

## July 8, 2008: Sanchez Expresses Condolences on the Passing of the Venerable Thich Huyen Quang

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 8, 2008

SANCHEZ EXPRESSES CONDOLENCES TO THE VENERABLE THICH QUANG DO AND THE UNIFIED BUDDHIST CHURCH OF VIETNAM ON THE PASSING OF THE VENERABLE THICH HUYEN QUANG

Washington, D.C. - Representative Loretta Sanchez (D-CA) joined Representatives Zoe Lofgren (D-CA) and Tom Davis (R-VA) in issuing the following letter expressing their condolences to the Venerable Thich Quang Do and the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam for the recent passing of the Most Venerable Thich Huyen Quang, 4th Supreme Patriarch of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV).

Below is the full text of the letter.

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July 7, 2008

Venerable Thich Quang Do  
Deputy Leader  
Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam  
Thanh Minh Zen Center  
90 Tran Huy Lieu Street  
District Phu Nhuan

HCM City, Vietnam

Dear Venerable Thich Quang Do:

We write to extend our deepest condolences to you and the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam for the recent passing of the Most Venerable Thich Huyen Quang, 4th Supreme Patriarch of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV).

Throughout his life, Venerable Thich Huyen Quang stood for justice, compassion and humility, devoting his life to achieving religious freedom and human rights for the people of Vietnam. He was the symbol of the non-violent Buddhist movement for religious freedom and human rights in Vietnam. We are aware that over the last three decades Venerable Thich Huyen Quang was placed into internal exile and house arrest while endeavoring to promote and fight for religious freedom. It is our hope that his lifelong efforts will not be forgotten or ignored and the government of Vietnam will soon recognize and honor the right of religious freedom.

It has come to our attention that the one-party government in Vietnam is restricting the UBCV's right to organize memorial services for Venerable Thich Huyen Quang according to the traditions and wishes of the Church. We offer the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam best wishes during this difficult time. We especially emphasize the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam's right to operate as an independent religious organization and to choose a successor to the Most Venerable Thich Huyen Quang.

We are fully aware that religious freedom and human rights conditions have deteriorated in Vietnam. We will continue to strongly urge our colleagues and the international community to not only recognize the abuses occurring in Vietnam but to speak out for human rights and religious freedom in Vietnam.

Sincerely,

Loretta Sanchez

Zoe Lofgren

Tom Davis

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

cc: His Excellency Le Cong Phung, Ambassador

The Honorable Michael Michalak, Ambassador

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