

**Letter from Guo Feixiong's wife, Zhang Qing, to UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**

[Translation by Human Rights in China]

May 19, 2016

To Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights:

I am Zhang Qing (张青), the wife of Guo Feixiong (郭飞雄) (whose real name is Yang Maodong (杨茂东)).

Guo Feixiong is a legal worker and writer, and one of the leaders of China's rights defense movement. Over the years, he has engaged in activities to promote freedom and democracy in China. Guo has been detained and imprisoned four times, and sentenced twice to a total of 11 years' imprisonment. His fourth detention occurred on August 8, 2013, because he supported the *Southern Weekly* protest, and called for freedom of speech, ratification of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, and disclosure of officials' assets. His case took a long time to come to trial due to unclear facts and insufficient evidence. On November 27, 2015 he was tried and sentenced. Ten minutes before the announcement of the verdict, the judge added the charge of "picking quarrels and provoking troubles" [to the charge for which he was tried, "gathering crowds to disrupt order in public places"]. The judge convicted Guo of both trumped-up charges, and sentenced him to six years' imprisonment.

On April 27, 2016, I wrote a letter to you, strongly urging the United Nations Human Rights Council to pay attention to the serious human rights violations in Guo Feixiong's case. The letter described Guo's deteriorating health condition:

Since arriving in prison, he has also suffered from occasional bleeding in the mouth and throat, and he hemorrhaged on April 19, and he has been unsteady on his feet. Yesterday, when he spoke with Officer Liu in the Prison Management Division, he could barely stand. In the hospital, he was kept with four other people inside a [seven-and-a-half square-meter] room without windows, for 23 hours a day. When he requested a medical check related to his symptoms, the police watching him said there was nothing they could do. When he asked the doctor, the hospital said this needed Officer Liu's approval, and Officer Liu did not approve it.

Recently, due to the urgent support actions launched both domestically and overseas, international human rights organizations have also lodged strong protests, one after another.

With the support of the concern and appeals from all parts of society, the Yangchun Prison, the Prison Administrative Bureau of Guangdong Province, and the whole Guangdong Domestic Security system, which directly controls everything behind the scenes, provided Guo with a partial physical examination. However, in the process, the Guangdong Domestic Security system and Yangchun Prison shamelessly used Guo's serious medical condition and need of a diagnosis as an opportunity to carry out new and more egregious human rights violations and persecution against him.

On May 9, 2016, when his family was not present, Yangchun Prison officials performed a rectal examination against his wishes and videotaped the exam. They also threatened to put the video on the Internet. On the same day, prison officials forcefully shaved Guo's entire head, and used threatening language, ordering him to "squat on the floor with hands behind his head like a bug whenever seeing a police officer." The prison authorities' evil actions seriously violated Guo's right to privacy—their level of vulgarity, shamelessness, and depravity far exceeded anyone's imagination, and sank lower than the lowest of moral standards. The Chinese government's new persecution of Guo directly resulted in his decision, while seriously ill, to announce on May 9, 2016 at 6:00p.m., his start of an indefinite hunger strike. This hunger strike is causing him both physical and mental devastation—putting his life in immediate risk.

With this hunger strike, Guo Feixiong demands that:

1. President Xi Jinping start reforms of the political system;
2. the Chinese government abolish the use of electric shock torture in all the nation's prisons;
3. the Chinese government improve the treatment of political prisoners in all prisons; and
4. the Chinese government ratify the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*.

The sequence of facts [immediately surrounding Guo's declaration of hunger strike] are as follows:

On Saturday, May 7, 2016, Officer Luo of the Guangdong police met with Guo's sister, Yang Maoping, at her work unit. Officer Luo said that Guo was just then being sent to a hospital for a physical examination. Officer Luo asked whether Guo Feixiong was very concerned about personal privacy. Yang replied that, yes, he was very concerned about personal privacy. Yang requested that Guo be accompanied by family members during a colonoscopy and/or endoscopy. Officer Luo said that he could. Yang planned to visit Guo in prison on Friday, May 13.

At 10:00 a.m. on May 9, Yang received a phone call from Section Chief Liu, of the Yangchun Prison, who said "I heard you were coming, when will you arrive?" Yang

responded that she would arrive on Friday [May 13]. Chief Liu said, “You should come a little earlier.” To this end, on May 10, Yang set out for Guangdong, and arrived in Guangzhou later that evening. Before the train had even arrived in Guangzhou, she received a call from Officer Luo of the Guangdong Provincial Domestic Security who requested an in-person meeting with her to chat. The group of people who met with Yang included Officer Luo of Guangdong Domestic Security, the chief of Guangdong Prison Administration Bureau, and others.

On May 11, Yang Maoping visited him in Yangchun Prison, Guangdong (广东阳春监狱). Guo told her that, two days earlier, on May 9, Yangchun Prison officials performed a rectal examination against his wishes and videotaped the exam. They also threatened to put the video on the Internet. On the same day, prison officials forcefully shaved Guo’s entire head. He began a hunger strike in protest. He said, “The causes of democracy and constitutionalism in China require blood and sacrifice—if I don’t enter the depths of suffering, who will?” Yang said that when she saw Guo during his hunger strike, he was very weak and was drenched in sweat. Prison authorities requested that Yang visit Guo again in the afternoon to try to persuade him to eat. Yang said, “His body can’t take it [another visit], I won’t visit him in the afternoon to talk to him.”

In the morning of May 12, Yang saw Guo again and tried to persuade him to stop the hunger strike, but he did not agree to it. On May 13, Yang left the prison.

Guo Feixiong is now on an indefinite hunger strike in prison, caused by the relevant authorities’ deliberate humiliation of him. [It was deliberate] because police specifically asked Yang Maoping when meeting her whether Guo was very concerned about personal privacy, and they performed, on May 9—purposely at a time when Yang was not at the prison—a rectal examination on Guo against his wishes, videotaped the exam, and then threatened to post the video on the Internet.

On May 18, Yang called the prison and asked Guo about his current condition. Guo confirmed that he was still on a hunger strike but that the prison was force feeding him through his nose to keep him alive.

As his wife, I am beyond angry. I write to request that the United Nations Human Rights Council make the following efforts to save Guo Feixiong’s life, and safeguard his human rights and dignity:

1. Publicly denounce the Chinese authorities who have carried out new and more egregious human rights violations against Guo Feixiong.

2. Negotiate directly with the Chinese government regarding Guo Feixiong's situation, and request that the Chinese government acquit and release Guo.

3. Establish an independent investigation team to investigate the two locations where Guo has been held, the Tianhe District Detention Center in Guangzhou and the Yangchun Prison in Guangdong, to determine whether they meet the Chinese government's requirements for detention facilities, including the per capita detention area, sanitary conditions, and especially food quality and safety. I seriously suspect that Guo's ill health is the result of harmful food provided to Guo by the detention center and prison.

4. Request that the Chinese government conduct an investigation into Guangdong's Domestic Security system, the Yangchun Prison, and associated personnel's responsibility for dereliction of duty or maltreatment of their detainees.

I believe that any person with a conscience would not tolerate the fact that Chinese authorities' have used Guo's serious medical condition and need of a diagnosis as an opportunity to carry out even more shameless persecution against him.

Honorable High Commissioner and officials of the UN Human Rights Council, I appeal to you to please, out of humanitarianism, justice, and conscience, discharge the function of your office to censure the Chinese government, which has ratified and agreed to comply with international human rights treaties, and request that the Chinese government investigate the responsibility of related personnel in Guo's case, and acquit and release Guo Feixiong.

With gratitude,

Zhang Qing (wife of Guo Feixiong)