

Four Years Too Long: Free Dang Dinh Bach

June 24, 2025 - Four years ago this month, environmental lawyer and climate justice advocate Dang Dinh Bach (Bach) was unjustly arrested in his home and imprisoned by the Vietnamese authorities. As we mark the fourth anniversary of his detention, **we renew our urgent call for his immediate and unconditional release.** Bach's imprisonment represents a grave injustice, silencing an important voice dedicated to protecting communities and the environment.

Alongside Bach's continued [arbitrary detention](#), financing for Vietnam's energy transition is flowing. In December 2022, the \$15.5 billion Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) was signed between Vietnam and largely G7 countries, signaling significant international investment in Vietnam's shift away from fossil fuels. Last month, the French government [announced a 67 million euro grant](#) to upgrade Vietnam's power transmission infrastructure, kickstarting public investment under the agreement. The European Union (EU) similarly continues to provide [millions of euros in financing](#) under the related EU - Vietnam Sustainable Energy Transition Programme (SETP).

Yet, in spite of explicit commitments within these agreements to a "just" transition and regular consultations with civil society, Bach and others who worked tirelessly towards a just and sustainable energy future for Vietnam remain behind bars.

Bach has dedicated his life to advocating for environmental justice and sustainable development in Vietnam. A distinguished lawyer and advocate, he worked alongside communities to empower them, defend their rights, and provide legal counsel in cases involving environmental harm -- including industrial waste, displacement due to hydropower dam construction, and pollution from coal plants. He worked to build and strengthen legal frameworks at local and regional levels, aiming to ensure that development is equitable and environmentally sound. He is recognized as one of six prominent individuals targeted and imprisoned for their work on Vietnam's energy shift.

Bach's commitment to justice and a sustainable future remains unwavering, even within prison. His continued advocacy and resilience serve as a powerful testament to his spirit and inspire others in Vietnam and around the world who stand in solidarity with him. In recognition of his dedication and achievements, he was awarded the prestigious [2024 Roger N. Baldwin Medal of Liberty](#), highlighting his role as a champion for fundamental freedoms.

Bach's wife, Tran Phuong Thao says: "My husband's dedication to supporting communities affected by environmental damage -- whether due to dams, coal projects, mining or toxic chemicals -- and to seeking a just transition away from reliance on destructive energy projects, continues to inspire people in Vietnam and abroad, in spite of four long years in prison. I look forward to the day when he will walk freely again, joining me and our young son, and continue his vital work for a better future for all."

On this fourth anniversary of his arrest, we reiterate our call for Dang Dinh Bach's immediate and unconditional release. Enabling him to return to his crucial work is both a matter of justice and an essential step towards sustainable development and a just energy transition for Vietnam.