

# NGOs call on Vietnam Authorities to Answer for Mysterious Deaths of Religious and Political Prisoners

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LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, USA, February 1, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A coalition of Vietnamese organizations at home and overseas issued a joint statement on January 30, 2023, ([https://vietnamhumanrights.net/webseite/230130\\_VNHRN.htm](https://vietnamhumanrights.net/webseite/230130_VNHRN.htm)) claiming that the Vietnamese communist authorities are accountable for the recent mysterious deaths of religious and political prisoners.

The statement lists the following typical cases:

On January 5, 2023, Pastor Dinh Diem, a religious prisoner serving a 16-year sentence for the alleged crime of “Activities aimed at overthrowing the people’s government,” died suddenly at prison camp No. 6 in Thanh Chuong district, Nghe An province. (<https://vietnam.postsen.com/trends/232148/Pastor-Dinh-Diem-died-while-serving-a-16-year-prison-sentence.html>)

On November 20, 2022, Mr. Phan Van Thu, founder of An Dan Dai Dao, an independent Buddhist organization serving a life sentence for the same alleged crime, died in Gia Trung prison, Gia Lai province. (<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/vietnam/phan-van-thu-11212022172546.html>)

On August 2, 2022, a citizen journalist, Mr. Do Cong Duong, died while serving an 8-year sentence for allegedly “abusing democratic freedoms” and “disturbing public order” in prison camp No. 6, Nghe An province. (<https://cpj.org/2022/08/journalist-do-cong-duong-dies-in-prison-in-vietnam/>)



Pastor Dinh Diem unexpectedly passed away at prison camp No. 6 in Thanh Chuong district, Nghe An province on Jan 5, 2023.

On November 10, 2019, former teacher Dao Quang Thuc died while serving a 13-year sentence for the charge of “Activities aimed at overthrowing the people’s government,” also at prison camp No. 6. (<https://the88project.org/teacher-dao-quang-thuc-died-in-prison-of-a-brain-hemorrhage-and-bronchitis-after-two-years-in-detention/>)

Also, in October 2019, Mr. Doan Dinh Nam, a religious prisoner of An Dan Dai Dao with a 16-year sentence, died in Xuyen Moc prison, Ba Ria-Vung Tau province. (<https://www.uscirf.gov/religious-prisoners-conscience/forb-victims-database/doan-dinh-nam>)

The joint statement also mentioned that many prisoners and former prisoners continued to speak out about forced labor, malnutrition, and lack of access to healthcare. Additionally, many prisoners were disciplined with extremely harsh tortures.

In particular, on August 9, 2022, twenty-seven families of political and religious prisoners issued a joint open letter calling on international human rights organizations and free governments to urge Vietnam to respect the prisoners of conscience’s rights to clean water, safe food, and timely medical care.

The joint statement pinpointed that the above facts evidence the Vietnamese authorities’ continued inhumane treatment of religious and political prisoners and a flagrant violation of the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the International Minimum Standards for the Treatment of Prisoners.

Therefore, with the joint statement, the coalition requested the Vietnamese government to clarify the above cases of mysterious deaths, redress the victims’ families, and improve the conditions for the incarceration of prisoners in detention centers and prisons across the country.

It also called for free governments worldwide with diplomatic and economic relations with Vietnam to bring up those human rights violations in their human rights dialogues with Hanoi and to consider Vietnam’s human rights achievements a prerequisite for financial aid and economic investment projects. Additionally, international human rights organizations should continue monitoring the human rights situation in Vietnam closely and firmly condemning cases of serious violations by the Vietnamese government.

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