



香港記者協會
HONG KONG JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION

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To: Editors/ News desk
For: Immediate release

Ten Cities Press Conference for Jailed Journalist

A total of 20 international organizations from more than ten cities will co-organize a press conference for the release of journalist Ching Cheong, the chief China correspondent for Singapore's The Straits Times newspaper on 20 July 2006 in their cities. Participating cities in the press conference are: Bonn, Calgary, Los Angeles, Melbourne, New York, Paris, San Francisco/Silicon Valley, Seattle, and Toronto.

Ching Cheong been detained in China since April 2005 and is scheduled to be sentenced later this month. The Hong Kong Journalists Association and the global organisations are deeply concerned about the plight of Hong Kong journalist Ching Cheong. A video appeal by his wife will be shown. (Please visit: http://www.visual-artists-guild.org/VAG/Pages/_start.html)

Ching is the chief China correspondent for Singapore's The Straits Times newspaper. He is a Hong Kong citizen, a legal resident of Singapore, and is a well-respected and experienced journalist. According to his wife, in April 2005 Ching went to China to meet a source who was to give him a manuscript about Zhao Ziyang, the former Prime Minister of China who spent 15 years under house arrest following the Tiananmen massacre. On April 22, 2005 Ching was arrested in Guangzhou and placed under a form of detention called "residence under surveillance" in Beijing.

During the first month of Ching's detention, his wife complied with the advice of China's Public Security Bureau and did not go public with any information. Her last conversation with her husband was on May 29, 2005. Because so many of his friends, colleagues and relatives had been inquiring about Ching, his wife finally decided to publicise the information about his detention and on May 30, 2005, the media reported Ching's situation.

On August 5, 106 days after he was first detained, the Beijing State Security Bureau formally charged Ching with spying for Taiwan. Ching faces life imprisonment for "endangering national security". Ching has been denied the rights granted to him under the China's Criminal Procedure Code: he has been kept in isolation, denied all legal recourse, and refused access to family members and Strait Times colleagues.

The HKJA and its affiliates continue to demand the Chinese authorities to handle Ching's case in a "fair, just and open" manner. If there is insufficient proof, they should release Ching immediately.

Support For The International Press Conferences For Ching Cheong:

Association of Humanitarian lawyers
Author Mr. Ethan Gutmann
Bernard Stein of the Riverdale Press
Committee to Protect Journalists
Hong Kong Alliance for Democracy in China
Hong Kong Forum, Los Angeles
Hong Kong Journalists Association
International Federation of Journalists, IFJ Asia-Pacific
Jay Nordlinger of National Review
Loagai Research Foundation
Magazine New China, Germany
Members of the New York Press Club
Movement for Democracy in China (Calgary)
Nat Hentoff of the Village Voice
Reporters Without Borders/Reporters Sans Frontiers
Silicon Valley for Democracy in China
The Foreign Correspondents' Club, Hong Kong
Toronto Association for Democracy in China
Visual Artists Guild
Wei Jingsheng Foundation

For enquiries, please feel free to contact us at 2591-0692 or 9199-2502. Thank you.

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Vice Chairman of the HKJA