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SỨC TRẺ CỦA ĐỘI CẢNH SÁT ĐẶC NHIỆM

(Caa.gov.vn) - Xuất phát từ tình hình ANTT, đặc biệt là diễn biến phức tạp của tổ chức phản động PULPO tại địa bàn Tây Nguyên mà trong đó Gia Lai nổi bật. Tháng 3-2004, Quân đội CA định Gia Lai đã thành lập Đại Cảnh sát đặc nhiệm (CSĐN) thuộc CA tỉnh. Nhiệm vụ chính của đơn vị là trấn áp các loại tội phạm, giữ quyền an ninh TRXH, giữ vững ANCT và TTADH, bảo vệ Đảng, bảo vệ chính quyền, bảo vệ sự bình yên cho nhân dân. Đơn vị trọng tâm là nhiệm vụ trực tiếp đối mặt với các đối tượng phản động PULPO chỉ các hoạt động một cách kín đáo trên sự sai trái của thể lực thủ đoạn và các chuyên môn chuyên.

Sau khi chọn địa phận là CSĐN ở xã vùng tây để nuôi dạy Tiểu đoàn CSĐN về kỹ thuật CA tỉnh. Đơn vị chỉ biên chế của ĐỘI CHỈ 20 người. Mặc dù thời gian (địa giới) khác, nhưng bằng sự thông minh, đầy chủ trương công tác linh hoạt của chỉ huy và của CSĐN, ĐỘI CSĐN ngày càng trở thành lực lượng cơ bản, ứng phó kịp thời hướng này, bên cạnh việc trấn áp hàng ngàn loại TPCĐ thậm chí giải phóng về cơ sở chính trị, văn hóa, thể thao, TTADH (trong đó ngày lễ, hội tại Gia Lai, cả hội biểu và các đoàn nghệ thuật dân gian, lễ hội văn hóa Gia Lai đều vẫn phải diễn ra đúng trình tự, trên chủ trương của Đảng PAVN). CA các địa phương theo hướng dẫn của Trung ương Đảng, chúng tôi tiến hành: giữ phân đội bộ vào chiến công bắt giữ PULPO ở sân bãi công.

Một trong những hình ảnh CSĐN đang làm nhiệm vụ.



VIETNAM

Montagnard Christians in Vietnam

A Case Study in Religious Repression

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH



Montagnard Christians in Vietnam

A Case Study in Religious Repression

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Human Rights Watch
350 Fifth Avenue, 34th floor
New York, NY 10118-3299 USA
Tel: +1 212 290 4700, Fax: +1 212 736 1300
hrwnyc@hrw.org

Poststraße 4-5
10178 Berlin, Germany
Tel: +49 30 2593 06-10, Fax: +49 30 2593 0629
berlin@hrw.org

Avenue des Gaulois, 7
1040 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: + 32 (2) 732 2009, Fax: + 32 (2) 732 0471
hrwbe@hrw.org

64-66 Rue de Lausanne
1202 Geneva, Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 738 0481, Fax: +41 22 738 1791
hrwgva@hrw.org

2-12 Pentonville Road, 2nd Floor
London N1 9HF, UK
Tel: +44 20 7713 1995, Fax: +44 20 7713 1800
hrwuk@hrw.org

27 Rue de Lisbonne
75008 Paris, France
Tel: +33 (1)43 59 55 35, Fax: +33 (1) 43 59 55 22
paris@hrw.org

1630 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 500
Washington, DC 20009 USA
Tel: +1 202 612 4321, Fax: +1 202 612 4333
hrwdc@hrw.org

Web Site Address: <http://www.hrw.org>



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Montagnard Christians in Vietnam

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Map of the Central Highlands of Vietnam i

Summary 1

Background: A Decade of Unrest..... 3

2001-2011: Cycles of Repression..... 7

“Legal” Straitjacket for Religion 13

Public Denunciation Ceremonies and Forced Renunciation of Faith15

2010: Rubber Plantation Unrest..... 19

Ongoing Arrest and Imprisonment..... 23

 Torture and Mistreatment in Custody 24

Recommendations..... 27

 To the Vietnamese Government27

Annex: Harassment, Arrests, and Forced Recantations of Faith of Montagnard Christians in Vietnam's Central Highlands 30

Map of the Central Highlands of Vietnam



Summary

After attempting to organize violent protests at various locations in the highlands and facing continued failure, some helpless leaders fled into the forest. But the sacred wood and untamed water could not protect them.

—*Bao Gia Lai*, a state newspaper in Gia Lai province, reporting on the arrest of Montagnard Christian activists

In recent months, the Vietnamese government has increased its harassment of peaceful ethnic minority Christians in the Central Highlands, targeting members of unregistered house churches. Vietnam's state media has presented the latest round of arrests, beatings, and intimidation as a response to conflicts between rubber plantation guards and ethnic minority highlanders—commonly known as Montagnards¹—in mid-2010 in Chu Prong district of Gia Lai. Information on the clashes is incomplete, and what specifically transpired is unclear, but in the aftermath the authorities reinforced the security presence in the three border districts of Duc Co, Ia Grai, and Chu Prong, and intensified their efforts to root out and arrest people the government terms “Dega Protestants” and blames for inciting the unrest.² The government declares that many highlanders who belong to independent or unregistered house churches are Dega Protestants, which authorities assert is not a legitimate religion, but a cover for a Montagnard independence movement.

Because Vietnam strictly controls its domestic media, prohibits foreign journalists from traveling freely to sensitive areas outside of Hanoi, and rejects visits by independent, international rights groups, it is difficult to obtain detailed, independently verifiable information about the current situation in the Central Highlands. This briefing paper is largely based on information gleaned from articles in Vietnam's government-controlled media and supplemented by Human Rights Watch interviews with Montagnards who have fled Vietnam and reports by Montagnard advocacy groups based outside of Vietnam.³

¹ The term “Dega” is derived from the Ede-language phrase *anak ede gar*, or children of the mountains. With the politicization of the term *Tin Lanh Dega* (Dega Protestantism) and its use by the Vietnamese government as well as by some Montagnard advocacy groups (some of whom spell it *Degarto* to distinguish it from the government's term), the term carries both positive and negative connotations.

² Thanh Khiet, “Building National Security and Defense” (Xay dung the tran an ninh-quoc phong toan dan), *Bao Gia Lai* (*Gia Lai* newspaper), July 5, 2010, <http://baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201007/Xay-dung-the-tran-an-ninh-quoc-phong-toan-dan-1949504/> (accessed September 1, 2010).

³ While Montagnard advocacy groups based outside of Vietnam report on abuses in the Central Highlands with varying degrees of accuracy and credibility, Human Rights Watch has found that many of their reports over the years provide useful leads on events as they unfold and are often worthy of further investigation. These groups include the Montagnard Human Rights Organization, the Montagnard Refugee Organization, and the Montagnard Foundation, Inc.

While this paper focuses on Central Highlands Protestants, serious issues of freedom of religion affect nearly every other denomination in Vietnam, particularly those whose followers do not wish to associate themselves with an officially-registered -religious organization.

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SỨC TRẺ CỦA ĐỘI CẢNH SÁT ĐẶC NHIỆM

(Cadn.com.vn) - Xuất phát từ tình hình ANTT, đặc biệt là diễn biến phức tạp của tổ chức phản động FULRO tại địa bàn Tây Nguyên nói chung và Gia Lai nói riêng, tháng 8-2006, Giám đốc CA tỉnh Gia Lai đã thành lập Đội Cảnh sát đặc nhiệm (CSDN) thuộc CA tỉnh. Nhiệm vụ chính của đơn vị là trấn áp các loại tội phạm, giải quyết tình hình TTXH, giữ vững ANCT và TTATXH, bảo vệ Đảng, bảo vệ chính quyền, bảo vệ sự bình yên cho nhân dân. Song, trọng tâm là nhiệm vụ trực tiếp đối mặt với các đối tượng phản động FULRO cốt cán mạnh động một cách khéo léo trước sự soi mói của thế lực thù địch về câu chuyện nhân quyền.

Được lựa chọn đa phần từ CBCS ở tuổi mười tám đôi mươi của Tiểu đoàn CSCĐ và một số đơn vị trong CA tỉnh, biên chế ban đầu của Đội chỉ 20 người. Mặc dù thời gian đầu gặp rất nhiều khó khăn, nhưng bằng sự thống nhất, dân chủ trong công tác lãnh đạo của chỉ huy và sự đoàn kết của CBCS, Đội CSDN ngày càng trở thành lực lượng cơ động, ứng phó kịp thời với các tình huống xảy ra. Bên cạnh việc triển khai hàng nghìn lượt CBCS tham gia bảo vệ các sự kiện lớn về chính trị, văn hóa, thể thao, TTATXH trong các ngày lễ, hội tại Gia Lai, cả nước, cũng như bảo vệ các đoàn khách A1 đến thăm, làm việc tại Gia Lai, Đội còn phải đảm đương một công tác trọng tâm, then chốt phối hợp với Phòng PA43, CA các địa phương thực hiện truy quét những đối tượng phản động, chống phá Nhà nước, góp phần đáng kể vào chiến công bắt gọn những tên FULRO cốt cán cuối cùng.

Một số hình ảnh của Đội CSDN Gia Lai. Ảnh: L.D

January 22, 2011: Cong An Da Nang (Da Nang Police) newspaper reports on security operations in the Central Highlands, in which the Special Task Force of the Mobile Intervention Police, Unit PA43, and provincial police detain and interrogate persons they identify as Dega Protestants. “The central focus...is to neutralize the dangerous key actors of the reactionary FULRO in a clever way, in order to avoid the scrutiny of hostile forces on human rights issues,” the article states. ©2011 CADN

Vietnamese law requires that all religious groups register with the government and operate under government-approved religious organizations. The government bans any religious activity deemed to oppose “national interests,” harm national solidarity, cause public disorder, or “sow divisions.” While many unregistered religious groups are

able to operate freely in Vietnam, those considered a threat to the party’s authority are sharply repressed on grounds that they pose a threat to national security and public order. Adherents of some unregistered religious groups, as well as religious activists campaigning for internationally-guaranteed rights, are harassed, arrested, imprisoned, or placed under house arrest. Police and local officials disperse their religious gatherings, confiscate religious literature, and summon religious leaders to police stations for interrogation. In some instances, police destroy churches of unauthorized religious groups and detain or imprison their members on charges of violating national security.

In addition to Montagnard Christians, religious groups whose members face severe restrictions on association, assembly, or freedom of movement—or worse yet, are languishing behind bars—include unapproved or independent congregations of Mennonites, Cao Dai, Hoa Hao Buddhists, ethnic Khmer Theravada Buddhists, and the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam.

Background: A Decade of Unrest

During the last decade, the Vietnamese government has launched a series of crackdowns on Montagnards in the Central Highlands, often in response to mass public protests calling for the return of confiscated land and greater religious freedom. The demonstrations have been fueled by Montagnards' growing anger and desperation over the steady loss of their farm land to agricultural plantations and lowland Vietnamese (*Kinh*) settlers, along with tightened restrictions on independent house churches.

January 30, 2011: *Quan Doi Nhan Dan* (People's Army) newspaper carries an article about militia forces patrolling with Gia Lai border soldiers and police in Chu Prong district, Gia Lai, near the Cambodian border. Their task, according to the article, is to "control social evils and ensure political security and social order." One area of focus is Chu Prong, described by *Quan Doi Nhan Dan* as formerly a "hotspot of social and political insecurity, where hostile forces infiltrated to illegally preach and incite the people to flee to the 'promised land' in Cambodia." ©2011 Quan Doi Nhan Dan

Montagnards, who traditionally followed animist religious practices, began to convert to Christianity in the 1950s and 1960s. With the North Vietnamese victory in 1975, Catholic and Protestant churches in the Central Highlands were closed and many Montagnards, including pastors, were imprisoned. Some Montagnards went underground and joined the highland resistance army known as the United Front for the Liberation of Oppressed Races (FULRO), which fought on the side of United States and South Vietnamese forces during the Vietnam War. As FULRO's fighting capacity steadily dwindled in the late 1980s and early 1990s, many Montagnards converted—or returned to—Christianity as they abandoned armed struggle.⁴



⁴ FULRO's existence as a guerilla organization came to an end in 1992, when its last remaining combatants and their families were airlifted by United Nations (UN) peacekeeping troops from their hidden camps in northeastern Cambodia. After refugee processing in Phnom Penh, the 400 families were resettled in the United States. See Human Rights Watch, *Repression of Montagnards: Conflicts over Land and Religion in Vietnam's Central Highlands*, ISBN: 1-56432-272-6, April 2002, <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2002/04/23/repression-montagnards>.

During the 1990s, increasing numbers of Montagnards joined unofficial Christian house churches.

In 2000 an activist Montagnard church movement—*Tin Lanh Dega*, or Dega Protestantism—emerged in the Central Highlands that combined evangelical Christianity with aspirations for greater political freedom, protection of ancestral lands, and for some, autonomy or self-rule. Less than one year later, in February 2001, unprecedented mass protests broke out in all four provinces of the Central Highlands. Thousands of Montagnards marched on the provincial towns to demand the return of ancestral lands and religious freedom.

In response, the government launched an aggressive crackdown, dispatching military and police units to seal off the region and arresting dozens of Montagnards, sometimes using torture to elicit confessions and public statements of remorse.⁵ By the end of 2001, 36 Montagnards had been sentenced to prison terms ranging from four to 13 years, with another 32 individuals awaiting trial. Fearing arrest, many Montagnards went into hiding in Vietnam. By early 2002, more than 1,000 Montagnards had fled to Cambodia, where they were recognized as refugees and resettled abroad.

The past decade has seen ongoing waves of repression and unrest. In April 2004 thousands of Montagnards again took to the streets, with smaller protests taking place in September 2002 and April 2008.⁶

A complicating factor in the Central Highlands has been the mutual distrust between the government and the highlanders. The government asserts that Montagnards belonging to independent house churches are using religion as a front for political activities, while many Montagnards distrust the government-authorized Protestant church in the Central Highlands, the Southern Evangelical Church of Vietnam (SECV). Some Montagnards have opted to worship in village or house churches that they control themselves, rather than affiliating with the SECV. Wary of any popular movement that might destabilize the Vietnamese Communist Party's grip on power, the government has launched intensive propaganda campaigns, backed up by military and police operations, to eradicate Dega Protestantism and pressure Montagnard

⁵ Human Rights Watch, *Repression of Montagnards: Conflicts over Land and Religion in Vietnam's Central Highlands*.

