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COI QUERY RESPONSE

VIETNAM- INFORMATION ON AVAILABLE INTERNAL RELOCATION

The *Radio Free Asia* in March 2025 states that: “Vietnam arrested an ethnic Khmer Krom monk and two activists on Thursday and charged them with breaking a vague law that is often used to silence dissent, a Khmer Krom advocacy group said. Nearly 1.3-million Khmer Krom live in a part of Vietnam that was once southeastern Cambodia. They have faced serious restrictions on freedom of expression, assembly and movement.”¹

The *UK Home Office* in March 2025 reported that: “In general, internal relocation is reasonable, particularly to an urban area such as (but not limited to) the capital city of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. However, this will depend on the person's circumstances, the nature of the threat and the reach and ability of the moneylender to locate and pursue the person.”²

This document further states that: “Vietnam is a large country of over 105 million people with several large cities, 6 of which have a population of over a million. The law allows for freedom of internal movement which is common. Local police require citizens to register when staying overnight in any location outside of their local area although police do not enforce the laws to the extent that it would prevent internal relocation. Those who move without permission can sometimes be hampered from seeking legal residence permits, public education, and health-care benefits.”³ “The 2022 DFAT report noted that: 'Internal relocation is common. Police keep close watch over relocation and citizens staying even one night away from their homes must register with local police. ...Internal relocation and re- registration in a new residence is possible, but bureaucratic difficulties may arise for certain people.' The 2023 USSD report noted that: 'The constitution provided for freedom of internal movement, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation, but the government

¹ Radio Free Asia (27 March 2025) Vietnam arrests Khmer Krom monk and 2 activists under vague law

² UK Home Office (6 March 2025) Country Policy and Information Note - Vietnam: Fear of illegal moneylenders (February 2025)

³ ibid

regularly imposed limits on the movement of individuals, especially those released after serving sentences under national security or related charges or outspoken critics of the government.”⁴

The *Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Australia* in February 2025 mentioned that: “In-country sources said in October 2023 that climate change was also a growing driver of internal migration. The US Department of State reported that migration from rural areas to cities 'continued unabated' in 2023. Limits to internal freedom of movement apply to some people, including those who are on bail, serving suspended prison sentences, or completing compulsory drug rehabilitation. Limits also apply to people undergoing supervised probation (*quan che*) after completing prison sentences for certain crimes, including crimes related to national security. *Quan che*, which can last up to five years, includes a requirement to live and work in a defined area under the supervision of local authorities during the period of probation. These limitations are time-bound, and internal relocation should theoretically be possible for most people to whom these temporary restrictions apply. There are otherwise no legal barriers to internal relocation.”⁵

The document also states that: “Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City have previously enacted local legislation to limit relocation because of concerns of overcrowding and associated pressures on infrastructure and services. In-country sources said, to the best of their knowledge, these restrictions were no longer in force or were otherwise not being enforced as of October 2023, pointing to the high rates of population growth in these cities as evidence.”⁶ This same document points out that: “DFAT assesses internal relocation is possible for most people. Security agencies are highly capable and can locate and monitor a person of interest should they relocate internally, including through the household registration system.”⁷

In January 2025 *Human Rights Watch* mentioned that: “The Vietnamese authorities systematically block rights activists, bloggers, dissidents, and their family members from domestic and international travel, including by stopping them at airports and border gates, and denying them passports or other documents that would allow them to leave or enter the country. Activists are routinely placed under house arrest during events deemed by the authorities as politically sensitive.”⁸

The *Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)* in July 2024 points out that: “Development projects often require the acquisition of land. While land acquisition may bring economic development or other public benefits, the Special Rapporteur has been made aware that, in some cases, individuals and communities who have lived off the land for generations may have been displaced without adequate compensation and/or resettlement. The Special Rapporteur has also received information that, under the 2013 Land Law and relevant decrees, communities have been notified only 15 days in advance that their land has been acquired and that they are subject to relocation, contrary to the principle of free, prior and informed consent and the need to ensure consultation throughout the development of resettlement plans. He has also received information that land is often sold to companies for prices far exceeding the amount of the compensation awarded to individuals.”⁹

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Australia (19 February 2025) DFAT Country Information Report: Vietnam (February 2025)

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ *ibid*

⁸ Human Rights Watch (16 January 2025) World Report 2025: Vietnam

⁹ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) (8 July 2024) Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to development, Surya Deva, on his visit to Viet Nam

The *US Department of State* Country Reports on Human Rights Practices in April 2024 notes that: “The constitution provided for freedom of internal movement, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation, but the government regularly imposed limits on the movement of individuals, especially those released after serving sentences under national security or related charges or outspoken critics of the government.”¹⁰

A report issued by *Freedom House* in February 2024 states that: “Freedom of movement is nominally protected by law. Residency rules limit access to services for those who migrate within the country without permission, though this system is not consistently enforced. Authorities have restricted the movement of political dissidents and members of ethnic minorities on national security or other grounds. People detained on grounds of being political dissidents or activists in any way generally have their movements then restricted, and have files created on them by the authorities, who continue to detain them. Independent reports indicate that the Vietnamese government is holding at least 160 political prisoners, including human rights activists, as of year-end 2023.”¹¹

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¹⁰ US Department of State (22 April 2024) 2023 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Vietnam

¹¹ Freedom House (29 February 2024) *Freedom in the World 2024: Vietnam*, p.8

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Reliefweb

United Kingdom Home Office

United States Department of State

UNHCR Refworld

Contact Information

Refugee Documentation Centre

Legal Aid Board

48/49 North Brunswick Street

Dublin 7

Ireland

Email: research@legalaidboard.ie