

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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UA 02/94 Death Penalty

10 January 1994

SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM: Nguyen Quang Thanh

On 30 December 1993, a military court in Danang City imposed the death penalty on Nguyen Quang Thanh for murder. A former navy captain, Nguyen Quang Thanh reportedly killed his wife in 1987 and fled to Cambodia. He was arrested in Ho Chi Minh City in September 1993.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In Viet Nam, immediately after a death sentence, the court file is sent to the Chief Justice of the People's Supreme Court and a copy of the judgement is sent to the Chief Procurator of the Supreme Peoples's Organ of Control for review. Both must decide within two months whether or not to protest the sentence imposed by an appellate court. A death sentence is enforced if there is no protest from either official.

Within a period of seven days from the time of the death sentence, the convicted person may also submit an appeal for clemency to Viet Nam's President.

The death penalty is rarely enforced in Viet Nam. In the past, most death sentences have been commuted to jail terms including life imprisonment. The death penalty may be applied as a maximum sentence for around 30 serious criminal offences including smuggling, treason, espionage, rebellion, murder, rape, defrauding socialist property, and bribery.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases on the grounds that it is a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/express and airmail letters either in English or in your own language:

- expressing concern that Nguyen Quang Thanh has been sentenced to death;
- stating Amnesty International's unconditional opposition to the death penalty;
- urging that all death sentences, including that of Nguyen Quang Thanh, be commuted and that no more death sentences be imposed.

APPEALS TO:

1. Head of State

Le Duc Anh
President
Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

35 Ngo Quyen St.

Ha Noi, Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (SRV)

Telegrams: President Le Duc Anh, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

Salutation: Your Excellency

2. Supreme Court

Pham Hung

Chief Justice of the

Supreme People's Court

Ha Noi, SRV

Telegrams: Chief Justice, Supreme People's Court, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

Salutation: Dear Chief Justice

3. Supreme People's Organ of Control

Tran Guyet

Chief Procurator

Supreme People's Organ of Control

16 Tue Tinh St.

Ha Noi, SRV

Telegrams: Chief Procurator, Supreme People's Organ of Control, Ha Noi, SRV

Salutation: Dear Chief Procurator

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

The Ministry of Justice

Nguyen Dinh Loc

Minister of Justice

25A Cat Linh

Ha Noi, SRV

and to diplomatic representatives of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 21 February 1994.