

# URGENT ACTION

## HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER ARBITRARILY DETAINED

Prominent human rights defender and advocate Nguyen Thuy Hanh, was arrested on 7 April 2021 and charged under Article 117 of the Criminal Code for “opposing the State of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam”, carrying a potential prison sentence of up to 20 years. Nguyen Thuy Hanh, through the organization she founded, the 50K Fund, has provided essential humanitarian support to countless unjustly detained prisoners and their families. The arrest of Nguyen Thuy Hanh is likely to have a serious negative impact on the welfare of many unjustly detained prisoners in Viet Nam. The Vietnamese authorities must immediately and unconditionally release her as she is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for peacefully exercising her human rights and carrying out vital humanitarian work.

### TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

*State President Nguyễn Xuân Phúc*  
*Văn phòng chủ tịch nước, số 2,*  
*Hùng Vương, Ba Đình,*  
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*Your Excellency the State President,*

*I am writing to express my grave concern over the recent arrest of **Nguyen Thuy Hanh**, a humanitarian and human rights defender who should be celebrated and supported by the Vietnamese authorities, rather than harassed and detained.*

*Nguyen Thuy Hanh's work has focused on helping the families of prisoners so that they can see their loved ones who are serving lengthy prison sentences once a month. Many of these prisoners have been separated from their families for years and even decades, often in dire prison conditions.*

*It is distressing to learn that Nguyen Thuy Hanh faces up to 20 years in prison under Article 117 of the Criminal Code. Her selflessness, sincerity, and tireless work on behalf of those in need have made her one of the most widely respected human rights defenders in Viet Nam.*

*Nguyen Thuy Hanh is a prisoner of conscience, who has been detained solely for her peaceful exercising of her human rights and undertaking humanitarian work.*

**Therefore, I urge you the State President, to ensure that:**

- **Nguyen Thuy Hanh is released immediately and unconditionally;**
- **Pending her release, Nguyen Thuy Hanh is granted prompt, regular and unrestricted access to family visits and access to a lawyer;**
- **Nguyen Thuy Hanh is treated in full accordance with the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), and is protected from torture and other ill-treatment, including poor conditions of detention and prolonged pre-trial detention.**

*Yours sincerely,*

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Nguyen Thuy Hanh is a human rights defender from Ha Noi. She founded the 50K Fund in 2017, through which she fundraised support for the families of unjustly detained persons across Viet Nam.

Arrested on 7 April 2021, she was charged under Article 117 of the Criminal Code for “making, storing, or spreading information, materials or items for the purpose of opposing the State of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam”, carrying a potential prison sentence of between five and 20 years.

Nguyen Thuy Hanh is currently detained in prison number 2 in Ha Noi. Her case is currently being investigated, a process which often lasts at least four months before a trial takes place. Nguyen Thuy Hanh is also a vocal advocate for human rights with a popular Facebook account where she frequently discusses human rights issues. She has faced multiple instances of harassment by the state in retaliation for her peaceful human rights activism.

Nguyen Thuy Hanh nominated herself as an independent candidate for Ha Noi City in the 2016 National Assembly election. Since then, she has been subjected to harassment and intimidation on many occasions. Amnesty International recently [called](#) on the Vietnamese authorities to end their mounting crackdown on independent candidates and other critical voices ahead of the 2021 National Assembly election.

In June 2018, while engaging in a peaceful protest against the Law on Cybersecurity and the Law on Special Economic Zones, Nguyen Thuy Hanh was arrested and detained by police. She reported afterwards that she was severely beaten during the interrogation which resulted in injuries to her face. Police have also interrogated Nguyen Thuy Hanh on her work relating to the 50k Fund on many occasions.

In January 2020, when police raided the village of Dong Tam in Ha Noi, leading to a deadly conflict, Nguyen Thuy Hanh fundraised for the family of a village leader who was killed by security forces. In retaliation, her bank account was frozen, with her bank reportedly telling Nguyen Thuy Hanh that police forced them to do so.

Prisoners of conscience and others detained on politically motivated grounds are often subject to ill-treatment in Vietnamese jails. They are regularly held in prisons located far from their home provinces, making it difficult for family members to visit due to financial constraints. Nguyen Thuy Hanh, through the 50K Fund, has helped many families of prisoners to conduct prison visits and thereby assessing the condition of their loved ones in prison.

Amnesty International's 2016 report, [Prisons Within Prisons](#), documented the widespread torture and other ill-treatment which prisoners of conscience are subjected to in Viet Nam.

**PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET:** [Vietnamese/English]

You can also write in your own language.

**PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL:** 17 August 2021

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

**NAME AND PRONOUN:** Nguyen Thuy Hanh (She/her)