⁶ "Vietnam: Montagnards under Lockdown," Human Rights Watch news release, May 28, 2004, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2004/05/26/vietnam-montagnards-under-lockdown>; "Vietnam: Independent Investigation of Easter Week Atrocities Needed Now," Human Rights Watch briefing paper, May 2004, <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2004/05/27/vietnam-independent-investigation-easter-week-atrocities-needed-now>; and Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2010* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2010) Vietnam chapter, <http://www.hrw.org/en/node/87404>.

Christians to join the SECV. Special “Central Highlands Security” units (PA43)⁷ and centrally-directed Mobile Intervention Police (Canh sat co dong)⁸ have been dispatched to the highlands to back up provincial and district police in rooting out Montagnard activists in hiding.⁹

The officially stated aims of the campaigns are to improve political stability and security in the Central Highlands by preventing and repelling plots by “hostile forces”; specifically Dega Protestants and members of what the Vietnam government calls other “false religions.” The government alleges that such groups are advancing separatist politics under the guise of religion, and supporting—or being manipulated by—anti-government groups such as FULRO.

While there is no evidence that FULRO, or any other Montagnard resistance group advocating violence, continues to operate in the Central Highlands, the government treats many highlanders with suspicion, particularly Montagnard Christians who choose not to join the SECV. Despite a lack of concrete evidence about FULRO, authorities typically include condemnation and renunciation of FULRO in public denunciation sessions.

The government’s campaigns include strong propaganda components, with officials convening village- and commune-level mass gatherings in which alleged supporters of Dega Protestantism are brought forward to be “constructively criticized” by officials and villagers before “voluntarily” renouncing their religion and confessing their wrongdoings. In similar fashion, provincial courts often conduct “mobile trials” of people charged with national security crimes

⁷ PA43 is the provincial level unit under the bifurcate command of both its national level organization, A43, and the Provincial Public Security Department. A43’s official title is Department of Central Highlands Security (Cuc An ninh Tay Nguyen). It was founded on July 19, 2004, originally coded as A44, under the General Department of Security. PA43 personnel are dispatched and controlled by A43, although the unit’s budget and logistics are controlled by the Provincial Public Security Department. In early 2010, the Department of Central Highlands Security was re-coded as A90 after Senior Col. Nguyen Hung Linh took over command of the unit from Col. Huynh Hue. Minh Chau, “Department of Central Highlands Security Receives First Rank Medal” (Cuc An ninh Tay Nguyen don nhan Huan chuong Chien cong hang Nhat), *An Ninh Thu Do*, August 13, 2007, <http://www.antd.vn/Tiayon/Index.aspx?ArticleID=6263&ChannelID=3> (accessed March 31, 2011).

⁸ The Mobile Intervention Police force (Canh sat co dong) comprises primarily officers from the E20 Battalion of the Central Highlands Mobile Police, which is under the command of K20 Mobile Police Command (Bo Tu lenh Canh sat Co dong) within the Ministry of Public Security. The “Special Task Force” (Canh sat dac nhiem) of the Mobile Intervention Police is an elite unit within the E20 Battalion. Hoai Nam, “Mobile Police Command officially operates” (Bo tu lenh Canh sat co dong chinh thuc hoat dong), *Thanh Nien (Youth)*, January 16, 2010, <http://www.thanhvien.com.vn/Pages/20100116/bo-tu-lenh-canhsat-co-dong-chinh-thuc-hoat-dong.aspx> (accessed March 21, 2011).

⁹ Ngoc Diep-Ksor H’bui, “The Judicial Protection and Assistance Mobile Police: Striving to Do Good Things” (Phong canh sat co dong bao ve va ho tro tu phap: No luc lam nhieu viec tot), *Bao Gia Lai*, June 28, 2010, <http://baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201006/Phong-Canh-sat-Co-dong-Bao-ve-va-Ho-tro-tu-phap-No-luc-lam-nhieu-viec-tot-1948557/> (accessed February 2, 2011); Le Duy, “Youthful Strength of the Special Task Force Police Team” (Suc tre cua Doi Canh sat Dac nhiem), January 22, 2011, *Cong An Nhan Dan (People’s Police)*, <http://cadn.com.vn/News/Chinh-Tri-Xa-Hoi/Hoat-Dong-LLCA/2011/1/22/54679.ca> (accessed January 23, 2011).

in front of hundreds of people gathered at commune centers, thereby expanding the audience and reinforcing the message for others not to follow Dega Protestantism.¹⁰

As part of the crackdown, PA43 units conduct operations with other provincial police units to detain and interrogate persons they identify as political activists or Dega Protestants.¹¹ Some of these people are formally arrested, tried, and sentenced to prison on national security charges, such as undermining national solidarity (Penal Code article 87), while others are forced to confess their guilt in public denunciation sessions and then placed under close surveillance afterwards. In addition, the police continue to break up house church gatherings by Montagnard Christians belonging to independent or unregistered congregations operating outside of the officially recognized SECV.¹²

September 19, 2009: Bao Gia Lai reports on the “Mobile Trial” of three Jarai men on charges of undermining national unity, conducted in Dak Doa district by the Gia Lai Provincial People’s Court. From left: Nhi, 53, sentenced to 10 years in prison; Am Linh, 68, sentenced to eight years; and Yuh, 49, sentenced to eight years. ©2009 Bao Gia Lai



The screenshot shows the homepage of Gia Lai Online, a news website for Gia Lai province, Vietnam. The header includes the site's name and logo, along with navigation links for various topics like 'Trang chủ', 'Chính trị', 'Kinh tế', etc. The main content area features a news article titled 'Cải giá của sự trả hàng' (Improvement of the return price) dated 19/09/2009. The article discusses political activities and trials in the region, mentioning the Provincial People's Court and the Provincial People's Court. Below the text is a photograph of three men sitting in a courtroom, identified as the defendants in the 'Mobile Trial' mentioned in the text.

¹⁰ While most trials of political cases in Vietnam are not public, “mobile trials” are conducted in front of large audiences. Ngoc Diep-Ksor H’bui, “The Judicial Protection and Assistance Mobile Police: Striving to Do Good Things,” *Bao Gia Lai*, June 28, 2010.

¹¹ After mass demonstrations by Montagnards in April 2004, the Ministry of Public Security established “political security” (PA43) units in the Central Highlands to eliminate what it characterized as reactionary movements, such as FULLRO, Dega Protestantism, and other “criminal” groups it accused of taking advantage of ethnic issues and religion. PA43 units were tasked to capture core “operatives” and ringleaders of these movements. The PA43 units also provide protection for “mobile trials” conducted in the communes by the People’s Courts. *Bao Gia Lai*, June 28, 2010; Trong Tinh, “Political Security Section VI (PA43) of the Provincial Police: On the Frontlines of Fighting Reactionary Forces” (Phong Bao ve chinh tri VI [PA43]-CA tinh: Chu Cong Tren Mat Tran Dau Tranh Voi Cac The Luc Phan Dong), *Bao Dak Lak*, December 11, 2009; and Gia Bao, “Three ‘together’ with people in the village” (“Ba cung” với ba con ở các bon lang), *Cong An Nhan Dan*, October 16, 2009.

¹² United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, USCIRF Annual Report 2010 - Countries of Particular Concern: Vietnam, April 29, 2010, <http://www.uscirf.gov/images/annual%20report%202010.pdf> (accessed February 9, 2011); US State Department, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, “International Religious Freedom Report 2010 - Vietnam Chapter,” November 17, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2010/148903.htm> (accessed February 9, 2011).

2001-2011: Cycles of Repression

The Vietnamese government has launched a series of crackdowns during the last 10 years to suppress political organizing and independent religious activities among Montagnard Christians. Elite security units have hunted down and arrested Montagnard activists in hiding and sealed off the border with Cambodia to prevent asylum seekers from fleeing the country.

During these crackdowns, authorities have committed clear-cut violations of fundamental rights, including arbitrary arrest, imprisonment, and torture. Officials have employed coercion to pressure Montagnards to renounce their religion and pledge their loyalty to the government and the Communist Party of Vietnam. Police have used excessive force to dispel largely peaceful protests, resulting in the deaths of as many as eight Montagnards during demonstrations in April 2004¹³ as well as injuries and deaths of others during arrest and in police custody. At various times, restrictions have been placed on travel within the highlands, on public gatherings, and on telephone communication with the outside world.

At the same time, the government has initiated some reforms to address Montagnard grievances, including official programs to allocate land to ethnic minority families, improve educational opportunities, and bring economic development to the impoverished region. Police who have been posted in villages to monitor activities of suspected Montagnard leaders and prevent escapes to Cambodia have also carried out public works projects such as assisting villagers with farming and village clean-up projects.

The following timeline, drawn from Vietnamese state media accounts, western wire service reports, and Montagnard sources, illustrates a continuous pattern of repression of independent political and religious activities in the Central Highlands during the last 10 years.

¹³ “Vietnam: Independent Investigation of Easter Week Atrocities Needed Now,” Human Rights Watch Briefing Paper, May 2004; “Socialist Republic of Viet Nam: Renewed concern for the Montagnard minority,” Amnesty International, April 28, 2004.

February 2001:

Authorities suppress widespread demonstrations by Montagnards by dispatching tanks and elite troops to the region and arresting dozens of protest organizers. Afterwards, authorities enforce sharp restrictions on public gatherings, church meetings, and freedom of movement.¹⁴

April 2001:

Officials announce that 13 military regiments are to be located in an “economic defense zone” in Dak Lak and neighboring Binh Phuoc province, bordering Cambodia. The plan calls for the resettlement of close to 100,000 soldiers, militia, and their families, who are to clear up to 230,000 hectares of land to plant rubber, cashews, cotton, coffee and pepper.¹⁵

May 2001:

Officials organize “goat’s blood ceremonies” in dozens of villages in the Central Highlands. Villagers who participated in the February 2001 demonstrations are forced to stand up in front of their entire village and local authorities to admit their wrongdoing, pledge to cease any contacts with outside groups, and renounce their religion. To seal their loyalty, they are forced to drink rice wine mixed with goat's blood.¹⁶

February 2002:

An additional 2,300 soldiers are deployed in Gia Lai, Dak Lak, and Kon Tum provinces, with party cadre sent to “hot spots” and remote areas to help maintain order.¹⁷

August-September 2002:

Police tighten security and arrest close to 70 Montagnards in Gia Lai, Dak Lak, and Phu Yen provinces in an effort to suppress Montagnard protests reportedly planned in Mdrak district of Dak Lak and Buon Ma Thuot City.¹⁸ “We arrested all the demonstrators. Nobody could escape,” a police chief in Dak Lak tells reporters.¹⁹

¹⁴ See Human Rights Watch report, *Repression of Montagnards: Conflicts over Land and Religion in Vietnam's Central Highlands*, ISBN: 1-56432-272-6, April 2002, <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2002/04/23/repression-montagnards>.

¹⁵ Agence France Presse, “Vietnam settling soldiers, militiamen in restive Central Highlands,” April 27, 2001.

¹⁶ Human Rights Watch interviews with Jarai from Vietnam, October 2001; transcripts on file at Human Rights Watch. See also, Human Rights Watch, *Repression of Montagnards*, 2002; “Report on the Protestants’ Situation in Dak Lak Province,” September 3, 2001, written by a Protestant church leader in the Central Highlands who asked to remain anonymous, report on file at Human Rights Watch.

¹⁷ Reuters, “Vietnam to send extra police to Central Highlands,” January 29, 2002; Reuters, “Hanoi troops sent to teach highlanders about plots,” February 25, 2002.

¹⁸ Associated Press, “Vietnam arrests scores of hill tribe members for attempting new protest,” September 6, 2002; Agence France Presse, “Demonstrators arrested in Vietnam’s Central Highlands,” September 6, 2002; Associated Press, “Two Montagnards surrender to charges of instigating anti-government protests,” October 30, 2002; Vietnam News Brief Service,

October-December 2002:

More than 600 “fast deployment” military teams are dispatched to the highlands.²⁰ Authorities intensify propaganda campaigns against “hostile forces” in the highlands, culminating in an October 2002 Party directive outlining the government’s efforts to eliminate “Dega Protestantism.”²¹ State media covers officially organized ceremonies in which Montagnard Christians “voluntarily” reject their religion, with Dak Lak provincial television broadcasting programs called “Dispersing the Illegally Self-Elected Protestant Board of Deacons” and “Illegally Self-Elected Protestant Deacons Voluntarily Disperse,” showing Montagnard Christians “volunteering” to abandon their religion.²² In November, government officials report that more than 2,700 Christians have severed connections with “bad elements who abuse religious issues to sow divisions in national unity,” dozens of evangelical Christians have confessed to having preached illegally, and 37 religious “cells” have been disbanded.²³

February 2003:

Government and party officials in the Central Highlands are instructed to “eradicate all illegal religious organizations” and to organize official “Swearing Brotherhood” (*le ket nghia*) ceremonies in which Montagnards must publicly pledge their loyalty to the government and the party and renounce “Dega Protestantism.”²⁴ To enforce the new directives, police launch a fresh round of arrests of Montagnard Christians and political activists, as well as those suspected by the government of seeking to flee to Cambodia.²⁵

“Two Initiators of Riot in Central Highlands Give up to Police,” October 30, 2002; Vietnam News Brief Service, “Army Newspaper Slams Attempts to Lure Minority Refugees,” November 22, 2002.

¹⁹ “New Unrest Flares in Vietnam’s Central Highlands,” Deutsche Presse-Agentur, September 6, 2002.

²⁰ “Vietnam forces ‘successfully’ maintain political stability in Central Highlands,” BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific, Text of report in English by Vietnam News Agency web site.

²¹ “Material to Propagandize and Fight Against the Scheme of the Enemy Forces to Establish an Independent Dega Country and Dega Protestantism,” Communist Party of Dak Lak, Cu Mgar District, October 22, 2002. Vietnamese language document on file at Human Rights Watch.

²² Vietnam TV broadcast, Krong Pak, Dak Lak, September 28, 2002. Videotape of the 25-minute broadcast is on file at Human Rights Watch.

²³ “Report: Protestant missionaries illegally preaching in Vietnam’s restive Central Highlands,” Associated Press, citing the official Phap Luat (Law) newspaper, November 1, 2002.

²⁴ “The Plan: Swearing brotherhood between all government organizations and units with all hamlets and villages in the district,” Communist Party of Vietnam, Party Office of Dak Lak, Dak Song District, no. 14 - KH/HU, February 12, 2003, Vietnamese language document on file at Human Rights Watch; “Directions re: Organizing the Swearing Brotherhood Ceremony,” Communist Party of Vietnam, Dak Song District, no. 44-HD/BTC, February 12, 2003; Vietnamese language document on file at Human Rights Watch; “Vietnam: New Documents Reveal Escalating Repression,” Human Rights Watch Briefing Paper, April 18, 2003.

²⁵ “Vietnam: New Documents Reveal Escalating Repression,” Human Rights Watch Briefing Paper, April 18, 2003, <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2003/04/18/vietnam-new-documents-reveal-escalating-repression> (accessed March 25, 2011).

