

# Reporters Without Borders

<http://www.rsf.org/vietnam-two-citizen-journalists-facing-05-10-2011,41130.html>

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Asia - Vietnam

Unjustified trial

## Two citizen journalists facing jail sentences for operating pirate radio

5 October 2011

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Reporters Without Borders condemns the decision by the Vietnamese judicial authorities to press ahead with the trial tomorrow of two citizen journalists, **Vu Duc Trung** and **Le Van Thanh**, on a charge of [illegally retransmitting radio programmes to China](#).

The Chinese-language programmes they began broadcasting to China on the short-wave in 2008 were those of *Sound of Hope Network*, an overseas Chinese radio station based in California.

"We urge the authorities to issue a fair and proportionate verdict in the case of these two radio journalists and we caution against any attempt to penalize them for the content of these programmes," Reporters Without Borders said in an interview for *Sound of Hope Network* today. "It would be unacceptable if an administrative offence resulted in jail sentences. We will be waiting to see the outcome of this trial.

"This prosecution is part of a deliberate government policy to crack down harder on journalists and bloggers. Nowadays bloggers can go to prison and be mistreated because of a single entry in their blogs. If the government regards someone as nuisance, the courts cooperate by putting them behind bars.

"The cases of **Paulus Le Son**, a netizen arrested on 3 August, and **Pham Minh Hoang**, a blogger with French and Vietnamese dual citizenship who is serving a three-year jail sentence, are examples of [this harsher crackdown](#). We urge to the international community to press the Vietnamese government to respect its own laws. Free speech is enshrined in Vietnam's constitution."

A Public Security Ministry document has reportedly confirmed that the content of the radio programmes, where were critical of the Chinese government, were the subject of a Chinese diplomatic note to the Vietnamese authorities asking them to stop the broadcasts.

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