

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

Ilham Tohti

Dear President Xi Jinping,

The human rights activist and economics **Professor Ilham Tohti**, who belongs to the Uighur ethnic minority group in Xinjiang, will again have to spend his upcoming birthday on 25 October behind bars. In September 2014 he was sentenced to life imprisonment for "separatism", following his criticism of China's treatment of the predominantly Muslim Uighur minority in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region. Ilham Tohti is a prisoner of conscience held solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression.

I urge you therefore to order the release of Ilham Tohti. Please ensure that pending his release, he is not tortured or ill-treated and that prison authorities grant him regular access to his family and lawyers as well as adequate medical care. I further appeal to you to immediately release all people who are arbitrarily detained in internment camps and prisons in Xinjiang.

Yours sincerely,