January 2004:

Authorities intensify crackdown on Montagnards, with Mobile Intervention Police searching villages and nearby coffee plantations—sometimes with dogs—to arrest Montagnards suspected of supporting the Dega church movement. After cordoning off a village, prohibiting entry and exit, the security forces then enter the village. They search the homes of villagers suspected of hiding or feeding others, often destroying the houses and beating the inhabitants during interrogation. They then fan out into nearby fields and forests, searching for people in hiding.²⁶

July 2004:

After widespread Montagnard protests in the Central Highlands in April 2004, the Department of Central Highlands Security (*Cuc An ninh Tay Nguyen*) is founded after a national conference on security in the highlands presided over by then-Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung.²⁷ Elite police units, such as PA43, Political Security Section VI units, the Mobile Intervention Police, and the “Special Task Force” are dispatched to the region to back up provincial and district police to prevent further demonstrations, root out Montagnard activists in hiding, stop the flow of asylum seekers to Cambodia, and bring an end to groups allegedly taking advantage of ethnic issues and religion to incite social turmoil.²⁸

Late 2004—Early 2005:

Police operations focus on capturing “reactionary FULRO operatives” in Dak Doa and Chu Se districts of Gia Lai, with state media reporting that 147 people are arrested in late 2004, including Kpa Hung, a key “ringleader” who is shot and wounded during his arrest and is now serving a 12-year prison sentence.²⁹

²⁶ See Human Rights Watch news release, “Vietnam: Violence against Montagnards during Easter Week Protests,” April 14, 2004.

²⁷ Ngoc Nhu, “On the Frontlines against FULRO” (Tren tuyen dau chong FULRO), *Cong An Nhan Dan* (People’s Police), August 19, 2008, <http://www.cand.com.vn/vi-VN/trongmatdan/2008/8/97681.cand> (accessed March 25, 2011).

²⁸ The PA43 unit was re-coded as PA90 in early 2010. “Department of Central Highlands Security Receives First Rank Medal” (Cuc An ninh Tay Nguyen don nhan Huan chuong Chien cong hang Nhat), *An Ninh Thu Do*, August 13, 2007, <http://www.antd.vn/Tiayon/Index.aspx?ArticleID=6263&ChannelID=3> (accessed March 20, 2011); “Political Security Section VI (PA43) of the Provincial Police: On the Frontlines of Fighting Reactionary Forces” (Phong Bao ve chinh tri VI [PA43]-CA tinh: Chu Cong Tren Mat Tran Dau Tranh Voi Ca The Luc Phan Dong), *Bao Dak Lak* online, Dec. 11, 2009; Tien Dung, “Quiet Victories” (Lang tham nhung chien cong), *Bao Gia Lai*, March 19, 2011, <http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201103/Lang-tham-nhung-chien-cong-1983520/> (accessed March 27, 2011).

²⁹ Tung Duy, “FULRO’s Nemesis” (Khac tinh cua FULRO), *Viet Bao Online*, August 18, 2005, <http://vietbao.vn/The-gioi-tre/Khac-tinh-cua-Fulro/70020908/504/> (accessed September 21, 2010). Information about arrests in state media accounts was corroborated by credible reports received by Human Rights Watch in late 2004 that 144 Montagnards were arrested during a two-week period (December 12-24, 2004), most of whom were from Gia Lai province. See Human Rights Watch briefing paper, “Vietnam: Torture, Arrests of Montagnard Christians,” January 2005, <http://www.hrw.org/legacy/backgrounder/asia/vietnam0105/index.htm>.

March 2005:

Targeting of Montagnard Christians for persecution, arrest, and mandatory renunciation sessions intensifies after promulgation of legislation that requires all religious groups to be officially registered. Decree 22, promulgated in March 2005, bans any religious activity deemed to threaten national security, public order, or national unity. Instruction No. 1, issued by the Prime Minister in February 2005, specifically bans Dega Protestantism.³⁰ The new regulations provide legitimacy to government officials and police arresting or forcing the recantation of faith of Montagnards belonging to religious groups that operate independently of the government-approved Southern Evangelical Church of Vietnam.³¹

November 2005:

Plans are announced to send 2,000 families from northern Vietnam to live and work in “Economic-National Defense Zones” (ENDZ) in Kon Tum and Gia Lai provinces near the Cambodian border. The Prime Minister also approves a plan to send 400 “young intellectuals” and members of the Communist Youth Union to the ENDZs for two-year terms to “enhance socio-economic development and strengthen defense” in the region.³²

April 2006—July 2009:

PA43 forces and provincial police launch a “1,200-day campaign” that focuses on capturing “reactionary FULRO operatives” and “Dega Protestants” in Chu Se district, Gia Lai.³³

Mid-2006:

Government begins implementation of the 01 CA-QS plan by provincial and district police and military Corps 15 to ensure political stability, national security, and defense in three border districts of Gia Lai and for rubber plantations located there. Goals of the 01 CA-QS plan are: a) ensure national security and defense (both political security and security of rubber plantation); b) eradicate FULRO and prevent escapes into Cambodia; c) mobilize masses to turn in reactionaries; and d) stop crime, especially illegal smuggling of rubber.³⁴

³⁰ Decree 22/2005/ND-CP, “Instructions for Implementing the New Ordinance on Beliefs and Religions; Prime Minister’s Instruction no. 01/2005/CT-TTg, “Some Work in Regard to Protestantism,” February 4, 2005.

³¹ See Human Rights Watch briefing paper, “Vietnam: Persecution of Montagnards Continues,” May 2005, <http://www.hrw.org/legacy/backgrounder/asia/vietnam0505/7.htm> (accessed March 25, 2011).

³² “Northern Households Rounded Up to Central Highlands,” Vietnam News Brief Service, November 22, 2005.

³³ D.A., “1,200 Days Hunting Dangerous FULRO” (1,200 Ngay Truy Bat Nhung Ten Fulro Nguy Hiem), *Cong An Thanh Pho Da Nang*, August 4, 2009, <http://cadn.com.vn/News/Print.ca?id=29006> (accessed February 2, 2011); Tien Dung, “Quiet Victories” (Lang tham nhung chien cong), *Bao Gia Lai*, March 19, 2011, <http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201103/Lang-tham-nhung-chien-cong-1983520/> (accessed March 27, 2011).

³⁴ Thanh Khiết, “Building National Security and Defense for All Citizens” (Xay dung the tran an ninh– quoc phong toan dan), *Bao Gia Lai*, July 5, 2010, <http://baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201007/Xay-dung-the-tran-an-ninh-quoc-phong-toan-dan-1949504/> (accessed August 1, 2010).

August 2006:

The Special Task Force, an elite police unit within the Ezo Battalion of the Central Highlands Mobile Police, coordinates with PA43 units and district and provincial police to hunt down and suppress FULRO “ringleaders,” focusing on Gia Lai.³⁵

January 2007:

Plans are announced for construction of resettlement villages in border and low-income areas, including four Central Highlands provinces, for young people from other parts of Vietnam to “uphold their pioneer role in socio-economic development.”³⁶

April 2007-June 2010:

Public security forces launch a three-year offensive that targets Montagnard church activists in Chu Se district, Gia Lai.³⁷

May 2010:

Officials launch propaganda campaigns and public criticism ceremonies targeting the Catholic Ha Mon sect in Kon Tum, Gia Lai, and Dak Lak provinces.³⁸

June 2010:

Heightened border security, arrests, and forced renunciation ceremonies take place in Gia Lai, allegedly in response to unrest in rubber plantations in Chu Prong district.³⁹

³⁵ Le Duy, “Youthful Strength of the Special Task Force Police Team” (Suc Tre Cua Doi Canh Sat Dac Nhiem), *Cong An Nhan Dan* (People’s Police), January 22, 2011; Trong Tinh, “Political Security Section VI (PA43) of the Provincial Police: On the Frontlines of Fighting Reactionary Forces” (Phong Bao ve chinh tri VI [PA43]-CA tinh: Chu Cong Tren Mat Tran Dau Tranh Voi Cac The Luc Phan Dong), *Bao Dak Lak*, December 11, 2009; Ngoc Diep-Ksor H’bui, “The Judicial Protection and Assistance Mobile Police: Striving to Do Good Things” (Phong canh sat co dong bao ve va ho tro tu phap: No luc lam nhieu viec tot), *Bao Gia Lai*, June 28, 2010.

³⁶ “Youth Villages to be Built in Remote Areas,” Voice of Vietnam Radio, January 31, 2007, <http://english.vovnews.vn/Home/Youth-villages-to-be-built-in-remote-areas/20071/28730.vov> (accessed March 24, 2011).

³⁷ Ngoc Diep-Ksor H’bui, “The Judicial Protection and Assistance Mobile Police: Striving to Do Good Things” (Phong canh sat co dong bao ve va ho tro tu phap: No luc lam nhieu viec tot), *Bao Gia Lai*, June 28, 2010.

³⁸ Le Duy and Thanh Khiet, “The Deceptive Nature of the So-called ‘Ha Mon’ Religion” (Ban chat lua bip cua cai goi la ‘Dao Ha Mon’), *Cong An Thanh pho Da Nang* (Da Nang Police), May 26, 2010, <http://candn.com.vn/News/An-Ninh-Doi-Song/CA-Pha-An/2010/5/26/42971.ca> (accessed June 15, 2010); Tran Cong and Thanh Hai, “Unmask the Evil Deception of Ha Mon Sect” (Vach mat ban chat lua bip cua ta Dao Ha Mon), *Bao Gia Lai*, July 10, 2010, <http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201007/Vach-mat-ban-chat-lua-bip-cua-ta-dao-Ha-Mon-1950142/> (accessed August 1, 2010).

³⁹ Thanh Khiet, “Building National Security and Defense for All Citizens” (Xay dung the tran an ninh–quoc phong toan dan), *Bao Gia Lai*, July 5, 2010; Ngoc Tan, “Chu Prong: ‘Hot’ Rubber Plantations,” *Bao Gia Lai*, September 9, 2010, <http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201009/Chu-Prong-Nhung-vuon-cao-su-dang-nong-1957912/> (accessed September 18, 2010); N. Nhu, “Hook Up with FULRO to spread reactionary propaganda” (Cau ket voi FULRO tuyen truyen phan dong), *Cong An Nhan Dan* (People’s Police), September 8, 2010, <http://ca.cand.com.vn/vi-vn/thoisuxahoi/thoiluan/2010/9/168205.cand> (accessed October 8, 2010); S.C., “Criticism of 50 Subjects in Social Disturbances in Ia Dok Commune, Duc Co” (Kiem diem 50 doi tuong gay roi tai xa Ia Doc-Duc Co), *Bao Gia Lai*, October 1, 2010,

“Legal” Straitjacket for Religion

When a so-called religion becomes a tool in the hand of evil people, it should be considered evil and unlawful and should be eliminated.

—Radio Voice of Vietnam

The Vietnamese government requires religious groups to obtain government permission in order to operate, advancing its official stance that religious freedom is a privilege to be requested and granted by the government, rather than a fundamental human right.⁴⁰

Legislation promulgated in 2005, Instruction No. 1, outlines the specific requirements for Protestant groups to register.⁴¹ They must submit applications to local authorities providing the names of their adherents, along with their photographs and biographical information, and certify that the group will not allow its members to engage or be involved in protests, riots, and “reactionary” organizations such as Dega Protestantism or FULRO.⁴² Instruction No. 1 reinforces the government’s long-held official stance that Dega Protestantism is not a legitimate religion, thereby providing a legal basis for authorities to force Montagnard Christians to join the government-approved SECV or face criminal penalties:

This is a religion with a dubious origin. The exiled FULRO members deliberately set up that religion of Dega Protestantism just to use as the tool for their dark political schemes of stirring up ethnic problems and undermining our country's stability.⁴³

<http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201010/Kiem-diem-50-doi-tuong-gay-roi-tai-xa-ia-dok-duc-Co-1960717/> (accessed November 11, 2010).

⁴⁰ Decree 22, promulgated in March 2005, provides the implementing instructions for Vietnam’s 2004 Ordinance on Beliefs and Religions. Both laws require that all religious groups be officially registered and subject to government control, and bans any religious activity deemed to threaten national security, public order, or national unity.

⁴¹ Prime Minister's Instruction no. 01/2005/CT-TTg, “Some Work in Regard to Protestantism,” February 4, 2005.

⁴² Instruction no. 1, passed in February 2005, outlines the process for Protestant groups to legally register. In art. 3 it states that Protestants in the Central Highlands must commit “not to follow ‘FULRO reactionaries’ or be connected to ‘Dega Protestantism’”—which, it adds “is in essence, an organization of FULRO reactionaries.” Decree 22, passed in March 2005, contains similar, though broader, language. In art. 8 (2) it prohibits the “abuse” of religion to undermine national solidarity and “sow division among the people, ethnic groups and religions” or to “spread superstitious practices.” Instruction no. 01/2005/CT-TTg, “Some Work in Regard to Protestantism,” February 4, 2005; Decree 22/2005/ND-CP, “Instructions for Implementing the New Ordinance on Beliefs and Religions,” March 2005; “Procedures for Registering Protestant Groups,” <http://luat.xalo.vn/thu-tuc-hanh-chinh/Kon-Tum/229506096/Thu-tuc-dang-ky-sinh-hoat-dao-Tin-lanh-theo-diem-nhom.html> (accessed February 13, 2011).

⁴³ “Heretical Beliefs Should Be Eliminated,” Radio Voice of Vietnam, August 10, 2004.

Overly restrictive registration criteria violate international standards, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Vietnam is a state party. Religious groups failing to meet such criteria can be denied permission to operate. In effect, this makes such groups illegal organizations and provides a rationale for authorities to pressure adherents of unregistered Protestant groups to join the officially recognized SECV. Groups lacking legal status to operate include those whose applications have been rejected or ignored by authorities, as well as groups that prefer to operate independent of the SECV.

The government's crackdowns and restrictions on Dega Protestants have thus impacted many Montagnard Christians, whether they are Dega supporters or not.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ While the government links "Tin Lanh Dega", or Dega Protestantism, to US-based Montagnard advocate Kok Ksor, since September 2010 Ksor has called the church he leads "Sang Ae Die Degar." Other unregistered Montagnard Christian groups in the Central Highlands that have faced official harassment and persecution include independent house churches that do not consider themselves part of Kok Ksor's group or the SECV; Mennonites affiliated with Pastor Nguyen Hong Quang or with Pastor Nguyen Cong Chinh; members of Vietnam Good News Mission Church; and Catholics, especially those thought to be following the Ha Mon sect.

