

China: UN experts worried about Liu Xia's health

GENEVA (4 July 2018) – UN human rights experts* are deeply concerned over the mental health of human rights defender Liu Xia, and are renewing their call for her release.

Ms. Liu is a poet and artist and the wife of deceased Nobel Peace Prize Liu Xiaobo. She has been arbitrarily held under house arrest since 2010 when her husband was awarded the Prize. In 2011, her detention was deemed arbitrary by the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention. She has continued to be detained.

“We are disturbed by reports of the deteriorating health of Liu Xia. She is reportedly physically restricted at an unknown location and suffers from severe psychological distress,” the experts said, referring to several recent audio recordings that were released in May in which she pleads for help.

“We understand her condition has been aggravated by the restrictions placed on her movements, and contact with outsiders, for over seven years, while she has not been accused of any criminal activity, nor charged with any criminal offence.”

In one of the audio recordings, Ms. Liu says she was being held for ‘the crime of loving Liu Xiaobo’. China denies that she is being held against her will. Ms. Liu was last seen in public at her husband’s funeral a year ago, accompanied by the Chinese authorities.

The UN experts urged that immediate and unfettered access be granted to her and that she be freely allowed to seek medical and psychological treatment where ever she wishes to, including outside China.

“We reiterate our call to the Chinese Government to disclose her whereabouts and release her,” said the experts. “If Ms. Liu is free as she is said to be by the authorities, she should be allowed to peacefully to exercise her right to freedom of expression and movement.”

The experts, who had called for the release of her husband, prior to his death in detention last year, continue to be alarmed by the growing trend of deaths in custody in China.

The experts have been in contact with the Chinese Government on regular occasions to raise their concern about Ms. Liu Xia’s situation.

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**The UN experts: Mr. Bernard Duhaime, Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; Mr. Seong-Phil Hong, Chair-Rapporteur of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention; Mr. Michel Forst, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders.*

** Endorsed by Mr. David Kaye, Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression.*

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UN Human Rights country page: [China](#)

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