

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

Mr. Xiao Yang
President of the Supreme People's Court
No.27 Dongjiaominxiang
Dongcheng District, Beijing 100745
People's Republic of China

Your Excellencies:

As a member of PEN Canada, I am writing, on World Press Freedom Day 2008, to express my deep concern regarding the suppression of the right to freedom of expression in China and to appeal for the release of writer Hu Jia.

I understand that Mr. Hu, a freelance reporter and blogger, civil rights, environmental and AIDS activist, was arrested December 27, 2007 at his home in Beijing on suspicion of "inciting subversion of state power." He was officially charged on January 30, 2008 by the Beijing Municipal People's Procuratorate, and on March 7, his case was submitted to the prosecution. Mr. Hu stood trial on March 18, and on April 3, he was convicted of subversion and sentenced to three and a half years in prison and one year's deprivation of political rights. He is currently being held at the Beijing Municipal Detention Centre at Dougezhuang in Chaoyang District.

Mr. Hu has been imprisoned for non-violent activities that are protected under Chinese law, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which China is a signatory. I therefore urge you to facilitate his immediate and unconditional release.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

[Your Name and Signature]