



Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition *Defending Women Defending Rights*

WHRDIC urges Chinese authorities to release five young feminists

The Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition (WHRDIC) calls on Wang Xiaohong, the Director of the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau, Chairman Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang to immediately and unconditionally ensure the release of the five young women human rights defenders who were criminally detained in China after they planned events to protest sexual harassment on International Women's Day.

On 12 March Wei Tingting, Wang Man, Li Tingting (aka Li Maizi) and Zheng Churan (aka "Da Tu") and Wu Rongrong were criminally detained on suspicion of 'picking quarrels and provoking troubles', a charge often used in China to suppress human rights defenders. If convicted each could face a maximum of five years in prison.

Police also raided Weizhiming Women Centre office in Hangzhou, a women's rights NGO that Wu Rongrong founded and where Zheng Churan and Li Tingting work.

The women, who are members of China's Women's Rights Action Group, had made stickers printed with slogans saying 'stop sexual harassment, let us stay safe' and 'go police, go arrest those who committed sexual harassment!'

As of 2 April, none of their family members had received formal notification of their detentions except Zheng Churan, which contravenes article 83 of China's Criminal Procedure Law.

The WHRDIC also urges authorities to provide urgent medical care to Wu Rongrong whose medical condition is of grave concern. Wu Rongrong has chronic liver problems, which have worsened in detention. She was not provided with the medication she needs despite requests from her lawyer, and had to sleep on the floor in the detention centre. On 19 March she was sent to a hospital run by the Public Security Bureau after her condition deteriorated, but it is not known whether she is now receiving adequate treatment.

The WHRDIC believes the ongoing detention of these young women is not an isolated incident but part of a broader trend to suppress the women's rights movements in China. In recent months, the authorities have cracked down on independent grassroots non-governmental organizations. Civil society leaders have been subjected to rigorous questioning about their sources of funding and their activities.

In China, many other women human rights defenders have paid a high price for their activism to defend human rights. Human rights activist Cao Shunli died on 14 March 2014 after being denied medical treatment while in detention. Today, many other women human rights defenders are in jail, detained, under house arrest or otherwise harassed by the

authorities in China. We note that Han Ying, Jia Lingmin, Liu Ping and Su Changlan are at risk because of their activism to defend human rights.

The WHRDIC calls on the Chinese authorities to fully respect the right of all women human rights defenders to carry out their important work without any fear of intimidation, threats or attacks. If arrests of this kind persist, it seriously undermines China's leadership in organizing the 26 September 2015 Global Leader's conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

China must show its genuine will to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at home, including by not standing in the way of activists who are seeking to advance women's rights as set out in this important instrument.

The Women Human Rights Defender International Coalition is a resource and advocacy network supporting women human rights defenders worldwide. We have 32 members:

Amnesty International (AI)	Isis International
Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)	ISIS Women's International Cross-Cultural Exchange (ISIS-WICCE)
Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM ASIA)	Just Associates (JASS)
The Association for Progressive Communications (APC WNSP)	The Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights (CLADEM)
Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID)	MADRE
BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights (BAOBAB)	Nazra for Feminist Studies
Center for Reproductive Rights (CRR)	Nobel Women's Initiative (NWI)
Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL)	Peace Brigades International
Coalition of African Lesbians (CAL)	Society for Appraisal & Women Empowerment in Rural Areas (SAWERA)
Frida the Young Feminist Fund	Rainbow Rights Project (R-Rights)
Front Line Defenders	Urgent Action Fund (UAF)
Human Rights First	Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML)
Information Monitor (INFORM)	Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR)
International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)	Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice (WIGJ)
International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)	Women's Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC)
International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAP-AP)	World Organisation against Torture (OMCT)