Public Denunciation Ceremonies and Forced Renunciation of Faith

Vietnamese government authorities persist in forcing Montagnard villagers to publicly recant their religion, despite strict prohibitions on forced renunciations of faith set out in Decree 22.⁴⁵ Throughout 2010 and early 2011, hundreds of Montagnards in the Central Highlands were pressured or coerced to abandon Dega Protestantism in public criticism ceremonies by signing pledges or through intimidation in private meetings with police or local authorities.



The screenshot shows the homepage of Gia Lai Online, a website for Gia Lai province. The main headline is "Pháp luật" (Law) with a sub-headline "Huyện Đức Cơ: Kiên quyết đấu tranh xóa bỏ tổ chức phản động FULRO" (Duc Co District: Firmly determined to fight to eliminate the FULRO counter-revolutionary organization). The article text describes the situation in Duc Co district, mentioning the presence of FULRO and the government's efforts to eliminate it. An image shows a public gathering where people are signing a pledge. The caption below the image reads: "Phát động phong trào quần chúng bảo vệ an ninh Tổ quốc. Ảnh: Ngọc Như" (Mobilizing the mass movement to protect national security. Photo: Ngọc Như).

October 2, 2010: *Bao Gia Lai* reports that Duc Co police and government officials have organized public criticism sessions for dozens of “reactionary Dega Protestants and FULRO” members since early 2010, with 34 people in la Kla commune signing pledges to abandon the movements. ©2010 Bao Gia Lai

The state media regularly carries accounts of public renunciation ceremonies. In one such public ceremony on September 24, 2010, in la Suom district, Gia Lai, 24 people “voluntarily” committed to abandon Dega Protestantism and FULRO and integrate with the community, according to an article in the *People’s Army* newspaper. Local officials coordinated closely with the provincial military headquarters, village chiefs, elders, and the “wayward” peoples’ families to turn them around, the article stated.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ While Decree 22 “strictly forbids coercion of citizens to convert or renounce one’s religion” and states that “all acts of violation shall be dealt with by the law” (art. 2), it has been used as the basis for official campaigns to force Dega Protestants and other Montagnard Christians to recant their religion, based on its banning of religious activities deemed to violate national security or undermine national solidarity. Decree 22/2005/ND-CP, “Instructions for Implementing the New Ordinance on Beliefs and Religions,” March 2005.

⁴⁶ Xuan Hoang & Van Tu, “Abandon ‘Dega Protestantism’ to return to the community” (Bo “Tin Lanh De Ga”, ve voi cong dong), Quan Doi Nhan Dan (People’s Army), September 25, 2010, <http://www.qdnd.vn/qdndsite/vi-VN/61/43/7/24/24/124799/Default.aspx> (accessed February 2, 2011).

Montagnard Catholics in the provinces of Kon Tum, Gia Lai, and Dak Lak also face harassment, forced renunciation of faith, and arrest, especially those allegedly associated with the “Ha Mon” Catholic sect. During the second half of 2010, officials in the Central Highlands became increasingly critical of the sect, whose popularity they allege is being exploited by FULRO exiles. State media reported in November that the “elusive” sect has penetrated not only into several districts in Gia Lai but to Dak Lak province further south.⁴⁷

In November 2010, Kon Tum Bishop Michael Hoang Duc Oanh diocese released a public pastoral letter to his diocese to raise his concerns about local authorities preventing him from conducting mass services and harassing and threatening members of his parish.⁴⁸ Despite this, police prevented him from celebrating Christmas mass with members of his diocese in Kbang district, Gia Lai.⁴⁹

Examples of civilians being pressured, coerced, or forced to publicly renounce their religion, or being harassed and denounced for alleged political activities at public denunciation ceremonies during 2010 include the following incidents, which were covered in the state media:⁵⁰

- On June 6, 2010, as part of an official public ceremony in Dak Mil district, Dak Nong province to launch a “mass movement to protect national security,” two men were brought forward to publicly confess to supporting Dega Protestantism and FULRO.⁵¹
- Starting in June 2010, officials in the Central Highlands organized a propaganda campaign against a Catholic sect known as “Ha Mon” (named after the commune

⁴⁷ Le Quang Hoi, “Towards Village Peace and Development” (De lang que binh yen, phat trien), Department of Information and Communications of Gia Lai, December 15, 2010, http://tttt.gialai.gov.vn/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=321:lang-que-binh-yen-phat-trin&catid=95:tin-tng-hp&Itemid=119 (accessed January 13, 2011).

⁴⁸ “Kontum: Police Prevent a Bishop from Visiting Isolated Christian Communities” (Kontum : la Sécurité publique empêche un évêque de rendre visite à des communautés chrétiennes isolées), *Bulletin Eglises D’Asie*, no. 539, November 9, 2010, <http://eglasie.mepasie.org/asie-du-sud-est/vietnam/kontum-la-securite-publique-empêche-un-èveque-de-rendre-visite-a-des-communautés-chrétiennes-isolées> (accessed December 4, 2010).

⁴⁹ “Vietnam: Bishop of Kontum banned from celebrating Christmas Mass with Montagnards,” Asia News, December 27, 2010, <http://www.speroforum.com/site/article.asp?id=45755&t=Vietnam%3A++Bishop+of+Kontum+banned+from+celebrating+Christmas+Mass+with+Montagnards> (accessed December 27, 2010).

⁵⁰ While none of these instances were described in the government-controlled press as “forced,” the voluntary character of a public renunciation of faith is suspect, particularly when it is conducted ostensibly for public display, and reported on in the state media.

⁵¹ The two men were Y Brim (Ama Luong), 38, and Y K Rum (Ama Xuan), from Dak R’la village, according to *Bao Dak Nong* (Dak Nong newspaper); Trong Ruc, “Thuan An Launches a Mass Movement to Protect National Security” (Thuan an phat dong phong trao quan chung bao ve an ninh), *Bao Dak Nong*, June 23, 2010, <http://www.baodaknong.org.vn/newsdetails.aspx?newsid=4730> (accessed July 10, 2010).

where the group's founder was born).⁵² Since its founding in Kon Tum in 1999, the sect has reportedly spread to Gia Lai and Dak Lak, where it is estimated by state media contacts to have 2,500 followers in three provinces.⁵³ Government officials charge that exiled FULRO members are taking advantage of the sect's growing popularity to undermine national unity and national security. Forced renunciation ceremonies and public criticism meetings have been conducted in Kon Tum, Gia Lai, and Dak Lak provinces for people to confess their wrongdoings and sign pledges to abandon the "false religion."⁵⁴

- On July 12, 2010, state media reported that 97 households, or 297 people, "voluntarily" abandoned Dega Protestantism in the villages of Tok and Roh, Chu Se district, Gia Lai.⁵⁵
- During September 2010, police in collaboration with local officials organized several public criticism ceremonies in Duc Co district, Gia Lai. In one session on September 29, 50 people from four villages in Duc Co district, Gia Lai, were summoned to be formally criticized in front of crowds of commune residents for having "disrupted security and order" on August 25, 2010. After admitting their wrongdoings, they pledged to abandon FULRO and Dega Protestantism.⁵⁶

⁵² Tran Cong, "Unmask the hoax of the reactionary clique" (Gia Lai: Lat tay tro lua bip cua bon phan dong), *Bao Gia Lai*, July 30, 2010, <http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201007/Gia-Lai-Lat-tay-tro-lua-bip-cua-bon-phan-dong-1952887/> (accessed August 15, 2010).

⁵³ Ngoc Nhu, "The Truth about the False Ha Mon Religion" (Su that ve ta dao Ha Mon), *Cong An Nhan Dan*, July 27, 2010, <http://www.cand.com.vn/vi-VN/xahoi/2010/7/134493.cand> (accessed November 30, 2010).

⁵⁴ Viet Nghia, "Public Criticism of Followers of False Religion" (Kiem diem cac doi tuong theo ta dao Ha Mon), *Bao Dak Lak*, November 26, 2010, <http://www.baodaklak.vn/channel/3690/201011/Kiem-diem-cac-doi-tuong-theo-ta-dao-Ha-Mon-1967691/> (accessed March 21, 2011); Viet Nghia, "Eliminate the False 'Ha Mon' Religion from Society" (Loai bo ta dao 'Ha Mon' ra khoi doi song xa hoi), *Bao Dak Lak*, December 8, 2010, <http://baodaklak.vn/channel/3485/201012/Loai-bo-ta-dao-Ha-Mon-ra-khoi-doi-song-xa-hoi-1969228/> (accessed February 20, 2011); Le Quang Hoi, "Towards village peace and development" (De Lang Que Binh Yen, Phat Trien), Gia Lai Bureau for Information and Communications, December 15, 2010, http://tttt.gialai.gov.vn/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=321:-lang-que-binh-yen-phat-trin&catid=95:tin-tng-hp&Itemid=119 (accessed January 13, 2011).

⁵⁵ Thai Kim Nga, "Stories from Ia Blang Commune [Chu Se]" (Chuyen ghi o xa Ia Blang), *Bao Bien Phong* (Bien Phong newspaper), July 12, 2010, <http://www.bienphong.com.vn/nd5/detail/phong-su-ky-su/chuyen-ghi-o-xa-ia-blang/38563.074.html> (accessed August 1, 2010).

⁵⁶ N. Nhu, "Hook Up with FULRO to spread reactionary propaganda" (Cau ket voi FULRO tuyen truyen phan dong), *Cong An Nhan Dan* (People's Police), September 8, 2010, <http://ca.cand.com.vn/vi-vn/toisuxahoi/thoiluan/2010/9/168205.cand> (accessed October 1, 2010); S.C., "Criticism of 50 Subjects in Social Disturbances in Ia Dok Commune, Duc Co" (Kiem diem 50 doi tuong gay roi tai xa Ia Doc-Duc Co), *Bao Gia Lai*, October 1, 2010, <http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201010/Kiem-diem-50-doi-tuong-gay-roi-tai-xa-ia-dok-duc-Co-1960717/> (accessed November 11, 2010); Thuc Vy, "Duc Co: Resolutely Fight to Eliminate the Reactionary Organization FULRO" (Huyen Duc Co: Kien quyet dau tranh xoa bo to chuc phan dong FULRO), *Bao Gia Lai*, October 2, 2010, <http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201010/Huyen-duc-Co-Kien-quyet-dau-tranh-voi-bon-phan-dong-FuLRO-1960807/> (accessed October 12, 2010).

- In October 2010, state media reported that 567 households related to Dega Protestantism had committed to “renouncing” the religion in Krong Pa district, Gia Lai, with the commune chief making daily visits to pressure 15 remaining households who pledged to abandon their religion.⁵⁷
- In November 2010, state media reported on the ongoing “Struggle to Eliminate Dega Protestantism” in Ia Grai and Duc Co districts of Gia Lai, where the border army was breaking up “reactionary gangs” of Dega Protestants in the border areas and bringing them in for public criticism sessions.⁵⁸
- On November 24, 2010, a public denunciation meeting was held in Hring village, Cu Mgar district, Dak Lak, in which followers of the Ha Mon Catholic sect “volunteered” to confess their wrongdoings and sign commitments pledging to abandon the “false” Ha Mon religion.⁵⁹

Additional incidents of forced renunciations of faith and public denunciation ceremonies can be found in the Annex at the end of this report.

⁵⁷ Hong Son & Van Vinh, “When ‘mass mobilization is carried out well,’ the Party wins the heart of the people” (Khi “Dan van kheo” thi long dan hop y dang), *Bao Gia Lai*, October 2, 2010, <http://baogialai.com.vn/channel/5921/201010/Khi-dan-van-kheo-thi-long-dan-hop-y-dang-1960795/> (accessed November 1, 2010).

⁵⁸ Thai Kim Nga, “Gia Lai: Struggle to Eliminate ‘Dega Protestantism’” (Gia Lai: Dau tranh loai bo 'Tin lanh De-ga'), *Bao Gia Lai*, November 4, 2010, <http://baogialai.vn/channel/1602/201011/Gia-Lai-dau-tranh-loai-bo-Tin-lanh-de-ga-1965141/> (accessed January 21, 2011).

⁵⁹ Viet Nghia, “Public Criticism of Followers of False Religion,” *Bao Dak Lak*, November 24, 2010.

2010: Rubber Plantation Unrest

After a struggle, the reactionary leaders have bowed their heads, confessed their crimes, and submitted themselves for review in front of the people of the village.

—Deputy Chairman of Chu Prong district People’s Committee, September 2010

In early 2010, a three-year government campaign to root out “reactionaries” and ensure security and order in the Central Highlands neared its target completion date.⁶⁰ In April the deputy police chief of Dak Lak province reported on the campaign’s success in fighting against illegal religious activities and groups that “take advantage of religion” to act against the revolution. “In particular, [we] have fought to eliminate the rekindling of ‘Dega Protestantism,’” he said.⁶¹ Since 2001, he reported, provincial police have uncovered and exposed thousands of people linked to FULRO and Dega Protestantism; seized hundreds of documents and reactionary FULRO flags; smashed nearly 30 campaigns to incite mass demonstrations or disturbances; and detected and prevented 412 people from trying to illegally cross the border to Cambodia, while receiving hundreds of people repatriated back from Cambodia.

State newspaper, *Bao Gia Lai*, described the campaign’s accomplishments in Chu Se district, Gia Lai:

The operation exposed thousands of people including those who provided underground bases for FULRO, persuaded 284 subjects to confess, and destroyed 14 organizations that helped people flee to Cambodia. We received 229 repatriated people [from Cambodia], and wiped out nearly 90 underground networks of FULRO reactionaries and Dega Protestants. We captured 45 people

⁶⁰ Various articles in the state media mention the three-year campaign in the Central Highlands, from mid-2007 until mid-2010, as well as previous operations such as the “1,200-day” campaign (August 2006-July 2009) that focused on capturing “reactionary FULRO operatives” in Chu Se district of Gia Lai, and a 2004-2005 campaign focusing on Dak Doa and Chu Se districts, in which 147 “targets” were arrested, including Kpa Hung, a key “ringleader” who was shot and wounded during his arrest and is now serving a 12-year prison sentence. Ngoc Diep-Ksor H’bui, “The Judicial Protection and Assistance Mobile Police: Striving to Do Good Things” (Phong canh sat co dong bao ve va ho tro tu phap: No luc lam nhieu viec tot), *Bao Gia Lai*, June 28, 2010; D.A., “1,200 Days Hunting Dangerous FULRO” (1,200 Ngay Truy Bat Nhung Ten Fulro Nguy Hiem), *Cong An Thanh Pho Da Nang*, August 4, 2009; Tung Duy, “FULRO’s Nemesis” (Khac tinh cua FULRO), *Viet Bao Online*, August 18, 2005, <http://vietbao.vn/The-gioi-tre/Khac-tinh-cua-Fulro/70020908/504/> (accessed September 21, 2010).

