

Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/vietnam-rwb-again-tries-to-hand-petition-15-02-2014,45872.html>

Asia - Vietnam

Wall of indifference

RWB again tries to hand petition to Vietnamese government official

15 February 2014

The blogger **Bui Thi Minh Hang** is still in prison, as is the human rights lawyer and blogger **Le Quoc Quan**, whose appeal will be heard on 18 February, but the Vietnamese government remains completely indifferent to their fate as it continues to celebrate France-Vietnam Year.

Reporters Without Borders tried unsuccessfully to hand a [petition](#) to Vietnam's Minister of Culture, Sport and Tourism, Hoang Tuan Anh, during his official visit to Paris yesterday. [Signed by more than 32,000 people](#), it calls for the release of the 35 bloggers currently detained in Vietnam.

"The government's complete refusal to start a dialogue with Reporters Without Borders is in reality a sign of contempt towards the petition's 32,000 signatories, many of whom are residents of Vietnam," said Benjamin Ismail, head of the Reporters Without Borders Asia-Pacific desk.

"Like Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung last September, the response that the culture minister gave to the demands we were carrying was a distressing silence. The situation of freedom of information and those who try to use it in Vietnam is worsening steadily.

"The latest evidence of this includes a violent attack on Huynh Ngoc Tuan, the blogger **Huynh Thuc Vy**'s father, and the refusal to release Bui Thi Minh Hang. The government [lied shamelessly during Vietnam's Universal Periodic Review](#) by the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva on 5 February, so we will redouble our efforts to apply pressure."

As the culture minister was signing an accord on broadcasting cooperation with his French counterpart yesterday, more than a dozen Reporters Without Borders members waved posters from a [campaign launched in 2012](#) to draw the attention of French tourists to the lack of freedom of information in Vietnam, and chanted calls in French and English for the release of all of Vietnam's detained bloggers. They also unsuccessfully requested a meeting with the Vietnamese minister.

The names of two Reporters Without Borders journalists who had previously registered their intention to attend the press conference with the National Audiovisual Institute were removed from the list by the French culture ministry's press department on the grounds that the room was too small and was being repaired.

With four days to go to Le Quoc Quan's appeal hearing, Reporters Without Borders has joined a coalition of human rights NGOs in appealing for his release. We are attaching this joint appeal and a poem written by Quan in the prison where he is currently held.

Vietnam is ranked 174th out of 180 countries in the 2014 Reporters Without Borders press freedom index, one place lower than in 2013. For more information about the index: <http://rsf.org/index2014/en-index20...>

To support the Vietnamese bloggers, [click here](#).

Attachments:

Press release for the release of Le Quoc Quan Poem and message from Le Quoc Quan

You can download those documents on our website :

- Press release Le Quoc Quan, (PDF - 414.3 kb)
 - Le Quoc Quan's poem and message, (PDF - 7.5 kb)
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