

ALTERNATIVE REPORT
to the Human Rights Committee (CCPR)
in response to the List of Issues
relating to the fourth periodic report of Vietnam

Intensifying Transnational Repression
by the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

A joint submission of



May 26, 2025

Boat People SOS (BPSOS), founded by former refugees from Vietnam in 1980, is headquartered in the Washington DC Metro Region with branches located in multiple U.S. cities and operates in Thailand through the Thai non-profit People Serving People Foundation. BPSOS' international initiatives include refugee protection in Thailand, combatting human trafficking in Asia, defending religious freedom in Southeast Asia, and building capacity for persecuted communities in Vietnam.

Website: <https://www.bpsos.org/>, email: bpsos@bpsos.org

Primary contact: Percy Nguyen, email: percy@vngrp.org

Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights (RWCHR) takes on the most pressing struggles for justice, freedom, and democracy around the world. Founded and led by Irwin Cotler, former Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada and based in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, we mobilize and engage a non-partisan, global coalition of parliamentarians, scholars, jurists, NGOs, activists, and students to take a collective stand for international justice and human rights.

Website: <https://www.raoulwallenbergcentre.org/en/>

Email: info@rwchr.org

Primary contact: Mutasim Ali, Legal Advisor, RWCHR, email: mutasimali@rwchr.org

Montagnards Stand for Justice (MSFJ) is a US-registered organization advocating for the rights and freedoms of the Montagnard people in the Central Highlands of Vietnam. Founded in 2019, MSFJ seeks to empower Montagnards to assert their cultural identity, religious freedom, and human rights through peaceful means. The organization provides legal support, training, and representation for Montagnard communities, aiming to address discrimination, religious oppression, land rights issues, and cultural preservation challenges faced by the Montagnard people.

Website: <https://msfjustice.org/>

Email: montagnardstandforjustice@gmail.com

Primary contact: Y Phic Hdok, email: yphichdok@gmail.com

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1. Introduction

This joint submission addresses the following items raised in the List of Issues (CCPR/C/VNM/Q/4):

- 1) Enforced disappearance, transnational disappearance, and penalties against identified perpetrators.

“10. Please describe the relevant legal framework in place and clarify whether relevant criminal legislation defines and criminalizes all acts of enforced disappearance and provides for penalties commensurate with the seriousness of the offence, in accordance with international human rights standards. Please respond to allegations of enforced disappearance and transnational repression during the reporting period, including through extraordinary rendition and the misuse of Red Notices of the International Criminal Police Organization, specifically targeting dissenting voices, such as bloggers, journalists and human rights defenders, and report on measures taken to conduct prompt, thorough and impartial investigations into such cases and to bring those responsible to justice. Please also provide information on the fate and whereabouts of Chinese refugee and human rights defender, Dong Guangping, who was reportedly detained arbitrarily by Vietnamese police in Hanoi on 24 August 2022 while awaiting resettlement in Canada.”

- 2) Freedom of expression:

22. ... Please respond to allegations of cases of intimidation and reprisals against civil society actors for engaging with the United Nations and its human rights mechanisms, and indicate the measures taken to allow human rights defenders and civil society actors to carry out their activities, including engaging with the United Nations, without fear of restrictions, violence or reprisals. Please also provide information on the steps taken to ensure that those who are imprisoned or convicted for peacefully exercising their civil and political rights have access to avenues for redress.

Specifically, this joint submission brings to the attention of the UN Human Rights Committee (CCPR) the following matters of concern:

- Enforced disappearance of Vietnamese refugees and asylum seekers in Thailand and foreigners in Vietnam
- Transnational repression against Montagnard and Hmong human rights advocates in Thailand
- Transnational repression against human rights defenders in exile

2. Enforced Disappearance

Vietnam has a long track record of abducting refugees. The Vietnamese government was involved in the kidnapping of journalist Truong Duy Nhat in January 2019 and blogger Duong Van Thai in April 2023, both of whom were abducted in Thailand. Vietnamese authorities sentenced Nhat to ten years in prison¹ and Thai to 12 years in prison followed by three years under administrative detention.² They targeted both Nhat and Thai for exposing high-level graft in the Government. These two cases of abduction followed a brazen incident of transnational repression, where Vietnamese secret agents abducted Trinh Xuan Thanh in Berlin, Germany, on July 23, 2017, forcibly disappearing and transferring him to Czechia and Slovakia by land and then to Russia and Vietnam by air.³ Thanh, a former petro-executive, national assembly member and high-level government official who exposed high-level corruption after fleeing to Germany, received two life sentences on charges of corruption.⁴ The late Secretary General of the Vietnamese Communist Party (VCP) Nguyen Phu Trong and his successor, General To Lam, were implicated in the kidnapping. General To Lam, then Minister of Public Security, was on the same Slovak government-chartered flight that brought Thanh from Bratislava, Slovakia to Moscow, Russia.⁵

A. Recent abduction of UNHCR-recognized refugee Duong Van Thai

Despite strong condemnation by the international community, Vietnam's Ministry of Public Security (MPS) has continued its practice of enforced disappearance. Most recently, on March 31, 2025, Mr. Duong Van Thai,⁶ a Vietnamese Hmong activist and UNHCR-recognized refugee, went missing in Bangkok. According to his wife, he left home at 7:00 am to work as a porter for a Thai person in Bang Ka Pi. Before leaving, he said he

¹ Opinions adopted by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention at its eighty-eighth session, 24–28 August 2020, available at:

https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Detention/Opinions/Session88/A_HRC_WGAD_20_20_42_Advance_Edited_Version.pdf

² “Communications transmitted, cases examined, observations made and other activities conducted by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances,” WGEID, July 21, 2023, available at:

https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/disappearances/advance-versions/A_HRC_WGEID_130_1_AEV.docx

³ David Hutt, “Vietnam-Slovakia Ties to Improve, Thanks to New Slovak PM”, Deutsche Welle (4 May 2024), online: <<https://www.dw.com/en/vietnam-slovakia-ties-to-improve-thanks-to-new-slovak-pm/a-68747303>>; Monika Tódová, “How the Slovak Interior Minister Parked the Airplane for Vietnamese Abductors”, Denník (2 August 2018), available at:

<https://dennikn.sk/1195284/how-the-slovak-interior-minister-parked-the-airplane-for-vietnamese-abductors/>

⁴ “Court hands Vietnam oil official another life sentence for corruption”, Reuters, 5 February, 2018, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/world/court-hands-vietnam-oil-official-another-life-sentence-for-corruption-idUSKBN1FP0FT/>

⁵ Monika Tódová, “How the Slovak Interior Minister Parked the Airplane for Vietnamese Abductors”, Denník (2 August 2018), available at:

<https://dennikn.sk/1195284/how-the-slovak-interior-minister-parked-the-airplane-for-vietnamese-abductors/>

See also Ivan Matusik, “Únos Vietnamského občana Trinh Xuan Thanh (Kidnapping of Vietnamese Citizen Trinh Xuan Thanh)”, Denník (6 February 2020), available at:

<https://dennikn.sk/blog/1746641/unos-vietnamskeho-obcana-trinh-xuan-Thanh/>

⁶ A different person from the one previously identified; his name, written without the Vietnamese diacritical marks, appears to be identical to the one above.

would come back home at 2:00 pm but disappeared without a trace. For many days, his wife tried to contact him many times via phone but could not reach him. On April 8, she was informed that the Dak Nong Provincial Police had visited Mr. Duong's parents in Vietnam on April 7 to inform them that Mr. Duong had "voluntarily returned to Vietnam" on April 5. The Police, however, did not disclose Mr. Duong's whereabouts, which remain unknown to his wife and family in Vietnam to this day.

