

URGENT ACTION

ONE G20 JOURNALIST REMAINS IN DETENTION AS FIFTH IS RELEASED

One of the citizen journalists detained for covering protests prior to the G20 summit, Yuan Ying, was released on 27 October and sources have attributed international pressure, including action taken by Amnesty International, to her release. The last of the six citizen journalist's from the Sichuan-based website "64 Tianwang", Qin Chao, is still being detained.

After more than nine weeks **Qin Chao**, from Wugang city in Henan province, remains in detention with no access to a lawyer of her choice and at risk of torture or other ill-treatment. She had planned to cover the G20 summit, held on 4 and 5 September 2016 in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, but was instead administratively detained on 30 August. After ten days, Qin Chao was then criminally detained on suspicion of "picking quarrels and provoking trouble" at the Baofeng County Detention Centre in Pingdingshan City, Henan. Her family was only informed about her whereabouts on 9 September by the local public security bureau.

Recently released **Yuan Ying** was first placed in administrative detention on 6 September for 15 days at the Wenjiang District Branch of the Chengdu City Public Security Bureau, for reporting on a protest outside the Communist Party's Central Commission for Disciplinary Inspection in Beijing ahead of the G20 Summit. Upon completion of the 15 days, Yuan was then criminally detained on the same grounds as Qin Chao until her release.

Four other citizen journalists from the website, Lin Xiurong, Jiang Chengfen, Yang Xiuqiong and He Yazhen, were also briefly detained for covering protests in relation to the G20 Summit.

Please write immediately in Chinese, English or your own language, urging the authorities to:

- Immediately and unconditionally release Qin Chao who has been detained for exercising her right to freedom of expression;
- Ensure that while in detention Qin Chao has regular, unrestricted access to family and lawyers of her choice, and is not subjected to torture or other ill-treatment;
- Stop the harassment and detention of journalists, citizens and others who report on protests and other sensitive issues of public interest.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 9 DECEMBER 2016 TO:

Director

Li Guofeng
Baofeng County Detention Centre
Youhaocun, Chengguanzen,
Baofeng Xian, Pingdingshan Shi,
Henan Sheng 467460
People's Republic of China
Tel: +86 375 6576166 (Chinese only)

Salutation: Dear Director

Minister of Public Security

Guo Shengkun
14 Dong Chang'an Jie
Dongcheng Qu, Beijing Shi 100741
People's Republic of China
Tel: +86 10 66262114 (Chinese only)
Email: gabzfwz@mps.gov.cn

Salutation: Dear Minister

And copies to:

Premier

Li Keqiang Guojia Zongli,
The State Council General Office,
2 Fuyoujie, Xichengqu,
Beijingshi 100017,
People's Republic of China.
Fax: +86 10 65961109 (c/o Ministry of
Foreign Affairs)

Salutation: Dear Premier

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY MR LIU XIAOMING, Embassy of the People's Republic of China, 49-51 Portland Place W1B 1JL, 020 7299 4049, press_uk@mfa.gov.cn

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 212/16. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/4839/2016/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Citizen journalists play a significant role in China in documenting human rights abuses, and covering protests of petitioners and grassroots activists who, due to censorship, are often unable to be mentioned in domestic media.

“64 Tianwang”, founded by Sichuan activist Huang Qi and his wife Zeng Li in 1998, is one of the few major mainland-based websites that reports and documents petitioners’ protests in China. Most of the website’s contributors were first petitioners before becoming citizen journalists to report on other petitioners’ protests and arrests.

Over the years, Huang Qi and other “64 Tianwang” contributors have been frequently detained or harassed by the Chinese authorities. Huang Qi has been imprisoned twice. He was first detained in June 2000 – the 11th anniversary of the Tiananmen crackdown – before being convicted of “inciting subversion of state power” and sentenced to five years in May 2003. He was again detained and later imprisoned for three years after exposing the substandard building scandal following the 2008 Wenchuan earthquake in Sichuan.

According to “64 Tianwang”, their journalists have been questioned or placed under brief detention more than 100 times since President Xi Jinping took power in 2012, and at least 30 have been imprisoned or criminally detained. Eight of “64 Tianwang”’s journalists are currently in prison, including Wang Jing, Zhang Jixin, Li Min, Sun Enwei, Li Chunhua, Wei Wenyuan, Xiao Jianfang and Yang Dongying.

China tightened security and environment measures in preparation for the G20 Summit, affecting cities as far as 300km away from Hangzhou. All Hangzhou residents were given a one-week vacation and discounts to tourist attractions outside Hangzhou, encouraging them to leave the city. Some residential areas were cordoned off to those without the necessary ID cards during the Summit period.

Further Information on UA: 212/16 Index: ASA 17/5068/2016 China Issue Date: 28 October 2016