

October 7, 2020

## Viet Nam: Human rights champion arrested, at grave risk of torture

Responding to the arrest of Pham Doan Trang, Amnesty International's Deputy Regional Director for Campaigns, Ming Yu Hah, said:

"The arrest of Pham Doan Trang is reprehensible. She is a leading figure in the struggle for human rights in Viet Nam. She has inspired countless young activists to speak up for a more just, inclusive, and free Viet Nam.

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**Ming Yu Hah, Deputy Regional Director for Campaigns**

"Pham Doan Trang faces an imminent risk of torture and other-ill treatment at the hands of the Vietnamese authorities. She must be immediately and unconditionally released.

"Pham Doan Trang has faced persecution due to her work as a woman human rights defender since her return to Viet Nam in 2015. She previously required hospitalization after being subjected to torture and gender-based violence following her arbitrary arrest in 2018."

### Background

According to witness accounts, Pham Doan Trang was arrested at an apartment in Ho Chi Minh City on the night of 6 October 2020. On Wednesday afternoon, authorities confirmed that she was charged under article 117 of the Vietnamese Penal Code, which punishes the "making, storing, distributing or disseminating information, documents and items against the Socialist Republic of Vietnam." If convicted, Pham Doan Trang may face up to 20 years in prison.

Pham Doan Trang is an internationally-recognized author and human rights defender who has been repeatedly targeted by the Vietnamese authorities solely for peacefully exercising her right to freedom of expression.

On 13 July, Amnesty International **raised** an alarm at the threats she was facing. Earlier, on 24 June, Viet Nam's Ministry of Public Security referred to Pham Doan Trang's written works as "anti-state propaganda" in a state media report.

Pham Doan Trang was **severely beaten** by police to the point of having her face disfigured while in custody having been arrested after attending a concert in 2018.

### Topics

VIET NAM

PRESS RELEASE

CENSORSHIP AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION