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**Open letter to the Vietnamese government**  
**President Tran Dai Quang,**  
**Vice President Dang Thi Ngoc Thinh**  
**and Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc**

2016 06 17

Dear President,  
Dear Vice President,  
Dear Prime Minister,  
Dear ladies and gentlemen,

in 2009 ethecon - Foundation Ethics and Economy presented the owners and responsible persons of FORMOSA PLASTICS GROUP (FPG), with the negative international ethecon Black Planet Award for their approach to law and order, ecology and peace, social rights and human rights in the business activities of their company.

We were shocked to learn about the catastrophe in Vietnam that was caused by FORMOSA HA TINH STEEL.

70% of FORMOSA HA TINH STEEL are held by FORMOSA PLASTICS GROUP. Of the remaining 30%, 25% belong to CHINA STEEL, a company that is still largely owned by the Taiwanese government, and 5% belong to the Japanese corporation JFE Holdings.

The steelworks FORMOSA HA TINH STEEL at the Vietnamese coast started its production in early 2016.

please **turn over** >>>

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Immediately after it was put into operation, masses of fish died off the Vietnamese coast. In four Vietnamese provinces over a distance of 200 km, masses of dead fish were washed up.

Local media report that residents were asked by the government to stop eating fish because it might be contaminated and its consumption might damage their health. According to Taiwanese media, one person also died.

The widespread death of fish also has a massive economic impact on the four Vietnamese provinces that were affected. The local fishing industry is facing ruin.

The Vietnamese population is seriously worried. There have been several large-scale protests and demonstrations.

A pipeline leading straight from FORMOSA HA TINH STEEL into the sea is blamed for the widespread death of fish. It is reported that according to Vietnamese law, the company is not allowed to discharge used and contaminated water into the sea.

The Vietnamese deputy minister of the Environment, Vo Tuan Nhan, complains that he does not receive any information about the substances FPG discharges through the pipeline.

According to local media, FPG has also ordered 300 tonnes of highly toxic chemicals to clean the wastewater pipeline. FPG refuses to disclose what exactly was cleaned, what was removed and what amount of what chemicals was used. The Vietnam Environment Administration was informed neither of the chemicals being ordered nor about their usage.

Instead a speaker of FORMOSA HA TINH STEEL proclaimed that the population would have to choose between fish and steel.

The speaker's dismissal by FPG shortly afterwards does not absolve the company from blame.

Your government assumed responsibility for the investigations. According to media reports, the guilty parties could be identified.

You refuse, however, to reveal your findings and inform the population.

We urge you to reveal your findings concerning the widespread death of fish and those who caused it.

The population must be informed regularly and fully.

You and your agencies must immediately enforce the regulations for the protection of people and the environment.

Those who are responsible for the environmental catastrophe and health damages must be taken to court and punished.

Ensure that the crime is cleared up directly, comprehensively and unsparingly and that all those who are directly or indirectly responsible have to face justice.

Yours sincerely,

Axel Köhler-Schnura  
(Chief of the Board)

Sarah Schneider  
(Managing Director)