

PRISONERS OF faith

Mua Say So Country: Vietnam

In a recent Compass report concerning the current situation in Vietnam, one Vietnamese house church leader talks about a new government directive as saying: *'Christians not considered to have a genuine need for religion are to be mobilised to return to traditional beliefs and practices'*.

To this day many Christians in Vietnam, particularly those among ethnic minorities such as the Hmong, are harassed, beaten, and imprisoned on account of their faith. Many ethnic groups, including the Hmong, are not allowed to have Bibles in their own language.

In 2002 police and militia burst into Mua Say So's home and beat and tortured his four married brothers in front of their families. His younger brother, Mua Bua Senh, died after he was beaten twice mercilessly. Seeking justice for his brother's murder, Mua Say So tried to petition the government. He photographed his brother lying in the coffin along with a sign that said: *'Beaten to death because of following the gospel'*. Because of this action, he was later arrested and charged with the murder. Police also ordered Mua Say So to restore the traditional altar for worship, but he did nothing.

During his hearing in April 2003, Mua Say So was sentenced and imprisoned for murdering his brother and for falsely accusing the police. He lost his home, and his wife fled with their children to a safe area.

While in prison Mua Say So has been forced to break rocks for construction projects. Prisoners are

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EMAIL ALERT
for prayer & action
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given only two meals a day, consisting of two bowls of rice with vegetables and salt. So families that are able, take food to the prisoners to supplement their diet and maintain their health.

The police have told Mua Say So that if he denied God, he would be released. He continues to stand firm in his faith, following Jesus. Says Mua Say So: *'Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God'* (Acts 4:19).

PLEASE PRAY

- ▶ For the release of Mua Say So, and that God will strengthen and encourage him
- ▶ For Christians who are imprisoned in Vietnam today, and their families— especially those from the Hmong ethnic minority
- ▶ For the Hmong and other ethnic groups that are prohibited from having Bibles in their own languages

'But while Peter was in prison, the church prayed very earnestly for him'
Acts 12:5

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THE VOICE OF THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

PLEASE WRITE IN SUPPORT OF MUA SAY SO

Please write a short, polite letter to the following asking for the release of MUA SAY SO. Please do not mention RI when you write.

His Excellency Mr Trinh Duc Du
Vietnamese Ambassador to the United Kingdom
The Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
12-14 Victoria Road
London W8 5RD
Fax: 020 7937 6108
(Salutation: Your Excellency)

His Excellency Tran Duc Luong
President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
Bureau de President
Hoang Hoa Tham
Hanoi
Vietnam
Fax: +84 4 823 4137
(Salutation: Your Excellency)

His Excellency Pham Van Khai
Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
Hoang Hoa Tham
Hanoi
Vietnam
Fax: +84 4 823 1872
(Salutation: Your Excellency)

Writing to officials

Be brief. Keep your letter short and to the point.

Be polite. You are representing Jesus Christ and His church. Don't be aggressive or offensive.

Be factual. Identify yourself, and state either a general or specific concern for persecuted Christians. If writing about specific prisoners, give the names of the prisoners on whose behalf you're writing and any known details eg: date of arrest, reason for detention, location, their home town, etc.

Be diplomatic. Don't offer political or religious opinions and don't criticise the government. Say that you are concerned to see human rights upheld in keeping with the basic principles of religious freedom, as recognised by the international community.

Be specific. Advise officials politely about what you would like to see done, eg: for the prisoner to be released, given medical treatment, etc.

Be positive. Assume officials are open to reason and discussion. Acknowledge and welcome past developments to protect human rights. Thank them in advance for their positive actions.

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