

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

August 2, 2024

H.E. Pham Minh Chinh  
Prime Minister  
Socialist Republic of Vietnam  
c/o Vietnam Embassy in the U.S.  
1233 20th St NW, Ste 400  
Washington, DC 20036

Subject: Urgent Appeal to Vietnam government regarding Formosa Environmental Disaster Victims

Dear Prime Minister,

We are writing to express our deep concern over the ongoing plight of the victims affected by the environmental disaster caused by the Formosa Ha Tinh Steel Corporation in central Vietnam in 2016. Despite assurances from the Vietnamese government that the situation has been resolved, numerous indications challenge this narrative and many victims have yet to receive justice and proper compensation.

Numerous victims who have suffered significant losses have filed lawsuits, only to face denial and violence from the authorities when seeking legal recourse. Advocates who have spoken up for the victims have been unjustly imprisoned, with harsh sentences as long as 20 years, further exacerbating the injustice.

Efforts to seek justice outside of Vietnam, particularly in Taiwan and the United States, have also faced obstruction and intimidation from local Vietnamese authorities. Individuals assisting victims with legal procedures have been threatened and summoned by police.

Recent incidents, such as the aggressive interrogation and threats endured by Ms. Nguyen Thi Lanh at the hands of local authorities at the Quang Loc Commune Police Station in the town of Ba Don, underscore the pervasive climate of fear and intimidation confronting those who seek justice. The heightened police presence, coupled with warnings issued to villagers and the unjust labeling of efforts to assist victims in seeking justice as scams, serve as stark evidence of the authorities' systematic campaign to stifle dissent and deter victims from asserting their rights. In the meantime, prisoners of conscience, including Nguyen Duc Phung and Hoang Duc Binh, continue to endure mistreatment, further underscoring the urgent need for intervention to safeguard their rights and well-being.

According to the Vietnamese Civil Code, Article 605, citizens are entitled to seek compensation for both material and emotional damages, and as a UN member state, it is imperative for Vietnam to adhere to the laws of the United Nations and international norms in upholding individuals' right to justice. Your government's obstruction of these principles not only violates domestic law but also contravenes international legal standards.

Moreover, in the bilateral agreement between the US and Vietnamese governments, article 7 reinforces the right to seek legal redress in court for disputes. The active engagement of the US Congress and State Department in assisting Vietnam to leverage this agreement underscores the importance of a fair and transparent legal system to foster investment and trade relations.

Vietnam's handling of the Formosa disaster raises significant concerns for us as Members of the United States Congress, the international business community, and human rights advocacy organizations. Continued mishandling of the Formosa cases risks undermining our confidence in Vietnam's economic, trade, and legal frameworks.

We strongly urge the Vietnamese government to take immediate actions to address these pressing issues:

1. Cease all retaliatory actions against victims and ensure their ability to complete necessary paperwork for legal proceedings in Taiwanese and US courts.
2. Unconditionally release all prisoners of conscience who have been unjustly imprisoned for their advocacy efforts on behalf of the victims.
3. Implement an independent study of the pollution in the area affected by the Formosa toxic spill to ensure proper cleanup efforts have been carried out by Vietnamese authorities and Formosa Plastics.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress  
Co-Chair, Congressional  
Vietnam Caucus



J. Luis Correa  
Member of Congress



Christopher H. Smith  
Member of Congress



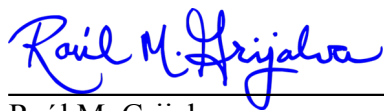
Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



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Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



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Katie Porter  
Member of Congress



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Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress