

Religious leaders in Vietnam to offer multi-faith prayer service for those persecuted because of their faith

Press Release

Contact: forb@bpsos.org

Subject: Vietnam's first Multi-faith Prayer Commemorating Victims of Persecution Based on Religion or Belief

August 23, 8pm – 9pm (Vietnam), 9am – 10am (EDT)

Register: <http://tiny.cc/VADPrayer>

In observance of this year's International Day Commemorating Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief, clergy members of diverse religious communities in Vietnam will conduct an online multi-faith prayer service this coming Sunday. The event will be hosted by BPSOS on GotoWebinar and livestreamed via Facebook with voice-over in different languages.

The idea of such a joint prayer came about at a webinar organized by BPSOS on July 31, when Catholic Bishop Nguyen Thai Hop of the Ha Tinh Diocese, Vietnam called for solidarity among all communities of faith in promoting religious freedom for all in Vietnam.

"Whether we are Buddhist, Catholic or Cao Dai, first and foremost we are Vietnamese. Therefore, more than ever before, this is the time for all people of faith to unite...", said Bishop Hop. "I wish that at the upcoming prayer service, there will be many people from different faiths praying for our own spiritual wellbeing, for our country, for our people... so as to build the future of our country... a future of spiritual values, of freedom, a future where we join hands with the modern world."

This call for unity was echoed by the Most Venerable Thich Thien Minh, clergy member of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam and former prisoner of conscience, who shared the same webinar panel with Bishop Hop:

"I fully agree with Bishop Nguyen Thai Hop's statement and his innovative idea, which reflects the common situation faced by all religions, the need for improving human rights, and the trend in the entire world."

Leading to the multi-faith prayer event on Sunday, some 150 religious communities in Vietnam have notified BPSOS of their commemorating activities. These communities include Catholic parishes, Montagnard and Hmong Christian house churches, Cao Dai congregations, Buddhist and Hoa Hao Buddhist groups... In 2019, 53 communities notified BPSOS of their observance of the August 22 commemorating day.

To participate, people can register with the organizing team at: <http://tiny.cc/VADPrayer>

"Additionally, we expect some ten thousand viewers to watch the event via livestreaming" said Dr. Nguyen Dinh Thang, CEO & President of BPSOS.

Dr. James Carr, Commissioner of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), will join Vietnamese religious leaders in this unprecedented multi-faith prayer service. Victims of persecution due to their religion or belief will give testimonials afterwards.

On this occasion, BPSOS will also announce the Commemorating Wall (<https://www.vncrp.org/ngay-tuong-niem-22-8>) in honor of victims of religious persecution, and introduce USCIRF's victims list.

Livestreaming on Facebook:

English: <https://www.facebook.com/VNAdvocacy/>

With Vietnamese voice-over: <https://www.facebook.com/Vietnamcivilrights/>

Ede language voice-over: <https://www.facebook.com/Montagnard-Stand-For-Justice-104565237819312/>

Hmong language voice-over: <https://www.facebook.com/hmonghrc.org/>

Multi-faith Prayer Commemorating Victims of Persecution Based on Religion or Belief

August 23, 2020 at 8pm — 9pm (Vietnam)



PROGRAM

- 8:00pm – Background information on UN resolution establishing the August 22 commemorating day and overview of commemorating activities in 2019 and 2020
- 8:15pm – Introduction to BPSOS's Commemorating Wall and USCIRF's victims list
- 8:20pm – Highlighted cases of victims
- 8:30pm – Multi-faith prayer service
- 8:40pm – Testimonials and statements by invited guests
- 9:00pm – Closing remarks by BPSOS's Board Chair, Ms. Tuyet Dinh