⁶¹ C.V.T., “Maintaining Security and Order in Dak Lak Province,” a report by Y Thoal H’mook, deputy director Dak Lak Police, at the National Conference for Ethnic Minority Representatives in Vietnam (Bao cao dien hinh cua anh Thoal H’mook, PGD Cong an tinh Dak Lak tai Dai hoi dai bieu toan quoc cac dan toc thieu so Viet Nam, Cong Tac Dam Bao An Ninh, Trat Tu Tren Dia Ban Tinh Dak Lak), April 27, 2010, <http://cema.gov.vn/modules.php?name=Content&op=details&mid=117451925> (accessed February 6, 2011).

including those who we persuaded to surrender, and wrote off five FULRO groups in hiding; [this included] two special projects to pursue and arrest FULRO leaders who fled to the jungle to continue stirring up trouble. We seized 106 cell phones, SIM cards, and some reactionary documents....⁶²

In mid-2010, four clashes reportedly took place between June 10 and 22 between Montagnard villagers and rubber plantation guards in Chu Prong district of Gia Lai (for details, see Annex).⁶³ This prompted authorities to reinvent their offensive against Dega Protestants, whom the government blamed, together with overseas Montagnards, for inciting the unrest. Authorities reinforced the security presence in the three border districts of Duc Co, Ia Grai, and Chu Prong, and broadened their search for recalcitrant Dega Protestant leaders.⁶⁴

In August state media reported on a police operation in Krong Pa district, Gia Lai, to root out Dega Protestants, who were allegedly inciting workers, sending false information and accusations to overseas groups, and carrying out other “disruptive conspiracies.”

In just a short time, the Krong Pa District Public Security Team has made timely discoveries of criminals and thoroughly rooted them out; forced criminals to confess to conspiring and using tricks to take advantage of Protestantism to act for FULRO to oppose the government’s authority. [The security team] has thereby acted in time to prevent plots to incite demonstrations and riots in the district.⁶⁵

⁶² Thanh Khiết, “Effectively Prevent the Destructive Activities Carried Out by the Reactionaries,” (Ngan chan co hieu qua cac hoat dong chong pha cua bon phan dong) *Bao Gia Lai*, July 20, 2010, <http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201007/Ngan-chan-co-hieu-qua-cac-hoat-dong-chong-pha-cua-bon-phan-dong-1951515/> (accessed February 2, 2011).

⁶³ State media articles on the rubber plantation riots in Gia Lai did not appear until September, almost three months after the incidents. Ngoc Tan, “Chu Prong: ‘Hot’ Rubber Plantations,” (Chu Prong: Nhung vuon cao su dang ‘nong’) *Bao Gia Lai*, September 9, 2010; Ngoc Tan, “Unmask ‘the puppeteer’ behind the stealing of latex,” (Lat mat nhung ke ‘giat day’ vu trom mu cao su) *Dan Viet*, September 6, 2010, <http://danviet.vn/13622p1c33/lat-mat-nhung-ke-giat-day-vu-trom-mu-cao-su.htm> (accessed February 2, 2011).

⁶⁴ In July 2010 an article in *Bao Gia Lai* covered the achievements of the 01 CA-QS plan in Gia Lai by provincial and district police and soldiers from Corps 15 to ensure defense and national security—both political security and security of rubber plantations—in the three border districts of Duc Co, Ia Grai, and Chu Prong. Thanh Khiết, “Building National Security and Defense for All Citizens” (Xay dung the tran an ninh-quoc phong toan dan), *Bao Gia Lai*, July 5, 2010, <http://baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201007/Xay-dung-the-tran-an-ninh-quoc-phong-toan-dan-1949504/> (accessed September 1, 2010).

⁶⁵ Thanh Khiết, “Krong Pa—Preventing the Saboteurial Plots of FULRO” (Krong Pa—Ngan chan am muu chong pha cua FULRO), *Bao Gia Lai*, August 21, 2010, <http://baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201008/Krong-Pa-Ngan-chan-am-muu-chong-pha-cua-FULRO-1955669/> (accessed January 21, 2011).

On August 25, 2010, police arrested four leading Dega Protestants in Chu Prong: Ro Mah Hit, Kpuih Do, Kpa Thom, and Ro Lah K'lanh. They were accused of inciting the “robberies and civil disturbances” in June. According to *Bao Gia Lai*:

In these targets' abodes, the police found lists of people who participated in meetings or donated money, a number of papers connected to reactionary people in prison, and propaganda VCDs about the so-called “Dega Protestantism” and “Dega State.”⁶⁶

Chu Prong district authorities mobilized civil defense forces in seven communes and localities to address the resurgence of Dega Protestantism in the district and arrest key “targets.” *Bao Gia Lai* quoted Nguyen Anh Dung, deputy chairman of the district People's Committee, as saying: “A number of subjects stealthily carry out activities against our state, steal latex, and rob people of their property.”⁶⁷

The following day, August 26, another “disturbance” took place in Chu Prong, according to *Bao Gia Lai*. After the rubber company's guards arrested one person who “stole” rubber latex, the article stated, more than 70 people from two villages arrived at the plantation, causing a riot.

In September Montagnard advocacy groups in the United States began to report that security forces had arrested and detained people in Chu Prong in August and September and sealed off several other districts in Gia Lai, bordering Cambodia.⁶⁸

Meanwhile, officials began to step up public denunciation sessions focusing on Dega Protestants allegedly linked to the rubber plantation unrest in Chu Prong and the adjoining border districts of Duc Co and Ia Grai. In a state media report on September 18, provincial

⁶⁶ Ngoc Tan, “Chu Prong: ‘Hot’ Rubber Plantations,” *Bao Gia Lai*, September 9, 2010. See also Vu Dinh Nam & Ngoc Tan, “Chu Prong: Surge in Latex Theft” (Chu Prong: Trom cap mu cao su hoan hanh), *Dan Toc va Phat Trien*, September 16, 2010, http://www.baodantoc.vn/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2231:ch-prong-trm-cp-m-cao-su-hoanh-hanh&catid=115:phap-lut&Itemid=369 (accessed October 1, 2010).

⁶⁷ Anh Huy, “Chu Prong District: Struggling to Defeat the Dark Plans of the Reactionaries” (Huyen Chu Prong: Dau tranh lam that bai am muu den toi cua bon phan dong), *Bao Gia Lai*, September 21, 2010, <http://baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201009/Huyen-Chu-Prong-dau-tranh-lam-that-bai-am-muu-den-toi-cua-bon-phan-dong-1959465/> (accessed October 10, 2010).

⁶⁸ According to the US-based Montagnard Refugee Organization (MRO), police and soldiers arrested and beat eight Montagnard Christians as they gathered for house church services in Chu Prong between August 21 and September 2. Of the eight, three were also named in *Bao Gia Lai*'s accounts of arrests carried out in August. On September 28 and October 14, police summoned another 22 Montagnard Christians to Bo Ngoong commune police station in Chu Se district, Gia Lai, where they were beaten, detained, and threatened for “worshipping God,” according to MRO. The US-based Montagnard Foundation, Inc. (MFI) reported that on August 22, soldiers and police launched “military operations” in five districts of Gia Lai to “wipe out” Dega Christians. MRO email correspondence with Human Rights Watch, September 6, 10, and 27, 2010, and November 1, 2010; MFI press release, “Vietnam Launches ‘Military Wipe Out Operation’ on Dega Christians in the Central Highlands,” September 15, 2010.

authorities announced that Dega Protestantism and FULRO were “actively recovering” in the three districts of Ia Gra, Chu Prong, and Duc Co and spreading to Chu Puhand Krong Pa districts.⁶⁹

Government officials justified the arrests and pressure on Dega Protestants by accusing them of inciting the rubber plantation riots under the direction of FULRO members living in the United States. According to articles in the state media:

Just a few days after these Dega Protestants were captured, the latex robberies and civil disturbances quickly settled down. This proves even more clearly the inciting role organized by these reactionary FULROs in exile.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Thanh Khiet, “Gia Lai: Prevent a Plot to Bring Back Reactionary FULRO Organization,” (Gia Lai: Ngan chan am muu phuc hoi to chuc phan dong FULRO) Gialapro.com, September 18, 2010, <http://gialapro.com/?cmd=act:news|newsid:1932> (accessed October 23, 2010).

⁷⁰ Ngoc Tan, “Chu Prong: ‘Hot’ Rubber Plantations” *Bao Gia Lai*, September 9, 2010.

Ongoing Arrest and Imprisonment

Since 2001, more than 350 Montagnards have been sentenced to long prison sentences on vaguely-defined national security charges for their involvement in public protests and unregistered house churches considered subversive by the government, or for trying to flee to Cambodia to seek asylum. They include Dega church activists as well as Montagnard Christians who do not describe themselves as followers of Dega Protestantism, including pastors, house church leaders, and land rights activists. Charges brought against them include undermining national solidarity (Penal Code article 87) or disrupting security (article 89).⁷¹

At least 65 of the Montagnards imprisoned since 2001 were arrested trying to seek safety and political asylum in Cambodia. They were sentenced to prison in Vietnam on charges of “fleeing abroad to oppose the People’s Administration” (article 91).

By making peaceful dissent and unsanctioned religious activities criminal acts, the Vietnamese government disregards fundamental rights and Vietnam's own commitments under international human rights treaties it has signed, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, acceded to by Vietnam in 1982. The forced return of asylum seekers violates the rights to leave one's country and to seek asylum outside of one's country, which are recognized in articles 13 and 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.⁷²

At least 250 Montagnards currently remain in prison or are awaiting trial. During 2009 and 2010, Vietnamese state media reported that 12 Montagnards were tried and sentenced to prison; it is unknown how many others were tried in proceedings not covered in the state press, or were detained without trial in government “education centers” (*co so giao duc* or *trung tam giao duc thuong xuyen*).⁷³

The arrests are ongoing, with more than 70 Montagnards arrested or detained during 2010 in Gia Lai alone.

⁷¹ Penal Code of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, cited in *A Selection of Fundamental Laws of Vietnam* (Hanoi: The Gioi Publishers, 2001).

⁷² Forced return of asylum seekers is also in violation of Cambodia's obligations as a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol not to return people to a place where their lives or liberty are at risk, or where they face the possibility of being tortured.

⁷³ Ordinance 44/2002/PL-UBTVQH10 authorizes placing people suspected of threatening national security in detention for up to two years without trial in so-called “education establishments” (*co so giao duc*) operated by the Ministry of Public Security.

Torture and Mistreatment in Custody

Montagnards who are arrested are often severely beaten or tortured in police custody and pre-trial detention.⁷⁴



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Pháp luật

10 năm tù cho 2 kẻ phá hoại chính sách đoàn kết
12:40:00 17/11/2010

Bị cáo Ksor Y Dú bị xử phạt 6 năm tù, còn Kpã Y Cồ - kẻ đã bị Y Đ phá hoại chính sách đoàn kết. 2 bị cáo đã lời kéo tuyên truyền, kích động số ở miền núi Phú Yên, Đắk Lắk hưởng theo cái gọi "Tin lành Đega" phá hoại chính trị.

Kết quả điều tra, truy tố và xét xử cho thấy, trong hai tháng 7 và 8/2008, 47 tuổi, trú ở buôn Ma Sung, xã Ea Bia và Kpã Y Cồ, còn gọi là thôn Hai Riêng, huyện Sông Hinh thường xuyên liên lạc điện thoại phân động lưu vong ở Mỹ tham gia hoạt động "Tin lành Đega".

Do trình độ dân trí và nhận thức pháp luật thấp kém nên Y Dú và Y Cồ kéo tuyên truyền, kích động một số đồng bào dân tộc thiểu số ở miền núi "Tin lành Đega" để mưu toan gây rối an ninh trật tự, phá hoại

Hai bị cáo tại phiên xử sơ thẩm của TAND tỉnh Phú Yên.

November 17, 2010: *Cong An Nhan Dan* (People's Police) newspaper reports on the trial of Ksor Y Du and Kpa Y Co to six and four years, respectively, for allegedly inciting ethnic minorities in Phu Yen and Dak Lak provinces to join "Dega Protestantism" and thereby disrupting security and order. The article notes that Ksor Y Du had been previously imprisoned for four years for attempting to flee to Cambodia. © 2010 CAND

Since 2001, at least 25 Montagnards have died in prisons, jails, or police lock-ups after beatings or illnesses sustained while in custody, or shortly after being prematurely released by prison authorities to a hospital or home.⁷⁵

Authorities arrested Y Ben Hdok in Dak Lak province in late April 2008 regarding his participation in protests earlier that month in Dak Lak and the subsequent flight to Cambodia of several people from his village. Then 29 years old, Hdok was arrested the evening of April 28 as he was coming home from work. Police took him to Buon Ma Thuot city, where he was detained for three days incommunicado, despite repeated requests by his wife and mother to see him.

⁷⁴ Human Rights Watch has documented the widespread practice of police beating and mistreating suspects in custody in Vietnam, even for routine traffic violations. In an alarming number of cases, detainees die after beatings inflicted by police while in custody. People arrested on national security charges because of their religious or political beliefs are even more susceptible to torture, not only because police want to extract information or confessions from them, but because they are routinely held incommunicado, without access to legal representation and sometimes even family members, during their pre-trial detention period, which can last from three months to more than one year. See "Vietnam: Widespread Police Brutality, Deaths in Custody," Human Rights Watch news release, September 22, 2010, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/09/22/vietnam-widespread-police-brutality-deaths-custody>.

⁷⁵ Information about Montagnard prisoners, including those who died in prison or shortly after their early release to a hospital or home, is based on Human Rights Watch interviews with former Montagnard prisoners, families of Montagnard prisoners, and Montagnard advocacy groups in the United States from 2001 to 2011, as well as articles in Vietnam's state media, international wire service reports, and reports by the US State Department and US Commission on International Religious Freedom during the same time period.



Y Ben Hdok with his daughter, shortly before his death. ©2008 Private

On May 1, 2008, the police told Hdok’s wife that he hanged himself during a break in his interrogation and told them to pick up his body, which had been brought to the hospital.⁷⁶ “His head was broken, his ribs were broken, his leg was broken, and his teeth were knocked out,” a family member told Human Rights Watch.⁷⁷

Among those recently sentenced to prison were Ksor Y Du and Kpa Y Co, described in a 2010 US State Department report as “lay preachers affiliated with the Good News Mission Church.”⁷⁸ In November 2010 the Phu Yen provincial court sentenced them to prison terms of six and four years, respectively, for “undermining national unity” under article 87.

