

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

24 April 2014

Your Excellency,

We are writing as part of the global online campaign '30 Days for Freedom' to call for the release of Gulmire Imin and all journalists imprisoned in China simply for doing their job.

Gulmire Imin was arrested and sentenced to life in prison on 14 July 2009 in the days following a violent uprising in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region. Ms. Imin, a website moderator, was one of several people arrested who worked for the now-defunct Uighur-language web forum, 'Salkin'. Reports suggest she has been convicted on charges of separatism, leaking state secrets, and organising an illegal demonstration.

Ms. Imin had started working for the website only a few months prior to her arrest. Since 2000, she had held a local government position and also wrote poetry and short stories that were published on 'Salkin'. Authorities claim she was one of the organisers of a major demonstration sparked by the deaths of Uighur migrant workers in Guangdong province that took place on 5 July 2009. Officials also accused her of leaking state secrets over the telephone to her husband, who lives in Norway.

Your Excellency, we are appalled that Ms. Imin is one of at least 32 journalists today imprisoned in China. The Chinese government has long maintained a tight grip on the media in an attempt to prevent any threat of opposition or subversion, and journalists have frequently been targets for state oppression.

We call on you to recognise the essential role journalists have in holding the powerful to account and encourage you to respect a free and independent press. We urge you to stop criminalising journalists and therefore call for the release of Gulmire Imin and all other journalists 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

