

RAN #43: November 23, 2007

CHINA: Writer, independent publisher and civil rights activist Yang Maodong (aka Guo Feixiong) sentenced to five years in prison

BACKGROUND: On November 14, 2007, Yang Maodong (aka Guo Feixiong), a well-known writer, independent publisher and civil rights activist, was sentenced to five years in prison by the Tianhe District Court in the southern city of Guangzhou, Guangdong Province. His trial opened on July 9, 2007, and the case was twice sent back by the district prosecutor for lack of evidence. He was found guilty of 'illegal business activity'. The charges are believed to relate to a publication entitled *Shenyang Political Earthquake*, which exposed government corruption in Shenyang, Liaoning Province. He has been detained since 14 September 2006. There are reports that he has been repeatedly tortured at Guangzhou City No.3 Detention Centre.

Yang Maodong, 40, was also detained in 2005 and held without charge for four months for his involvement in and reporting of an anti-corruption campaign by villagers in Taishi Village, Guangdong Province. He is the author of two novels and one collection of short stories and has published many essays, poems and articles.

APPEAL LETTER

His Excellency Hu Jintao
President of the People's Republic of China
State Council
Beijing 100032
P.R. China

Your Excellency:

As a member of PEN Canada, I wish to add my voice to the protest by the Writers in Prison Committee of International PEN of the five-year prison sentence handed down to Yang Maodong on 14 November 2007 for his critical writings.

We reiterate the call for Yang Maodong's immediate and unconditional release in accordance with Article 19 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which China is a signatory. I join my colleagues in seeking immediate reassurances that Yang Maodong is being treated humanely while in detention.

Sincerely,

[your signature and name and address]

Copies (care of the Chinese Embassy in Ottawa) to:

Procurator General Mr. Jia Chunwang
Supreme People's Procuratorate
Beiheyuan Street 147
100726 Beijing
P.R.China

H.E. Lu Shumin
Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Canada

Huang Huikang
Political Counsellor and Deputy Chief of Mission
Embassy of the Peoples Republic of China

515 St. Patrick Street, Ottawa, Ont. K1N 5H3
Fax: (613) 789-1911
E-mail Address: chinaemb_ca@mfa.gov.cn

Please also send copies of your appeal to the following Canadian authorities:

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