Before his disappearance, Mr. Duong had sought assistance from the BPSOS-funded Center for Asylum Protection (CAP) Office and the UNHCR in Bangkok, Thailand and reported that the Thai police had attempted to arrest him on the following occasions. On January 24, 2024, Thai police approached him when he was in front of a supermarket and displayed an arrest warrant issued by the Vietnamese government. The arrest warrant was dated March 18, 2016, shortly after Mr. Duong fled Vietnam. The warrant references Article 349 of the 2015 Vietnamese Criminal Code (organizing and brokering illegal emigration) and alleges that Mr. Duong "aided others in escaping from Vietnam for the purpose of opposing the people's Government." Mr. Duong Van Thai managed to escape. Shortly thereafter, several police officers visited his wife at their home in Bangkok. The police officers explained to her that they had come to arrest him pursuant to an arrest warrant. This attempted arrest followed another attempted arrest of Mr. Duong on December 21, 2023. On that day, the Thai police came to the couple's home to look for him. He was not home at the time, so the police took his wife and child to the station. While in custody, Mr. Duong's wife was questioned about his whereabouts. They were released after CAP and UNHCR intervened. Mr. Duong and his wife are clients of the CAP.

B. Abduction of asylum seeker Duong Van Quan

In February 2012, Duong Van Quan, along with his wife and children, left their home in Vietnam to seek refugee protection in Thailand. In Vietnam, authorities had accused his wife of assisting the Front Uni de Lutte des Races Opprimées" (United Front for the Liberation of Oppressed Races (FULRO) despite the fact that it was disbanded in 1992, twenty years earlier. Moreover, she is of Hmong ethnicity from the Northwestern Highlands, an ethnic and geographic background distinct from FULRO, which was composed of Montagnard ethnicities in the Central Highlands. He followed his wife to Thailand to seek asylum. The UNHCR rejected their asylum application in March 2013. In December 2013, while looking for work in Bang Yai Province in Thailand, Quan was abducted by two Vietnamese nationals and taken across the border into Cambodia and then back to Vietnam, where he was handed over to the police. He was detained in Ho Chi Minh City and later transferred to Gia Trung Prison in Gia Lai Province, where he was accused of "organizing and brokering illegal emigration with the intent to oppose the government."⁷ According to his own account, he was falsely accused of crimes he did not commit:

⁷ "Bắt cóc, tra tấn, tù đầy—câu chuyện gia đình chồng H'mong vợ K'ho (Abduction, torture, imprisonment – the story of the family of H'mong husband and K'ho wife)," Mach Song Media, December 19, 2024, available at: <https://machsongmedia.org/vietnam/moi-tuan-mot-guong-mat-ti-nan/2297-bat-coc-tra-tan-tu-daycau-chuyen-gia-dinh-chong-hmong-vo-kho.html>

In Gia Lai, they accused me of organizing illegal emigration, conspiring to overthrow the government, and coercing others to leave Vietnam. I told them repeatedly that I was innocent, that I knew nothing about these charges. But they wouldn't stop. They beat me until I was swollen and bruised, forcing me to sign a false confession. When I refused, they squeezed the pens placed between my fingers until I could no longer bear the pain. They then used electric batons and rubber truncheons, striking my back, chest, and arms. I was kicked so hard in the chest that they broke a bone. When I lost consciousness, they poured water over me and resumed the torture.⁸

During this ordeal, Vietnamese authorities forced Mr. Quan to appear in propaganda videos broadcast on state television, where he was coerced into denouncing refugee life in Thailand and urging others not to speak ill of the Communist regime.

He was sentenced to five years and incarcerated in Gia Trung Prison. Mr. Duong recalled that Major General Rahlan Lam, Director of the MPS Department in Gia Lai Province was one of the people who beat him when he was detained. He recounted the harsh life in prison:

In prison, we were forced to plant cassava and rice under extreme conditions. The workload was impossible to complete, and failure to meet their demands was punished with beatings. We worked from 7:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and again from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Sundays were our only reprieve. At first, I was beaten constantly. They punished us for the smallest mistakes, leaving us with no choice but to endure.

Duong Van Quan was released early in 2016. One week later, he fled the country to rejoin his wife and children in Thailand. This time, with the assistance of CAP lawyers in Thailand, the UNHCR recognized him and his wife as refugees. On December 18, 2024, they left Thailand to resettle in the United States.

C. Abduction of prominent Tibetan Monk Tulku Hungkar Dorje Rinpoche

Renowned Tibetan Lama Tulku Humkar Dorje, head of the Lung Ngon monastery in Gabde county in the Golok Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Qinghai province in China, reportedly fled to Vietnam in September 2024 after facing interrogation by Chinese authorities.⁹ Reportedly, Chinese authorities had targeted him for having refused to hold an elaborate reception for a Chinese-appointed Panchen Lama during his visit to the region.

⁸ “Bắt cóc, tra tấn, tù đày—câu chuyện gia đình chồng H’mông vợ K’ho (Abduction, torture, imprisonment – the story of the family of H’mong husband and K’ho wife),” Mach Song Media, December 19, 2024, available at:

<https://machsongmedia.org/vietnam/moi-tuan-mot-guong-mat-ti-nan/2297-bat-coc-tra-tan-tu-daycau-chuyen-gia-dinh-chong-hmong-vo-kho.html>

⁹ “The Silent Passing of Tulku Hungkar Dorje: A Call for Transparency and Justice,” The Vietnamese, 20 April, 2025, available at:

<https://www.thevietnamese.org/2025/04/the-silent-passing-of-tulku-hungkar-dorje-a-call-for-transparency-and-justice/>

Once in Vietnam, he disappeared until March 25, 2025, when reports surfaced that Vietnamese security forces had arrested him in his hotel room and detained him in Ho Chi Minh City at the behest of their Chinese counterparts.¹⁰ Four days later, Chinese authorities announced his death in Vietnam. On April 8, five monks from the Lung Ngon Monastery arrived in Vietnam, escorted by six Chinese security officials. The five monks were told to sign a document stating that Tulku Humkar Dorje had died. The monks refused to sign the document because they were not allowed to see the body of Tulku Hungkar Dorjee.¹¹ On April 20, his body was reportedly cremated in secrecy.¹²

2. Transnational Repression

A. Transnational repression against Montagnard human rights advocates in Thailand

On June 20, 2023, the MPS' Deputy Minister Nguyen Van Long met with the Department of Prisons Director of Thailand's Ministry of Justice to "effectively implement the 'Agreement on Transfer of Convicts and Cooperation in Criminal Judgment Execution,'" signed by Vietnam and Thailand in 2010.¹³ Thai police arrested targeted Montagnards and Hmongs in the following months, which appeared to be non-coincidental. Independent sources in Vietnam reported that the MPS would send a delegation to Thailand by mid-March 2024, carrying with them a list of Montagnard and Hmong individuals of interest.

One of them was Y Quynh Bdap, a young Montagnard Christian human rights activist from the Ede ethnic group of Vietnam's Central Highlands. In 2016, he attended human rights training in Bangkok co-hosted by BPSOS and Amnesty International. Upon return to Vietnam, he was repeatedly detained, interrogated and tortured by the police. Faced with the threat of imminent arrest, he fled with his wife and children to Thailand in 2018, where he was recognized as a refugee by the UNHCR. With the support and assistance of BPSOS, he co-founded Montagnards Stand for Justice (MSFJ), an organization advocating for the indigenous, religious, and political rights of the Montagnard People, who have been

¹⁰ "Central Tibetan Administration Holds Press Conference to Address Suspicious Death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje," Central Tibetan Administration, 8 April, 2025, available at: <https://tibet.net/central-tibetan-administration-holds-press-conference-to-address-suspicious-death-of-tulku-hungkar-dorje/>

¹¹ "Death of Tibetan Buddhist leader under unclear circumstances highlights China's repressive policies," International Campaign for Tibet, 9 April, 2025, available at: <https://savetibet.org/death-of-tibetan-buddhist-leader-under-unclear-circumstances-highlights-chinas-repressive-policies/>

¹² "Tibetan Buddhist leader cremated in Vietnam under tight control points to Chinese transnational repression," International Campaign for Tibet, 23 April, 2025, available at: <https://savetibet.org/tibetan-buddhist-leader-cremated-in-vietnam-under-tight-control-points-to-chinese-transnational-repression/>

¹³ "Tổ chức BPSOS lại trắng trợn vu cáo, xuyên tạc sau vụ khủng bố ở Đắk Lắk (BPSOS blatantly slandered and misrepresented facts after the terrorist attacks in Dak Lak)," Công An Nhân Dân, 7 July, 2023, available at: <https://cand.com.vn/Chong-dien-bien-hoa-binh/to-chuc-bpsos-lai-trang-tron-vu-cau-xuyen-tac-sau-vu-khung-bo-o-dak-lak-i699575/>. English translation: <https://dvov.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/BPSOS-blatchantly-slandered-and-misrepresented-facts-after-the-terrorist-attacks-in-Dak-Lak-07-07-2023.pdf>

subjected to historic discrimination and intensifying persecution by Vietnamese authorities. Since its formation, MSFJ has submitted some 200 rights violation reports to UN Special Procedures and Treaty Bodies.

