

VĂN BÚT VIỆT NAM HẢI NGOẠI
VIETNAMESE ABROAD PEN CENTRE

*Hiển dương những Tiếng Nói của Lương Tâm và các Tiếng Lòng Vang Vọng của người Việt Nam khắp thế giới
Promote the Voices of Conscience and the Echoes of Compassion of Vietnamese across the Globe*

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Letter of Objection
Protesting the Proposed Legislation to Open the Floodgates
to Century-Long Leases of Vietnam's Inland Territories to China

The Vietnamese Abroad PEN Centre protests the legislative bill before Vietnam's National Assembly to open the floodgates to century-long leases of Vietnam's inland territories to China and hereby calls upon legislative Members of Vietnam's National Assembly to forthwith reject the said legislative bill (*Dự thảo Luật Đơn vị hành chính - kinh tế đặc biệt Vân Đồn, Bắc Vân Phong, Phú Quốc*).

Throughout history China has consistently proven to be an aggressive neighbor seeking to dominate Vietnam and to subject the Vietnamese people to slave status. In recent years, Vietnam's territorial integrity has been violated by China's military ambitions, especially in relation to Vietnam's Spratly and Paracel islands which are being illegally occupied by the Chinese armed forces.

While the illegal occupation and militarization of Vietnam's islands by China continue despite strong objections both from the Vietnamese people and the international community, the currently proposed legislative bill would offer China invaluable opportunities to occupy Vietnam's inland territories by legal means through century-old leases and thus is extremely dangerous and unwise.

Vân Đồn, Bắc Vân Phong, Phú Quốc, especially Vân Đồn and Phú Quốc island, are strategic regions that could be manipulated by China through the proposed 99-year occupation to further its military ambitions in Vietnam and seriously jeopardize Vietnam's defense capability.

Short-term's financial gains through the proposed 99-year leases could result in strategic opportunities for China to once again enslave the Vietnamese people.

The Vietnamese Abroad PEN Centre therefore calls upon **legislative Members of Vietnam's National Assembly** to raise strategic concerns and to:

[A] categorically reject the said legislative bill (*Dự thảo Luật Đơn vị hành chính - kinh tế đặc biệt Vân Đồn, Bắc Vân Phong, Phú Quốc*) or, alternatively,

[B] at least include an **entrenched clause** with unambiguously explicit terms **excluding China** directly or indirectly through any subsidiary entity or any satellite state to obtain leases of Vietnam's territories on national security ground.

Should the National Assembly pass the said legislative bill without an entrenched clause to exclude China, the Vietnamese Abroad PEN Centre requests **Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc** to immediately veto the said legislation to eliminate conclusively any potential threat by century-old leases of Vietnam's inland territories to China on national security ground.

Furthermore, **the Vietnamese Abroad PEN Centre urges Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc and the Vietnamese government to order the security force and secret service refrain from harassing and/or arresting Vietnamese citizens**, who peacefully protest the said legislative bill

and exercise their constitutionally guaranteed freedom of expression to object to China's illegal occupation of Vietnam's islands and territories.

The long-term and strategic interests of the Vietnamese people override all considerations especially in light of China's regional ambitions.

Vietnamese Abroad PEN Centre

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The **Vietnamese Abroad PEN Centre** is an organization of writers, poets and literary composers, *etc.*, from across the globe and has been **an official member Centre of PEN International** since 1979. The Vietnamese Abroad PEN Centre has many members in Canada and the United States of America. In August 2016 the Vietnamese Abroad PEN Centre held a successful summer camp for members in Houston. Mayor S. Turner issued a Proclamation declaring August 19-20/8/2016 as the Vietnamese Abroad PEN Centre Days in Houston, Texas. In December 2017 the Vietnamese Abroad PEN Centre's 11th Congress received many congratulatory notations, among which is the official communiqué from the government of Ontario authored by Premier K. Wynne.
