

**EXTERNAL (for general distribution)**

**AI Index: ASA 41/01/91**

**Distr: UA/SC**

**UA 106/91**

Health Concern

**20 March 1991**

**SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM (SRV) Doan Thanh Liem**

---

Information has been received that **Doan Thanh Liem**, a prisoner whose case is currently under investigation by Amnesty International, is seriously ill.

Doan Thanh Liem, a lawyer, is believed to be detained in a villa called Cuong De located at the corner of Thong and Nhat Boulevards in Ho Chi Minh City. According to a person who was able to see him in February 1991, Doan Thanh Liem cannot speak and communicates by hand signs. His hair has reportedly turned white and "he looks like he is 90 years old". He is reportedly subjected to regular interrogations under harsh circumstances and has almost stopped eating.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Doan Thanh Liem was arrested in April 1990 and was reported to have been accused of involvement in the preparation of an unauthorized draft of a new constitution, and of having been a signatory to a petition to the Archbishop of Ho Chi Minh City. The petition was said to have urged the pro-government Roman Catholic authorities to adopt a more critical attitude towards government policy.

Doan Thanh Liem is 56 years of age and is a lawyer. He studied at Georgetown University in Washington DC. He is a Roman Catholic whose family originally came from North Viet Nam and settled in Saigon in 1954.

He held a number of senior legal posts in the former Government of the Republic of Viet Nam (South Viet Nam) in the 1960s. He was a member of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) between 1975 and 1976.

After 1976 Doan Thanh Liem worked for Saigontourist, Seaprodex and other Vietnamese companies and organizations. He also worked with various government companies and government organizations as a legal adviser and had contacts with prominent people in both Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

He was also active in civic work. In 1988 or 1989, he is said to have organized one of the first privately-run social work programs (medical volunteers travelling to the rural areas to provide free medical services) in South Vietnam.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/express and airmail letters:**

-expressing concern that Doan Thanh Liem is seriously ill;

-urging the government to ensure that he receives immediate and adequate medical attention;

-asking the authorities for the legal charges against him and the grounds for his continued detention.

**APPEALS TO:**

Mai Chi Tho  
Minister of the Interior  
16 Tran Binh Trong St.  
Ha Noi  
Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

Telegrams: Interior Minister, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

Tran Quyet  
Chief Procurator  
Supreme People's Organ of Control  
16 Tue Tinh St.  
Ha Noi  
Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

Telegrams: Chief Procurator Tran Quyet, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

**COPIES TO:**

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

and to diplomatic representatives of Viet Nam in your own country

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 20 April 1991.