The MPS falsely accused Mr. Bdap of being a FULRO member and attributed responsibility for the two shootings on June 11, 2023, in Dak Lak Province to MSFJ, which it characterized as acts of terrorism.¹⁴ MSFJ strongly and publicly condemned those shootings.¹⁵

To shore up its accusation, An Ninh TV (Security Television), the MPS' official television channel, broadcast a show titled "The real identity of Y Quynh Bdap: Leader of the group 'Montagnards Stand for Justice'" on December 21, 2023, accusing Mr. Bdap of being a FULRO¹⁶ member and displaying a photo of him holding a "submachine gun."¹⁷ MSFJ quickly pointed out that the "submachine gun" in the photo was actually a carnival game BB gun and that the photo was taken at a local fairground that Mr. Bdap and a few friends had visited on October 28, 2022. Other photos taken at the fairground prove the falsity of the evidence used by the MPS to implicate Mr. Bdap and MSFJ in the shooting incidents.

The same television broadcast baselessly alleged that MSFJ is a FULRO group:

Among the 6 specially wanted subjects related to the terrorist incident that caused particularly serious consequences in Cu Kuin district, Dak Lak province last June was Y Quynh Bdap, the leader of the exiled FULRO group called "Montagnards Stand for Justice" abbreviated as MSFJ, which operates in Thailand. This is a subject with a history of opposing the government. Even though he was sent to re-education, Y Quynh still did not wake up but sank deeper and deeper into mistakes.

The broadcast displayed portrait photos of six individuals: Mr. Bdap, Y Pher Hdrue, Y Phic Hdok, Y Aron Eban, H Biap Krong and H'Tlun Bdap. Y Pher Hdrue, Y Aron Eban and Y Phic Hdok are co-founders of MSFJ; they have contributed to many of the organization's reports. H'Tlun Bdap is a member of MSFJ and a UNHCR-recognized refugee. H Biap Krong, a recognized refugee who once worked as a contractor with the UNHCR in Bangkok and as a fellow with BPSOS, is not a member of MSFJ. Being labeled as a member of a

¹⁴ "Hơn 90 người bị khởi tố trong vụ nổ súng ở Đắk Lắk" (Over 90 individuals are prosecuted in the shootings in Dak Lak), RFA, 19 October, 2023,

<https://www.rfa.org/vietnamese/news/vietnamnews/minister-of-public-securities-92-prosecuted-for-involving-in-dak-lak-mass-shootings-10192023091930.html>

¹⁵ Press release, MSFJ, 11 June, 2023, available at:

<https://dvov.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/MSFJ-press-release-11-June-2023.pdf>

¹⁶ "Front Uni de Lutte des Races Opprimées" (United Front for the Liberation of Oppressed Races), a Montagnard armed group created and supported by the French colonialist government; it ceased operations in 1992, the year Y Quynh Bdap was born.

¹⁷ "Chân tướng của Y Quynh Bdap: Kẻ cầm đầu nhóm "Người Thượng đứng lên vì công lý", ANTV, 21 December, 2023, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wF15fwSAaF8>, English translation by BPSOS available at:

<https://dvov.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/The-real-identity-of-Y-Quynh-Bdap-21-12-2013.pdf>

terrorist organization, Ms. H Biap Krong, who held a valid Thai passport, immediately relocated to Switzerland for her own safety.

On the morning of November 24, 2023, Thai police arrested eleven Montagnard refugees and asylum seekers. The police officers were accompanied by individuals whose uniforms indicated that they were from the Thai military and intelligence agencies, as well as by a Vietnamese man who appeared to be acting as an interpreter but whose demeanor and apparent central role in the raid suggest that he might also be connected to Vietnamese government security forces. The Vietnamese government maintains a robust security presence in Bangkok and has been intensely interested in the activities of refugees and asylum seekers there, particularly Montagnards and Hmong.

Several factors strongly suggest that the raid may not have been a routine immigration enforcement exercise but rather a targeted operation against particular Montagnard men who are of interest to the Vietnamese government. First, it is highly unusual for local police to be accompanied by Army officers and intelligence agents on a routine raid to arrest illegal immigrants.

Second, when those arrested are UNHCR-recognized refugees, UNHCR protection officers call the police and are almost always successful in persuading them to release the arrestees. In this case, the UNHCR did call but was told there would be no release.

Third, in this case, the police officers found dozens of men, women, and children who had no legal status in Thailand, but they arrested only the men. Initially, they directed the men downstairs so that they could take pictures of their UNHCR registration cards, but after taking the pictures, they arrested only the men.

Fourth, on November 25, the day after the arrests, the police attempted to arrest Y Aron Eban and Y Pher Hdrue, both co-founders of MSFJ. The police even tried to pry open the window of Mr. Hdrue's apartment. Fortunately, neither man was at home at the time, so neither was arrested and both stayed in hiding. However, the Vietnamese interpreter who accompanied the Thai police officers – once again taking a central and forceful role in the attempted arrest – told Mr. Hdrue's wife that they had come to arrest Mr. Hdrue and that they would be back. After a few days in hiding, both men relocated their families to a different neighborhood to evade surveillance and arrest by the Thai police.

Others were not that lucky. Eleven Montagnard refugees and asylum seekers were detained in Immigration Detention Center in Bangkok, Thailand after their arrest in late 2023. The detainees reported regular visits by Vietnamese Embassy officials, including Hoàng Minh Hải, First Secretary of the Vietnamese Embassy in Bangkok.¹⁸ These officials interrogated

¹⁸ Hoàng Minh Hải profile, Vietnamese Embassy website. Available at: <https://vnembassy-bangkok.mofa.gov.vn/vi-vn/Consular%20Services/Contacts/Trang/default.aspx>

the refugees about their connections to Y Quynh Bdap and pressured them to disclose his location.

Vietnamese authorities have also been accused of orchestrating violence against the detainees by using other Vietnamese detainees, primarily undocumented migrants, as enforcers within the detention center. These detainees, reportedly led by individuals such as Bui Thanh Tuan and Nguyen Xuan Tuat, acted under promises of leniency from Vietnamese authorities. They carried out physical assaults on Montagnard and Hmong refugees, including beatings with electrical wires.

