

Statement of Concern over Accusations Directed at Chu Hảo and the Knowledge Publishing House (Nhà Xuất Bản Tri Thức)

To: Mr. Nguyễn Phú Trọng, General Secretary of the Vietnamese Communist Party and President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
Mr. Nguyễn Xuân Phúc, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
Central Inspection Commission of the Vietnamese Communist Party

Cc: Foreign Embassies in Hanoi

Dear Sirs and Madams:

We, who have signed our names below, are scholars, academics and researchers, who have dedicated much of our careers and lives to the study of Vietnam. Hailing from universities and research institutes around the world, we are often at the forefront of promoting a deeper understanding of Vietnam, as well as Vietnamese language learning and international educational cooperation. As part of this work, we regularly seek funding and opportunities for Vietnamese students and scholars to visit, study and work at our respective universities, departments and research institutes.

We write this letter to express our *profound disagreement and disappointment* with accusations directed at Professor Chu Hảo, Director of the Knowledge Publishing House, by the Central Inspection Commission on October 25, 2018, as well as follow-up comments posted on the Commission's webpage on October 31.

Chu Hảo's primary work at the Knowledge Publishing House has been to make more accessible major academic works to Vietnamese students and scholars by translating them into Vietnamese. This initiative has been both far-sighted and highly important for scientific inquiry. Such works constitute the foundations of contemporary research and thinking in the social sciences and humanities. In high schools and universities around the world, they represent a body of essential readings across disciplines and subjects. *Unfortunately, the language barriers that Vietnamese scholars and, especially, students face when trying to access these works puts them at a significant disadvantage when competing for university admissions, scholarships and research funding.*

As researchers and educators from around the world, we reject any assertion that these works present a threat to the stable or peaceful development of Vietnam. Modern education has been founded on an ability to discuss and incorporate a wide range of ideas and theoretical propositions. Restricting or denying people access to these ideas will only reduce the analytical tools available to them and impoverish their intellectual development. Even controversial works must be read and analysed before they can be credibly criticized or refuted.

At a time when Vietnam is vying to be internationally competitive in university education and academic scholarship, we find the accusations made by the Central Inspection

Commission to be unfounded and disturbing. In the interests of international cooperation and educational development for Vietnam, we strongly request the Commission to revise its assessment of the important work that Chu Hảo is leading at the Knowledge Publishing House. We also strongly support the open letter to support Chu Hảo signed by former members of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and more than 200 eminent supporters.

At the same time, we recommend that the government cultivate wide intellectual discussion of ideas on all topics in Vietnam, and we strongly urge the government to desist from any efforts to harass, intimidate or otherwise punish persons for peacefully expressing their views or opinions.

We thank you for your attention to this matter and we trust that you will respond in a matter that reflects the civility, dignity and educational ambitions of Vietnam.

November 11, 2018

LIST OF SIGNERS

No.	Full Name	Current Position(s) and Institution(s)	Country
1	Pierre ASSELIN	Professor of History, San Diego State University	USA
2	Margaret B. BODEMER	Chair, Viet Nam Studies Group, Professor of History and Asian Studies, California Polytechnic State University	USA
3	Pascal BOURDEAUX	Associate Professor, École Pratique des Hautes Études	France
4	Mark Philip BRADLEY	Professor of History, University of Chicago	USA
5	Pierre BROCHEUX	Professor (retired), Université Paris – Denis Diderot	France
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9	Nguyet DANG	PhD Researcher, Erasmus University Rotterdam	Netherlands
10	ĐỖ Đăng Giu	CNRS Research Director (retired), University Paris–Sud	France
11	ĐOÀN Cẩm Thi	Associate Professor, Inalco	France
12	George DUTTON	Professor of History and Director for Southeast Asian Studies, University of	USA

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13	Dominique FOULON	Carnets du Viet Nam, and Independent Researcher, Lyon	France
14	Laurent GEDEON	ENS de Lyon	France
15	Francis GENDREAU	Demographer (retired), Institute of Research for Development (IRDn), Paris	France
16	Christoph GIEBEL	Professor of History, University of Washington	USA
17	Christopher GOSCHA	Professor of History, Université du Québec à Montréal	Canada
18	François GUILLEMOT	CNRS Research Engineer, ENS de Lyon, Lyon Institute of East Asian Studies, Lyon	France
19	HÀ Dương Tường	Professor of Mathematics (retired), University of Technology of Compiègne	France
20	Erik HARMS	Associate Professor, Anthropology and Southeast Asian Studies, Yale University	USA
21	Bill HAYTON	Independent Researcher	United Kingdom
22	Judith HENCHY	Affiliate Faculty, Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington	USA
23	Caroline HERBELIN	Lecturer, University of Toulouse Jean Jaurès	France
24	Carina HOANG	Author/Publisher, School of Humanities, Curtin University	Australia
25	Hue-Tam HO TAI	Professor Emerita, Harvard University	USA
26	Rob HURLE	Lecturer (retired), Australian National University	Australia
27	Charles KEITH	Associate Professor, Department of History, Michigan State University	USA
28	Ben KERKVLIT	Professor Emeritus, Australian National University	Australia
29	John KLEINEN	Associate Professor Emeritus, Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR)	Netherlands
30	Gary KULIK	Writer and Vietnam-War Veteran	USA
31	Scott LADERMAN	Professor of History, University of Minnesota	USA
32	LÊ Minh Hằng	Hydrologist (retired), Vietnam Hydro-Meteorological Services	Vietnam
33	LÊ Trung Tĩnh	Engineer	United Kingdom

34	Christian C. LENTZ	Associate Professor of Geography, University of North Carolina	USA
35	Ann Marie LESHKOWICH	Professor of Anthropology, College of the Holy Cross	USA
36	David MARR	Professor Emeritus, Australian National University	Australia
37	André MENRAS (HỒ Cương Quyết)	Documentary Filmmaker and Independent Researcher	France
38	Pamela MCELWEE	Associate Professor, Department of Human Ecology, Rutgers University	USA
39	Edward MILLER	Professor of History, Dartmouth College	USA
40	Dominique De MISCAULT	Artist	France
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		Analytics	
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61	Benoit QUENNEDEY	Author of books and articles on East Asia	France
62	Sophie QUINN-JUDGE	Associate Professor (retired)	USA
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76	TRỊNH Xuân Thuận	Professor, University of Virginia	USA

77	William TURLEY	Professor Emeritus, Southern Illinois University Carbondale	USA
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79	Vũ Quang Việt	Former Chief of National Accounts Statistics at the United Nations	USA
80	Vũ Đức Vương	Editor, <i>Trồng Người</i> , A Clearinghouse on Education in Vietnam, San Francisco – Sai Gon	USA
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