

TAKE ACTION: Please cut and paste this letter onto your personal or Institutional letterhead calling for the release from prison of writer Nguyen Vu Binh.

13 April 2007

Nguyen Minh Triet
President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam
C/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs
E-mail: Banbientap@mofa.gov.vn

Excellency,

I wish to add my name to this appeal from PEN Canada, the Canadian centre of the international writers' organization, International PEN. PEN Canada is writing to call for the release of writer **Nguyen Vu Binh**.

A writer and leading member of the Democracy Club for Vietnam, Nguyen was arrested by police on 21 July 2002, at his home in Hanoi following a search of his home and seizure of books and other materials. The police, to whom he had to report daily, put him under house arrest and close surveillance. He was re-arrested on 25 September 2002.

On 16 July 2002, Binh and 16 other writers, relatives of detainees and retired government officials wrote an open letter to the government calling for political reform and the release of political prisoners. His re-arrest on 25 September is thought to be linked to the on-line publication of one of his critical essays, 'Some Thoughts on the China-Vietnam Border Agreement.' Nguyen was convicted of espionage by the Hanoi People's Court in a three-hour trial on 31 December 2003. He is said to have "written and exchanged, with various opportunist elements in the country, information and materials that distorted the party and state policies". He was also accused of communicating with "reactionary" organisations abroad.

Nguyen is serving a seven-year prison sentence, which is set to expire on 24 September 2009. That will be followed by three years' house arrest. Nguyen is said to be in poor health, and to be denied urgent medical treatment for undiagnosed chronic gastrointestinal disease and high pressure.

PEN Canada believes that Nguyen Vu Binh has been imprisoned in violation of his fundamental right to freedom of expression, as guaranteed by Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We call for his immediate and unconditional release. PEN Canada also urges that Nguyen receive all necessary medical treatment while in jail.

Sincerely,

[Your name and address]

Copies to:

Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung
1 Hoang Hoa Tham Street
Hanoi
Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Le Doan Hop

Minister of Culture and Information
1 Hoang Hoa Tham Street
Hanoi
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Care of:

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Please send copies of your appeal to the following Canadian authorities:

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