On March 6, 2024, the MPS announced its official designation of MSFJ as a terrorist organization and concluded: “therefore, anyone who participates, propagandizes, entices, incites others to participate, sponsor, receive sponsorship from ‘Montagnards Stand for Justice – MSFJ’; participates in training courses offered by ‘Montagnards Stand for Justice – MSFJ’; operating under the direction of ‘Montagnards for Justice – MSFJ’... are guilty of ‘terrorism’ or ‘supporting terrorism’ and will be dealt with as the law prescribes.”¹⁹ At the same time, MPS announced a ten-year prison sentence against Y Quynh Bdap.²⁰

In January 2024, a “mobile court” in Dak Lak Province, Vietnam sentenced Y Quynh Bdap *in absentia* to ten years in prison on fabricated charges of being involved in the June 11, 2023 “terrorist” shooting incidents in Dak Lak Province.²¹ In June 2024, Thai police arrested and jailed Mr. Bdap in response to Vietnam’s convict transfer request.²² A Thai Criminal Court then ruled that his extradition would not violate Thai laws, rendering his extradition imminent. UN human rights experts immediately decried Thailand’s violation of the principle of non-refoulement because the UNHCR had already recognized Mr. Bdap as a refugee.²³ Respectable international actors, including The U.S. Commission for International Religious Freedom (USCIRF),²⁴ Republican and Democratic members of the

¹⁹ “Thông báo về tổ chức khủng bố ‘Người Thượng vì công lý – MSFJ’ (Announcement about the terrorist organization ‘Montagnards Stand for Justice – MSFJ’),” MPS, March 6, 2024, available at: <https://mps.gov.vn/khung-bo/bai-viet-to-chuc-khung-bo/thong-bao-ve-to-chuc-khung-bo-nguoi-thuong-vi-cong-ly---msfj-24.html>; English translation at:

<https://dvov.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/MPS-announcement-about-the-terrorist-organization-MSFJ.pdf>

²⁰ “Lý lịch đối tượng cầm đầu tổ chức khủng bố ‘người Thượng vì công lý – MSFJ’ (Background of the subject that leads the terrorist organization ‘Montagnards Stand for Justice – MSFJ’),” MPS, March 6, 2024, available at:

<https://mps.gov.vn/khung-bo/bai-viet-to-chuc-khung-bo/ly-lich-doi-tuong-cam-dau-to-chuc-khung-bo-nguoi-thuong-vi-cong-ly---msfj-27.html>; English translation:

<https://dvov.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Background-of-subject-leading-terrorist-organization-MSFJ.pdf>

²¹ “Thailand: Vietnamese Activist at Risk of Forced Return,” Human Rights Watch, 22 October, 2024, available at:

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/10/22/thailand-vietnamese-activist-risk-forced-return#:~:text=In%20requesting%20Y%20Quynh%20Bdap's,to%2010%20years%20in%20prison.>

²² Ibid.

²³ “Thailand: Court ruling puts human rights defender in danger if extradited to Viet Nam, say experts,” Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, October 16, 2024, available at:

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/10/thailand-court-ruling-puts-human-rights-defender-danger-if-extradited-viet>

²⁴ Tweet from Chair and Vice-Chair of USCIRF, August 23, 2024, available at:

<https://x.com/USCIRF/status/1827030907183575254>

U.S. Congress,²⁵ and international human rights organizations²⁶ have come forth to call on Thailand not to deliver Y Quynh Bdap into the hands of his former persecutors.

On February 23, 2025, Thai police raided a funeral service for the mother of Y Quynh Bdap's wife in Nonthaburi Province, arresting and detaining sixty-five Montagnard asylum seekers, many of whom possessed refugee cards issued by the UNHRCR in Thailand. Subsequently, forty-three Montagnards were jailed for illegal entry into Thailand, including Y Quynh Bdap's wife, while others were released. Although it remains unclear whether this raid was conducted at the behest of Vietnamese authorities, it reflects a broader pattern of repression against Montagnards in both Thailand and Vietnam by the VCP.

On March 13, 2025, police Colonel Y Luong Nie from the Dak Lak Provincial Police and another officer, A Trung, visited the IDC in Suanplu to interview Y Duong Brong, Y Phuong Enoul, and H Leo Nie, who are on the wanted list of the government because of allegations related to terrorist attacks in June 2023. On March 20, 2025, the Vietnamese government issued a letter to persuade Montagnards to return to Vietnam, targeting refugee asylum seekers in Thailand.²⁷

On March 24, at about midnight, an officer in IDC called Y Phuong Enoul and Y Khiu Nie, two asylum seekers that did not have UNHCR cards, to sign a document in the Thai language. However, after that, an inmate who can read Thai informed them that they had signed a document to return to Vietnam. The police said they already had flights to go back to Vietnam. The two refused and then went back to their room. On April 18, 2025, representatives from the Vietnamese Embassy met with Y Khiu Nie and Y Duong Bkrong, threatening them to accept repatriation. Additionally, local police visited their residence in Vietnam, pressuring their family to sign a document agreeing for the two refugees to return.

Subsequently, the Vietnamese government issued letters to the National Security Council of Thailand, alleging that Y Duong Brong, Y Phuong Enoul, and H Leo Nie were involved in a terrorist attack in June 2023—a claim that has prevented them from being released on bail from the IDC. On May 12 2025, police from Cu Mgar District in Dak Lak Province visited H Leo Nie's family in Vietnam, demanding that they sign documents consenting to

²⁵ Letter from Vietnam Caucus, US House of Representatives, October 10, 2024, available at: <https://correa.house.gov/news/press-releases/correa-vietnam-caucus-call-on-blinken-to-intervene-in-case-of-y-quynh-bdap-prevent-extradition-to-vietnam>

²⁶ "Thailand: Joint Open Letter to the Thai Government on the extradition of United Nations-recognized refugee Y Quynh Bdap," October 18, 2024, available at: <https://www.icj.org/thailand-joint-open-letter-to-the-thai-government-on-the-extradition-of-united-nations-recognized-refugee-y-quynh-bdap/>

"Thailand: Open Letter to the Royal Thai Government on the extradition of United Nations-recognized refugee Y Quynh Bdap," Amnesty International, October 18, 2024, available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa39/8662/2024/en/>

Joint letter initiated by International Religious Freedom Roundtable, October 16, 2024, available at: <https://www.irfroundtable.org/advocacy-2024/thailand-vietnam-against-extradition>

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<https://daklak.gov.vn/-/thu-keu-goi-ong-bao-dan-toc-thieu-so-ak-lak-ang-cu-tru-tai-thai-lan-tu-nguyen-hoi-huong-ve-viet-nam>

her deportation. It remains unclear why the Vietnamese government is targeting H Leo Nie, especially since she has not participated in any political activities. Only her husband is a member of MSFJ, and he was detained along with eleven other Montagnards in late 2023.

At present, these three cases remain in a state of uncertainty, with deportation looming at any moment.

B. Transnational repression against Hmong human rights advocates in Thailand

While the MPS could not stretch its accusations to implicate Hmong human rights advocates in the June 11 shootings, it has deliberately targeted human rights advocates from the Hmong Christian community seeking refugee protection in Thailand. In mid-August 2023, Lu A Da, Coordinator of the Hmong Human Rights Coalition (HHRC), reported to BPSOS that strangers had been surveilling his residence for many days. Then on August 24, two Thai police officers showed up looking for him, but he was not at home. They showed his photo to his neighbors and his 9-year old daughter for identification and said that they would come back. Fearing arrest per the request of Vietnamese authorities, Lu A Da relocated his family to an undisclosed location, with the help of BPSOS.

On August 30, 2023, the Public Security Department of Lai Chau Province denounced Lu A Da on its official portal:

*Thus, the subject took advantage of the ignorance of a sector of the population who have religious faith to deliberately propagate propaganda against and distort the Party's guidelines and policies and the State's law on religion (Law on Belief, Religion) to incite them and create a divide between the government and religions...*²⁸

On December 7, Thai police arrested Lu A Da in front of his residence, where his family had moved only a few months before, despite the pleas of his 9-year old daughter. The police already had his photo and identifying information, suggesting the arrest was pre-planned. He was taken to the Bangkok police station. His wife was left alone to care for their 9-year old daughter and 4-month old child without any source of revenue, as Mr. Da was the main breadwinner for the family.

At the time of his arrest, Lu A Da coordinated the participation of Hmong religious freedom advocates in Vietnam and in Thailand as part of BPSOS' year-long training program and represented the HHRC at a monthly meeting of the Vietnam Freedom of Religion or Belief Roundtable. This virtual roundtable was established in March 2016 with the encouragement and support of BPSOS. Its co-founder and first coordinator, Nguyen

²⁸ “Tuyên truyền, xuyên tạc luật tín ngưỡng, tôn giáo (Propaganda against and distorting the Law on Belief and Religion),” Public Security of Lai Chau Province, 30 August, 2023, available at: <https://congan.laichau.gov.vn/index.php/an-ninh-trat-tu/tuyen-truyen-xuyen-tac-luat-tin-nguong-ton-giao-932.html>

Bac Truyen, was arrested in July 2017 by Vietnamese authorities and sentenced to 11 years of imprisonment. Thanks to international pressure, he was released in early September of this year but exiled to Germany with his wife.

On December 15, USCIRF Vice Chair Fred Davie expressed his concern in a post on X about the arrest, detention, and potential deportation of Mr. Lu A Da to Vietnam.²⁹ On December 28, 2023, the First Secretary of the Vietnamese Embassy Hoang Minh Hai threatened Lu A Da with deportation to Vietnam and harm to his family if he did not cooperate.

Other members of the HHRC are similarly at risk:

- 1) Ly A Cha
- 2) Giảng A Dinh
- 3) Ma A Dinh
- 4) Ma A Sinh
- 5) Ma Seo Chang

Ly A Cha, a H'mong Christian who provided information on religious persecution to BPSOS for reporting to UN Special Procedures, was interrogated by MPS officers and forced to falsely admit that he had fabricated the news to misrepresent government policies. After several instances of interrogation and threats from local authorities, Ly A Cha fled to Thailand in July 2022. In Thailand, he continued to receive threats on social media, and his family in Vietnam was repeatedly visited by local public security officials. On August 9, 2023, the MPS office in Nhi Sơn Hamlet, Mường Lát District, Thanh Hoa Province accused Ly A Cha of being a “reactionary element in exile” who worked to deceive public opinion due to mercenary interests.³⁰

On October 12, 2023, VTV4 (Vietnam Television 4), the primary state-run television program of Vietnam targeting the Vietnamese diaspora, broadcast a commentary piece that accused BPSOS of being one of the “[o]rganizations of reactionary expatriates” training ethnic minorities in the Northwest, Central Highlands and Southwest “to spark anti-state movements.” The piece specifically targeted Giang A Dinh, a key member of the HHRC: “Mr. Dinh himself provided training on politics, law, and the right to freedom.”³¹

²⁹ “US religious freedom commission urges Thailand not to deport Hmong activist to Vietnam,” Radio Free Asia, 15 December 2023, available at:

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/vietnam/hmong-activist-12212023153600.html>

³⁰ “VIỆC QUÂN NHÂN ĐÀO NGŨ VÀ SỰ XẢO TRÁ CỦA Đám Phấn Động Lý A Chà,” (The case of an army defector and the cunning character of Lý A Chà’s reactionary group),” Public Security of Nhi Sơn Hamlet, Mường Lát District, Thanh Hoá Province, 9 August, 2023, available at:

<https://www.facebook.com/congannhison/posts/pfbid0574RVkQfH6uDQxGH14rrv94xZ9tfSZvjmw78CJeVGH74fd6FTDLtqc1KfCaNktm5l>

³¹ “Vạch trần thủ đoạn tập huấn tôn giáo trong đồng bào dân tộc thiểu số (Exposing the religious training ruse targeting ethnic minorities),” VTV4, 13 October, 2023, available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-dZvK1S968>. English translation:

<https://dvov.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/VTV4-video-attacking-Hmong-refugees-and-asylum-seekers-in-Thailand-13-10-2023.pdf>

Fortunately, Dinh and his family were resettled to the United States on October 25, a dozen days after the broadcast.

Three other HHRC members who have been in the MPS' crosshairs were leaders of their community in Subdivision 179, Đam Rông District, Lam Dong Province: Ma A Dinh, Ma A Sinh and Ma Seo Chang. With the support of the HHRC, they negotiated with government authorities about ID card issuance for all residents of Subdivision 179. When the government reneged on its promises and moved to arrest them, these three community leaders fled to Thailand. Once in Thailand, they joined the HHRC to continue their advocacy for undocumented Hmongs back home.

Following the government's reversal of policy towards Subdivision 179, Ma A Dinh fled Vietnam in August 2022. Shortly thereafter, he attended the Southeast Asia Freedom of Religion or Belief (SEAFORB) Conference held in Bali, Indonesia in early November of the same year to speak out for undocumented Hmong Christians in Vietnam.

On November 22, 2022, a government-affiliated Facebook fanpage "Góc Nhìn Người Đà Lạt" (Da Lat People's Perspective) denounced Ma A Dinh in a lengthy article titled "Ma A Dinh – who hangs on to the pipe dream of Boat People SOS - BPSOS".³² The said article displayed Ma A Dinh (rightmost) in a group photo at the SEAFORB Conference with a commissioner and two staffers of the USCIRF. The first comment on this Facebook post says: "Who knows Ma A Dinh's current whereabouts, please inform the law enforcement."

On October 13, 2023, Vietnam's state-run television program VTV4 denounced Hmong Christians who attend training on human rights and on reporting rights violations:

In recent years, reactionary, hostile forces have continuously implemented the strategy of peaceful evolution of an increasingly dangerous and sophisticated nature, including attacks aiming to affect the thought process of ethnic minorities is one of their central goals, to incite riots and protests impacting political security and social order. And recently, a trick to help them easily reach ethnic people is to entice them to participate in online religious training classes, under the guise of providing political and legal knowledge, the law. People who participate in these training courses will gradually become a tool to spread misleading rhetoric about ethnic and religious issues in Vietnam, helping to slander the Party and State for oppressing ethnic minorities, to create false perceptions about Vietnam in the international community. The above online courses intended to oppose and attack the government have made

³² "Ma A Dinh – Kẻ đu bám giấc mơ hảo huyền của Ủy Ban Cứu Người Vượt Biển – BPSOS (Ma A Dinh – who hangs on to the pipe dream of Boat People SOS – BPSOS)", Góc Nhìn Người Đà Lạt, 22 November, 2022, available at: https://www.facebook.com/gocnhinnguoidalat/posts/pfbid0KdhFLAPJAKiAnV2PArU4drJuX6wHB3MHdgJ3z9jnGLsE4TL8x7s84BfUd9gpS8pzl?_rdc=1&_rdr

*their way into the Protestant Hmong ethnic community, and the following story was recorded in Điện Biên Province.*³³

The program showed the photos of Ma A Sinh and Ma Seo Chang as an illustration of “reactionary, hostile forces.”

On January 23, 2024, the police of Dam Rong District came to the home of Ma A Sinh and Ma Seo Chang ordered his father to sign an arrest warrant against Sinh; his father refused to sign it. On the same day, Ma Seo Chang’s younger brother, under threat, signed an arrest warrant against Chang.

On April 5, 2025, two Thai police officers visited Pastor Giang A Au’s house. He is a member of the Hmong Human Rights Coalition (HHRC) and a volunteer working for BPSOS. Luckily, Giang A Au was not at home at the time. His son talked with the Thai police and they learned that the police had come to arrest Pastor Giang A Au. Before leaving, the police told him they would return in the evening.

In the first four months of 2025, after the mass arrests of 13 Hmong Christians, nine of them were recognized as refugees by the UNHCR in Thailand. All are members of the HHRC and are at high risk of being deported back to Vietnam.

On April, 27, 2025, once again, the Vietnamese Embassy group led by First Secretary Hoang Minh Hai and another official named Hung visited the Hmong group in IDC. Mr. Hung told Pastor Giang A Au:

You and your family have been in Thailand for nearly 10 years. Vietnam has changed a lot. The United States has also closed its doors to refugees. There is no place left for you to go. Now you return to Vietnam. Remember, you have children waiting for you outside. You also have relatives in Vietnam, we know them all.

The police in Vietnam also reportedly visited several detainees’ relatives’ houses to ask them to sign documents consenting to deport their family members. In May 2025, Mr. Hoang Minh Hai also visited Sinh Thị Danh, wife of Pastor Giang A Au, to ask her to sign documents, despite the fact that she cannot speak or read Vietnamese fluently.

