

December 8, 2025

Sent via email

His Excellency Xi Jinping

President of the People's Republic of China
Zhongnanhai, Xicheng District
Beijing, 100017
China

Dear President Xi,

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), an independent, nonprofit press freedom organization, writes to request your urgent attention to the matter of journalists imprisoned in China ahead of International Human Rights Day on December 10.

According to data compiled by CPJ, your government holds at least [50 journalists](#) in prison because of their work — making China the world's worst jailer of reporters. This includes seven journalists who are being held in Hong Kong.

Those behind bars include British publisher Jimmy Lai Chee-ying, whose health is rapidly deteriorating in a Hong Kong prison, and prominent Chinese journalist Dong Yuyu, who was imprisoned for having lunch with a Japanese diplomat in Beijing. The data indicates a trend of using anti-state charges to target journalists, with at least 34 behind bars for vague and overly broad crimes such as “subversion of state power” and “inciting subversion.”

In December 2016, you said in a statement that “China needs to know better about the world and the world needs to know better about China.” These words resonate with journalists, including those in China who seek to explain the country's perspectives, aspirations, and complexities to the global community.

If China truly aspires to engage with the world from a position of confidence and openness, its journalists must be able to do their jobs safely without fear of reprisal.

China's constitution guarantees freedom of speech and of the press. To mark International Human Rights Day, we urge your government to uphold these values by taking steps that would allow all imprisoned journalists to return to their families. Your personal attention to this matter would demonstrate a

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Committee to Protect Journalists

commitment to your December 2016 remarks and the principles of fairness and justice.

Our advocacy is supported by more than 1,500 journalists, representing over 100 countries, who joined CPJ in a [solidarity action](#) at this year's Global Investigative Journalism Conference in Malaysia to call on governments around the world to free imprisoned journalists and end impunity for those who attack the press.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. We look forward to your reply and welcome any dialogue with the relevant offices of the Chinese government.

Sincerely,

Beh Lih Yi
Asia-Pacific Director
Committee to Protect Journalists

CC:

The Honorable John Lee
Chief Executive
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, People's Republic of China