August 5, 2009: *Cong An Nhân Dân* (People’s Police) newspaper reports that police have capped off a three-year campaign to capture “hard-core FULRO elements who had fled into the forest” by arresting Rah Ma Hlach and Siu Koch on July 22, 2009. In January 2010, the two were sentenced to 12 and nine years’ imprisonment, respectively, on charges of undermining national solidarity. “The black plots of this group were discovered and in a timely manner rendered powerless by the competent authorities,” the article stated. © 2009 CAND ©2009 CAND

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Pháp luật

Hai đối tượng cốt cán FULRO sa lưới
18:56:00 05/08/2009
Qua các biện pháp nghiệp vụ, đêm 22/7, các đơn vị chức năng bắt gọn Rah Ma Hlach và Siu Koch tại huyện cuối cùng trong chuyên án truy bắt số đối tượng cốt cán FULRO sa lưới.
>> CSĐN Gia Lai: Truy bắt nhiều đối tượng FULRO nguy hiểm
Sau các đợt kích động biểu tình, bạo loạn bị đấu tranh quyền, chia rẽ khối đại đoàn kết các dân tộc thiểu số T chỉ đạo hàng chục đối tượng cầm đầu cốt cán trên địa

Rah Ma Hlach, Siu Koch.

⁷⁶ US State Department, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, “2008 Country Reports on Human rights Practices: Vietnam,” February 25, 2009, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/eap/119063.htm> (accessed July 14, 2010).

⁷⁷ Human Rights Watch interviews with relatives of Y Ben Hdok, May 2008; US State Department, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, “2008 Country Reports on Human rights Practices: Vietnam,” February 25, 2009, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/eap/119063.htm> (accessed July 14, 2010); MFI, “Vietnam’s Blueprint for Ethnic Cleansing: Report on the Persecution of the Indigenous Degar Montagnards,” May 2008.

⁷⁸ US State Department, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, “2009 Country Reports on Human rights Practices: Vietnam,” March 11, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/eap/136015.htm> (accessed July 19, 2010).

In January 2010 the Gia Lai provincial court handed down prison sentences to two Montagnards, Rmah Hlach and Siu Koch, on the same charges. Their arrests in July 2009 in Chu Se district, Gia Lai, were heralded in the *People's Police* newspaper as one of the high points of the three-year campaign to eliminate Dega Protestantism:

In a 1,200-day special operation that the Gia Lai police have recently closed, the police captured every relevant criminal in Chu Se district, an enormous victory which shows ever more clearly one fact: none of the enemy's dark schemes will ever succeed in this land of Tay Nguyen (the Central Highlands).⁷⁹

⁷⁹ D.A., "1,200 Days Hunting Dangerous FULRO," (1,200 Ngày Truy Bạt Nhung Ten FULRO Nguy Hiem), *Cong An Thanh Pho Da Nang* (Da Nang Police), August 4, 2009, <http://cadvn.com.vn/News/Print.ca?id=29006> (accessed February 2, 2011).

Recommendations

Human Rights Watch recommends that Vietnam's bilateral donors, including the European Union, Japan, and the United States, press Vietnam to improve its record on religious freedom by meeting the following benchmarks. Until these benchmarks are met, Human Rights Watch recommends that the United States reinstate Vietnam's designation as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) for religious freedom violations.

To the Vietnamese Government

- Allow all independent, religious organizations to freely conduct religious activities and govern themselves. Churches and denominations that do not choose to join one of the officially authorized religious organizations with government-appointed governing boards should be allowed to operate independently.
- Release or grant amnesty to all people imprisoned or detained because of their nonviolent religious and political beliefs and practices.
- Investigate and punish those responsible for all instances of violence against religious believers, including by civilians acting in concert with government officials. Such incidents include the violent suppression of the April 2004 protests by Montagnards in the Central Highlands, and reports of torture, beatings, and killings of Montagnards in police custody, jails, prisons, and re-education camps.
- Ensure that all domestic legislation addressing religious affairs is brought into conformity with international human rights standards, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Amend provisions in domestic law that criminalizes certain religious activities on the basis of imprecisely-defined "national security" crimes.
- Amend Ordinance No. 21/2004/PL-UBTVQH11 on Beliefs and Religion to include a provision that prohibits forced renunciation ceremonies by government officials, linked to specific disciplinary measures for offenders.
- Enforce provisions in Instruction No. 01/2005/CT-TTg, "Some Work Regarding Protestantism," that outlaw forced renunciations of faith and establish specific penalties for those who carry out such practices.
- Permit outside experts, including those from the United Nations (UN) and independent international human rights organizations, to have access to religious followers in Vietnam, including members of denominations not officially recognized by the government.

- Invite the UN special rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, and the UN special rapporteur on torture to visit Vietnam to investigate violations of religious freedom and other rights abuses committed against members of churches that are not officially sanctioned by the government.

Annex: Harassment, Arrests, and Forced Recantations of Faith of Montagnard Christians in Vietnam's Central Highlands

Chronology of Events During 2010

Compiled from Vietnamese State Media Sources

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
January 22, 2010	Gia Lai	Chu Se district: la Blang commune, Tok and Rok villages	Forced renunciation.	Government newspaper <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> reports that 97 households or 297 people in the villages of Tok and Roh, Chu Se “voluntarily” abandoned Dega Protestantism.	Le Quang Hoi, “Story of people who turn back to ‘good road’” (Chuyen nhung nguoi “phuc thien”), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , January 22, 2010, http://baogialai.vn/channel/1622/201001/Chuyen-nhung-nguoi-phuc-thien-1925780/ (accessed February 6, 2010).
March 2010	Gia Lai		Critique of “Ha Mon” Catholic sect.	State media article reports that the “Ha Mon” sect is spreading to Gia Lai.	Tran Cong, “Gia Lai: Unmask the tricks employed by reactionary clique” (Gia Lai: Lat tay tro lua bip cua bon phan dong), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> (<i>Gia Lai</i> newspaper), July 30, 2010, http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201007/Gia-Lai-Lat-tay-tro-lua-bip-cua-bon-phan-dong-1952887/ (accessed August 15, 2010).
April 2010	Dak Lak		Report by deputy director of Dak Lak Provincial Public Security regarding	Dak Lak Provincial Public Security Deputy Director Thoal Y H’mook reports that since 2001, “provincial police have discovered and exposed thousands of people linked to FULRO	C.V.T., “Working to Ensure Security and Order in Dak Lak Province,” by Thoal Y H’mook, deputy director of Dak Lak Provincial Public Security, at the

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
May 26, 2010	Kon Tum	Sa Thay district	State media article about the origins of the Ha Mon Catholic sect in Kon Tum in 1999, which has reportedly spread to ethnic minority areas in Gia Lai and Dak Lak provinces since late 2009.	and Dega Protestantism; seized hundreds of documents and reactionary FULRO flags; smashed nearly 30 campaigns to incite mass demonstrations or disturbances; and detected and prevented 412 people trying to illegally cross the border to Cambodia, while receiving hundreds repatriated back from Cambodia... [Provincial police] have fought against illegal religious activities, and activities that take advantage of religion to act against the revolution. In particular, [we] have fought to eliminate the rekindling of 'Dega Protestantism'."	National Congress of Ethnic Minority Deputies in Vietnam" ("Cong tac dam bao an ninh, trat tu tren dia ban tinh Dak Lak" Bao cao dien hinh cua anh Y Thoal H'mook PGD Cong an tinh Dak Lak tai dai hoi dai bieu toan quoc cac dan toc thieu so Viet Nam), Trang tin dien tu Uy ban Dan toc (Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs Website), April 27, 2010, http://cema.gov.vn/modules.php?name=Content&op=details&mid=117451925 (accessed February 6, 2011).
				Article alleges that the Ha Mon Catholic sect is a "fake religion" that is being taken advantage of by exiled FULRO to abuse religious freedom and undermine national unity and national security; also inciting people not to believe the policies and programs of the state. Some people are abandoning their work, school, etc., to participate; meanwhile the group calls for monetary contributions. After being exposed by Kon Tum authorities, the article states, sect founder Y Gyin and 32 followers reportedly go into hiding, under the direction of FULRO exiles, who call them "Dega Catholics".	Le Duy & Thanh Khiet, "The Deceptive Nature of the So-called 'Ha Mon' Religion" (Ban chat lua bip cua cai goi la 'Dao Ha Mon'), <i>Cong An Thanh pho Da Nang</i> (Da Nang Police), May 26, 2010, http://cadn.com.vn/News/An-Ninh-Doi-Song/CA-Pha-An/2010/5/26/42971.ca (accessed June 15, 2010).

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
June 2010	Gia Lai	Mang Yang, Dak Doa districts	Forced Renunciations; propaganda campaign against Ha Mon Catholic sect.	<p><i>Bao Gia Lai</i> reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 households with 83 people “voluntarily” agree to abandon Ha Mon sect in Jo Long village, Ha Ra commune, Mang Yang district. Close to 90 Ha Mon believers abandon the religion in Kon Ma Har village, Ha Dong commune, Dak Doa district. 	Tran Cong & Thanh Hai, “Unmask the evil deception of Ha Mon Sect” (Vach mat ban chat lua bip cua ta Dao Ha Mon), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , July 10, 2010, http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201007/Vach-mat-ban-chat-lua-bip-cua-ta-dao-ha-mon-1950142/ (accessed August 1, 2010).
Chu Prong Rubber Plantation Unrest: Overview and Summary of Events, June 10-August 26					
June 10 – August 26, 2010	Gia Lai	Chu Prong district: Chu Prong Rubber Plantations	<p>On September 9, 2010, <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> carried its first accounts of unrest in Chu Prong rubber plantations that started in June 2010. Authorities blame the unrest on lazy youth quitting their jobs who have been incited by Dega Protestants and exiled FULRO.</p>	<p><i>Bao Gia Lai</i> reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> June 10: Youths clash with rubber plantation defense forces. June 15: More villagers arrive, riot ensues; commune police and company defense forces are called in to disperse the crowd. June 19: Another big conflict when many villagers return; 80 police and plantation defense forces are called in. June 22: Villagers return to ‘take revenge’. August 25: Defense forces begin to arrest people connected to the unrest in June for theft, which causes riots that day in two different villages. 	Ngoc Tan, “Chu Prong: ‘Hot’ Rubber Plantations” (Chu Prong: Nhung vuon cao su dang ‘nong’), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , September 9, 2010, http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201009/Chu-Prong-Nhung-vuon-cao-su-dang-nong-1957912/ (accessed September 18, 2010).
Details, Rubber Plantation Unrest in Chu Prong, June and August 2010					
June 10, 2010	Gia Lai	Chu Prong district: Team 24	Conflict between youth from Mui village allegedly trying to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> states that six youths, led by brothers Ro Lah Dau and Ro Lah Den, enter Team 24 Suoi Mo Rubber Plantation and try 	Ngoc Tan, “Chu Prong: ‘Hot’ Rubber Plantations” (Chu Prong: Nhung vuon cao su dang ‘nong’), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> ,

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
		Suoi Mo Rubber Plantation Youth come from Mui Village, Binh Giao commune, CP	steal latex and workers and security guards at Team 24 Suoi Mo Rubber Plantation.	to steal 80 kilograms of latex. o The same day scores of youth from Mui village enter a lot to steal latex and fight with workers and security, throwing a bowl at Mr. Nghiep's head, injuring him and requiring stitches.	September 9, 2010.
June 15, 2010	Gia Lai	Chu Prong district: la O commune, Tung village	Security forces try to stop 30 people from Tung village from "stealing latex"; people reportedly fight back.	<i>Bao Gia Lai:</i> "On June 15, around 30 people from Tung village, la O commune entered a lot to steal latex. When security arrived to stop them they immediately began breaking the bowls containing latex, using bows and catapults to fight back."	Ngoc Tan, "Chu Prong: 'Hot' Rubber Plantations" (Chu Prong: Nhung vuon cao su dang 'nong'), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , September 9, 2010.
June 19, 2010	Gia Lai	Chu Prong district: Team 3 Rubber Plantation in la Grang commune Villagers from Canh village, Binh Giao Commune	Unrest at Team 3 Unity Rubber Plantation in la Grang commune and 80 commune and district public security officers and company guards are dispatched to quell the riot by hundreds of Montagnards from Canh village, Binh Giao commune.	<i>Bao Gia Lai:</i> "A particularly serious incident occurred on June 19... Around 50 people from Canh village, Binh Giao commune, carrying iron bars and knives flagrantly entered a lot in order to steal latex. Security forces and the workers came to request that they leave, but they fiercely resisted. In the struggle, Ro Ma Ul and Siu Hien were slightly injured on their arms. Immediately, these two people ran back to their village shouting that they had been beaten. Thus incited, hundreds of villagers carrying sticks with iron nail tips and blades began to chase off security forces and workers,	Ngoc Tan, "Chu Prong: 'Hot' Rubber Plantations" (Chu Prong: Nhung vuon cao su dang 'nong'), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , September 9, 2010.

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
June 22, 2010	Gia Lai	Chu Prong district: Team 3 Rubber Plantation	More unrest at Team 3 Rubber Plantation. Villagers return to Team 3 Unity Rubber Plantation to “take revenge.”	and then returned to destroy the plantation. Only when the district police, commune police, and company security arrived with a force of nearly 80 people did the crowd disperse.” <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> reports that on June 22 “a crowd of villagers carrying knives and bows came to ‘take revenge.’ Hundreds of bowls of latex and three motorbikes belonging to workers were destroyed... ‘Since that day, we workers are afraid to enter the plantation. The security guards have to be equipped with iron shields to guard against being attacked with dangerous weapons...’”	Ngoc Tan, “Chu Prong: ‘Hot’ Rubber Plantations” (Chu Prong: Nhung vuon cao su dang ‘nong’), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , September 9, 2010.
August 26, 2010	Gia Lai	Chu Prong district: Team 12 Rubber Plantation	Rubber plantation Guard Forces arrest a Montagnard for theft at Team 12 Rubber Plantation. Riot reportedly ensues when 30 Montagnards from Bac I village arrive, followed later by 40 people from Chu Prong town.	<i>Bao Gia Lai</i> : “On August 26 at Lot 28B belonging to Team 12 Mo Suoi Farming Community Ltd. –a member of Chu Prong Rubber—a number of people in Lan village (la Kly commune) flagrantly entered the lot in order to steal latex. The Guard Forces arrived to intervene, arresting one person for theft. Shortly afterwards there was a riot in the lot. Around 30 people—mostly youths from Bac I village (la Phin commune), thundered in on their motorcycles. Some held sticks, others knives, and they forced their way into the lot and destroyed over 300 bowls of rubber. When Guard Forces and workers arrived and	Ngoc Tan, “Chu Prong: ‘Hot’ Rubber Plantations,” (Chu Prong: Nhung vuon cao su dang ‘nong’), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , September 9, 2010.

