

Organizational Sign-On Letter Calling for the Release of Dang Dinh Bach and Support of Civil Society in Vietnam's Just Energy Transition

June 19, 2023

Dear Supporters of a Just Energy Transition and Sustainable Development in Vietnam,

We, the undersigned climate justice and human rights advocates worldwide, call for the immediate release of prominent environmental lawyer, [Dang Dinh Bach](#), who is serving a five year prison sentence in Vietnam on trumped-up tax evasion charges after advocating for the country's movement away from coal.

Bach has declared that on June 24, 2023 - the two-year anniversary of his arrest - he will go on a hunger strike to the death in defense of his innocence. In his own spirit of nonviolent and peaceful protest, we are launching in solidarity with him a relay hunger strike" joining him in solidarity in a relay [hunger strike from May 24 through June 24](#), to raise awareness about this extreme injustice and call for his release.

We are running out of time to address the climate crisis. Action is urgent, and across the world, steps are being taken to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and mitigate the impacts of climate change for future generations. The Vietnamese government itself has committed to [net zero emissions by 2050](#) and accepted a [\\$15.5 billion](#) deal to support a just transition to clean energy. But this cannot succeed with climate leaders like Bach in jail.

Bach is one of four members of the Vietnam Sustainable Energy Alliance who were imprisoned in Vietnam, despite playing an instrumental role in the country's ambitious climate commitments, indicating an [ongoing and highly concerning trend](#).

Bach has dedicated his life to improving the health and well-being of marginalized communities throughout Vietnam and worked tirelessly to limit pollutants such as plastic, asbestos, and coal. "I have witnessed so many painful stories of poverty and terrible diseases that weigh on abused communities in Vietnam," said Bach in a recent statement from prison. "They are deprived of their land and livelihoods and do not have opportunities to speak out for justice and the right to be human in the face of environmental pollution, especially in places with coal-fired power plants across the country. In order to conceal the truth and threaten the voices of people, the Vietnamese authorities have arrested, convicted and unjustly detained environmental and human rights activists in defiance of national and international law."

This is why we, the global community, stand in solidarity with Bach through peaceful protest and call for his release, as well as an end to retaliation against government and civil society actors in Vietnam and around the world pushing for human rights and environmental justice.

We urge all governments, multilateral institutions and others invested in a just energy transition for Vietnam to 1) insist on Bach's release; and 2) demand that civil society in Vietnam is

welcome to participate meaningfully in this process that is so crucial for the future of the region and the planet.

We must act now to safeguard Bach's life, as well as Vietnam's ability to successfully transition away from coal and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Sincerely,

ACAT Germany (Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture)
Accountability Counsel
Abibinsroma Foundation
Africa Coal Network
Agency for Turkana Development Initiatives (ATUDIS)
Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
Asian Peoples Movement for Debt and Development
Asia Democracy Network
Alliance for Empowering Rural Communities
ALLIED Global
ACAT Belgium (Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture)
Asian Peoples Movement on Debt and Development
Both ENDS
Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association
The Bretton Woods Project
BALKANKA
Building and Wood Workers International (BWI)
Community Resource Centre
Center for Constitutional Rights
Climate Action Network Australia
Community Empowerment and Social Justice Network (CEMSOJ)
Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)
Clean Air Action Network of Glens Falls
CIVICUS
Center for Energy, Ecology and Development (CEED)
Climate Action Network Southeast Asia
Environmental Defender Law Center
EarthRights International
Equitable Cambodia
ENLAWTHAI Foundation (EnLAW)
Ecosistemas

EcoAlbania
ETO Watch Coalition
Earthlife Africa
Friends Against Dictatorship (FAD)
Forum Umwelt und Entwicklung
FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights), within the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders
Federal Association of Vietnamese Refugees in the Federal Republic of Germany
Friends of the Earth Japan
Friends of the Earth United States
Friends of the Earth Asia Pacific
Focus on the Global South
Fundacion Sociedades Sustentables
GongGam Human Rights Law Foundation
Grassroots Foundation (Germany)
GegenStrömung
groundWork, Friends of the Earth, SA
Giniw Collective
Global Witness
Global Network of Movement Lawyers at Movement Law Lab
Human Rights Defenders
Indonesia Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI)
International Rivers
Inclusive Development International
International Service for Human Rights
Indigenous and Local Communities for the Sustainable Management of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa (REPALEAC)
Initiatives for Dialogue and Empowerment through Alternative Legal Services (IDEALS Inc)
Indigenous Peoples Partnership
International Accountability Project
Indigenous Women Legal Awareness Group (INWOLAG)
indus Consortium for Humanitrain Enviornment and Development Inittiatives
Jamaa Resource Initiatives
Just Ground
Japan Center for a Sustainable Environment and Society (JACSES)
Kiko Network
KRuHA
LBH Pers

Lawyers' Association for Human Rights of Nepalese Indigenous Peoples (LAAHURNIP)
Manushya Foundation
Mekong Watch
Market Forces
Malaysian Youth Delegation
Mighty Earth
Mouvman 18 Novanm
NGO Forum on ADB
Not1More
Namati
National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM)
Oil Change International
Oyu Tolgoi Watch
Observatori DESC
PowerShift e.V.
Protection International (PI)
Policy research institute for Equitable Development
Programme Intégré pour le Développement du Peuple Pygmée au Kivu (PIPD)
Project on Organizing, Development, Education, and Research (PODER)
Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum
Pro Public
Palestinian Environmental NGOs Network PENGON-Friends of the Earth Palestine
Pathways/Mazibuko
Pathways Institute
Peace & Justice Project
Project 88
Quê Me: Vietnam Commi9ttee for Human Rights (VCHR)
Rivers without Boundaries Coalition
Reality of Aid-Asia Pacific
Recourse
Rivers without Boudaries Mongolia
RAPEN envirotnment protection associations and nature network
Sierra Leone Land Alliance
Sustainable Development Institute
Transitional Justice Working Group (TJWG)
The Bretton Woods Project
Urgewald
Univ of Johannesburg Centre for Social Change

World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), within the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders