

30 Days for Freedom

4 April - 3 May 2014

#FreethePress

WAN-IFRA www.worldpressfreedomday.org

His Excellency
Mr. Xi Jinping
President of the Peoples' Republic of China
Beijing
China

C/O The Chinese Ambassador to France,
Mr. Zhai Jun
chinaemb_fr@mfa.gov.cn

1 May 2014

Your Excellency,

We are writing as part of the global online campaign '30 Days for Freedom' to call for the release of Liu Xianbin and all journalists and writers currently behind bars in China.

In March 2011, after a trial lasting only two hours, Liu Xianbin was sentenced to ten years in prison on charges that his writing slandered the Communist Party. The case was largely centred around articles published by overseas Chinese-language websites that advocated for democracy and human rights.

Liu Xianbin is a founding member of the China Democracy Party and has spent much of his career in and out of jail. At 20, he participated in the Beijing Tiananmen Square democratic movement that demanded political reform and an end to corruption. Despite a military crackdown, he persevered with his writing and in 1991 was sentenced to nearly three years in jail. Upon his release in 1993 he continued to organise and was again sentenced to 13 years for "state sedition" on the basis of his writing. He was eventually released in November 2008.

Your Excellency, we urge you to recognise Liu Xianbin's right to free expression. We call on you to recognise the essential role journalists and writers have in holding the powerful to account, and encourage you to respect a free and independent press. We urge you to stop criminalising free speech and therefore call for the release of Liu Xianbin and all journalists and writers imprisoned in China.

Sincerely,

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The 30 Days for Freedom campaign

Organised by the World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) and the World Editors Forum, the '30 Days for Freedom' campaign aims to highlight the plight of imprisoned journalists worldwide in the 30 days leading up to 3 May, World Press Freedom Day.

www.wan-ifra.org / www.worldpressfreedomday.org