

Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh
No. 16 Lê Hong Phong Street
Na Dinh District
Hanoi City 10000
Viet Nam

2023

Dear Prime Minister,

the reason I am writing to you is to express my deepest concerns regarding the imprisonment of the Vietnamese blogger and entrepreneur Trần Huỳnh Duy Thức.

Trần Huỳnh Duy Thức was arrested in May 2009 and held in pre-trial detention until he was convicted by a Hanoi court for “activities aimed at subverting the administration,” according to Article 79 of the 1999 Criminal Code. 2010 he was sentenced to sixteen years in prison followed by a five-year-long house arrest. He is currently held in Nghe An Province.

In 2015 a new Criminal Code was passed which superseded the 1999 law. According to the new Code, the maximum prison sentence for the type of activities Thuc was accused of is only five years. The new Code was supposed to go into effect in 2018, pending amendments and changes.

Therefore I ask you to review his sentence, which by law should result in his release. Amnesty International considers Trần Huỳnh Duy Thức a prisoner of conscience. I kindly ask the Vietnamese authorities to immediately and unconditionally end the imprisonment of Trần Huỳnh Duy Thức. He was solely imprisoned for the peaceful expression of his dissenting political beliefs. I am very concerned that although freedom of opinion and expression are guaranteed in the Constitution of Viet Nam, as the practice of these rights is strictly controlled by the state in law, thus effectively criminalizing those peacefully expressing their beliefs and opinions.

With best regards