

# China must release human rights defenders Huang Xueqin and Wang Jianbing now

dimanche 24 septembre 2023, par [Civil society groups](#) (Date de rédaction antérieure : 21 septembre 2023).

**The trial of Huang Xueqin and Wang Jianbing will begin on 22 September 2023, a few days after the second anniversary of their arrest.**

We, the undersigned civil society groups, are deeply concerned about this case and call for the two activists' immediate and unconditional release, as they have been detained for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression and association. Pending their release, the Chinese authorities must respect and protect their rights in detention, including by providing regular, unrestricted access to their family and lawyers of their choice ; prompt, adequate and necessary medical treatment ; and ensuring that they are not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment.

On 19 September 2021, independent journalist and #MeToo activist Sophia Huang Xueqin and labour rights activist Wang Jianbing were detained by the police in Guangzhou, China. They were formally arrested on the charge of 'inciting subversion of state power' a month later. In January 2023, they were transferred to Guangzhou City No 1 Detention Centre awaiting trial at the court. Their continued detention is believed to be related to the weekly gatherings hosted by Wang Jianbing in the year prior to their detention, at which they discussed the challenges activists faced due to the shrinking space for civil society.

The health condition of Sophia Huang Xueqin is alarming as she is believed to have experienced significant weight loss and amenorrhea (no menstruation) for at least five months. Credible reports indicate that her sleep is often interrupted and that she has been subjected to interrogations in the middle of the night.

Sophia Huang Xueqin and Wang Jianbing should have not been detained for peacefully exercising their human rights. Ahead of their trial, we call on the Chinese government to uphold its international human rights obligations. It must :

- Release Sophia Huang Xueqin and Wang Jianbing immediately and unconditionally ;
- Pending their release, ensure that Sophia Huang Xueqin and Wang Jianbing have regular, unrestricted access to family and lawyers of their choice ; prompt, adequate and necessary medical treatment ; and are not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment ;
- Stop harassing, arresting and threatening other human rights defenders who peacefully exercise their right to freedom of association or other human rights.

## BACKGROUND

Sophia Huang Xueqin is a journalist who has been involved in several #MeToo campaigns to provide support and assistance to survivors of sexual assault and harassment. She was previously detained

between October 2019 and January 2020 and charged with “picking quarrels and provoking trouble” after writing about the 2019 mass protests in Hong Kong.

Labour activist Wang Jianbing (known to friends as “Pancake”) has provided legal support for people with disabilities and workers with occupational diseases. He is also a prominent supporter of the #MeToo movement in China.

21 September 2023

*Undersigned, in alphabetical order :*

ACAT-France  
Amnesty International  
Asia Citizen Future Association  
Beijing Yirenping Center  
Changsha Funeng  
China Against the Death Penalty  
China Labour Bulletin  
Christian Solidarity Worldwide  
Covenants Watch/國際人權聯盟  
Front Line Defenders  
Georgetown Center for Asian Law  
HKers United  
Hong Kong Labour Rights Monitor  
Hong Kong Outlanders in Taiwan  
Human Rights in China  
Human Rights Now  
Humanitarian China  
Index on Censorship  
International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), within the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders  
International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)  
International Tibet Network  
Judicial Reform Foundation  
ME2Allies  
PEN Canada  
PEN International  
Reporters Without Borders (RSF)  
Safeguard Defenders  
Taiwan Association for Human Rights  
The Network of Chinese Human Rights Defenders (CHRD)  
The Rights Practice  
World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), within the framework of the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders  
World Uyghur Congress

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