

## 1. David Tran [Repatriation of Uyghurs in Vietnam]

**[WARNING: This expert report contains pictures that some may find distressing]**

I, Dr. David Tran, MD will say as follows.

I am a practicing child and adolescent psychiatrist in the US for the last 25 years. I am a recipient of the American Medical Association Leadership Award and several AMA's Physician Recognition Awards. I was a Clinical Assistant Professor at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center and am currently the Medical Director of a medical group practice.

I am the founding member and Vice President of Vietnam Democracy Center (VDC), a non-profit research and educational organization with a focus on constitutional framework for a free and democratic Vietnam. VDC has published "A Model Constitution for A Democratic Vietnam" and has promoted this constitutional model to millions of Vietnamese.

1. Preliminaries. The facts set out in this statement are within my own knowledge save where I state otherwise. Where I refer to facts that are not within my own knowledge, I will give the source of my knowledge of those facts.

2. Facts:

1) An overland trek into Southeast Asian countries has been an increasingly common route of escape for Uyghurs fleeing forced labor, organ harvesting and internment camps.

2) Between 2011 and 2015, Sean Roberts, Director and Associate Professor of the International Development Studies Program at George Washington University, estimates that around 15,000 Uyghurs fled Xinjiang to Turkey via Southeast Asia.

3) Chinese reports also suggest that Southeast Asia is the preferred passage out of the country. Vietnam is one of the chosen routes as Chinese nationals do not need a passport to cross the border, just a travel permit - which is easy to obtain. Just for a period of eight months from May 2014 to January 2015, statistics from China's Ministry of Public Security reveal that Chinese border authorities in their campaign against the so-called *jihadi immigration* "have busted 262 human smuggling cases, seizing 352 suspects who allegedly organized such activities and 852 suspects who attempted to cross the border illegally."

4) There is no evidence that this has slowed down. In 2015, the New York Times reported the Chinese police shot and killed two members of the Uyghur ethnic minority trying to flee into Vietnam and "had arrested hundreds of people since last year in an effort to staunch illegal immigration into Southeast Asia."

5) In the last three days of 2020, official Vietnamese news reported 343 illegal immigrants, mostly from China.

6) Desperate to leave China, Uyghurs paid more than 100,000 yuan each (\$15,000) to human smugglers and made their way across the border where they would unknowingly meet a hostile welcome.

7) In 2014, one group of 16 Uyghurs allegedly escaped detention by the Vietnamese border guards and barricaded themselves in a building on the Vietnam's side of the border. Chinese police officers and Vietnamese border guards surrounded the building and killed all the Uyghur men.

8) Another report said that some or all of those who killed themselves did so by leaping from the multistory building. Photos on Vietnam's social media showed bodies apparently male being stacked on several carts.



9) Other pictures showed old women and young children being returned to China as Uyghur "extremists and terrorists".



10) On the same day, Vietnamese authorities arrested another 21 Uyghurs from China after being alerted by their Chinese counterparts that the group was trying to enter Vietnam by sea.

11) Vietnamese press, quick to cover the shoot-out in Bac Phong Sinh, swiftly removed references to Xinjiang in their reports. Photos of four women in the group, all wearing headscarves and distinctive Uighur clothing, were deleted from official media websites.

12) According to their families, many of these Uyghurs who were detained by the Vietnam's authorities or returned to China have disappeared while in custody.

13) The unusual fast transfer of bodies and people to the Chinese side without any investigation even after they allegedly killed Vietnamese border guards suggested that Vietnam and China had reached a deal on how to handle the Uyghurs, in contravention of international laws. Carlyle Thayer, a veteran Vietnam watcher in Canberra, Australia, said: "Vietnam appears to be under pressure from China to detain and repatriate Uyghur asylum seekers who attempt to enter Vietnam as a gateway to resettlement overseas, in Turkey for example." Despite this significant flow of Uyghur refugees, the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) has operated an office in Hanoi for decades but so far it has not received any Uyghur refugee applications.

14) The repatriation of Uyghurs in Vietnam also happens in other countries (Thailand, Malaysia, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Turkey).

3. The information I have provided in this report is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.