



**GIÁO HỘI PHẬT GIÁO VIỆT NAM THỐNG NHẤT ÂU CHÂU**  
**LA CONGRÉGATION BOUDDHIQUE VIETNAMIENNE UNIFIÉE EN EUROPE**  
**THE UNIFIED VIETNAMESE BUDDHIST CONGREGATION IN EUROPE**

Chùa Association Bouddhique

***Khánh Anh***

# **PETITION**

TO: The President of the European Parliament of Strasbourg, France

Today, the 11<sup>th</sup> of July 2013, we are coming, on behalf of the Vietnamese Buddhist Religious Council and Buddhist adepts in Europe, to gather before the European Parliament of Strasbourg to celebrate Buddha Sakyamuni's 2557<sup>th</sup> Birthday and Illumination and to also commemorate the 50th self-immolation of Boddhisattva Thich Quang Duc at Saigon, Viet-Nam (11/06/1963) to demand equality among religions and social justice. For the same occasion, we would submit the following requests to the European Parliament:

**1)- *Buddha Sakyamuni is a historic Buddha, born in India some 2637 years ago, and in 1999, the United Nations General Assembly in New York decided to observe Buddha's birthday and Illumination as the Day of Peace for the entire mankind. We do hope the European Parliament will support this spirit some day; for Buddha is a Spiritual Master carrying a love message, and his Compassion and Wisdom have been beneficial to multitude living beings since His existence on this earth.***

**2)- *The Grand Religions on our planet have appeared for the past thousand years and have wished that all men would live in peace on this earth; however, violence, war and the spirit of revenge persist continuously. For, humanity has not followed correctly the teachings of Religious Founders; we sincerely think this time has come for all of us - men and women- to get together to observe faith in the religion we all practice.***

**3)- *On 11<sup>th</sup> of June 1963, at the crossroads of Phan Dinh Phung and Le Van Duyet Streets of Saigon, Boddhisattva Thich Quang duc immolated himself in the service of his Faith offering his carnal envelop to World Peace and claiming the Government at that time to respect Buddhist religious liberty. Religious liberty is an aspiration essential to man, explicitly recognized in the introduction of the United Nations Organisation Chart. But yet, when a majority of political forces hold their power, they forget people's aspirations; this is the case of the actual Communist Party in Vietnam – for this reason Grand Venerable Thich quang Duc's self immolation does not aim to wake up only the conscience of the Vietnamese determined ruler but also other rulers who do not know how to return to human dignity and religious freedom rights as well.***

**4)- *We would also express our profound gratitude towards all European governments that have generously welcomed in the years 70 till now millions of refugees fleeing vietnamese communist regime and have also created favourable conditions to practice their religion in various countries where the United Nations Chart applies.***

**5)- *Vietnam is actually a member of the United Nations Organization and a commercial partner non-negligible to European Union countries. For this reason, we call***

***for an appeal to all Leaders of European Union countries that when they establish their relations with Vietnam, they should emphasize the importance of Respect to human rights and religious freedom and more practically respect to 1<sup>st</sup> Article of Cooperation Accord between European Union and Vietnam, signed on July 17<sup>th</sup> 1995 at Brussels. This decision has been repeated on many occasions in European National Assembly: on 08/12/1995, 15/12/1998, 16/01/1998, 16/01/2000, 05/07/2001, 5/05/2003... and other times. But in fact, as of now, 28 years after the Accord signature, the Vietnamese Communist Government does not at all respect human rights and religious freedom in Vietnam.***

***6)- The Vietnamese Communist government does not honour its signature towards European Union, but goes even further in the brutal oppression of traditional religions that do not submit to its control, such as, in the area of thinking, it takes into custody, puts in prison, inflicts heavy hardships to those who do not adhere to its rules. At social level, the Vietnamese authorities do not respect at all human rights and religious liberty in Vietnam as well.***

***7)- The Most Venerable Thich Quang Duc immolated himself by fire on 11/06/1963 for two main objectives: religious freedom and social justice. 50 years after his sacrifice, Vietnam has still been plunged in an ocean of sufferings under the Vietnamese communist party ruling: traditional religions are still persecuted, society still crumbles with injustice, national wealths are still plundered shamelessly.***

On this day of commemoration of Bodhisattva Thich Quang Duc's fire sacrifice that coincides with the 2557<sup>th</sup> Vésak celebration, with Buddhist adepts getting together before the European Parliament of Strasbourg, France, the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation in Europe sincerely requests the European Parliament by its influence to intervene towards the Vietnamese government with the following points :

- 1. To stop its politics of oppressing and confining the religious and other adepts of traditional religions who attempt to stand outside the communist party rule.***
- 2. To liberate all prisoners of conscience, in particular those who are punished from 6 to 10 years of prison for daring to express their personal viewpoints.***
- 3. To stop all arbitrary expropriations and render to people their lands that had belonged by their own work from generation to generation and the State has confiscated without appropriate indemnification.***

With our anticipated thanks, would you please accept, Mr. President, our most sincere salutations and gratitude.

Respectfully,

**President, the Most Venerable Thich Minh Tâm**  
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