

Press Freedom Award: Pham Doan Trang struggles with pen

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With Pham Doan Trang being awarded the 2019 Freedom of the Press award, it is hoped that domestic authorities will "reduce the intensity of their repression against the individual", lawyer Trinh Huu Long told the BBC.

A freelance journalist, blogger, and a well-known democracy fighter in Vietnam has just been awarded the 2019 Press Freedom award by Reporters Without Borders, in the Influence category.

Ms. Pham Doan Trang won the Press Freedom Award 2019

On behalf of Mrs. Doan Trang to receive the human rights award

Blogger Pham Doan Trang hid after being interrogated

The announcement and award ceremony took place on the evening of September 12 in Berlin.

Representing journalist Pham Doan Trang at the award ceremony was Mr. Trinh Huu Long, who co-founded two websites of Luat Khoa Magazine and The Vietnamese with Ms. Doan Trang.

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Ms. Pham Doan Trang of Vietnam is one of three women to win the RSF Press Freedom Award 2019; the other two are Caroline Muscat from Malta and Eman Al Nafjan from Saudi Arabia

"We hope that by being more known to the world [through this award], and more recognized by the world for the efforts of independent Vietnamese journalists, the Vietnamese government will reduce the intensity of the violence. pressure on Pham Doan Trang personally and the community of Vietnamese independent journalists as well as Vietnamese activists," Mr. Trinh Huu Long said from Berlin.

"We hope that international pressure will help gradually improve the Vietnamese government's attitude, behavior and policies towards independent journalists," added Mr. Trinh Huu Long.



Representing Ms. Pham Doan Trang to attend the award ceremony in Berlin is freelance journalist Trinh Huu Long (right).

Pham Doan Trang started her journalism career in 2000.

During 13 consecutive years, she has worked for nearly 10 official press agencies, including famous newspapers such as VietnamNet, VnExpress, Ho Chi Minh City Law.

She is famous for a number of articles on the topic of territorial disputes between Vietnam and China published in these newspapers, and articles on other sensitive political topics.

In 2009, she was detained in a police station for nine days on suspicion of what authorities say was related to "national security", but some human rights groups have attributed to a wave of crackdowns on dissenting voices.

This event made her "not only a journalist but also a democracy activist," said Trinh Huu Long.

"Pham Doan Trang tries to use the most popular language, to explain in the most understandable way the seemingly abstract concepts, difficult to understand about democracy, human rights, the rule of law, the rights people have."

She wants to "use her pen to wish to change the political regime in Vietnam", Mr. Trinh Huu Long added.

Berlin city officials held a ceremony on the evening of September 12 at the prestigious venue, the Deutsches Theater Berlin.

In February 2018, Pham Doan Trang was awarded the Homo Homini 2017 Human Rights Prize by People in Need in the Czech Republic, for her "courage in tirelessly pursuing democratic change for her country, despite her bravery, harassment and terrorism."

Pham Doan Trang is the first Vietnamese woman to win the RSF Press Freedom Award.

This year, all three RSF awards were presented to female faces.

Also awarded in 2019 with Ms. Pham Doan Trang are Caroline Muscat from Malta (Independence category) and Eman Al Nafjan from Saudi Arabia (Courage category).

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