

URGENT ACTION

VIETNAMESE BLOGGER "LOSES ARM" IN PRISON

Imprisoned blogger Nguyen Hoang Hai, known as Dieu Cay, has "lost his arm," according to a security official at the prison investigation office. No further information has been given and requests to meet with Hai continue to be denied. He has not been seen by his family or lawyer since October 2010.

Prisoner of conscience Nguyen Hoang Hai completed a two-and-a-half-year prison sentence on politically motivated charges of tax fraud in October 2010. Instead of releasing him, the authorities told his family that he was being held for investigation for "conducting propaganda" against the state. The authorities have rejected repeated requests from his family and lawyer to visit him and provide food and medicines.

On 5 July, his wife again went to the prison where he was last detained to try to see him, and to deliver food for him. She spoke with a security official, who told her that Nguyen Hoang Hai had "lost his arm," but provided no further information, and gave no answer to her request to meet with her husband.

Nguyen Hoang Hai is the co-founder of the independent Free Vietnamese Journalists' Club, formed in 2007; has written articles critical of China's foreign policies with regard to Viet Nam; and taken part in peaceful protests. He had publicly criticized government policies before his arrest in April 2008 and spoke out for human rights in Viet Nam in his blogs. Amnesty International considers him a prisoner of conscience, detained for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression.

Prison conditions in Viet Nam are generally harsh. With poor food and limited health care, prisoners are reliant on additional supplies from their families. In 2009 Nguyen Hoang Hai was held incommunicado for several months after being transferred to a prison further from his home in Ho Chi Minh City, making it difficult for his family to visit him. Political prisoners held incommunicado are particularly vulnerable to torture and ill-treatment.

Please write immediately in English or your own language:

- Demanding that the authorities urgently provide information on the whereabouts and physical wellbeing of Nguyen Hoang Hai, especially details of how he "lost an arm," as an official told his wife on 5 July;
- Demanding that they release Nguyen Hoang Hai immediately and unconditionally;
- Urging them to give him access to his family, a lawyer of his choice and any medical attention he may require.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 7 SEPTEMBER 2011 TO:

Minister of Public Security

Lt Gen Tran Dai Quang
Ministry of Public Security
44 Yet Kieu Street
Ha Noi, Viet Nam

Fax: +844 3942 0223

Salutation: Dear Minister

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Pham Binh Manh
Minister of Foreign Affairs
1 Ton That Dam Street
Ba Dinh district, Ha Noi
Viet Nam

Fax: +844 3823 1872

Email: bc.mfa@mofa.gov.vn

Salutation: Dear Minister

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 132/11.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Freedom of expression, association and assembly are severely restricted in Viet Nam. The authorities routinely harass and imprison peaceful activists who criticise government policies and advocate greater freedoms, in order to silence them. Dozens of prisoners of conscience, including bloggers, lawyers, writers, labour activists, business people, and supporters of opposition groups, are serving long prison terms under legislation which criminalizes peaceful dissent.

Name: Nguyen Hoang Hai, also known as Dieu Cay
Gender m/f: m
Affiliation: Journalist

Further information on UA: 132/11 Index: ASA 41/004/2011 Issue Date: 27 July 2011