C. Transnational repression against human rights defenders in exile

MSFJ, incorporated as a non-profit organization in the United States, serves as a liaison to the international community for Montagnard communities at risk of political and religious persecution inside Vietnam. The organization also facilitates the training of Montagnard

³³ Photo showed on the VTV4 broadcast “Vạch trần thủ đoạn tập huấn tôn giáo trong đồng bào dân tộc thiểu số (Exposing the religious training ruse targeting ethnic minorities),” VTV4, 13 October, 2023, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5-dZyK1S968>. English translation: <https://dvov.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/VTV4-video-attacking-Hmong-refugees-and-asylum-seekers-in-Thailand-13-10-2023.pdf>

Christians in Vietnam on identifying and reporting human rights violations. MSFJ members have attended many international forums to highlight the persecution faced by Montagnards in Vietnam, including the annual Ministerial on International Religious Freedom hosted by the US Department of State, the annual SEAFORB Conferences co-hosted by BPSOS and its civil society partners, and the annual International Religious Freedom Summit hosted by a coalition of some 80 civil society organizations (CSOs).

Since its formation in 2019, MSFJ has collected information for some 200 rights-violation reports submitted to UN Special Procedures and Treaty Bodies, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the US Department of State, and the USCIRF, among others. Since 2021, MSFJ has worked with BPSOS to identify Montagnards trafficked to Saudi Arabia and Cambodia. Scores have been rescued and repatriated as a result. The UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, has initiated multiple joint allegation letters to the Government of Vietnam regarding cases documented by MSFJ.

Over the past four years, Vietnamese government authorities in the Central Highlands of Vietnam, where most Montagnards live, have falsely alleged that MSFJ engaged in “anti-state” activities with the aim to establish an independent Montagnard (“Dega”) nation in the Central Highlands. MPS has particularly targeted the two key co-founders of MSFJ: Y Quynh Bdap and Y Phic Hdok.

Y Phic Hdok, recognized as a refugee by the UNHCR in Thailand and currently residing in the U.S., attended the aforementioned human rights training co-organized by BPSOS and Amnesty International in Bangkok in 2016, where he met Y Quynh Bdap. After seeing what happened to Mr. Bdap upon return to Vietnam, Mr. Hdok went to Cambodia instead. Shortly thereafter, the police in Vietnam ordered his father, Mr. Y Ku Knul, to bring him home from Cambodia.³⁴ The police threatened that failure to do so would be met with punishment.³⁵ On December 28, 2016, Mr. Knul went to work on his farmland as usual but did not return home.³⁶ After much searching, Mr. Knul’s wife found him hanging from a bamboo tree, with bruises and marks of electric batons all over his body.³⁷ Even without being notified, twenty police agents quickly appeared and took Mr. Knul’s body down.³⁸ From the autopsy, Mr. Knul’s wife saw that her husband’s organs were smashed, likely due to heavy blows.³⁹ The police took away the damaged organs and did not give the family the autopsy report.⁴⁰ When relatives brought Mr. Knul’s corpse home, plainclothes police followed and stood guard at his home, ordering visitors not to come close or take pictures

³⁴ BPSOS et al, “Joint Submission Responding to the 5th and 6th State Report on Vietnam’s Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child” (28 February 2020), at 10, para 22, available at: https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2FCRC%2FNGO%2FVNM%2F42735&Lang=en

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

of the corpse.⁴¹ The police ordered the family to bury Y Ku Knul quietly.⁴² For safety reasons, Y Phic Hdok fled from Cambodia to Thailand, where he was recognized as a refugee by the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.⁴³ In Thailand, he co-founded MSFJ. He currently resides in California.

On June 28, 2024, the official website of the Bình Phước Provincial Government falsely accused Y Phic Hdok and Y Quynh Bdap of being FULRO members who incited the June 11, 2023 shootings in Dak Lak Province:

*According to information from competent agencies in Đắk Lắk Province, the 2 subjects Y Phic Hdok and Y Quynh Bdap, who were born and grew up in Đắk Lắk Province, had joined the terrorist organization FULRO at an early age, regularly followed instructions from FULRO expatriates to expand the group's membership in the country; enticed and incited residents of Cư Kuin District and Krông Ana District to participate in protests and an insurrection to demand the establishment of 'Dega Protestantism' and a 'Dega State'.*⁴⁴

The FULRO movement ceased to exist more than three decades ago, the same year Y Quynh Bdap was born and many years before Y Phic Hdok's birth. These two did not know each other until they met at the 2016 human rights training co-organized by BPSOS and Amnesty International in Bangkok.

On February 14, 2025, MPS labeled BPSOS, a U.S.-based organization with operations in Thailand, of having ties to terrorism because it protected and defended Y Quynh Bdap and other MSFJ members against Vietnam's transnational repression:

*After Y Quynh Bdap was detained and during the trial of Y Quynh Bdap by a Thai court, BPSOS continues to actively and diligently seek ways to protect and prevent the Thai court from deporting Y Quynh Bdap to Vietnam; raise funds for a Thai lawyer to participate in defending Y Quynh Bdap at the trial; and, together with H Biap Krong, a member of the terrorist organization MSFJ, advocate with international organizations to support the activities of this organization.*⁴⁵

MPS also accused BPSOS President and CEO Dr. Nguyen Dinh Thang of leading a terrorism-linked organization and posted his home address on the MPS website.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ “Có tật giật mình! (A culprit is easily startled!), Bình Phước Online, 28-06-2023, available at:

<https://baobinhphuoc.com.vn/news/0/145849/co-tat-giat-minh>. English translation:

<https://dvov.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/A-culprit-is-easily-startled-28-06-2023.pdf>

⁴⁵ “Ủy ban cứu người vượt biên - BPSOS' đã và đang liên quan đến khủng bố (“Boat People SOS - BPSOS” has been related to terrorism),” Công An Nhân Dân Online (People's Public Security Online), February 14, 2025, available at:

<https://cand.com.vn/Ban-tin-113/uy-ban-cuu-nguoi-vuot-bien-bpsos-da-va-dang-lien-quan-den-khung-bo-i759142/>

On February 15, VTC News, a state-owned multimedia corporation under the Ministry of Information and Communications,⁴⁶ announced the Ministry of Public Security's designation of BPSOS as a terrorist-related organization, labelling it as a "terrorist organization" in its headline.⁴⁷ Announcers cited the Ministry of Public Security's justification for the designation, identified Nguyen Dinh Thang as the leader of BPSOS and included his photo, marked with a red 'X'.⁴⁸ The VTC News program was broadcast across hundreds of state-run media organizations within Vietnam and around the world.

BPSOS is a reputable, globally-recognized human rights organization, which has submitted some 500 reports to UN Special Procedures and treaty bodies in partnership with victims. Dr. Thang is a prominent, accomplished, and tireless human rights defender with decades of experience in human rights advocacy.

Amb. Julie Turner, US Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor has publicly decried MPS' labeling of BPSOS and Dr. Thang of being linked to terrorism:

We are also concerned that the acts of censorship also extend beyond Vietnam's borders. I am deeply troubled by reports that the Vietnamese authority continues to coerce, harass, intimidate, surveil and censor dissidents and activists in exile for exercising their rights including reported incidents of transnational repression targeting US citizens. I know that many of you have also shared terrible experiences and described the far-reaching negative consequences of transnational repression on your own life and those of your colleagues and family. I would like to take a moment to acknowledge Boat People SOS, a United States organization, and the contributions of Director Nguyen Dinh Thang, a US citizen who has publicly shared his experience as a victim of this over-reach. The United States prioritizes the safety of all US citizens and will continue to push back against governments that arbitrarily and unlawfully surveil, threaten and attack Americans who are exercising their universal human rights.⁴⁹

The MPS' transnational repression against BPSOS and Dr. Thang were similarly dismissed as not credible by Czech Ambassador at Large Robert Rehak, Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues, Interfaith Dialogue and Freedom of Religion or Belief, and Chair of the Article 18 Alliance (also known as the International Religious Freedom and Belief Alliance, or IRFBA), a grouping of over 40 governments working collectively to defend and promote religious freedom worldwide.⁵⁰

⁴⁶ VTC, "Introduction: General Introduction", available at: <https://vtc.org.vn/en>.

