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THE ROYAL SWEDISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Kungl. Vetenskapsakademien har till uppgift att främja vetenskaperna och stärka deras inflytande i samhället.
The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences has as its aim to promote the sciences and strengthen their influence in society.

Stockholm 12 February 2020
Elisabeth Rachlew /ch

His Excellency Nguyễn Phú Trọng
President
Office of the President
Số 2 Hùng Vương, Ba Đình,
Hà Nội, Việt Nam

Your Excellency,

We, the Human Rights Committee of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities, the Swedish Academy and the Young Academy of Sweden write seeking your assistance with the situation of Nguyen Ngoc Anh, a Vietnamese aquatic engineer who has been imprisoned since August 2018 and is held at the Ben Tre detention center. We understand that he has been subjected to repeated ill-treatment and denied access to medical treatment.

Mr. Anh reportedly was arrested in August 2018 after making critical remarks on social media. In June 2019, following proceedings that failed to meet international fair trial standards, he was convicted of “making, storing, disseminating or propagandizing materials and products that aim to oppose the State of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam” and sentenced to six years in prison. Five months later, his conviction and sentence were upheld on appeal.

Reliable reports indicate that Mr. Anh was subjected to mental and physical abuse by other prisoners during the months prior to his appeal hearing in an effort to pressure him into making a false confession. In response to Mr. Anh’s requests for medical care, we understand that he was placed in isolation and denied any medical treatment. Reliable reports indicate that prison authorities have failed to acknowledge the complaint that he filed.

Given the information above, we are concerned that Mr. Anh is being incarcerated for his peaceful exercise of the rights to freedom of opinion and expression, rights which are protected under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Vietnam is a party. We respectfully request that you use your good offices to ensure that Mr. Anh is promptly and unconditionally released from prison. Pending his release, we urge you to ensure that his conditions of confinement are brought into conformity with the U.N. Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules), including that he is given regular access to any needed medical care, his family, and legal counsel.

Thank you in advance, Your Excellency, for your attention to this important matter.

Respectfully yours,

Elisabeth Rachlew
Professor, Chairman of the Human Rights Committee

Copy: His Excellency Phạm Bình Minh, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs



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The Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in Stockholm, Sweden
The Embassy of Sweden in Hanoi, Vietnam



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