

June 26, 2008: Human Rights in Vietnam

The Honorable Loretta Sanchez

HUMAN RIGHTS IN VIETNAM

JUNE 26, 2008

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss human rights in Vietnam and the Vietnamese Prime Minister, Nguyen Tan Dung's visit to the United States.

I understand that when President Bush and Prime Minister Dung met, they discussed the importance of promoting human rights in Vietnam, and that Prime Minister Dung told President Bush that the Vietnamese government has made efforts and is committed to further promoting and improving human rights in Vietnam.

However, as a long-time advocate of human rights in Vietnam and the representative of a very active Vietnamese-American community-we know that human rights in Vietnam have only been getting worse.

The Government of Vietnam has continued to harass, arrest and sentence peaceful democracy advocates to prison-both Vietnamese citizens, and US citizens!

In addition, the Government of Vietnam has further repressed the freedom of speech that their own Constitution proclaims by harassing and arresting innocent bloggers.

If there is any evidence of Prime Minister Dung's claim that human rights in Vietnam are improving I urge him to provide specifics to the U.S. Congress-BUT, I fear that this is just one more empty promise from the Government of Vietnam.

The United States and the international community must stand up and put a stop to the human rights abuses and religious persecution that is continuing in Vietnam