating the gathering of Catholics at the home of the District Police Officer on 22 May. Some sources believe that the two men were selected as "scapegoats" because they are "easy-going" and police believed they could easily extract a confession. The two men's families were later informed that they had been charged with "disturbing public order".</p> <p>Members of the Catholic community in Nghe An appealed for their release, hoping the two men would be set free under the annual national amnesty on 2 September. When this did not happen, a large number of Catholics demonstrated peacefully in front of the Peoples' Committee District Office in Nghi Phuong the following day (3 September). In response, the local district chief issued a</p>					

paper promising that the two men would be released on the afternoon of 4 September. However, the families were later told that there had been no such promise of a release.

Several hundred members of the community arrived to protest against the continued detention of the two men. As the crowds surrounded the District Office, the situation became tense. Sources agree that it was at this point that the military arrived to dispel the crowd, armed with guns, batons, tear gas, and guard dogs. Some sources say hired thugs were also present. At one point, these undercover police officers threw rocks at the uniformed police and military, giving them an excuse to attack. In response, the military fired their guns into the air for five to seven minutes, and severely beat the petitioners. This continued until 8pm. During this period, the military also smashed religious icons in the neighbouring area. This was reported by eyewitnesses and later confirmed in an investigation by Vinh Diocese church authorities. Between 21 and 40 people were injured. About 15 people arrested during the protest were released the following day.

Following the incident on 4 September, the government launched a media campaign which blamed Bishop Paul Nguyen Thai Hop and the Catholic petitioners for all of the unrest.