

URGENT ACTION

MINORITY GROUP'S PROTEST MET WITH VIOLENCE

A spontaneous demonstration by ethnic and religious minority Ede in the Central Highlands of Viet Nam on 14 July was violently suppressed, resulting in injuries to around 20 demonstrators. The arrests and incommunicado detention of at least seven demonstrators raises serious concerns about torture and ill-treatment.

A huge police operation in Ea Enao village, Buôn Ma Thuột, Đắk Lắk province, Viet Nam on 14 July was initiated to clear crops planted by the local community on an area of approximately 100 hectares. The operation is believed to have been initiated in advance of the anticipated sale of the land – which is the ancestral land of members of the **ethnic and religious minority group Ede** that makes up the village – to a private company. In response to the operation, a spontaneous demonstration of around 400 villagers took place which was quickly and violently suppressed by a huge operation by a force of police said to have outnumbered the villagers.

Amnesty International has received information that dozens of demonstrators were beaten. One pregnant woman was electrocuted with an electric baton. More than 20 villagers needed medical treatment but were turned away by clinics and hospitals in the area. At least seven demonstrators were arrested and are being detained incommunicado at an unknown location. Amnesty International has confirmed the names of five of those arrested, they are **H Nuen Adrong, Y Pina Nie, Y Som Hwing, Y Tluk Hwing, and Y Nai Nie.**

A huge police build-up remains in the vicinity of the village with military stationed nearby in Buôn Ma Thuột city. Amnesty International has been informed that police have summoned local people who used Facebook to share information and images from the demonstration for questioning, and those using social media for these ends are being threatened with fines of between five and 10 million dong (\$225-450USD).

Please write immediately in Vietnamese or your own language:

- Demanding the end of the suppression of demonstrations by Ede villagers and full respect for the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and expression, including online;
- Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of all individuals arrested for exercising their right to peaceful assembly, and for access of individuals arrested and charged with recognized criminal offences to their family and lawyers of their choosing in line with international standards and any medical treatment they may require;
- Calling on the authorities to immediately stop clearing of ancestral land belonging to the Ede people, and ensure free prior and informed consent in relation to any planning or development of the land in line with international standards.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 2 SEPTEMBER 2016 TO:

Minister of Public Security

Minister of Public Security To Lam
44 Yet Kieu Street, Hoan Kiem district
Ha Noi, Viet Nam
Email: via online contact form:
http://www.mps.gov.vn/web/guest/contact_english

Salutation: Dear Minister

Viet Nam Permanent Office on Human

Rights
Dr. Nguyễn Thanh Sơn, Director General
6 Chua Mot Cot St., Ba Dinh District,
Ha Noi, Viet Nam
Fax: +84 (04) 37347181
Email: pplan76@yahoo.com

Salutation: Dear Director General

Đắk Lắk Provincial Council

Y Bier Nie, Chairman of the Provincial
People's Council of Đắk Lắk
8 Mai Hac De Street,
Buôn Ma Thuột,
Đắk Lắk province, Viet Nam
Fax: +84 (08) 050557

Salutation: Dear Chairman

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY MR VAN THAO NGUYEN, Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 12-14 Victoria Road W8 5RD
020 7937 1912, Fax 020 7565 3853, vanphong@vietnamembassy.org.uk, www.vietnamembassy.org.uk**

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ede are an ethnic and religious minority group in Viet Nam who practice Christianity. They live mostly in the Central Highlands of the country, in the provinces of Đắk Lắk and Gia Lai. Ethnic and religious minority groups in the Central Highlands are persecuted by the Vietnamese authorities. Large scale land grabbing is reported but difficult to confirm due to tight restrictions on freedom of movement and freedom of expression in affected areas. Minority religious practices are closely monitored and tightly controlled. Ethnic minority groups often encounter difficulties in getting registration and permission for religious activities, even if they belong to officially recognised denominations.

A recent report by Amnesty International, *Prisons within prisons: Torture and ill-treatment of Prisoners of Conscience in Viet Nam*, highlighted how prisoners of conscience are subjected to torture and ill-treatment. In the cases involving ethnic minority prisoners of conscience examined in the report, one of whom was Ede, Amnesty International documented enforced disappearances, prolonged periods of incommunicado detention and solitary confinement, and months' long periods where victims were subjected to daily torture sessions involving beatings which often left them unconscious. The report outlines how, in many cases, the treatment is worse during the period immediately after an arrest as authorities are seeking to coerce an admission from wrongdoing from the victim to support a conviction at trial. For more information please see <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa41/4187/2016/en/>.

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