

URGENT ACTION

HEALTH CONCERNS FOR PRISONER OF CONSCIENCE

Prisoner of conscience Huỳnh Trương Ca continues to suffer from several illnesses behind bars including lung disease, stomach problem and diabetes. The authorities at his previous facility failed to provide him with adequate medical treatment, now they moved him to another prison further away from his home. We urge the Vietnamese government to release Huỳnh Trương Ca immediately and unconditionally.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc
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Dear Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc,

I write to express my grave concern regarding the situation of **Huỳnh Trương Ca** who, despite suffering from several illnesses including diabetes, lung disease and high blood pressure, was moved without warning to Xuân Lộc prison on 7 March.

The new detention centre is situated 250km away from his home town, making it very difficult for his family to visit him and bring him necessary supplies.

Huỳnh Trương Ca was arrested on 4 September 2018 while on his way to participate in a peaceful protest in Ho Chi Minh city. Convicted and sentenced to five years and six months in prison solely for peacefully exercising his fundamental rights, he is a prisoner of conscience and should be immediately released.

Therefore, I urge you Prime Minister to release Huỳnh Trương Ca immediately and unconditionally to demonstrate Vietnam is a country where human rights are respected.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Huỳnh Trương Ca, is a member of a non-registered group named Hiến Pháp (English translation: 'Constitution'), which focuses on promoting and protecting the basic human rights guaranteed in the Viet Nam 2013 Constitution. Before being arrested, Huỳnh Trương Ca had previously been harassed and intimidated many times by local public security officials. The authorities wanted him to "stop using Facebook to talk about human rights and criticise the government". He refused to comply.

Following an unfair trial, the Peoples Court of Đồng Tháp Province sentenced Huỳnh Trương Ca to five years and six months imprisonment on 28 December 2018 for "conducting propaganda against the state" under article 117 of the Viet Nam 2015 Penal Code. The family of Huỳnh Trương Ca told Amnesty International that they were too poor to hire a lawyer to defend him and the authorities refused to provide access to one. In Vietnamese law and international law, the authorities are obliged to provide access to a lawyer to defendants if they are unable to hire one.

In Viet Nam, prison transfer is often applied to prisoners of conscience since it creates more difficulties for families to visit and provide supplies. Prisoners who come from the south are normally transferred to facilities in the north and vice versa.

Angry with the ill-treatment that her father is enduring behind bars, Huỳnh Trương Ca's daughter decided to write about his case on her personal Facebook page. As a result, the local authorities summoned her to a police station where she was forced to unlock her phone and hand it to the officers who then deleted everything she wrote on Facebook. The police further threatened her and told her not to write about her father's story on social media or contact people to ask for their help with his case.

Currently, there are more than a hundred prisoners of conscience in Vietnam, many of whom experience torture or other ill-treatment behind bars - including harassment, threats, intimidation or physical assault. The living conditions in prison are harsh; Amnesty International often receives news and reports from families of prisoners of conscience complaining of the poor diet, lack of healthcare, and inadequate clothing during winter time.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English, Vietnamese
You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 30 April 2019
Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Huỳnh Trương Ca [him/he]

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa41/9945/2019/en/>