

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 30, 2020

The Honorable Mike Pompeo  
Secretary  
Department of State  
2201 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Pompeo:

We write today regarding the Socialist Republic of Vietnam's continued human rights abuses against the Vietnamese people. Vietnam is an important security partner in the region but their human rights record remains an obstacle to strengthening relations. Therefore, we respectfully request that you raise these issues directly with the Vietnamese government and that you review imposing *Global Magnitsky Act* sanctions against individuals for grave human rights abuses. Additionally, we request Vietnam be designated as a Country of Particular Concern for its violations of religious freedom.

Cooperation between the U.S. and Vietnam has increased over the years in a number of areas that are important to security and efforts to counter an increasingly aggressive Chinese Government and Communist Party. We support the Administration's vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific, but the Vietnamese government's unjust arrests and persecution of members of the press and religious practitioners remains a challenge in our relationship. Under your and President Trump's leadership, the State Department has championed freedom of religion around the world, and I am proud to support the State Department's advocacy for this fundamental human right. Vietnam's abuses of its Law on Belief and Religion continues to be used to harass and persecute religious groups who only wish to practice their religion in peace. The targeted oppression of Vietnamese, Montagnard, and Hmong Christians is especially troubling. The Vietnamese government's targeting of the press, including members of the Independent Journalists Association of Vietnam, and efforts to silence dissent is also of great concern. It is important for the U.S. to press the Vietnamese government to respect the fundamental rights of the Vietnamese people and hold accountable those officials who are responsible for grave human rights violations.

The United States must continue to develop and strengthen our partnerships with nations in the region to ensure mutual prosperity and security and counter Chinese influence. The only way to realize the full potential of the U.S.-Vietnam relationship is to press them to take serious steps to improve the human rights situation in Vietnam.

Thank you for your leadership and attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

  
JOHN CORNYN  
United States Senator

  
MARCO RUBIO  
United States Senator