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Your Excellency

CALL FOR RELEASE OF PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

I am writing with regard to the major prisoner amnesty which has been announced to mark the 70th anniversary of Viet Nam's National Day on 2 September 2015. According to media reports, up to 17,000 prisoners will be released under the amnesty. Amnesty International calls on the authorities to include in the amnesty all prisoners of conscience imprisoned after conviction by a court and currently detained in Viet Nam.

A prisoner of conscience is a person imprisoned or otherwise physically restricted because of their political, religious or other conscientiously-held beliefs, ethnic origin, sex, colour, language, national or social origin, economic status, birth, sexual orientation or other status who has not used or advocated violence or hatred. Amnesty International considers people imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression to be prisoners of conscience, and calls for their immediate and unconditional release everywhere in the world.

As a state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Viet Nam has the duty to respect and protect the rights set out in this core human rights treaty. Instead, the individuals named below, who have done nothing more than peacefully exercise their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, are currently serving prison sentences between two years and life imprisonment, imposed under vaguely worded provisions of the 1999 Penal Code after unfair trials. Many are held in harsh conditions, are in poor health and have been subjected to abusive treatment in detention. They include peaceful bloggers, labour rights and land rights activists, political and religious activists and followers, human rights defenders and social justice advocates.

I urge your government to comply with international human rights law and take this opportunity to release immediately and unconditionally all prisoners of conscience, including the following 51 individuals:

- **Bui Van Trung**, a Hoa Hao Buddhist from An Giang province, sentenced to four years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Bui Thi Minh Hang**, a land rights and religious activist arrested in Dong Thap province, sentenced to three years' imprisonment in August 2014.
- **Dang Xuan Dieu**, an engineer, blogger and social activist from Vinh City in Nghe An province, sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Dinh Nguyen Kha**, a student and computer technician from Tan An in Long An province, sentenced to eight years' imprisonment in May 2013, reduced to four years on appeal in August 2013.

- **Dinh Van Nhuong**, a land activist from Bac Giang province sentenced to four years' imprisonment in July 2012.
- **Do Thi Hong**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Doan Dinh Nam**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment.
- **Doan Huy Chuong**, a labour organizer and founding member of the United Workers-Farmers Organization arrested in Tran Vinh province, sentenced to seven years' imprisonment in October 2010.
- **Doan Van Cu**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Ho Duc Hoa**, a journalist, community organizer and company director from Vinh City, Nghe An province, sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Ho Thi Bich Khuong**, a social justice campaigner and blogger from Nghe An province, sentenced to five years' imprisonment in December 2011.
- **Le Duc Dong**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Le Duy Loc**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 17 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Le Trong Cu**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Le Xuan Phuc**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Lo Thanh Thao**, a pro-democracy activist from Dong Nai province, sentenced to three and a half years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Luong Nhat Quang**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Ngo Hao**, a former army officer and blogger on injustice, sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment in September 2013.
- **Nguyen Cong Chinh**, a Mennonite pastor from Pleiku in Gia Lai province, sentenced to 11 years' imprisonment in March 2012.
- **Nguyen Dang Minh Man**, a social activist and freelance worker from Vinh City in Nghe An province, sentenced to eight years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Nguyen Dinh**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Nguyen Dinh Cuong**, director of Canh Tan Company and social activist in Vinh City, Nghe An province, sentenced to four years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Nguyen Hoang Quoc Hung**, a labour organizer and member of a petitioners' movement "Victims of Injustice arrested in Tra Vinh province, sentenced to nine years' imprisonment in October 2010.
- **Nguyen Kim Nhan**, a land protest leader in Bac Giang province, sentenced to five and a half years' imprisonment in July 2012.
- **Nguyen Ky Lac**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Nguyen Ngoc Cuong**, a land rights activist from Dong Nai province, sentenced to seven years' imprisonment in October 2011.
- **Nguyen Thai Binh**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Nguyen Thi Thuy Quynh**, a Hoa Hao Buddhist activist arrested in Dong Thap province, sentenced to two years' imprisonment in August 2014.

- **Nguyen Van Lia**, a Hoa Hao Buddhist advocate from An Giang province, sentenced to five years' imprisonment in March 2012, reduced on appeal to four and a half years.
- **Father Nguyen Van Ly**, a Catholic priest and pro-democracy activist, sentenced to eight years' imprisonment in March 2007.
- **Nguyen Van Minh**, a Hoa Hao Buddhist activist arrested in Dong Thap province, sentenced to two and a half years' imprisonment in August 2014.
- **Nong Hung Anh**, a foreign language student and blogger from Vinh City, Nghe An province, sentenced to five years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Pham Van Thong**, a farmer and land rights activist sentenced to seven years' imprisonment in May 2011.
- **Phan Ngoc Tuan**, an advocate of religious, land and labour rights from Phan Rang-Thap Cham city in Ninh Thuan province, sentenced to five years' imprisonment in June 2012.
- **Phan Thanh Y**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 14 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Phan Van Thu**, leader of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to life imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Ta Khu**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Ta Phong Tan**, blogger and former policewoman, sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment in September 2012.
- **Tran Huynh Duy Thuc**, a pro-democracy activist and blogger, sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment in January 2010.
- **Tran Minh Nhat**, a foreign language student from Vinh City, Nghe An province, sentenced to four years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Tran Phi Dung**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Tran Quan**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Tran Thi Thuy**, a trader, Hoa Hao Buddhist and land rights activist from Ben Tre province, sentenced to eight years' imprisonment in May 2011.
- **Tran Vu Anh Binh** also known as Hoang Nhat thong, a songwriter from Ho Chi Minh City, sentenced to six years' imprisonment in October 2012.
- **Tu Thien Long**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Vo Minh Tri** also known as Viet Khang, a songwriter from Ho Chi Minh City, sentenced to four years' imprisonment in October 2012.
- **Vo Ngoc Cu**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Vo Thanh Le**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Vo Thi Thu Thuy**, a Catholic supporter from Vinh diocese of Father Nguyen Van Ly, sentenced to five years' imprisonment in March 2012, reduced to four years on appeal.
- **Vo Tiet**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment in January 2013.
- **Vuong Tan Son**, a follower of the "Council for the Laws and Public Affairs of Bia Son" religious environmental group in Phu Yen province, sentenced to 17 years' imprisonment in January 2013.

This list may not be exhaustive, but rather illustrates the extent of the detention of prisoners of conscience in Viet Nam.

Finally, I urge the Viet Nam government to ensure that peaceful activists, human rights defenders, journalists and other individuals are able to carry out their legitimate activities without fear of reprisals, harassment, intimidation, arrest, prosecution and imprisonment, in compliance with Viet Nam's obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other international human rights law and standards, including the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

I would welcome any comments or information with regard to this request. I am sending copies of this letter to Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung and Minister of Public Security General Tran Dai Quang. The letter will be made public on Amnesty International's website: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/>.

Yours sincerely

Salil Shetty
Secretary General