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
June 20, 2010	Dak Nong	Dak Mil district: Thuan An commune, Sar Par village	Mass movement launched to protect national security; two people are brought for public criticism.	requested that the rioters disperse, a number of these people began to throw the bowls used to hold latex into the crowd. The head of the team, Nguyen Huy Duong—who was struck in the eye—had to go to the hospital for emergency treatment. Only when the company’s Guard Forces cooperated with the commune’s police forces did the rioters agree to disperse.... “Also during this time over 40 people from Giang village [Chu Prong town] entered the lot to smash bowls of latex. When security arrived, they demanded 300,000 dong before they would agree to leave the plantation!”	Trong Ruc, “Thuan An Launches a Mass Movement to Protect National Security” (Thuan An phat dong phong trao quan chung bao ve an ninh), <i>Dak Nong (Dak Nong newspaper)</i> , June 23, 2010, http://www.baodaknong.org.vn/newsdetails.aspx?newsid=4730 (accessed July 10, 2010).
June 28, 2010	Gia Lai	Chu Se district	State media article assesses impact of three-year campaign targeting Chu Se district of Gia Lai by	<i>Bao Gia Lai</i> : Combat unit belonging to the Mobile Police Battalion, the Police Special Forces Platoon...and other units have been deployed to effectively struggle against crime. Capt. Ngo Thanh Son, Deputy Chief of the Battalion and	Ngoc Diep-Ksor H’bui, “The Judicial Protection and Assistance Mobile Police: Striving to Do Good Things” (Phong canh sat co dong bao ve va ho tro tu phap: No luc lam nhieu viec tot),

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
			Mobile Police Special Forces and Political Security Section VI of the Ministry of Public Security.	Commander of the Police Special Task Force, said, “Three years ago, when we received information that the leading FULRO operatives were hiding in the forests of Chu Se, the Board of Directors of the Provincial Police promptly directed police units to cooperate with Political Security Section VI, deploying 60 officers and soldiers to march into the dark woods.”	<i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , June 28, 2010, http://baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201006/Phong-Canh-sat-Co-dong-Bao-ve-va-Ho-tro-tu-phap-No-luc-lam-nhieu-Viec-tot-1948557/ (accessed March 4, 2011).
July 5, 2010	Gia Lai	Duc Co, la Grai, Chu Prong districts	State media article assesses four-year campaign by provincial and district police and military Corps 15 under the 01 CA-QS plan to ensure political stability, national security, and defense in three border districts of Gia Lai and for rubber plantations located there. Goals of the 01 CA-QS plan are: a) ensure national security and defense (both political security and security of rubber plantation);	<i>Bao Gia Lai</i> : Army owned rubber companies and police forces “actively coordinate propaganda to mobilize the people to submit to the Party’s policies and guidelines and the state’s legal regulations, to refute distortions propagated by FULRO and prevent illegal crossings to Cambodia. Since the launch of the mass movement for the protection and security of the Motherland, the people have supplied police forces with hundreds of sources on criminals, preventing those who have been fooled by the FULRO reactionaries from escaping abroad, rooting out hidden FULRO cells and handling the illegal trade of rubber.... Strictly adhering to the slogan that: ‘The [army] Corps is bound to the province, companies are bound to the district, the workforce is bound to the village’ in order to	Thanh Khiết, “Building National Security and Defense for All Citizens” (Xay dung the tran an ninh– quoc phong toan dan), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , July 5, 2010, http://baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201007/Xay-dung-the-tran-an-ninh-quoc-phong-toan-dan-1949504/ (accessed August 1, 2010).

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
			b) prevent FULRO and escapes into Cambodia; c) Mobilize masses to turn in reactionaries; d) stop crime, especially illegal smuggling of rubber.	increase the effectiveness of mobilization works, to date 72 out of 77 production forces have organized partnerships with 116 out of 117 villages in the three border districts.”	
July 10, 2010	Gia Lai	Chu Pah, Dak Doa, Mang Yang, Dak Po districts	State media article “unmasks the deception” of the Ha Mon religion and its spread to Catholic areas in several Gia Lai districts in 2009.	<i>Bao Gia Lai</i> reports that the Ha Mon Catholic sect has spread to ethnic minority Catholic areas in Chu Pah, Dak Doa, Mang Yang, and Dak Po districts of Gia Lai in late 2009.	Tran Cong & Thanh Hai, “Unmask the Evil Deception of the false Ha Mon Sect” (Vach mat ban chat lua bip cua ta dao Ha Mon), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , July 10, 2010, http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201007/Vach-mat-ban-chat-lua-bip-cua-ta-dao-Ha-Mon-1950142/ (accessed August 1, 2010).
July 2010	Gia Lai	Chu Se district	Forced renunciation of faith.	<i>Bao Gia Lai</i> reports that 97 households in the villages of Tok and Roh, Chu Se district, “voluntarily abandon ‘Dega Protestantism’.”	Thai Kim Nga, “Stories from Ia Blang Commune [Chu Se]”, (Chuyen ghi o xa Ia Blang), <i>Bao Bien Phong (Bien Phong Newspaper)</i> , July 12, 2010, http://www.bienphong.com.vn/nd5/etail/phong-su-ky-su/chuyen-ghi-o-xa-ia-biang/38563.074.html (accessed August 1, 2010).
July 27, 2010	Kon Tum Gia Lai	Mang Yang district	State media story about the Catholic “Ha Mon” sect estimates that 2,500 people in	Several people are quoted in <i>Cong An Nhan Dan</i> (People’s Police) as to why they “voluntarily” left the “false religion” of Ha Mon, allegedly being used by FULRO exiles to	Ngoc Nhu, “The Truth about the False Ha Mon Religion” (Su that ve ta dao Ha Mon), <i>Cong An Nhan Dan</i> , July 27, 2010, http://www.cand.com.vn/vi-

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
	Dak Lak		eight districts of three provinces “ignorantly” follow the sect.	become “Dega Catholicism,” a political force like “Dega Protestantism” in the past.	VN/xahoi/2010/7/134493.cand (accessed March 4, 2011).
July 30, 2010	Gia Lai	Phu Thien district: Churoh Ponan A village	Official campaign against Catholic Ha Mon sect and “Dega Protestantism.”	<i>Bao Gia Lai</i> reports: “To expose deception, many undercover agents are dispatched to scout out and monitor the situation, mobilize people to report [on suspects] and support the police. Thus within a short time, [we were able to] prevent the leadership of exiled FULRO to revive the reactionary organization Dega Protestantism.... Recently, people who were infected with ‘reactionary ghosts’ were publicly criticized at the village of Churoh Ponan A. After the evil was exposed again and pushed away, peaceful life returned to the villagers.”	Tran Cong, “Gia Lai: Lat tay tro lua bip cua bon phan dong,” <i>Bao Gia Lai (Gia Lai newspaper)</i> , July 30, 2010, http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201007/Gia-Lai-Lat-tay-tro-lua-bip-cua-bon-phan-dong-1952887/ (accessed August 15, 2010).
August 2010					
August 21, 2010	Gia Lai	Krong Pa district	Police campaign against “Dega Protestants.” State media report regarding district police operations to root out Dega Protestants who are allegedly inciting workers, sending false information and accusations overseas,	<i>Bao Gia Lai</i> : “In just a short time, the Krong Pa district Public Security Team has made timely discoveries of criminals, thoroughly rooting them out; forced criminals to confess to conspiring, using tricks and taking advantage of Protestantism to act for FULRO to oppose the government’s authority. They have thereby acted in time to prevent plots to incite demonstrations and riots in the district.”	Thanh Khiet, “Krong Pa–Preventing the Saboteurial Plots of FULRO” (Krong Pa–Ngan chan am muu chong pha cua FULRO), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , August 21, 2010, http://baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201008/Krong-Pa-Ngan-chan-am-muu-chong-pha-cua-FULRO-1955669/ (accessed January 21, 2011).

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
August 25, 2010	Gia Lai	Chu Prong district	Police arrest four leading “Dega Protestants” for allegedly inciting the rubber plantation unrest in June.	Those arrested are: Ro Mah Hit, Kpuih Do, Kpa Thom, and Ro Lah K’Lanh.	Ngoc Tan, “Chu Prong: ‘Hot’ Rubber Plantations,” <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , September 9, 2010. Vu Dinh Nam & Ngoc Tan, “Chu Prong: Surge in Latex Theft” (Chu Prong: Trom cap mu cao su hoan hanh), <i>Bao Dan Toc</i> , September 16, 2010.
September 2010					
September 1, 2010	Gia Lai	Duc Co district: Neh village, la Din commune	Public Criticism Session.	<i>Cong An Nhan Dan</i> (People’s Police) reports that police in collaboration with local officials organize public-criticism session for Siu Nheng, 62, and Siu Hiep, 32, in la Din commune, Duc Co district.	N. Nhu, “Hooking Up with FULRO to spread reactionary propaganda” (Cau ket voi FULRO tuyen truyen phan dong), <i>Cong An Nhan Dan</i> , September 8, 2010, http://ca.cand.com.vn/vi-vn/thoisuxahoi/thoiluan/2010/9/168205.cand (accessed October 8, 2010).
September 8, 2010	Gia Lai	Duc Co district: la Krel and la Krieng communes	Public Criticism Session.	Cong An Nhan Dan (People’s Police): Three people are submitted to public criticism session in la Krel and la Krieng communes of Duc Co, including Kpuih Tho, 50, Ro Mah Toan, 38, and Kpuih Nen, 41.	N. Nhu, “Hooking Up with FULRO to spread reactionary propaganda” (Cau ket voi FULRO tuyen truyen phan dong), <i>Cong An Nhan Dan</i> , September 8, 2010.
September 9, 2010		Chu Prong district		First reporting by state media on the June unrest in Chu Prong rubber plantation.	Ngoc Tan, “Chu Prong: ‘Hot’ Rubber Plantations” (Chu Prong: Nhung vuon cao su dang ‘nong’), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , September 9, 2010.

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
September 18, 2010	Gia Lai	la Grai, Chu Prong, and Duc Co districts	Authorities announce that FULLRO and Dega Protestantism are actively recovering in several districts.	Gialaipro.com reports that FULLRO and Dega Protestantism are reviving in la Grai, Chu Prong, and Duc Co; and spreading to Chu Puhand Krong Pa districts; alleges that core leaders are distributing “reactionary” documents, VCDs, etc.	Thanh Khiet, “Gia Lai: Prevent a Plot to Bring Back Reactionary FULLRO Organization” (Gia Lai: Ngan chan am muu phuc hoi to chuc phan dong FULLRO), Gialaipro.com, September 8, 2010, http://gialaipro.com/?cmd=act:news newsid:1932 (accessed October 1, 2010).
September 21, 2010	Gia Lai	Chu Prong district: Thang Hung, Binh Gia, la Bang	Following the arrest of four Dega Protestants (Ro Mah Hit, Kpuih Do, Kpa Thom, and Rah Lan Klanh), officials organize public criticism sessions and mobilize militia in seven communes and localities.	<i>Bao Gia Lai</i> reports that “Dega Protestantism” has been rekindled in Chu Prong; district officials mobilize “self-defense units from three businesses and militias from seven communes and towns.” <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> quotes Nguyen Anh Dung, vice director of the district People’s Committee as saying: “A number of our enemies stealthily try to destroy our state and steal rubber, rob people of their property. After a struggle, the reactionary leaders have bowed their heads, confessed their crimes and submitted themselves for review in front of the people of the village.”	Anh Huy, “Chu Prong District: Struggling to Defeat the Dark Plans of the Reactionaries” (Huyen Chu Prong: Dau tranh lam that bai am muu den toi cua bon phan dong), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , September 21, 2010, http://baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201009/Huyen-Chu-Prong-dau-tranh-lam-that-bai-am-muu-den-toi-cua-bon-phan-dong-1959465/ (accessed October 10, 2010).
September 24, 2010	Gia Lai	Krong Pa district: la Siom commune, Phum Yi village	Forced renunciation.	<i>Quan Doi Nhan Dan</i> (People’s Army) reports that 24 people in five households have “voluntarily” committed to leave “FULLRO-Dega Protestantism” and integrate with the community. Local officials coordinated closely with the provincial military headquarters, village elders, chiefs, and	Xuan Hoang & Van Tu, “Abandon Dega Protestantism, to Return to the Community” (Bo ‘Tin lanh De Ga’, ve voi cong dong), <i>Quan Doi Nhan Dan</i> , September 24, 2010, http://www.qdnd.vn/qdndsite/vi-

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
September 27, 2010	Gia Lai		State media proclaims a Dega Protestant conspiracy involving exiled Montagnards.	people's relatives to convince the wayward families to abandon "FULRO-Dega."	VN/61/43/7/24/24/124799/Default.aspx (accessed February 2, 2011). Ngoc Nhu, "First article: The Dark Conspiracy is Exposed" (Bai 1: Nhung am muu den toi da bi lat tay), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , September 27, 2010, http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201009/Bai-1-Nhung-am-muu-den-toi-da-bi-lat-tay-1960066/ (accessed December 1, 2010).
September 28, 2010	Gia Lai	Chu Prong and Duc Co districts	State media article condemn the revival of Dega Protestantism in two districts.	Article alleges that Dega Protestants are meeting, distributing materials, and showing reactionary films to incite people to join Dega Protestantism.	Ngoc Nhu, "Final article: Ksor Kok and his Associates are Reactionaries" (Bai cuoi: Ksor Kok va dong bon la nhung ten phan dong), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , September 28, 2010, http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201009/Bai-cuoi-Ksor-Kok-va-dong-bon-la-nhung-ten-phan-dong-1960341/ (accessed November 1, 2010).
September 29, 2010	Gia Lai	Duc Co district: la Dok commune: Ghe, Boong, Dok Ngol, Dok Lah villages	Officials organize a public criticism session for 50 people regarding the August 2010 events, in which they pledge to abandon FULRO and Dega Protestantism.	<i>Bao Gia Lai</i> : 50 people from four villages in la Dok commune, Duc Co, are criticized in front of a crowd and confess to misconduct including inciting people to join FULRO, disrupting security and order, and sabotaging national unity on August 24, 2010. They pledge to abandon FULRO and Dega Protestantism.	S.C., "Public Criticism of 50 Subjects in Social Disturbances in la Dok Commune, Duc Co" (Kiem diem 50 doi tuong gay roi tai xa la Doc-Duc Co), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , October 1, 2010, http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201010/Kiem-diem-50-doi-tuong-gay-roi-tai-xa-lai-dok-duc-co-1960717/ (accessed November 11, 2010).

