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**THE COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN VIETNAM**  
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## **December 2006 Human Rights News Bulletin**

In November 2006, the Vietnamese communist government further tarnished its human rights records, as exposed to the Vietnamese people and the international community as well. In December 2006, the government continued to step up repression against religious leaders and democracy advocates in Vietnam.

### *I. The religious repression situation:*

On December 15, 2006, Pastor Y Koor, Gia Lai province, invited Pastor Nguyen Hong Quang and other pastors from Saigon to attend his daughter's wedding. Gia Lai province police harassed Pastor Y Koor, questioning why he had not sought government approval prior to holding the wedding and inviting Pastor Quang to the event. Immediately after the wedding Pastor Quang and his group, on the way to visit Pastor Nguyen Cong Chinh's family, were harassed by police who insisted on taking the whole group in for interrogation.

In particular, during Christmas 2006, provincial authorities prevented many Protestant house congregations from organizing Christmas celebrations.

On December 21, 2006, Mr. A Luong of Buon Me Thuot came to visit Pastor Nguyen Cong Chinh's family, carrying some rice with him, but two security guards stationed in front of Pastor Chinh's house took away the rice and Mr. A Luong's motorcycle while savagely beating him up.

Many Mennonite congregations in the provinces of Plei Mo and Gia Lai, as well as H're house churches in Ka Neo and Long Mai, Minh Long district, Quang Ngai province, and in the provinces of Lao Cai and Ha Giang in northern Vietnam, were prohibited from organizing Christmas events.

*In Bac Giang province:* Pastor Than Van Truong arrived in his hometown from Dong Nai province to hold Christmas celebrations for his followers. Despite the goodwill of Pastor Truong who had sent the Bac Giang Province People's Committee and the Song Mai village authorities invitations to the celebrations, Bac Giang provincial authorities fanned out verbal orders to stop Pastor Truong from celebrating Christmas. Because they poured a special kind of glue into the lock of Mr. Tong Dinh Hoe's house, where Pastor Truong was staying, Pastor Truong and all the Tong family members were locked up inside the house for the duration of December 12 morning. Nevertheless, Pastor Truong was determined to offer a Christmas mass in the afternoon of December 27, 2006, when Bac Giang province's police mobilized traffic police to install barricades at intersections leading to the entrance of the Congregation and prevented the Christmas mass from happening.

*In Hai Phong province:* The World Family Protestant Congregation, led by Mr. Pham Huu Thinh, in collaboration with four other Vietnamese Protestant congregations, rented the Hai Phong City Youth and Cultural Center, located at 45 Lach Tray, Hai Phong City as a venue for

their Christmas celebration. On the alert, Hai Phong City police threatened Mr. Pham Huu Thanh, saying that they would squeeze his bank out of his company's business loan. In the evening of December 24, the World Family Protestant Church and its partners went ahead with conducting a mass of about 1,500 followers and their relatives at 7: 30 p.m. in the face of a tight police cordon around the Center. However, the Center's director, under intense pressure from the police, ordered the mass to come to a stop at 8:30 p.m.

As soon as Vietnam has been removed from the CPC list, admitted to WTO, and granted PNTR, and the APEC summit was over, the Vietnamese communist government reneged on their commitments by intensifying repression against religions. Christmas is the most important religious holiday for Protestants in Vietnam and throughout the world. Being as always reactionary as it is, the communist government was trying to deceive the international community by concealing its violations of human and religious rights on the one hand, and on the other they repressed Vietnamese Protestants in violation of the [Vietnamese] Constitution, consequently revealing the true face of Vietnamese communists.

## **II. The situation regarding advocates for democracy and human rights.**

In December 2006, the communist government continued its campaign with secret security agents to harass and house-arrest many advocates for freedom, democracy and human rights, and summoned them for interrogation. Inherently reactionary and anti-democratic, the government is afraid of activities of the advocates as each and every advocacy action is considered an arrow aimed at its reactionary and anti-democratic heart. By all means, it tries to interfere with their advocacy work from meetings to celebrations to exchange of views with overseas Vietnamese over the Internet. Communist secret security always employs unconstitutional and unlawful measures when dealing with advocates for freedom, democracy and human rights.

On December 1, 2006, the Ministry of Public Security Investigation Service conducted a search of Mr. Tran Quoc Hien's residence without a warrant from the Supreme People's Procuracy but no documents in question could be found.

