



## NATIONAL CONGRESS OF VIETNAMESE AMERICANS

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December 15, 2003

The Honorable Arthur E. "Gene" Dewey  
Assistant Secretary  
Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration  
Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Attn: Kelly Ryan, Deputy Assistant Secretary

Dear Secretary Dewey,

We express our full support for your office's recent initiative to consider Vietnamese boat people in the Philippines for resettlement.

These 2,000 Vietnamese are remnant of the Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA), which ended in 1996. The United States was a leader in the formation of the CPA in 1989 and also in attempting to bring the CPA to a dignified closure through the establishment of the Resettlement Opportunity for Vietnamese Returnees (ROVR). Under this program, approximately 18,000 repatriated boat people have arrived in the United States.

In 2000, Congressman Christopher Smith authored an open letter addressing human rights and refugee issues of vital interest to Vietnamese-American voters. Entitled *A Republican Response*, this open letter calls for the extension of the registration deadline for the Humanitarian Operation (HO) program, resumption of the processing of former United States employees under the U11 program, review of Amerasian cases unfairly excluded from admission to the United States, special intervention for Montagnards, and consideration of unresolved cases of former boat people who should qualify for the ROVR program. This open letter was widely distributed in and warmly welcomed by the Vietnamese-American communities across the United States.

We commend the Bush Administration for implementing most of the refugee-related initiatives proposed in that open letter. Your recent trip to Vietnam to pursue the extension of the HO program's registration deadline is encouraging. We thank you for your commitment to



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protecting “re-education” survivors who suffered persecution because of their previous ties with the United States.

We are also very pleased with the Department of State’s inclusion of the Vietnamese boat people in the Philippines in its *Report to the Congress: Proposed Refugee Admissions for FY 2004*. We urge you to start the processing of this Priority 2 group. Their fate tragically remains uncertain seven years after the CPA officially ended. We are anxious to see that the Vietnamese boat people saga, protracted and mostly painful, be brought to a truly honorable and fair conclusion.

Sincerely,

Hung Quoc Nguyen  
President