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
October 2010					
October 1, 2010	Gia Lai	Krong Pa district: Chu Drang commune	Pressure on households to abandon Dega Protestantism by village elder in Chai village, Chu Drang commune.	<i>Bao Gia Lai</i> article refers to the “poison wind” of Dega Protestantism penetrating the village in late 2008, causing some villagers to flee to refugee camps in Cambodia. “After three months of cramped living in the refugee camp—‘like pigs and chickens kept in cages’—they were sent back [to Vietnam] by the Cambodian government.”	Phuong Son, “Nay Kroi—the pillar of his village” (Nay Kroi - Cho dua cua buon lang), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , October 1, 2010, http://baogialai.com.vn/channel/1624/201010/Nay-Kroi-Cho-dua-cua-buon-lang-1960658/ (accessed on December 10, 2010).
October 2, 2010	Gia Lai	Duc Co district: la Kla, la Krel, la Krieng and la Din communes	Campaign continues against FULRO and Dega Protestantism.	<i>Bao Gia Lai</i> : From the beginning of the year district police have coordinated with other government departments to organize public criticism sessions for dozens of “reactionary Dega Protestants and FULRO” members, with 34 people in la Kla commune signing pledges to abandon FULRO.	Thuc Vy, “Duc Co: Resolutely Fight to Eliminate the Reactionary Organization FULRO” (Huyen Duc Co: Kien quyet dau tranh xoa bo to chuc phan dong FULRO), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , October 2, 2010, http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/1602/201010/Huyen-duc-Co-Kien-quyet-dau-tranh-voi-bon-phan-dong-FULRO-1960807/ (accessed October 12, 2010).
October 2, 2010	Gia Lai	Krong Pa district: Chu Drang-Nay Droh commune	State press report about 567 households linked to Dega Protestantism pledging to renounce the religion in Krong Pa district, Gia Lai.	<i>Bao Gia Lai</i> : In Chu Drang-Nay Droh commune, some 567 households related to Dega Protestantism have committed to “renouncing” the religion. The commune chief made daily visits to 15 households who followed Dega Protestantism in order to “give them advise.” Eventually, these fifteen households committed to “renouncing” Dega Protestantism.	Hong Son & Van Vinh, “When ‘mass mobilization is carried out well,’ the Party wins the heart of the people” (Khi “Dan van kheo” thi long dan hop y dang), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , October 2, 2010, http://baogialai.com.vn/channel/5921/201010/Khi-dan-van-kheo-thi-long-dan-hop-y-dang-1960795/ (accessed November 1, 2010).

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
October 9, 2010	Gia Lai	Gia Lai: Chu Pah, Mang Yang, Dak Doa, Dak Po, la Grai, Duc Co, Chu Prong, Phu Thien, Chu Puh, Krong Pa districts and the city of Pleiku	State media critique of “Dega Protestantism” and “false” Ha Mon religion.	The “false religion,” Ha Mon, is mentioned in an article <i>in Quan Doi Nhan Dan</i> (People’s Army) about the arrest of “Dega Protestant” leaders Rmah Hit and Kpuith Do. The article states that in la Grai, Duc Co, and Chu Prong districts, reactionary “Dega Protestants” have incited young people to “steal rubber” as an excuse to cause trouble and incite people to protest.	Le Quang Hoi, “Gia Lai: Several organizations have been revealed as Fulro reactionaries” (Nhiều tổ chức phản động FULLRO bị bóc gô), <i>Quan Doi Nhan Dan</i> , October 9, 2010, http://www.qdnd.vn/qdndsite/vi-VN/61/126162/print/Default.aspx (accessed November 10, 2010).
November 2010					
November 4 and 24, 2010	Gia Lai	la Grai district, la Chia commune, Kom Yo and Beng villages	Officials organize public criticism sessions for 25 members of two “Dega Protestant gangs” operating in border areas. Increased coordination between different levels of border guards against “reactionary Dega Protestant gangs” in border areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> reports on the “Struggle to remove ‘Dega Protestantism,’” in which Gia Lai’s Provincial Border Command coordinates with the National Reconnaissance Border Guard Command to dissolve reactionary gangs of “Dega Protestants” in the border areas, bringing them for criticism before the people. Public criticism sessions are conducted for 25 people in several “Dega Protestantism” gangs in border areas. The article notes the particular problems of 11 people belonging to such reactionary “Dega Protestant” gang in the village of Kom 	<p>Thai Kim Nga, “Gia Lai: Struggle to Eliminate ‘Dega Protestantism’” (Gia Lai: Đấu tranh loại bỏ ‘Tin lành De-ga’), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i>, November 4, 2010, http://baogialai.vn/channel/1602/201011/Gia-Lai-dau-tranh-loai-bo-Tin-lanh-de-ga-1965141/ (accessed January 21, 2011).</p> <p>Thai Kim Nga, “The lost ‘puppets’ of the village” (Những ‘con roi’ ngo ngao noi buon lang), <i>Bao Bien Phong</i>, November 24, 2010, http://www.bienphong.com.vn/nd5/detail/phap-luat/nhung-con-roi-ngo-ngao-</p>

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
November 4, 2010	Gia Lai	Duc Co district: la Dok commune: Phong, Ghe, Dok Lah and Dok Ngol villages	Four “Dega Protestant” groups are broken up.	Yo, la Chia commune, of whom seven are women; and 14 people in the village of Beng, of whom nine are women. State press article regarding la Dok commune officials helping authorities break up four groups of “Dega Protestants,” including 15 in Dok Lah village led by Ro Cham Che, and 13 in Ghe village led by Ro Cham Chol.	noi-buon-lang/40659.037.html (accessed January 10, 2011). Hoang Cu, “Gia Lai: Breaking up groups of ‘De-ga Protestants’” (Gia Lai: Pha ra nhieu nhom ‘Tin lanh De-ga’), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , November 4, 2010, http://baogiailai.vn/channel/1602/201011/Gia-Lai-Pha-ra-nhieu-nhom-Tin-lanh-de-ga-1965817/ (accessed January 20, 2011).
November 24, 2010	Dak Lak	Cu Mgar district	Official campaign against Ha Mon Catholic sect in Dak Lak includes: Forced Renunciation of Faith and Public Criticism Sessions.	State media articles report on a self-criticism ceremony in Hring village, Cu Mgar district, Dak Lak, in which followers confess their wrongdoing and sign commitments to abandon Ha Mon, the “false religion.” “At the review, after listening to village elders and government officials of different levels outlining the nature of the ‘false religion’ Ha Mon, the subjects were able to realize their wrongdoings, and promised to abandon the ‘false’ religion,” returning to normal life afterwards.	Viet Nghia, “Eliminate the False ‘Ha Mon’ Religion from Society” (Loai bo ta dao ‘Ha Mon’ ra khoi doi song xa hoi) Bao Dak Lak, December 8, 2010, http://baodaklak.vn/channel/3485/201012/Loai-bo-ta-dao-Ha-Mon-ra-khoi-doi-song-xa-hoi-1969228/ (accessed February 20, 2011). Viet Nghia, “Public Criticism of Followers of ‘Ha Mon False Religion’,” Bao Dak Lak, November 26, 2010, http://www.baodaklak.vn/channel/3690/201011/Kiem-diem-cac-doi-tuong-theo-ta-dao-Ha-Mon-1967691/ (accessed March 21, 2011).

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
November 24, 2010	Gia Lai		Provincial Party Committee meeting to assess implementation of Directive No. 5, in which provincial authorities are to promptly detect, prevent, and disable operations of reactionary groups such as FULRO and “Dega Protestants.”	<i>Bao Gia Lai</i> : Since passage of Directive No. 5 in 2006, it has achieved important results. “The province has promptly detected, prevented, and disabled the operations of hostile forces and reactionary groups inside and outside the country; it has destroyed underground frameworks of FULRO and ‘Dega Protestants’ groups; it has prevented and pushed back hostile forces’ plots and activities that stirred up unrest, riots, and people crossing the border; it has done well in carrying out the task of internal protection, solving conflicts and complaints related to security in the countryside and religion. Thanks to this, political security has been maintained in the province.”	Tien Dung, “Gia Lai: Strengthening political security, social order and safety” (Gia Lai: Tang cuong bao dam an ninh chinh tri, trat tu an toan xa hoi), <i>Bao Gia Lai</i> , November 25, 2010, http://www.baogialai.com.vn/channel/581/201011/Gia-Lai-Tang-cuong-bao-dam-an-ninh-chinh-tri-trat-tu-an-toan-xa-hoi-1967498/ (accessed December 20, 2010).
November and December 2010	Kon Tum Gia Lai		Kon Tum Bishop prevented from conducting Catholic mass services in Kon Tum and Gia Lai.	In November 2010, Kon Tum Bishop Michael Hoang Duc Oanh releases a public pastoral letter to his diocese to raise his concerns about local authorities preventing him from conducting mass services and harassing and threatening members of his parish. Despite this, local officials prevent him from celebrating Christmas mass with members of his diocese in Kbang district, Gia Lai.	“Kon Tum: Police Prevent a Bishop from Visiting Isolated Christian Communities” (Kon Tum: la Sécurité publique empêche un évêque de rendre visite à des communautés chrétiennes isolées), <i>Bulletin Eglises D’Asie</i> no. 539, November 9, 2010. “Vietnam: Bishop of Kontum banned from celebrating Christmas Mass with Montagnards,” <i>Asia News</i> , December 27, 2010.

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
December 2010					
December 15, 2010	Gia Lai	Chu Pah. Mang Yang. Dak Doa. Dak Po. districts	State media attacks on “Ha Mon” sect.	State media reports that the “elusive” Ha Mon Catholic sect has penetrated into parts of several districts in Gia Lai.	Le Quang Hoi, “Towards village peace and development” (De lang que binh yen, phat trien), <i>The Bureau of Information and Communications of Gia Lai province</i> , December 15, 2010, http://tttt.gialai.gov.vn/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=321:lang-que-binh-yen-phat-trin&catid=95:tin-tng-hp&Itemid=119 (accessed January 13, 2011).
December 20, 2010 – January 9, 2011	Gia Lai	Chu Puh district (formerly part of Chu Se district)	Arrests, including of Montagnards formerly imprisoned for religious or political beliefs.	Many arrests during or just after Christmas in Chu Puh (former Chu Se) district, including 17 Montagnards from Plei Tao, four from Plei Bo 2, and three from Plei Bo 1. All were beaten and held until January 9, 2011. One was so severely beaten he had to be taken from jail to the hospital. Also briefly detained during this time are former Montagnard political prisoners. Arrests continue to be reported through March 2011.	Email communications from Montagnard Refugee Organization members to Human Rights Watch, dated January 11, 2011, February 17, 2011, and March 6, 2011.
December 23 and December 24, 2010	Kon Tum	Dak Ha and Ngok Hoi districts	Catholic Church services disrupted. Security forces disperse Christmas celebrations and	According to MFI: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security forces disperse Degar Catholics in Hamong K’tu village, assaulting two. Security forces disperse house church gathering in Dak Kang village; beating Y Dim. Authorities ban public Christmas celebrations 	MFI press release, “The Vietnamese Government Halted ‘Sang Ae Die Degar’ (Degar Church) Christians from Celebrating Christmas in 2010,” January 18, 2011.

Month	Province	District	Event	Details	Source
January 22, 2011	Central Highlands, and Gia Lai in particular		disperse Degar Catholics.	in Dak Mot village and announce that people can only worship in their homes. Article describes the activities of PA43 units and the mobile police Special Task Force team in suppressing FULRO as part of the units' duty to "control social evils, ensure political security, social order, and safety; and protect the Party and authorities." It notes that such efforts should be done "in a clever way, in order to avoid the scrutiny of hostile forces on human rights issues."	Le Duy, "Youthful Strength of the Special Task Force Police Team" (Suc Tre Cua Doi Canh Sat Dac Nhiem), <i>Cong An Nhan Dan</i> (People's Police), January 22, 2011, http://cadvn.com.vn/News/Chinh-Tri-Xa-Hoi/Hoat-Dong-LLCA/2011/1/22/54679.ca (accessed February 15, 2011).
January 30, 2011	Gia Lai	Chu Prong district	Mixed border patrolling by militia units, border army, and public security forces.	Article in the <i>People's Army</i> newspaper about the cooperation of permanent militia fighters with Gia Lai border army and public security forces to patrol Chu Prong near the Cambodian border, previously a "hotspot of social and political insecurity, where enemies infiltrated to illegally preach and incite the people to flee to Cambodia."	Xuan Hoang, "Peace to the Border Areas" (De vung bien gioi binh yen), <i>Quan Doi Nhan Dan</i> (People's Army Daily), January 30, 2011, http://www.baomoi.com/De-vung-bien-gioi-binh-yen/122/5639480.epi (accessed February 26, 2011).
February 9 and 17, 2011	Gia Lai	Chu Puh district (formerly part of Chu Se district)	Police severely beat Montagnards in Plei Tao village.	Police disperse house church meetings, beating participants identified as organizers of the prayer meeting and confiscating their motorcycles.	Email communications from Montagnard Refugee Organization members to Human Rights Watch, dated February 16, 2011, February 17, 2011, and February 21, 2011.

Montagnard Christians in Vietnam

A Case Study in Religious Repression

Since mid-2010 the Vietnamese government has intensified suppression of Montagnard Christians, indigenous people in the Central Highlands who are pressing for religious freedom and land rights. The government charges that the unregistered or independent house churches in which many Montagnards worship—which operate outside of the official Southern Evangelical Church of Vietnam—are covers for a Montagnard independence movement.

This report, based on interviews with Montagnards who have fled Vietnam and on reports in Vietnam’s government-controlled media, details the latest government crackdowns on Montagnards in the Central Highlands.

Ostensibly responding to unrest in rubber plantations in Gia Lai province, authorities have in recent months reinforced the police and military presence in districts bordering Cambodia in order to root out Montagnards in hiding and dissolve house church gatherings. More than 70 Montagnards have been detained or arrested during 2010.

In addition, government officials have forced hundreds of Montagnard Christians in public criticism sessions to publicly renounce their faith, violating internationally protected rights to freedom of religion and conscience. Those who resist and insist on their right to independent worship face beatings, arrest, and imprisonment. Some are arrested, tried, and jailed on national security charges, such as “undermining national solidarity.” Provincial courts often hold “mobile trials” of people charged with national security crimes before hundreds of people, reinforcing the message not to follow unsanctioned religious groups. More than 250 Montagnards are currently in prison or awaiting trial.

Montagnard Christians in Vietnam: A Case Study in Religious Repression calls on Vietnam’s government to immediately end systematic repression of Montagnard Christians and release all Montagnards imprisoned for peaceful religious or political activities.



Cong An Da Nang (Da Nang Police) newspaper reports on security operations in the Central Highlands, in which elite police units detain and interrogate persons they identify as “Dega Protestants”

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Jarai women in Plei Lao village, Gia Lai, where Mobile Intervention Police broke up an all-night prayer meeting in March 2001, fired on villagers—killing one—then burned the village church.

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Montagnard refugees in a makeshift shelter in the Cambodian forest.

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