

# Protest Rally

## At Official Residence of Vietnamese Ambassador

Notes for comments by Hon. David Kilgour, J.D.

17 June 2018

Ottawa

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Dear fellow Canadians from Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal,

Permit me to repeat some points made recently by two Canadian parliamentarians of origin in Vietnam, who no doubt speak for many Canadians of all origins:

**SENATOR NGO OBJECTS TO CANADA'S CONTENTIOUS INVITATION TO VIETNAM TO A G7 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION MEETING**

June 6, 2018

Today, Senator Thanh Hai Ngo issued the following statement regarding Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's invitation to Vietnam to the Special Outreach Session held in the context of the G7 Summit on June 9, 2018, in Charlevoix, Quebec.

"I am terribly concerned about Canada's unjustified invitation to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to a special side meeting to discuss

environmental responsibility without due consideration for the rampant corruption and illegal detentions by Vietnamese authorities following a severe environmental incident in 2016.

“It is highly irresponsible for the Government of Canada to engage Vietnam on the margins of the G7 meeting without fully understanding the aftermath of the April 2016 Formosa Ha Tinh Steel plant incident that discharged toxic industrial chemicals polluting 200 km of Vietnam’s coastline, killing marine life and devastating a vital fishing industry.

“Canada should be fully aware that the Vietnamese communist authorities profited from the \$500 million in reparations paid by the Formosa plant instead of compensating the victims of the pollution disaster with transparency and accountability.

“It is the shared responsibility of the attending world leaders and international organizations to pressure the Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc to immediately release all environmental activists and human rights defenders such as Ms. Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh, Mr. Hoang Duc Binh, Father Dang Huu Nam, and Mr. Nguyen Nam Phong who were sentenced, surveyed, intimidated, and brutally harassed for peacefully protesting the toxic spill for peacefully protesting the toxic spill.

“This unacceptable crackdown on environmental dissent, unaccountable governance, and lack of transparency continues to demonstrate that it is impossible to work with Vietnam on pressing global challenges without addressing its persistent human rights violations and political corruption.

“As the 2018 G7 president, Canada must clearly frame greater respect for human rights as a key theme in its international priorities with Vietnam.”

June 7th, 2018

***MP Anne Minh-Thu Quach (Salaberry-Suroît) made the following statement:***

“Like many members of the Vietnamese community in Canada, I was surprised to learn that Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc was invited to speak about ocean protection at the G7 meeting on June 9<sup>th</sup>. His presence is an opportunity for our own Prime Minister

to raise Canada's concerns regarding human rights and environment protections in Vietnam.

"In 2016, the Vietnamese people witnessed the greatest ecological disaster in their history, when the Formosa steel plant discharged toxic industrial waste into the ocean, destroying the entire marine ecosystem along Central Vietnam's 250 km Pacific coastline, where 100 tonnes of fish carcasses washed up onshore.

"The manner in which M. Nguyễn Xuân Phúc's government managed this disaster was fiercely opposed in Vietnam. Instead of assisting the populations impacted by the disaster, the Vietnamese government severely repressed public protesters and allowed the steel plant to continue its polluting activities. Many environmentalists and human rights activists received lengthy jail sentences, including bloggers, who denounced the problem online. A notable example is Nguyễn Ngọc Như Quỳnh, also known as *Mother Mushroom*. She began a hunger strike last Friday to denounce abuses against her.

The Canadian government must put pressure on the Vietnamese Prime Minister, to liberate these jailed activists like *Mother Mushroom*, instead of offering him a spot on the international stage, and to actively commit to protecting our oceans."

Thank you very much for giving up some or all of Fathers' Day to be here on this important matter.