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One Hundred Thirteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
www.foreignaffairs.house.gov

December 10, 2014

Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung
c/o Embassy of Vietnam
1233 20th Street NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Prime Minister Dung:

I write to express my deep concern over the continued detention of prominent blogger Mr. Nguyen Huu Vinh, popularly known as Anh Ba Sam, and his assistant, Ms. Nguyen Thi Minh Thuy. Freedom of the press is a basic human right, respect for which is the hallmark of a strong society.

As you may know, Anh Ba Sam and Nguyen Thi Minh Thuy were arrested on May 5, 2014 and prosecuted for "abusing democratic freedoms to infringe upon the interests of the state." Anh Ba Sam has reportedly used his blog solely to collect daily news articles related to political issues, posting links to the most prominent bloggers and civil society organizations in Vietnam. While the recent release of prominent blogger Dieu Cay was welcomed by many in Congress, the continued persecution of bloggers like Anh Ba Sam remains a source of much concern.

It is my understanding that Anh Ba Sam has not only been denied bail, but that his family has been denied visitation rights. Understandably, Anh Ba Sam's wife has expressed her great concern over her husband's condition and she is worried that he may be subjected to severe conditions.

If our two countries are to build a stronger relationship, Vietnam must honor its citizens' basic human rights, including freedom of the press, freedom of religion, and freedom of assembly. I urge you to release Anh Ba Sam and Nguyen Thi Minh Thuy, and to cease arresting and detaining citizens for exercising such basic human rights as free expression.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "E. Royce".

EDWARD R. ROYCE
Chairman