



## **International Coalition to Free Vietnam's Climate Leaders' Response to the UNDP's First Public Speech about the draft JETP Resource Mobilization Plan**

On August 11, 2023, UNDP Resident Representative in Viet Nam, Ms. Ramla Khalidi, delivered [a speech](#) at the consultation workshop for the draft “Resource Mobilization Plan” (RMP) - essentially the implementation plan - for Viet Nam’s Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP).

This [\\$15.5 billion JETP](#) was announced on December 14, 2022, [by the UK Government](#) along with the U.S., the E.U., and other G7 countries plus Denmark and Norway. Additional financing partners include multilateral development banks such as the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and Asian Development Bank (ADB), plus national development banks, development finance agencies, and private financial institutions.

Ms. Khalidi highlighted “the importance of not losing focus on the ‘just’ elements of the energy transition,” which she said relates to “the essential support to and protection of workers and other affected vulnerable groups, ensuring affordable energy for all, sustaining and developing the local economy, and generating green and decent jobs from women and men... Inclusive dialogue and active participation and consultation with affected people and local communities is also essential,” she said.

There was no mention of the five climate leaders who have been arrested and detained on trumped-up tax evasion charges in the last couple of years, including environmental justice lawyer [Mr. Dang Dinh Bach](#); [Obama Foundation Scholar](#) Ms. Hoang Thi Minh Hong; or Goldman Environmental Prize winner [Ms. Nguy Thi Khanh](#). This is despite the numerous statements from different UN agencies and governments raising concerns about the unjust and wrongful nature of the incarceration of these environmental defenders and climate activists.

The U.K., for example, [expressed their concerns](#) about Hoang’s arrest as “the latest in a pattern of arrests of environmental advocates in Vietnam,” and urged “the Vietnamese authorities to respect all human rights, including the right to freedom of expression and association.” “We recognise the importance of civil society actors ... in securing sustainable and inclusive development for all,” said the statement. “We note that within the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP), agreed in December 2022 between Vietnam and G7+ partners, the Government of Vietnam committed to consult NGOs, media and other stakeholders to ensure a

broad social consensus. In line with this, environmental organisations and other advocates must be able to contribute meaningfully to climate and environmental policy making.

Germany's Foreign Ministry [similarly said](#) the arrests of Hoang and others "are an alarming signal for civil society actors across the country, as well as for environmental and climate protection."

Viet Nam is already in violation of the "just" aspect of this transition until these climate leaders are released and specific measures for civil society and environmental defenders to participate freely and safely in the process are included in the JETP Resource Mobilization Plan.

Ms. Khalidi also stated that while the \$15.5 billion allocated for the JETP is "very encouraging," it represents just a fraction of the \$135 billion up to 2030 that will be needed for Vietnam's clean energy transition. The silencing of prominent civil society leaders, as well as the closure and restrictions on environmental NGOs throughout the country, raises significant concerns about a lack of accountability in the use of transition financing to meet the country's ambitious climate targets and ensure a shift away from coal investments. The wrongful arrests of environmental defenders also close down any channels for meaningful and inclusive dialogue and consultation with affected communities, before the process of energy transition even begins.

"Viet Nam's success in charting a clear path towards a green, low carbon, and climate-resilient economy is not only imperative for Viet Nam's prosperity," said Ms. Khalidi. "It is also a test case that can demonstrate the effectiveness of joint global action."

This will clearly be impossible while the country's most prominent climate leaders, who were instrumental in getting Viet Nam to the point of being able to participate in a JETP in the first place, are in jail.

Viet Nam's JETP Resource Mobilization Plan must ensure that:

- 1) No financing for the JETP is released until Bach, Hong, and other unjustly imprisoned climate leaders are released; and
- 2) There are explicit protections against retaliation and reprisals for environmental and human rights defenders, together with effective measures for civil society to participate freely and safely in decision-making on the JETP and monitoring of its implementation.

Without these measures in place, a just energy transition will not be possible in Viet Nam.

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