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Public Statement

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China: Liu Xiaobo should be released immediately

Liu Xiaobo's detention and "residential surveillance" are in contradiction of Chinese law and his continued detention without due process cannot continue, said Amnesty International today.

On 8 June 2009, police told Liu Xiaobo's wife Liu Xia that her husband would remain in custody for "continued investigation". Police will continue to keep Liu Xiaobo in custody without charge, access to a lawyer or any due process.

Chinese dissident and literary scholar Liu Xiaobo has been held without charge at an unknown location in China for six full months as of 8 June 2009. His official "residential surveillance" term should have expired according to limits established in the Chinese Criminal Procedure Law. If the Chinese authorities are not going to charge him, then they should now release Liu Xiaobo.

Liu Xiaobo's lawyer, Mo Shaoping, sent a formal request to Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau for information concerning the detention and the charge on 11 February 2009, but still has received no reply.

The detention notice given to Liu Xiaobo's family was blank in the column giving the suspected crime. The authorities only told his family that he was suspected of "incitement of subversion". The detention notice also did not state the name of the issuing department or the place of detention, and therefore according to his lawyer should not be considered an official detention notice.

The Chinese authorities detained Liu Xiaobo after he signed a campaign for political and rights reform in China, known as Charter 08. They have not yet made public any information concerning his alleged crimes, the charges against him and his current whereabouts. He has not spoken to his lawyer. He doesn't have the right of access to a judge to challenge the grounds of his detention. This not only violates Chinese Criminal Procedure Law, but also is a serious violation of due process guarantees.

Amnesty International urges China to make public Liu Xiaobo's current situation and release him immediately.

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