

The Secretary General of Vietnamese Communist Party and the State President Nguyen Phu Trong
So 1A Hung Vuong, Ba Dinh, Ha Noi, Vietnam

Dear Secretary General and State President Nguyễn Phú Trọng;

I am writing to ask you to take steps to bring about the immediate and unconditional release Đoàn Thị Hồng, mother of a three-year-old child and a peaceful activist. Charged with “disrupting security” under article 118 of 2015 Penal Code, she has been detained without trial for a year at the Police Detention Center in Ho Chi Minh city.

Following her participation in a peaceful protest in June 2018, Đoàn Thị Hồng was arbitrarily arrested on 2 September 2018 in Hồ Chí Minh City while meeting friends. No arrest warrant, nor charge sheet, was presented to her at the time of arrest.

I further wish to express my concern about Đoàn Thị Hồng's health and access to her family. After eleven months in detention, Đoàn Thị Hồng was finally able to see her family on 4 September 2019 for the first time. During the visit, her sister was alarmed to notice obvious signs on Đoàn Thị Hồng face and hands that she was unwell but, as there was a police officer in the room, they could not discuss her health. Nevertheless, when they were leaving, the prison guard provided the family with a list of medicines that were needed for stomach, brain, and skin problems. No further explanation was provided. Under international standard, in particular the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), prison authorities must provide adequate medical care to all prisoners, free of charge.

I fear for the wellbeing of Đoàn Thị Hồng and her young child who is being forced to grow up without her mother. Therefore, I call on you to:

- Immediately and unconditionally release Đoàn Thị Hồng as she has been detained solely for exercising her right to freedom of expression; and
- Pending her release, ensure that Đoàn Thị Hồng has regular, unrestricted access to her family, lawyers of her choice and adequate medical care provided by the state.,

Yours sincerely,