



VIETNAM HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK MẠNG LƯỚI NHÂN QUYỀN VIỆT NAM

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April 11, 2024

The Honorable Gina Raimondo
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Secretary Raimondo,

The undersigned organizations are writing to express our concern regarding the proposed supply of security equipment and weapons to the Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security as announced by the US-ASEAN Business Council (Reuters March 11, 2024).

The Communist Party of Vietnam, through the Ministry of Public Security, has continued to carry out egregious and systemic abuses of the Vietnamese people's fundamental rights and freedoms.

According to a report from the Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security, there were 226 deaths in police-run detention centers nationwide from October 2011 to September 2014.

The U.S. Department of State's current Country Reports on Human Rights Practices in Vietnam found there were "credible reports that members of the security forces committed numerous abuses." Those abuses include "unlawful or arbitrary killings by the government; torture and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment and punishment by government agents; arbitrary arrest and detention; political prisoners; serious problems with the independence of the judiciary; arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy; serious restrictions on free expression and media, including arbitrary arrest and prosecution of government critics, censorship, and the use of criminal libel laws; serious restrictions on internet freedom; substantial interference with the freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association; and restrictions on freedom of movement" [...]

Irresponsible authorized arms and security equipment sales to Vietnamese police, under those circumstances, will undoubtedly strengthen their consistent pattern of human rights repression and contradict the Biden Administration's commitments to put human rights at the center of U.S. foreign policy.

Therefore, with this letter, we urge you to immediately block the intended sales of weapons and security equipment to the Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Tung B. Nguyen, DPA

Executive Director of the Vietnam Human Rights Network

Co-signatory organizations:

- Defend The Defenders
- The Independent Journalists Association of Vietnam
- The Vietnam Political and Religious Prisoners Friendship Association
- Brotherhood for Democracy
- Bloc 8406
- The Humanistic Socialist Party
- Vietnam Democracy Federation
- Assembly for Democracy in Viet Nam