



Brussels,
Ares(2018)6279341-7338229

Dear Petitioners,

Thank you for submitting this petition in which you express concerns about the human rights violations in Vietnam and request the EU to ensure that Vietnam implements the envisaged EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in a manner that spurs economic growth while respecting human rights.

The EU is closely following the situation of civil society in Vietnam and is increasingly concerned about the harassment, detention and sentencing of human rights activists. The EU has repeatedly called on Vietnam to address shortcomings in the protection of human rights. International conventions on fundamental freedoms must be fully respected and human rights defenders should be able to conduct their peaceful activities.

Under the EU-Vietnam Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), these concerns and proposals for advancement are continuously and consistently raised in our Human Rights Dialogue with Vietnam. Individual cases of human rights defenders are brought to the attention of the relevant Vietnamese authorities, including at the highest levels. The EU also maintains a regular dialogue with Vietnam on the legal framework underlying freedom of expression, association, assembly, religion and belief and offers its assistance for aligning with international standards.

In addition to establishing a link to the human rights provisions in the EU-Vietnam PCA the envisaged EU-Vietnam FTA also includes a chapter on Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) with binding commitments on adherence to and effective implementation of fundamental Conventions of the International Labour Organization. Hence, the FTA will provide additional mechanisms and opportunities for further engagement with the Vietnamese Government, business and civil society to contribute to improving the labour conditions in Vietnam.

We will keep monitoring the situation and we will promote cooperation with civil society in the implementation of our agreements.

Yours sincerely,

David Daly

Head of Division, EEAS ASIAPAC 3

Peter Berz

Acting Director, DG TRADE C