

PEN CANADA

for FREEDOM of EXPRESSION



Yang Tongyan – China

PEN Canada protests the twelve-year prison sentence handed down to dissident writer Yang Tongyan (aka Yang Tianshui) on 16 May 2006 for his critical writings. PEN Canada calls for his 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.

According to PEN's information, dissident writer and member of Independent Chinese PEN Centre Yang Tongyan (pen-name Yang Tianshui) was convicted of subversion and sentenced by the Zhenjiang Intermediate Court in eastern China's Jiangsu province at a three-hour closed trial on 16 May 2006. He was convicted for posting anti-government articles on the Internet, organizing branches of the (outlawed) China Democracy Party and accepting illegal funds from overseas. The Zhenjiang Intermediate People's Court verdict cited several allegedly subversive articles published on overseas Chinese websites between May 2002-December 2005 under the pseudonyms 'Yang Tianshui' and 'China's Tears', namely "October First is China's Day of Calamity", "An Admonition to the Chinese Communist Ruling Clique", "Everyone has the Right to Oppose Tyranny", "Our Hopes for the Great Democracy Party", and "Pondering the Chinese Democracy Movement". Yang Tongyan was detained without a warrant on 23 December 2005 in Nanjing, and formally arrested on 20 January 2006. His family was not notified of his arrest or whereabouts until 27 January 2006.

Yang Tongyan, born 21 February 1962, is known for his critical writings published on dissident news websites such as Boxun.com and Epoch Times. He spent a decade in prison from 1990 to 2000 on counter-revolution charges for his involvement in the 1989 pro-democracy protests. His previous conviction is said to have contributed to the severity of his sentence. He was also previously held incommunicado from 24 December 2004-25 January 2005.

Send appeals to:

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