⁴⁷ VTV24, "Bộ Công an cảnh báo về tổ chức khủng bố Ủy ban cứu người vượt biển (Ministry of Public Security warns about terrorist organization Boat People SOS)" (15 February 2025), available at: https://youtu.be/VMelfUVqfQI?si=d1rnuRj_ZK8tSs3r.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Statement of Amb. Julie Turner at Vietnam Human Rights Day, 1 May, 2025, available at: <https://www.facebook.com/61556748598460/videos/1209063104184035>

⁵⁰ <https://www.state.gov/international-religious-freedom-or-belief-alliance/>

On Feb 14, 2025, the Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security made an outrageous and unacceptable accusation: a refugee aid group, Boat People SOS, is being labeled as a terrorism-linked organization. For over three decades, Boat People SOS has fought for those who have no voice – refugees, victims of human trafficking and communities facing persecution. They have saved lives, defended human dignity and stood up for fundamental rights. Crucial role in this has Dr. Thang that I know personally and I appreciate it very high. Now, the Vietnamese government is calling this terrorism. Such accusation is not only false, but they also aim to silence the voices of those who stand up for freedom of religion or justice. Let's be clear: Helping refugees is not terrorism. Defending human rights is not a crime. I am proud to stand with Dr. Thang and Boat People SOS. Their work matters. And no government should ever try to silence those who fight for justice.⁵¹

In November 2024, during the Committee Against Torture (CAT) review of Thailand, Hai Di Nguyen represented BPSOS to raise concerns about Y Quynh Bdap. Unexpectedly, the Vietnamese government sent a delegation of ten officials to attend the event, allegedly wearing badges from the UNDP. This was unprecedented, as most countries do not participate in the review sessions of others. Hai Di reported experiencing intimidation from members of the Vietnamese delegation, including attempts to photograph her, read her notes, and stare at her. Some individuals even changed seats to sit unnervingly close to her in an apparent effort to intimidate. This constitutes a clear act of harassment and interference.

On March 5, 2025, after the IRF summit in Washington DC, all users of BPSOS email were informed by the IT team that their email accounts had been subjected to a cyberattack. Google confirmed that the attack had originated from a government entity, with a strong suspicion that the Vietnamese government was responsible.

In March 2025, the payment from BPSOS to Percy Nguyen was blocked by WISE, the financial platform we have used for years. The transaction was flagged by WISE and a bank for a potential violation of international sanctions laws—an unprecedented occurrence. WISE even asked Percy Nguyen about his relation with BPSOS in Vietnamese, which raises serious concerns, as it suggests that the Vietnamese government is actively pressuring financial institutions to disrupt the operations of BPSOS and those associated with it.

D. Monitoring and surveillance

The Government of Vietnam has developed an intricate network of agents monitoring Vietnamese refugees and immigrants in Thailand.

For example, BPSOS found that the Vietnamese individual, Nguyen Huy Hoang, contracted by the UNHCR for translation/interpreting services at refugee status determination (RSD)

⁵¹ Statement of Ambassador Robert Rehak, 14 March, 2025, available at: https://x.com/Robert_Rehak/status/1900570305443029065

and resettlement interviews is closely affiliated with the Vietnamese Embassy. Nguyen Huy Hoang is the leader of the Association of Vietnamese Students in Thailand, a group established as an apparatus of the Embassy.

This may explain why the Vietnamese police knew the exact dates of some RSD interviews, which was reported to BPSOS by Vietnam-based relatives of several asylum seekers. The police had threatened them with harm if their family members said anything negative about the communist regime in Vietnam during their RSD interviews.

On September 5, 2023, Nguyen Huy Hoang led a group of Vietnamese students to visit the refugee communities in Nonthaburi. The location should have been kept confidential but Nguyen Huy Hoang might have known about the location using information from his work as an interpreter for the UNHCR. The next day, September 6, Y Quynh Bdap reported that Nguyen Huy Hoang took a picture of him in an IOM office in Silom, Bangkok. This act of surveillance directly correlated with the Vietnamese Embassy's intimate knowledge of the refugee resettlement status of Y Quynh Bdap—a disturbing link that paved the way for his arrest immediately after his interview with the Canadian Embassy in June 2024.

In another case, Tran Thanh Man, a refugee in Sikiew refugee camp in the 1990s who was stuck in Thailand for decades, also reported that Nguyen Huy Hoang was his interpreter for his RSD interview in 2019. Mr. Tran said that Nguyen Huy Hoang was extremely unpleasant during the interview and might have intentionally translated several things incorrectly. Later on, the UNHCR closed his case.

During the International Religious Freedom (IRF) Summit, a group of informants from the Vietnamese embassy in Washington D.C. was reported going around the summit taking pictures while wearing a media pass. One of them regularly came to past IRF Summits to take pictures of Vietnamese participants. When asked by one of our volunteers, he claimed to be a reporter with Vietnam News, a state-run media organization catering to English-speaking readers.

After this summit, Vietnam News published an article designating BPSOS as a terrorist organization.⁵² We also found one woman wearing a badge showing that she registered under the name of BPSOS. Her name was listed as Uyen, but she was not our staff or a volunteer. When confronted, she left and never came back.

3. Repressive Alliance: Vietnam and Thailand's Cooperation

Vietnamese authorities are increasingly targeting Hmong and Montagnard Christians who have fled to Thailand, particularly those reporting on human rights violations as members of the Evangelical Church of Christ in the Central Highlands (ECCCH), MSFJ, and the

⁵² "Boat People SOS" labelled as terrorist organisation
<https://vietnamnews.vn/politics-laws/1692267/boat-people-sos-labelled-as-terrorist-organisation.html>

HHRC. Reports suggest that “swap mart” agreements between Vietnam and Thailand, as well as other Southeast Asian countries, facilitate transnational repression in the region.⁵³

As detailed in Mr. Truong Duy Nhat’s case, BPSOS obtained evidence and witness accounts about his abduction by the Thai police and his subsequent delivery to the Vietnamese police. A Vietnamese couple, both UNHCR-recognized refugees who happened to be inadvertent witnesses, provided BPSOS with videos and photos of the Thai police’s kidnapping operations. BPSOS then shared the evidence and witness accounts with the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance (WGEID) and the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) in Geneva about this kidnapping incident.⁵⁴ Running the risk of elimination by both the Thai and the Vietnamese police, the witness couple were relocated by BPSOS to an undisclosed location and, thanks to the UNHCR’s intervention, promptly resettled in a Nordic country.⁵⁵ On September 18, 2020, the WGAD wrote to both the Thai and Vietnamese governments about their apparent collaboration in the kidnapping.⁵⁶

In February 2019, approximately a month after Nhat’s disappearance, Vietnam’s MPS arrested three Thai anti-junta activists charged with royal defamation – Siam Theerawut, Chuchep Chivasut and Kritsana Thapthai – at the Laos-Vietnam border for illegal entry and the use of fake travel documents.⁵⁷ The Vietnamese police turned them over to the Thai authorities, according to U.S.-based Thai Alliance for Human Rights.⁵⁸ All three activists have remained missing to this day.⁵⁹ There was a suspected quid pro quo agreement between the two governments.

The cross-border coordination between the Thai and Vietnamese governments became significantly apparent over the past 18 months, as they jointly target Montagnard Christian and Hmong Christian refugees and asylum seekers in Thailand.

