

November 6, 2007: Sanchez Testifies on Human Rights Concerns in Vietnam

Sanchez Urges Binding Legislation to Hold Vietnam Accountable for Its Human Rights and Religious Freedom Violations

Sanchez Testifies Before the Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight

Washington, D.C. - Today, Representative Loretta Sanchez (D-Garden Grove) testified at a "Human Rights Concerns in Vietnam" hearing before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights, and Oversight, citing Vietnam's established and continuing record of human rights violations. Sanchez detailed current accounts of the Vietnamese Government's unlawful arrests, detentions, and imprisonments of individuals who speak out in favor of democracy and religious freedom.

Those cases include, but are not limited to: the unjust trial and sentencing of Father Ly; the abusive treatment of women by Vietnamese police at the private residence of former U.S. Ambassador Michael Marine; press censorship and the incarceration of award-winning journalist Tran Khai Thanh Thuy, who is diabetic and prohibited from receiving medical care; brut force used by the Vietnamese police against peasants during a peaceful land protest; and the false arrest and incarceration of Cong Thanh Do, a United States Citizen.

"Human rights violations in Vietnam have only gotten worse since Vietnam was granted Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) status, removed from the State Department's list of Countries of Particular Concern and added to the World Trade Organization (WTO); all actions that were approved by the Bush Administration," underscored Sanchez.

"The Vietnamese government has continued to harass and detain individuals that promote democracy, human rights, and religious freedom. We must enact binding legislation to hold Vietnam accountable for these violations. This legislation would mandate that U.S. assistance to Vietnam be contingent on whether the Government of Vietnam makes significant progress toward improving human rights, religious freedom, returning confiscated lands, and combating human trafficking.

We must also continue to support those brave individuals who fight for change from within Vietnam."

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