

Report: Vietnam releases rights activist

by UPI

NEW YORK - Vietnam has released imprisoned dissident writer Tran Khai Thanh Thuy, but continues to hold other dissidents under house arrest, Human Rights Watch said. Thuy was arrested April 21, 2007, on charges of "causing public disorder." She was released Thursday following an unpublicized trial in Hanoi, at which she was sentenced to nine months and 10 days, or time served, the rights organization said in a release. Thuy, 47, was the 2007 winner of the Hellman/Hammett prize for persecuted writers. She was one of an estimated 40 activists who have been imprisoned or held under house arrest during the past 18 months in Vietnam, Human Rights Watch said. Those being held include human rights lawyers, opposition party members, underground publishers, religious activists, Internet dissidents and labor union leaders. "Like the dozens of other peaceful dissidents who have been jailed, Tran Khai Thanh Thuy should never have been arrested in the first place," said Sophie Richardson, Asia advocacy director for Human Rights Watch. "The Vietnamese government should stop locking people up simply for expressing their views."

© 2008 United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Report: Vietnam releases rights activist by UPI