On the International Human Rights Day, December 10, communist secret service summoned for interrogation democracy advocates Attorney Nguyen Van Dai, writer Hoang Tien, Ms. Tran Khai Thanh Thuy, engineer Do Nam Hai and journalist Nguyen Khac Toan, under the pretext that they were banned to participate in an online seminar on the International Human Rights Day. They also prevented other advocates from attending the wedding of Attorney Le Thi Cong Nhan's sister and jammed incoming telephone calls for Attorney Nhan from the seminar attendees. In particular, Attorney Nguyen Van Dai was taken in for interrogation on both December 9 and 10, which hindered him from going to church on Sunday.

On December 7, 2006, while Mr. Le Tri Tue was being held in a "working session" at the Precint 4 Police Headquarters, Saigon City, Mrs. Thuy, Deputy Secretary General of the Ward 12 [Vietnamese Communist] Party Chapter, Precinct 4, in the company of Chair Chau Thanh Hai of the Ward 12 War Veterans' Committee and two Ward 12 police inspectors, Lt. Major Van Phu Tan (also Party Chief) and Captain Vu Cap, came to Mr. Doan Van Bo's residence to inspect without consent Mr. Tue's private room, searching for his personal belongings, accessories, and information stored in his computer.

In the afternoon of December 13, Ms. Duong Thi Xuan, secretary of Dan Chu Tu Do (Democracy & Freedom) Magazine, came to visit Messrs. Hoang Minh Chinh and Le Hong Ngoc. On the way home, she was stopped by a group of six to seven people either in plainclothes or civil defense uniforms, who forcibly took her to the Ward Tran Hung Dao [police station] and then searched her for any documents she might have exchanged with Mr. Chinh. After this interception, police threatened her husband on December 15 that she would be arrested if she kept on seeing Mr. Chinh.

In the morning of December 15, Mr. Nguyen Phuong Anh, in his white shirt, drove his car to an appointment with Mr. Nguyen Thanh Giang, which had been previously arranged over the phone. Just 500 meters away from his home, a traffic policeman stopped him at the Dai Co Viet and Pho Hue intersection, and finally confiscated his car and papers. Police also removed from the car 4.5 million dongs in cash with which Mr. Anh had planned to buy clothes as gifts for needy paperboys. Upon his swift reaction, he was clubbed in the head.

On December 19, Attorney Le Thi Cong Nhan and her mother, Mrs. Tran Thi Le, were summoned for interrogation by Secret Service A42.

On December 26, on the flight to Bangkok to spend her year-end vacation and visit her friends, Attorney Cong-Nhan was stopped and denied exit by the Noi Bai Airport Security by order of the Ministry of Public Security.

On December 27, Attorney Cong-Nhan continued to be interrogated by A42 regarding her flight to Bangkok.

On December 12, 2006 and January 1, 2007, secret service agents continued to maintain its clamps on such advocates for democracy and human rights as Nguyen Phuong Anh, Nguyen Thanh Giang, Nguyen Khac Toan, and Tran Khac Thanh Thuy while summoning Attorney Nguyen Van Dai to a “working session,” thus preventing them from gathering for the New Year celebration.

In brief, in the month of December 2006, the Vietnamese communist government continued to act in violation of Articles 58, 68, 69, 70, 71, and 73 of the Vietnamese Constitution [of 1992] with regard to the protection of the citizen’s properties, the freedom of movement, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, the inviolability of one’s body, and the the inviolability of one’s domicile, respectively. By the same token, it acted in serious violation of Articles 7, 9, 12, 17, 18 and 21 of the [United Nations] International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights with reference to the inviolability of one’s body, the right to liberty of movement, the inviolability of one’s home, the right to freedom of belief and religion, and the right of assembly, respectively

We, the Committee for Human Rights in Vietnam, hereby condemn the Vietnamese communist government for having committed the above-stated acts, and we urge that it stop similar violations in the immediate future.

We call upon the international community to strongly condemn the Vietnamese communist government for having committed the above-stated violations of human rights, as well as to voice their support for advocates of religious freedom and human rights in Vietnam.

*Filed on behalf of the Committee for Human Rights in Vietnam  
Nguyen Cong Ly and Bui Minh Thanh*