

URGENT ACTION

FEARS FOR ACTIVIST HELD INCOMMUNICADO

First detained on 2 September 2017, human rights defender Zhen Jianghua has not yet been allowed access to his lawyer. Held under “residential surveillance in a designated location” on suspicion of “inciting subversion of state power” since 29 September, his current location is unknown, adding to grave concerns that he is at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

Zhen Jianghua’s lawyer received a written notification from Zhuhai City Public Security Bureau on 1 February 2018 that Zhen Jianghua was not allowed to meet his lawyers because his case involved national security, and meeting with them might hinder the investigation or cause possible disclosure of state secrets. The authorities further denied the request to release him on bail and confirmed that Zhen Jianghua had been placed under residential surveillance in a designated location since 29 September, without specifying where he is currently being detained.

Zhen Jianghua was criminally detained on suspicion of “inciting subversion of state power” on 2 September 2017 and, according to a notification received by his family five days later, held at the Zhuhai City No.1 Detention Centre. After three months, on 13 December, the national security officer-in-charge of his case informed his lawyer that Zhen Jianghua had been placed under residential surveillance in a designated location and was not allowed to meet with his defence counsel.

Zhen Jianghua is a human rights defender with over 10 years’ experience working for marginalized communities in China and has been detained several times as a result of his activism. Held incommunicado, and without access to a lawyer and his family, there are concerns that Zhen Jianghua is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

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

- Immediately and unconditionally release Zhen Jianghua who is a prisoner of conscience and drop all charges as he has been detained solely for exercising his right to freedom of expression;
- Ensure that, pending his release, Zhen Jianghua is protected from torture and other ill-treatment while in detention, and that he is allowed, without delay, effective access to his family, and lawyer of his choice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 15 MARCH 2018 TO:

Director
Zhuhai City Public Security Bureau
Meihuaxilu
Xiangzhouqu
Zhuhai Shi 519000
People’s Republic of China
Salutation: Dear Director

Director
Li Chunsheng Tingzhang
Guangdong Provincial Department of
Public Security
97 Huanghualu
Guangzhou Shi
Guangdong Sheng 510050
People’s Republic of China
Salutation: Dear Director

And copies to:
Minister of Public Security
Guo Shengkun Buzhang
Ministry of Public Security
14 Dongchanganjie
Dongchengqu Beijing Shi 100741
People’s Republic of China
Tel: +86 10 66262114 (Chinese Only)

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 235/17. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/7178/2017/en/>

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Zhen Jianghua, also known by his online pen name “Guests Zhen”, serves as executive director for Human Rights Campaign in China, a virtual organization that campaigns for human rights defenders at risk and helps rights holders to document and publicize the human rights violations they experienced. Zhen Jianghua is also the executive editor and founder of ATGFW.ORG, a website which advocates against Internet censorship and teaches people how to access censored information by circumventing the Great Firewall of China. In addition, he has also led a HIV/AIDS prevention education project in Zhuhai, hosted by Hong Kong AIDS Foundation.

On 3 September 2016, Zhen Jianghua travelled to Wukan village, Guangdong province, in support of the protest against illegal land grabbing by the local government. As he was about to leave Wukan, he was detained and questioned by the police for over 24 hours on suspicion of inciting a protest in Wukan village. Upon his release, on 7 September, Zhen Jianghua published an online public statement about his detention and, that same night, was detained again until the following day for interrogation on suspicion of “inciting participation in illegal rallies, marches and demonstrations”.

Over the years, China has made further efforts to reinforce its already oppressive internet censorship architecture. Thousands of websites and social media services are forced to censor their content, while some platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are blocked. China's Ministry of Industry and Information Technology announced in January 2017 that the government had launched a 14-month campaign to crack down on 'unauthorized' Internet platforms. The Government's pre-approval is required for offering VPN services, a tool used to evade China's internet censorship, and according to local media several people have been prosecuted in 2017 for supplying and selling VPN products and services.

In addition, a number of citizen journalists and directors of local news outlets that publicize articles and information about human rights incidents in China have been detained and imprisoned. Six journalists from Sichuan-based website “64 Tianwang” (64tianwang.org) were detained for covering protests in relation to the G20 Summit in Hangzhou in September 2016 while its founder, Huang Qi, has been detained since November 2016, and formally arrested for “leaking state secrets” in December 2016. The founder and director of Hubei-based human rights website “Civil Rights and Livelihood Watch” (www.msguancha.com), Liu Feiyue, was formally arrested for “inciting subversion of state power” in December 2016. Lu Yuyu and his girlfriend Li Tingyu, who managed a blog (wickedonna.blogspot.com) and a Twitter account (@wickedonnaa) that compiled and released data on strikes, protests and rural unrest in China, were both criminally detained on 15 June 2016 on suspicion of “picking quarrels and provoking trouble”. Li Tingyu was released on bail after a court trial on 10 April 2017 while Lu Yuyu was sentenced to four years imprisonment for “picking quarrels and provoking trouble.”

Activists and human rights defenders continued to be systematically subjected to monitoring, harassment, intimidation, arrest and detention. Police detained increasing numbers of human rights defenders outside of formal detention facilities, sometimes without access to a lawyer for long periods, exposing the detainees to the risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

Further information on UA: 235/17 Index: ASA 17/7824/2018 Issue Date: 2 February 2018