

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

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## **ILHAM TOHTI**

Dear President Xi Jinping,

I am writing you this letter on behalf of Uyghur scholar and writer Ilham Tohti, who was sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of 'separatism' in September 2014 simply for criticising the Chinese government's unjust and discriminatory treatment of the predominantly Muslim Uyghur minority in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. His trial did not meet international standards for fair trials, nor do the conditions of his detention comply with international conventions regulation the humane treatment of prisoners. He is reportedly being subjected to ill-treatment, including handcuffing and shackling, prolonged periods in solitary confinement, inadequate medical care, and food deprivation.

Ilham Tohti is a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression. I would like to ask you to order the immediate and unconditional release of Ilham Tohti, who has been imprisoned solely for his peaceful human rights work. Please ensure that he is not subjected to torture or other ill-treatment while he is detained and that he has regular and unrestricted access to his family and a lawyer of his choice. Please urge the prison authorities to allow Ilham Tohti regular video contact with his daughter, Jewher Ilham, who was last allowed to speak to him via Skype on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2014! He should also be permitted to contact his family in China, who could last visit him in spring 2017.

Yours sincerely,