



Committee to Protect Journalists

December 8, 2025

Sent via email

His Excellency To Lam
General Secretary
Communist Party of Vietnam
1 Hung Vuong Street
Ba Dinh District, Hanoi
Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Dear General Secretary To Lam,

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), an independent, nonprofit press freedom organization, writes to request your urgent attention to the matter of journalists imprisoned in Vietnam ahead of International Human Rights Day on December 10.

Your government holds at least 16 journalists behind bars and has consistently ranked among the world's worst jailers of reporters, according to data compiled by CPJ.

Among them is [Pham Doan Trang](#), who has been jailed since 2020 and is serving a nine-year sentence on anti-state charges for her critical reporting. She has been denied private medical treatment for health conditions that have [worsened](#) during her imprisonment. CPJ bestowed its 2022 International Press Freedom Award on Trang in recognition of her courage in the face of persecution.

On June 21, 2025, you said in a speech that Vietnam's "press has not only been a witness but also a direct force promoting the process of reform, openness and international integration," and emphasized its "important contribution to the formation and development of a democratic, civilized society."

For Vietnam to become a truly democratic, open, and civilized society — one well integrated into the international order as a respected and responsible actor — journalists must be able to report without fear of reprisal, including potential imprisonment under vague and overly broad anti-state laws and provisions.

To mark International Human Rights Day, we encourage you to turn your pro-press rhetoric into reality by immediately releasing all journalists

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imprisoned by your government. Such action would demonstrate your commitment to the principles outlined in your June 21 remarks and reinforce the vital role of an independent press in Vietnam's national development.

As a party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, it would also signal that Vietnam is genuinely committed to upholding its legal obligations under both international human rights conventions and its own constitution, and to decisively turning the corner on the long-standing harassment and persecution of journalists.

Our advocacy is supported by more than 1,500 journalists, representing over 100 countries, who joined CPJ in a [solidarity action](#) at this year's Global Investigative Journalism Conference in Malaysia to call on governments around the world to free imprisoned journalists and end impunity for those who attack the press.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. We look forward to your reply and welcome any dialogue with the relevant offices of the Vietnamese government.

Sincerely,

Beh Lih Yi
Asia-Pacific Director
Committee to Protect Journalists