

Statement Regarding the Upcoming Trial of Brotherhood for Democracy (HAEDC) Members

On December 31, 2017, the People's Procurator served the indictment to prosecute six activists: Nguyen Van Dai, Pham Van Troi, Pastor Nguyen Trung Ton, Truong Minh Duc, Nguyen Bac Truyen and Le Thu Ha, members of the Brotherhood for Democracy who have been charged under Article 79, "activities aimed at overthrowing the state," of the 1999 Penal Code, deeming the the following activities as those aimed at overthrowing the people's administration.

1. Organising meetings over social media
2. Forming a political manifesto for the organisation based on a market economy, multi-party democracy and separation of powers
3. Calling upon international NGOs to raise awareness regarding human rights abuses in Vietnam. Meeting with international delegations with the purpose of forming alliances with the United States, Australia, Canada and the EU
4. Collaborating and helping land rights petitioners and laborers file civil lawsuits. Supporting victims of the Formosa environmental disaster which affected four provinces in Central Vietnam.
5. Promoting "human rights and democracy" across social media and connecting civil society in Vietnam with international organisations. Organising English language classes.

These are peaceful activities aligned with the individual rights and freedoms outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which the Vietnamese government has signed and committed to the international community.

Vietnamese authorities should be providing the opportunity for the Brotherhood for Democracy and other civil society organisations and individuals to work together toward multi-party democracy and the separation of powers, based on the fundamental protections of the Constitutional court. However, Vietnamese authorities have used the reasons above to oppress and arrest members of the Brotherhood for Democracy and open a trial on 5 April 2018.

This is a trial that goes against the international conventions the Vietnamese government has signed.

The Brotherhood for Democracy declares that:

- The goals and activities of the Brotherhood for Democracy and its members are to promote true democracy, development, and the fundamental rights of all people.
- The Vietnamese government must respect the Constitution and Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which it has signed. Authorities must stop oppressing and arresting peaceful activists promoting democracy in Vietnam.

- Unconditionally and immediately release Brotherhood for Democracy members and all other activists who have been arbitrarily detained in Vietnam.

- The Brotherhood for Democracy calls on all individuals, civil society organisations, and international organisations following the case to raise awareness and pressure Vietnamese authorities to release all human rights activists in Vietnam.

ADVOCATING FOR DEMOCRACY IS A RIGHT, NOT A CRIME.

Vietnam

March 26, 2018

Nguyen Thuy Quynh

Representative and Spokesperson for the Brotherhood for Democracy