

**CHINA**

**ILHAM TOHTI**

## Life sentence for Uighur activist

Uighur academic Ilham Tohti is a prominent critic of the Chinese government's policies in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region. Uighurs, members of an ethnic minority that practices Islam, face widespread discrimination in their employment, education and housing, curtailed religious freedom, and political marginalisation.

Ilham has spoken out about his community's plight for many years. His 'Uighur Online' website reported human rights violations, but has been repeatedly shut down. He has consistently opposed violence and worked peacefully to build bridges between communities.

Nevertheless, he has been put under surveillance, and was interrogated after travelling to France in 2009 and giving media interviews critical of China's policies on ethnic minorities. After being charged with 'separatism', an 'offence' often used against Uighurs who speak out, Ilham was sentenced to life imprisonment in 2014.

### SEND A SOLIDARITY CARD TO:

Ilham Tohti  
Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region No. 1 Prison  
No. 215 Hebei Donglu  
Urumqi, Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region  
People's Republic of China  
Postal code: 830013

*Sending messages to Ilham puts pressure on the authorities and could lead to an improvement in his treatment, even if he does not actually receive them.*

■ **Language:** Chinese

■ **Suggested message:** 'We stand with you even when they all think you are defeated! Courage! Although you are in prison, you have inspired many others to defend human rights! We are thinking about you.' Versions of these messages in Chinese are available at [www.amnesty.org.uk/write](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/write)

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### SEND AN APPEAL LETTER:

**Urge the Chinese authorities to release Ilham Tohti immediately and unconditionally.**

**Write to:** Fan Jun  
Prison Administration Bureau of Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region  
No. 626 Xinquanjie, Tianshanqu  
Urumqi,  
Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region  
People's Republic of China  
Postal code: 830002

**Salutation:** Dear Director

**In your letter:** Call on the authorities to release Ilham Tohti immediately and unconditionally. Pending his release, urge them to ensure he is not tortured or ill-treated, has access to lawyers and medical treatment, and is moved closer to his family.

**'I have relied only on pen and paper to diplomatically request the human rights, legal rights, and autonomous regional rights for the Uighurs.'**

Ilham Tohti

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