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*Plenary sitting*

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16.4.2013

B7-0169/2013

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 122 of the Rules of Procedure

on Vietnam, in particular freedom of expression  
(2013/2599(RSP))

**Fiorello Provera, Lorenzo Fontana, Mara Bizzotto, Jaroslav Paška,  
Rolandas Paksas, uozas Imbrasas**  
on behalf of the EFD Group

**European Parliament resolution on Vietnam, in particular freedom of expression (2013/2599(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

--having regard to its previous resolutions on Vietnam, in particular that of 26 November 2009

--having regard to the EU-Vietnam human rights dialogue of 25 October 2012;

--having regard to the statement of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on 24 September 2012 on the sentencing of bloggers in Vietnam;

– having regard to Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,

– having regard to Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966,

– having regard to the UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination based on Religion and Belief of 1981,

– having regard to Rule 122 of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas in 2012 at least forty people in Vietnam are known to have been convicted and sentenced to prison following trials that did not meet international due process and fair standards and during the first six weeks of 2013 at least another forty people were convicted in political trials;

B. whereas the Vietnamese government does not permit independent or private owned media to operate and criminal penalties apply to those who disseminate material deemed to oppose the government;

C. whereas harassment of cyber-activists have been on the rise since 2008 and the recent detention of human rights defenders, students, bloggers and journalists illustrates the intensification of the crackdown orchestrated by the Vietnamese government;

D. whereas the explosion in Internet access in Vietnam and the use of social media had resulted in the government initiating strict surveillance methods and the removal of content viewed as opposed to the government;

E. whereas prominent blogger Huynh Ngoc Tuan in central Vietnam reported that on April 4 2013 both he and his family were victimized at home by locals assigned by the local security services due to his criticism of the government through his online writings;

F. whereas basic free education for Vietnamese citizens is at risk due to a draft amendment to the country's constitution which omits references to free education but replaces it with a vague

article stating citizens have a right and obligation to study;

G. whereas police assigned by the Vietnamese government regularly use excessive force in response to public protests over evictions and confiscations of land;

H. whereas the growth of religious activity across Vietnam has prompted the government to take harsh measures against new converts to Christianity or those who engage in independent religious activities and advocates for religious freedom;

I. whereas on March 17, 2013 a Hmong church leader in Vietnam Vam Ngaij Vaj was beaten to death and electrocuted while in police custody in Gia Nghia Town;

J. whereas Hmong churches in Vietnam's Central Highlands often report harassment by a communist regime that views Christianity as a threat and more than 35,000 Hmong have fled their native area in Vietnam's Northwest Mountainous Region.

1. Urges the government of Vietnam to cease all forms of repression against those who exercise their rights to freedom of expression, freedom of belief and religion and freedom of assembly, in accordance with international human rights standards and the Vietnamese Constitution;
2. Urges the authorities to release immediately and unconditionally all human rights defenders, political prisoners and prisoners of conscience, as their detention is a violation of human rights; also requests the authorities to guarantee their physical and psychological wellbeing in all circumstances and to offer those who need it access to good independent professional medical care;
3. Deplores the legal harassment against dissidents and human rights defenders, such as the case of Buddhist youth leader Le Cong Cau and urges Vietnamese government to put an end to judicial harassment of dissidents and human rights defenders;
4. Expresses deep concern about the detention conditions of prisoners of conscience such as Nguyen Huu Cau, aged 77, sentenced to life imprisonment in 1982 and Do Van Thai, serving a 19 year sentence and suffering with AIDS after being forced to shave with the sole razor blade used by all the prisoners;
5. Expresses further concern about bloggers such as Nguyen Van Hai (Dieu Cay), who is allegedly subjected to ill-treatment and threatened to death by the prison authorities;
6. Calls for Vietnamese officials to preserve Article 59 of the constitution which states that primary education is compulsory and dispensed free of charge;
7. Condemns the targeting of individuals and families by the Vietnamese security services who use indiscriminate methods to silence critical dissent of the government;
8. Expresses the need for the Vietnamese government to safe guard the right to religious freedom and that it desists in any policies targeting Christians, Buddhists, independent religious activists and advocates for religious freedom;

9. Calls for an end to the harassment and mistreatment of members of the Hmong community who have been frequently subject to religious persecution and human rights violations;
10. Asks the European Commission to monitor and assess the impacts and results of its development cooperation activities, to ensure their conformity with the human rights clause and to define precise and time-bound benchmarks to that end;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President / High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Council, the Commission, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the government and parliament of Vietnam.