

EXTERNAL

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To: Medical professionals
From: Medical Office/Research Department - Asia
Date: 30 June 1992

@ *MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION*

**Do Ngoc Long
VIET NAM**

Keywords

Theme: POC/ill-health/detention without trial

Summary

Do Ngoc Long is a 56-year-old adopted prisoner of conscience who is reported to suffer from hypertension and heart disease. He is believed to have been transferred from Phan Dang Luu prison to the hospital of Chi Hoa prison in early June 1992 after collapsing in his prison cell. Both prisons are located in Ho Chi Minh City. No further information is available at present. Since his transfer to Chi Hoa prison his family have been denied access to him and there is concern for his present state of health.

Recommended Actions

Letters are requested from medical professionals to the addresses given below:

- ◆ stating that you are writing to enquire about the current state of health of Do Ngoc Long, noting that he was transferred to Chi Hoa prison for medical care in early June after collapsing in his cell at Phan Dang Luu prison
- ◆ seeking information on the treatment he is currently receiving and urging the government to ensure that he will receive regular and adequate medical care while he remains in prison
- ◆ urging that his family and relatives are allowed access to him and asking to be kept informed of any developments in his condition
- ◆ expressing the view that Do Ngoc Long is a prisoner of conscience, arrested in April 1990 for peacefully expressing his political opinions and urging his unconditional release from prison.

Addresses

Bui Thien Ngo
Minister of the Interior
16 Tran Binh Trong St.
Ha Noi
Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

Nguyen Dinh Loc
Minister of Justice
5 Ong Ich Khiem St.
Ha Noi
Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

Copies to:

Pham Song
Minister of Public Health
138A Giang Vo St.
Ha Noi
Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

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MEDICAL CONCERN

**Do Ngoc Long
VIET NAM**

Amnesty International is seriously concerned about the current state of health of Do Ngoc Long, a 56-year-old prisoner of conscience who has been held in detention without trial since April 1990. He is reported to suffer from hypertension and heart disease. Do Ngoc Long was recently transferred to the hospital of Chi Hoa prison after collapsing in his cell at Phan Dan Luu prison, Ho Chi Minh City. No further information is at present available on his state of health.

BACKGROUND

Do Ngoc Long was among a number of people arrested in April 1990 in Ho Chi Minh City in connection with the arrest and subsequent expulsion in May 1990 for alleged "espionage activities" of United States business consultant Michael Morrow. Do Ngoc Long was accused of violating security regulations by facilitating an "illegal meeting" and acting as an interpreter between a freelance British journalist and some members of the "*Club of Resistance Fighters*" (a group of high-level members of the Communist Party of Viet Nam and war veterans, some of whom were critical of the slowness of the political and economic reform process in Viet Nam). He is also reported to have been openly critical of the government prior to his arrest, blaming government bureaucracy for many of Viet Nam's economic problems.

Do Ngoc Long, a Roman Catholic, is an economist who spent five years as a postgraduate student at the University of Brisbane, Australia. During the Viet Nam war he held senior positions with the Viet Nam National Bank and with the multinational petroleum company, Esso. He was also active in civic work, helping to run a social welfare project for street children in Ho Chi Minh City (then Saigon) and Da Nang.

Following the end of the war in mid-1975, he worked with the new government's fuel distribution organization which took over the operations of Esso. He later became a partner in a manufacturing business and an *ad hoc* adviser to various government officials.

Do Ngoc Long is reported to have been held without trial in Phan Dan Luu prison since his arrest in 1990. In early June 1992 he is reported to have collapsed in his cell and to have been moved to the hospital at Chi Hoa prison, also in Ho Chi Minh City. His family have not been permitted to visit him since his transfer to Chi Hoa prison hospital and there is concern for his present state of health.

Amnesty International is seeking information about his present state and the medical treatment he is receiving, and is urging that he is released from prison on the grounds that he is a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned for peacefully expressing his political opinions.