

URGENT ACTION

DEPORTEE RELEASED, OTHERS STILL DETAINED

On June 19, Tuan Thanh Phan (who originates from Viet Nam) was released after being arbitrarily detained in South Sudan's capital for almost one year. Tuan Thanh Phan was deported as part of the United States government's mass deportation campaign in May 2025, transiting through a U.S. military base in Djibouti, and had been arbitrarily detained in South Sudan since his arrival on July 4, 2025. José Manuel Rodríguez-Quiñones, Kyaw Mya, and Thongxay Nilakout as well as two other deportees (Enrique Arias Hierro and Nyo Myint) remain arbitrarily detained.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter to the government official(s) listed. Use the sample letter below as a guide or use your own words.
- [Click here](#) to report your action(s) on **Third UA 82.25**. We share this number with the officials we are trying to persuade.

Minister of Foreign Affairs and International
Cooperation

Ambassador Cecilia Adut Manyok

Email: mofaic.rss@gmail.com

X: @MoFA_SouthSudan / @mofaicss

Send a copy of your letter to the address below

CC: South Sudan Embassy in the United States

Chief of Mission Dr. Santino Fardol W. Dicken

1101 Vermont Ave N.W. STE 850,

Washington DC 20005

Email: info@ssembassydc.org

Dear Ambassador Cecilia Adut Manyok,

I am concerned about the ongoing arbitrary detention of **José Manuel Rodríguez-Quiñones, Kyaw Mya, and Thongxay Nilakout**, who were deported as part of the United States government's mass deportation campaign in May 2025, transiting through a U.S. military base in Djibouti, and have been arbitrarily detained in South Sudan since their arrival on July 4, 2025.

Whilst I welcome the release on June 19 of **Tuan Thanh Phan**, who was also part of the same May 2025 deportation campaign and who originates from Viet Nam, I am concerned about the well-being of the men who remain arbitrarily detained by the South Sudanese authorities without legal justification or clarity regarding their legal status. All individuals' U.S.-based legal representatives have only accessed their clients through monitored phone calls every few months. Their lawyer in Juba, South Sudan's capital, has not been able to access or communicate with them at all. The South Sudanese authorities have failed to disclose their whereabouts. [Two other deportees, Enrique Arias Hierro and Nyo Myint](#), have also been arbitrarily held for over a year as part of the same scheme.

I call on you to immediately disclose the whereabouts of José Manuel Rodríguez-Quiñones, Kyaw Mya, and Thongxay Nilakout as well as Enrique Arias Hierro and Nyo Myint, grant them unmonitored and full access to their legal representatives, including local counsel, and immediately clarify the legal grounds of their detention. I further urge you to ensure that individuals' wishes for a durable solution are facilitated including through access to UNHCR, IOM, and the national human rights commission and other relevant bodies, and if, following a full and fair assessment, there is no breach of the principle of non-refoulement, we urge the states of the men's countries of origin to expedite their repatriation.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In 2025, U.S. President Donald Trump advanced a mass deportation campaign targeting millions of immigrants and people seeking safety. As part of this, eight men – only one of whom was South Sudanese – were deported to South Sudan after a weeks-long legal battle. Three of the eight men have since been released from detention, including **Dian Peter Domach**, a South Sudanese national who was released in July 2025, **Jesús Muñoz Gutiérrez** who was repatriated to Mexico on September 6, 2025, and **Tuan Thanh Phan** repatriated to Vietnam on Jun 19, 2026. While the U.S. has the authority to regulate immigration, it must do so within the framework of its international human rights obligations.

In a diplomatic note between the USA and South Sudan signed on May 10, 2025, South Sudan agreed that it would “treat the individuals in a manner that is consistent with its international legal obligations regarding human rights.” In a note dated May 12, 2025, the South Sudanese government requested the United States to, amongst others, lift sanctions imposed on then First Vice President, Benjamin Bol Mel, to revoke visa restrictions on South Sudanese nationals, to reactivate a bank account at the New York Federal Reserve, and to support the state’s prosecution of First Vice President and opposition leader, Riek Machar, who remains under house arrest. In September 2025, a news outlet reported that South Sudanese authorities denied the existence of any agreement with the U.S. to receive third-country nationals.

In South Sudan, civic space for engagement in public life continues to be under attack and engaging in legitimate civic activities has resulted in arbitrary arrests, prolonged detention, torture and other ill treatment, and extrajudicial killings. South Sudan’s security actors and authorities, especially the National Security Service (NSS), systematically harass and target civil society members and individuals critical of the government. Even though the NSS continues to be implicated in human rights violations, in August 2024, President Kiir allowed a bill maintaining the National Security Service’s abusive and unconstitutional powers of arrest and detention to become law.

Throughout the course of the conflict that broke out in South Sudan on December 15, 2013, the NSS has become increasingly powerful, acting as a de facto police force to powerful elites. The NSS and Military Intelligence Directorate have detained hundreds of people, mostly men, in various detention facilities across the country. Amnesty International has documented cases of torture and other forms of ill-treatment in at least three of the main detention centers in the capital, Juba. Amnesty International has also documented cases of individuals being detained and threatened by the NSS for freely expressing their opinion that is critical of the government, or who have otherwise been perceived to act against the interests of powerful elites. Relatives of detainees can become persons of interests, increasing their risk of being surveilled and possibly detained.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English or your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: March 23, 2027

NAME AND PRONOUN: José Manuel Rodríguez-Quiñones, Kyaw Mya, Thongxay Nilakout, Tuan Thanh Phan (All he/his)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnestyusa.org/urgent-actions/south-sudan-end-four-deportees-arbitrary-detention-2/>