

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
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Vietnamese authorities must release Dr. Nguyen Dan Que

Amnesty International is calling for the immediate release of Dr. Nguyen Dan Que, a Vietnamese political and human rights activist, who was arrested on Saturday, 26 February 2011, by the Ho Chi Minh City Police Investigation Agency.

In an official media report, the Vietnamese authorities described Dr. Que as being caught "red-handed keeping and distributing documents" calling for the overthrow of the government. The police seized documents and a computer from his home. Article 79 in the national security section of the 1999 Penal Code provides for between five years and life imprisonment, or the death penalty for "overthrowing" the state.

"Amnesty International is shocked to learn that Nguyen Dan Que has been arrested yet again," said Donna Guest, Amnesty International's Asia-Pacific Deputy Director. "Dr. Que is a staunch and peaceful defender of human rights and free speech, for which he has paid a heavy price, including spending almost 20 years in prison."

"Media reports suggest that his arrest may be linked to a statement he made in the last week calling for people to rise up against the government, with a reference to the democracy movements in the Middle East and North Africa. It also seems to be no coincidence that his arrest comes on the same day that an article by Dr. Que critical of the Vietnamese authorities' position on human rights was published in the Washington Post," said Donna Guest.

"Dr. Que has never used nor advocated violence. The authorities should immediately end its draconian attempts to stifle peaceful dissidents which have seen more than 20 activists jailed in the last 12 months. Amnesty International calls for Dr Que's immediate release," said Donna Guest.

Background

Dr Que is has been a former Amnesty International prisoner of conscience on three previous occasions. He became an international member of Amnesty International in January 1990. He has been imprisoned previously three times for a total of almost 20 years.

Amnesty International released the following July 2004 feature about Dr Nguyen Dan Que's lifelong committed to human rights:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ASA41/019/2004/en/4de3291f-d59c-11dd-bb24-1fb85fe8fa05/asa410192004en.pdf>