⁵³ Human Rights Watch, “‘We Thought We Were Safe’: Repression and Forced Return of Refugees in Thailand” (16 May 2024), s “Surveillance and ‘Snatch Squads’”, available at: <https://www.hrw.org/feature/2024/05/16/we-thought-we-were-safe/repression-and-forced-return-of-refugees-in-thailand>

⁵⁴ [A/HRC/WGAD/2020/42 Advance Edited Version](#)

⁵⁵ ‘Unholy alliance’? SE Asian authorities accused of trading exiled activists, Reuters, June 21, 2019, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-asean-summit-rights/unholy-alliance-se-asian-authorities-accused-of-trading-exiled-activists-idUSKCN1TM1EI>

⁵⁶ Opinions adopted by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention at its eighty-eighth session, 24–28 August 2020, available at: https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Detention/Opinions/Session88/A_HRC_WGAD_20_42_Advance_Edited_Version.pdf

⁵⁷ FIDH- International Federation for Human Rights Internet Law Reform Dialogue (iLaw) Thai Lawyers for Human Rights (TLHR) for the 39th Session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, 25 March, 2021, available at: <https://uprdoc.ohchr.org/uprweb/downloadfile.aspx?filename=9044&file=EnglishTranslation>

⁵⁸ ‘Unholy alliance’? SE Asian authorities accused of trading exiled activists, Reuters, June 21, 2019, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-asean-summit-rights/unholy-alliance-se-asian-authorities-accused-of-trading-exiled-activists-idUSKCN1TM1EI>

⁵⁹ Court refuses to declare activist missing person 5 years after disappearance,” Prachatai, 23 December, 2024, available at: <https://prachataienglish.com/node/11250>

After MPS' designation of MSFJ as a terrorist organization on March 13, 2024, the Thai police escorted an MPS delegation, led by Major General Rahlan Lam, Director of MPS Department in Gia Lai Province, through two neighborhoods with large concentrations of Montagnard refugees and asylum seekers in Bang Yai District, Nonthaburi Province, on the outskirts of Bangkok. Major General Lam told the refugees that Vietnam has human rights because its government is a member of the UN Human Rights Council and that the refugees would enjoy freedom back in Vietnam: "If you want to eat cassava leaves, you can have cassava leaves. If you want to eat dog meat, you can have dog meat."⁶⁰

Among the some 20 MPS officers accompanying Major General Lam, the Montagnard refugees recognized:

- (1) Lieutenant Colonel Y Luong Nie, Deputy Head of the Internal Police Department of Dak Lak province;
- (2) Tran Xuan Phi, formerly Head of the Security Team in Cu Quyn, Dak Lak province.

Lt. Col. Y Luong Nie had twice interrogated Y Quynh Bdap, in 2009 and 2010. He reportedly held public denunciation sessions where members of Montagnard Christian house churches had to admit to being wrong and repent.⁶¹ Tran Xuan Phi had interrogated Y Pher Hdrue in 2018. They were accompanied by an official from the Vietnamese embassy.

The Thai police rounded up Montagnards in front of their residences for the Vietnamese delegation to "interview" them. In one interview, General Lâm asked a Montagnard woman where she came from in Vietnam and tried to entice her to return to her home village, offering a guarantee that she would receive assistance upon return. He kept insisting until she quit the conversation and walked away.

Several members of the Vietnamese delegation videotaped each conversation between MPS officers and refugees. Many of the refugees expressed fear for their personal safety now that the MPS knew their whereabouts. During his interviews with refugees, Lt. Col. Y Luong Nie sought information about the residence of Mr. Bdap and some other MSFJ members. Prior to the delegation's arrival in Thailand, a number of Hmongs and Montagnards high on the MPS' list of targets had received assistance to relocate to undisclosed locations.

After about a few days, Major Gen. Lam, Lt. Col. Y Luong Nie and other members of their delegation left Thailand. Reportedly, others remained in Bangkok for about a month to monitor the whereabouts of Montagnard refugees and asylum seekers.

⁶⁰ Video clip of Gen. Rahlan Lam talking to refugees in Bang Yai district, with English subtitle:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/18IZh18p-S0gAQ0_LaKqYohqx83AR7gd/view

⁶¹ "Phát động phong trào toàn dân bảo vệ an ninh Tổ quốc tại xã Ea Tu, thành phố Buôn Ma Thuột (Launching the movement of all people to protect national security in Ea Tu commune, Buon Ma Thuot city)," Public Security of Dak Lak Province, December 24, 2023, available at:

<https://congan.daklak.gov.vn/-/phat-ong-phong-trao-toan-dan-bao-ve-an-ninh-to-quoc-tai-xa-ea-tu-thanh-pho-buon-ma-thuot>

On April 28, 2025, a group of police, led by a Vietnamese official named Minh and escorted by the Thai police, came to a pink building in Bang Yai, Nonthaburi, Thailand to meet with Montagnard refugees in Thailand. He told them if they knew anyone who wanted to return to Vietnam, they could coordinate the repatriation process.

The Thai government has compromised the safety of refugees by routinely allowing Vietnamese officials to visit detainees at the Immigration Detention Center (IDC). This policy has cultivated a hostile environment, essentially enabling the Vietnamese Embassy to coerce asylum seekers into returning to Vietnam against their will. Testimonies of refugees reveal severe abuses. Eleven Montagnard refugees detained after the November 2023 arrests reported that a group of Vietnamese inmates—allegedly acting on promises of leniency from the Embassy—systematically tortured them to extract information about individuals targeted by the Vietnamese government. In yet another incident in April 2025, Ma Seo Khua, a Hmong refugee, was brutally beaten by a Vietnamese room leader. The assault left him with critical head injuries, causing him to collapse and bleed profusely. Despite the Hmong group asking for help, IDC officials did not intervene.

While the Thai government has not been directly implicated in these acts of torture and repression, it has failed to uphold its obligation to protect refugees and asylum seekers within its territory, including those held in immigration detention. The failure to prevent such abuses, coupled with a lack of accountability for the actions of Vietnamese Embassy officials operating on Thai soil, raises serious concerns about Thailand's compliance with its international obligations.

4. Conclusion

The filing organizations have been documenting human rights abuses in Vietnam, particularly those committed in cross-border targeting of dissidents, religious minorities, refugees, and their families. We confirm that the incidents of transnational repression outlined in this submission reflect a consistent state policy targeting Vietnamese in exile perceived as national security threats to the VCP. Accordingly, the filing organization jointly filed several sanctions recommendations in Canada and the United States, requesting sanctions designations against Vietnamese public officials and other state entities for their involvement in serious human rights violations against Vietnamese citizens.

The incidents detailed in this submission illustrate that the VCP's practices are in violation of established international norms and principles, particularly the ICCPR, the UN Refugee Convention, and the related Protocols. The CCPR Committee is, therefore, requested to adopt the following recommendations and utilize all available tools to ensure Vietnamese authorities adhere to established international norms and principles that guarantee the rights of individuals and groups to exercise freedoms, as well as the right to seek refuge without fear of being returned to frontiers where their lives would be at risk. The pervasive nature of

transnational repression and other repressive acts necessitates immediate curtailment. This body must ensure that the Vietnamese state ceases such practices.

5. Recommendations

1. Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.
2. Amend vague and over-broad counterterrorism laws to conform with international standards.
3. Take legislative action to ensure the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms, including the right to freedom of expression and religion.
4. Cease the abduction and forced return of Vietnamese citizens and members of the diaspora to Vietnam.
5. Halt the use of repressive measures against Vietnamese refugees, asylum seekers, and human rights defenders.
6. Take measures to fully protect the rights of indigenous peoples and persons belonging to ethnic and religious minorities, including the right to religion or belief.
7. End the arbitrary arrest and detention of all individuals exercising fundamental rights and freedoms, including the right to freedom of expression, association, and religion.
8. Unconditionally release all those imprisoned for exercising fundamental rights and freedoms, including the right to freedom of expression, association, and religion.
9. Take measures to ensure due process for all those charged with crimes, including political criminal cases.
10. Implement measures to guarantee the full independence and impartiality of the judiciary, free from any form of political influence.