



Date: 30th of September 2020

STATEMENT BY CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS ON THE TRIAL AND DEATH PENALTY OF DONG TAM VILLAGERS



In the early hours of 9 January 2020, approximately 3,000 armed and police forces descended on the village of Dong Tam to attack the family home of Mr Le Dinh Kinh and killed him. Mr Kinh is an 84-year-old senior who was acting as the representative of the village disputing forced land seizure from Viettel Group, Vietnam's military-run communications company. Mr Kinh's body showed signs of a bullet fired right in the heart. His chest was split and sewed. His head was battered with blood and his left leg was broken.

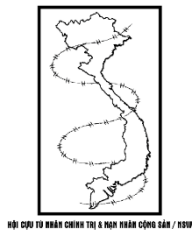
During the raid, 3 police officers apparently fell to their death in the dark. 29 villagers including Mr Kinh's children and grandchildren who were trying to defend Mr Kinh and themselves from the attack were arrested and subsequently charged with murder and disrupting public security.

A few days after the raid, a number of those arrested including Mr Kinh's children were shown on television with bruises on their face purportedly "confessing to their crimes".

After a 4-day trial, two of Mr Kinh's children Le Dinh Cong and Le Dinh Chuc were sentenced to death on 14 September 2020. One of the Mr Kinh's grandchildren Le Dinh Doanh was sentenced to life imprisonment. The other 26 villagers received sentences ranging from 15 months to 16 years imprisonment.

We strongly condemn violent attacks against Dong Tam villagers by the paramilitary police and subsequent arrest, torture, conviction and imprisonment of the villagers, particularly the death sentences handed out to Mr Kinh's children.

We call on the international community to demand the Vietnamese authorities to immediately stay the death sentences of Le Dinh Cong and Le Dinh Chuc and to open an independent and public inquiry of the case particularly the decision to send 3,000 armed police in the dark of night to attack the Dong Tam villagers and to execute Mr Le Dinh Kinh in the process.



Statement released by:

- Vietnamese Community in Australia
- Vietnam Human Right Network
- VOICE Australia
- Vietnamese Australian Lawyers' Association (VALA)
- Human Rights Relief Foundation (HRRF)
- The International Youth Movement For Human Rights Foundation
- Viet Liberty
- Tan Dai Viet Party
- The Alliance For Democracy in Vietnam
- Vietnamese Women Association, NSW
- The Vietnam League of Ex-Prisoners of Conscience & Victims of Communism in Australia (NSW Chapter) Inc.
- Du Ca Sydney
- Prisoners Of Conscience Fund Inc.