

PETITION

Dec 8, 2022

Mr. Lo Ping-Cheng
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Minister Jaushich Joseph Vu
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USA

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11 Greenway Plaza
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Dear Ministers, Chairperson, and Representative,

We are writing this letter as the voice of the people to request your assistance on the terrible injustice brought on the Vietnamese fishermen, victims of the Formosa Plastics environmental disaster in 2016.

The "Formosa Ha Tinh Steel Corporation", a subsidiary of the Taiwanese firm Formosa Plastics, admitted responsibility for the release of toxic chemicals into the Vietnamese coastline and agreed to pay 500 million USD in compensation. Unfortunately, Formosa paid the Vietnamese government directly instead of the victims.

Thus far, the impacted fishermen and their families have not been compensated fairly. When they sued the Formosa Ha Tinh Steel Corp., their cases were dismissed. When these victims appealed the dismissal, many of them were arrested, brutally beaten, and even imprisoned with heavy sentences ranging from 5 to 20 years. Currently, more than twenty victims are in prison only because they were seeking justice.

With assistance from overseas Vietnamese and organizations such as the Justice for Formosa's Victims Association in the United States, in June 2019, 7,874 victims filed a lawsuit against the Formosa Plastic Group in Taiwanese Court.

As a request from Formosa Group's Attorney, in May 2020, the Taiwanese Supreme Court required the Plaintiffs to authenticate their Power of Attorneys (POA), which allows individuals to authorize other people to represent or act on their behalf. This decision was deemed legitimate by the Supreme Court for a small number of Vietnamese plaintiffs who live in Taiwan, and they were allowed to continue the lawsuit against the 13 Taiwan-based defendants, including the parent company, Formosa Plastics Corp.

However, most of the Plaintiffs who live in Vietnam found themselves excluded from the case before the Taiwanese Court, because POA authentication from Vietnam as a prerequisite for continuing their lawsuit is almost impossible for such victims to fulfill.

For nearly 7 years, the fish have not returned plentiful enough that the fishermen can work a way of life that was handed down by their ancestors for generations. They have to go to the southern provinces or go to Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, Laos, Cambodia, and China to work. Children must live far away from their fathers, mothers, or both. Children grow up without parents to love and care for them. Many children have dropped out of school because their parents can no longer afford to pay.

The fishermen hope to be compensated so that they can return home to rebuild their families and villages. Their overriding desire is that the health of the sea be restored and there is a semblance of the peaceful life they lived before the arrival of the Formosa company.

We condemn the Vietnamese government that failed to address the country's worst environmental disaster. We condemn the violence they used against victims of this environmental tragedy. We also condemn Formosa Plastics for making a deal with the Vietnamese government to avoid their responsibility.

We respectfully urge the Taiwanese government to lower or remove legal barriers for foreign plaintiffs so that these victims may have access to justice.

Respectfully,

Signed by,

Justice For Formosa's Victims
World Forum of Fisher Peoples
San Antonio Bay Estuarine Waterkeeper
Vietnamese Community of Houston and Vicinity
Viet Tan
Liên Danh Quyết Tiến
Liên Danh Thế Hệ Trẻ.
看守台灣協會 Taiwan Watch Institute
The Federation of Vietnamese American Communities of the USA, Inc.
Vietnamese Canadian Center
Vietnamese Literary & Artistic Club
Vietnamese Migrant Workers and Immigrants Office
Sahabat Alam Malaysia (Friends of the Earth)
Calhoun County Resource Watch
Center for Biological Diversity
Earthworks
Healthy Gulf
Louisiana Bucket Brigade
Rise Saint James
Sierra Club
t.e.j.a.s.
Texas Campaign for the Environment
The Story of Stuff Project
Turtle Island Restoration Network
Upstream
Alaska Community Action on Toxics
Concerned Citizens of Wagon Mound and Mora County
Dri Tattersfield

EcoGovLab
Fishadelphia
FoCo Trash Mob
Friends of the Earth U.S.
Front Commun pour la Protection de l'Environnement et des Espaces Protégés (FCPEEP-RDC)
Get Hooked Seafood
Honor the Earth
Inland Ocean Coalition
KAS Consulting
Los Jardines Institute
Mike Fortun, University of California, Irvine
Margaux Fisher, University of California, Irvine
Moms for a Nontoxic New York
M-W & Associates Environmental Policy Analysis
National Family Farm Coalition
North American Marine Alliance
Peter Le
Plastic Free Future
Plastic Pollution Coalition
Red de Acción por los Derechos Ambientales (RADA)
Republic of Viet Nam Veterans
7 Directions of Service
Stand.earth
The Last Beach Cleanup
The Last Plastic Straw
Toxic Free NC
Veterans for Peace (Phil Berrigan Memorial Chapter - Baltimore, MD)
VOICE CANADA
Ya Wen Chuang