

Statement at Congressional Executive Commission on China

December 9, 2002

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Christina Fu

I'm Christina Fu, wife of Yang Jianli. On April 26th this year, my husband was detained in Kunming, China during a peaceful visit to his native country. Today marks the 227th day of his detention and his whereabouts remain unknown.

My husband is the president of the Foundation for China in the 21st century, through which he promotes the cause of democracy in China. As a veteran of 1989 Tiananmen student movement and an outspoken advocate for human rights in China, he testified before the Congress many times. On June 21 and July 7, 1989, after my husband fled China, he testified before the Congressional Human Rights Committee his eye witness of the Tiananmen Massacre, and testified in front of the United Nations on July 8, 1989. On April 5, 1991, my husband appeared in the Congress hearing testifying China's worsening human rights record. In December 1996, he testified again on "the Hearing of China's Human Rights". In May 1997, he testified before the Congress on the Chinese government's persecution of Christian in China.

My husband is a permanent legal resident of the United States, but has remained a citizen of China. He came to the U.S. in 1986 as a student, and his passport expired in 1991. Since 1993, he tried many times to get a new passport from the Chinese consulate general in New York. I remembered traveling to New York with him a number of times to visit the Chinese consulate. As soon as the people inside the consulate heard my husband's name, they told us to go away. No one even wanted to talk to us.

After my husband was detained in China, on May 8, 2002, I called the Chinese consulate in New York and spoke to Mr. Wang Hai-Tao, a consul in charge of the affairs for overseas Chinese, told me that "if we do not give him (Yang Jianli) a passport, he should not go back to China." On June 14, when my husband's mother and two sisters visited the Chinese Embassy in Washington D.C., the first secretary and consul Mr. Wang Yi-Gong told them that "our government cannot give Yang Jianli a passport based on what he was doing in the United States. What he was doing here even you may not know."

It is commonly known that my husband is one of the forty-nine prominent dissidents who have been blacklisted by the Chinese government and denied entrance to China since 1989 (please refer to the attached report by Human Rights in China, January 6, 1995). According to the HRIC report, the [Chinese government's "re-entry Blacklist"](#) was issued confidentially by the Ministry of Public Security to all border control units in China in May 1994. My husband's name was listed in the third category with other 17 people. In this category, it says "in accordance with relevant instructions from the Party Center: if subject attempts to enter China, to be dealt with according to circumstances of the situation." (That is, border authorities are to seek immediate instructions from above on how to handle the case, while presumably keeping their charges either in isolation or under close surveillance.) For this category, the duration of detention was not specified.

My husband's decision to travel to China this spring was the result of his growing concern about the under reported labor unrest and his strong belief that he has the right to go to his own country, that is guaranteed by international treaties. The "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights," signed by the Chinese government in 1998 but has not ratified by the Congress of People's Representatives, states that "no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of the right to enter his own country." (Article 12, item 4.)

After my husband was detained and was being held in a hotel room guarded by Chinese police officers, he spoke with me by phone. We spoke again the next day on the morning of April 27. Since that day, I have been unable to communicate with him.

In the past seven months, our family has been deeply concerned for my husband's well-being and safety. We have done everything we could to obtain information about him, but our basic rights were denied. We submitted eight written requests, made more than twenty calls to the Chinese Embassy in Washington D.C. and made six visits to the various offices in China. I arrived in Beijing on May 23 and was not allowed to enter the country. I was sent to Canada on the same day.

My husband's brother traveled to Beijing four times from his home in Shandong province to learn where my husband was being held and try to arrange for legal representation. No lawyers in China would accept his case since there was no official record of his arrest or trial date. Chinese authorities at the Public Security Ministry, the State Security Ministry, the Foreign Ministry, and the Beijing Public Security Bureau would not provide any confirmation.

We have been in close contact with the US State Department, which has been very supportive. Despite their active involvement in the case, they have also been unable to obtain even the most basic information, such as where my husband is being held and how he is being treated. Since July, the State Department has more than once requested a written notification from the Chinese government, but nothing has happened.

Chinese law requires notification of detention within 24 hours; Chinese law imposes a 37-day limit on detentions without a warrant; Chinese law requires that the detainee be permitted rapid access to legal counsel. China has not honored its own laws with respect to my husband's case. He has not been permitted to communicate with anyone since his detention seven months ago. Such an extended period of isolation from the outside world surely constitutes inhuman, cruel and degrading treatment

Just today, my attorney Jared Genser of Freedom Now, filed a [petition to the United Nation High Commission on Human Rights](#), Working Group on Arbitrary Detention describing the violations of Chinese and International law in my husband's case. The petition will be attached with my statement.

I remain hopeful and appreciative of the many people working on my husband's behalf. I would particularly thank the more than forty members of Congress from Senate and House, Republicans and Democrats, who have written a total of 21 letters to both the Chinese and U.S. governments to appeal for my husband's release.

Supportive letters were also written by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, President Lawrence Summers of Harvard University, thirty-four faculties of Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Chancellor Robert Berdahl of University of California at Berkeley and many others. Their efforts have given me much courage and hope during this very difficult struggle. Their help will have a direct impact on my husband's fate.

I greatly appreciate the opportunity to inform the Congressional-Executive Commission on China of my husband's case and to appeal for help. It is also my hope that this commission will continue to show concern about my husband's case and take advantage of the upcoming human rights dialogue with China to press for my husband's release so that joy and peace will return to my children and my family.

Thank you all very much!