

URGENT ACTION

CHINESE JOURNALIST FEARED DETAINED

Prominent journalist and columnist Jia Jia went missing while he was at the Beijing airport, about to board a flight to Hong Kong. Friends believe that his disappearance may be related to an open letter published on a website on 4 March calling for President Xi Jinping to resign.



On 4 March, the Chinese website Wujie News published an open letter which urged President Xi Jinping to retire. **Jia Jia** – a columnist and editor unaffiliated with the website – contacted the website’s director, **Ou Yang Hongliang**, his former colleague, about the letter. The BBC reported that he warned the editor against publishing the letter, which blamed President Xi for China’s “unprecedented problems”, and went on to criticize the leader’s handling of economic, political, and foreign policy. The letter was subsequently deleted from the website.

According to Apple Daily, Jia Jia called his wife around 8pm on 15 March saying that he had passed through customs at the Beijing airport. He has not been heard from since. Jia Jia, who is usually active on social media, has not posted on his twitter account since Monday. Before attempting to travel to Hong Kong, he confided in

friends that he was afraid he would be detained by authorities. Last week, security officials investigating the open letter questioned Jia Jia’s relatives in Shaanxi Province, north-western China.

Please write immediately in <preferred language> or your own language:

- Demanding the authorities immediately disclose Jia Jia’s whereabouts and his legal status;
- If he is in custody, urging the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Jia Jia, unless he is formally charged with an internationally recognizable criminal offence;
- While in detention, urging the authorities to ensure that he has regular, unrestricted access to his families and lawyers, without delay, and is protected from torture or other-ill-treatment.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 29 April 2016 TO:

Minister of Public Security

Guo Kunsheng
14 Dongchang’an jie
Dongcheng Qu
Beijing 100741
People’s Republic of China

Fax: +86 10 6626 2550

Salutation: Your Excellency

Director of Beijing Municipal Public

Security Bureau
Wang Xiaohong
Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau
Dongdajie 9 hao
Qianmen
Dongcheng Qu
Beijing 100740
People’s Republic of China

Fax: +86 10 65242927

Salutation: Dear Director

And copies to:

Premier
Li Keqiang
The State Council General Office
2 Fuyoujie, Xicheng Qu
Beijing 100017
People’s Republic of China

Fax: 86 10 65961109

Email: english@mail.gov.cn

Salutation: Your Excellency

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

China maintains one of the most extensive censorship apparatuses in the world, and publishing unauthorized letters or opinions criticizing leaders or government policy can have enormous professional and criminal ramifications for editors.

The authorities continue to use vaguely-worded laws to arbitrarily target individuals for solely exercising their right to freedom of expression online. Since President Xi Jinping came to power in November 2012, hundreds of people have been detained solely for expressing their views online.

President Xi Jinping has repeatedly reiterated the need to uphold the “Marxist view of journalism”, which sees all state media outlets as defenders of Communist Party interests. At the same time, leaked ideological memo “Document Number 9” warned about the “false trend” of promoting “freedom of the press” and the “free flow of information on the internet”.

On 19 February, President Xi Jinping toured China Central Television (CCTV), the newspaper *People’s Daily*, and Xinhua News Agency to encourage the outlets to “safeguard the Party’s authority, and safeguard the Party’s unity”. He also told party media that they “must be surnamed Party”. Historically, discussions about the “surnames” of institutions or political structures are debates about the fundamental direction and ideology to be undertaken by that body.

Name: Jia Jia, Ou Yang Hongliang

Gender m/f: Male

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