

Xi Jinping, President of China
Li Keqiang, Premier of China

April 30, 2015

CC:
Zhou Qiang President of the Supreme People's Court of China
Cao Jianming Procurator-General of the Supreme People's Procuratorate

RE: Sentencing of Gao Yu

Your Excellency,

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and the undersigned IFJ affiliates write regarding the sentencing of veteran journalist Gao Yu on April 17. The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), represents more than 600,000 journalists in 134 countries.

Gao Yu has already been incarcerated for 12 months, despite strong international condemnation from the IFJ, IFEX and other international press freedom organisations. This is not the first instance in which Gao has been arrested and dealt a heavy sentence in China. Yet the manner in which her confession was gained questions the role of the police in this case.

The IFJ and its affiliates impress upon you that any journalist who face China's judicial system should be guaranteed a free and fair trial, which cannot be said for Gao Yu. In addition to Gao's coerced confession, the definition of state secret and the document which Gao shared brings a degree of uncertainty to the case. It is apparent that the document for which she was charged was already quasi-public having been shared in a number of provinces prior to Gao's involvement. Even if the Communist Party's Document No 9 were a secret document, it could not be a state secret, but rather a secret of the Communist Party.

As the President and Premier of the People's Republic of China you have the power to order the immediate release of Gao and end the case against her, which given her current medical conditions, including heart disease, is absolutely necessary.

China is the second largest economy in the world, with a large number of foreign journalists working within its borders. Gao's case raises serious questions about China's judicial system, and has tarnished the reputation of the People's Procuratorate and the People's Court of China in the eyes of the global community.

The IFJ 2014 *China's Media War: Censorship, Corruption & Control* Report highlighted a number of the challenges that continue to face journalists and media workers in China. The country now holds the title as the largest jailer of journalists in the world.

We call on you to act immediately to follow the principle of the rule of law for press freedom enshrined in Article 35 of the Chinese Constitution.

Yours sincerely,



Beth Costa
General Secretary
International Federation of Journalists

Afghanistan Independent Journalists' Association
Aliansi Independen Jurnal
Association of Taiwan Journalists
Committee for the Protection of Journalists, Cambodia
Confederation of Mongolian Journalists
Engineering, Manufacturing and Press Union
Federation Des Journalistes Freelances, Nouvelle Calédonie
Federation of Nepali Journalists
Free Media Movement
Hong Kong Journalists Association
Indian Journalists Union
INFORM, Sri Lanka
Journalists Association of Bhutan
Media Association Vanuatu
Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance
Media Forum Japan
Japan Freelance Union
Myanmar Journalists Association
National Union of Journalists, Nepal
National Union of Journalists, Peninsular Malaysia
National Union of Journalists of the Philippines
Nepal Press Union
Timor Leste Journalists Association
Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists
Sri Lanka Working Journalists Association