



## Nguyen Huu Quoc Duy

### Vietnam

Nguyen Huu Quoc Duy is an online activist who served a three year sentence for criticizing the Vietnamese government on Facebook.

Prior to his arrest, Nguyen graduated from college with a degree in education and worked with his mother at a market.

Nguyen was arrested with his cousin on August 28, 2015, but was released three days later. He was arrested again on November 21, 2015, after posting comments on Facebook in support of Nguyen Huu Thien An, his cousin who had been arrested in August 2015 for spray painting an anti-communist slogan on the side of police station . After the arrest, Nguyen was held *incommunicado* for nine months and denied effective communication with his family. His mother was not allowed to see him in prison despite repeated attempts.

Nguyen's family hired two domestic lawyers to represent him, however the prosecutor's office replaced these lawyers with another counsel. The trial was closed to the public and held on August 23, 2016. Nguyen was convicted under article 88 of the penal code for spreading anti-government propaganda and sentenced to three years in prison.

According to state media's description of the trial, Nguyen had posted articles that distorted the policies of the Communist Party and had called for the overthrow of the government. The judge was quoted as saying that their actions were very serious and had damaged confidence in the leadership of the Communist party and hurt social order.

Nguyen's family attempted to attend the trial, but police at the courthouse denied the family's entry by claiming that the family lacked an invitation from the court. Nguyen's mother had her phone taken away after attempting to record the scene and was forcibly removed from the courthouse and taken to a local commune police station until the trial was over. Eleven activists attempted to travel from Ho Chi Minh City to attend the trial, but were detained by police en route.

Following the trial, Nguyen was immediately placed in a solitary cell. His mother attempted to visit him, but the authorities claimed the province's Police Department prohibited visits.

In September 2017, Freedom Now and King & Spalding [submitted a petition](#) to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention on behalf of Nguyen. The [Working Group determined](#) in December 2019 that his detention was a violation of international law and called for his immediate release.

Freedom Now brought international attention to the case preparing a report for the UN Human Rights Council prior to Vietnam's [universal periodic review](#) and preparing a report for the [UN Human Rights Committee](#).

Nguyen was released on November 21, 2018 after serving his three year prison sentence.