

President Xi Jinping
Zhongnanhai Xichangan'jie Xichengqu
Beijing Shi 100017
VOLKSREPUBLIK CHINA

Dear President Xi Jinping,

I am very concerned about imprisoned economics professor Ilham Tohti, who belongs to the Uighur ethnic minority group in Xinjiang. Once again, he will have to spend his upcoming birthday on 25 October behind bars. He was sentenced to life imprisonment in September 2014 on charges of "separatism", which are based on the fact that Ilham Tohti criticised China's treatment of the predominantly Muslim Uighur minority in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, facilitated peaceful dialogue and campaigned against injustice and discrimination. Ilham Tohti is therefore a prisoner of conscience held solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression.

I fear that Ilham Tohti may be one of the 1 million or more men and women estimated to have been arbitrarily detained in internment camps and in prisons in Xinjiang.

I urge you to order the release of Ilham Tohti. Please ensure that pending his release, he is not tortured or ill-treated in detention and that prison authorities grant him regular access to family and lawyers as well as an independent medical examination and any medical treatment he needs. Additionally, I call on you to immediately release all people who are arbitrarily detained in internment camps and in prisons in Xinjiang.

Yours sincerely,

Copy:

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