



FREEDOM FROM CENSORSHIP! FREE YANG TONGYAN

Minister of Justice of the People's Republic of China
WU Aiyang Buzhang
Sifabu
10 Chaoyangmen Nandajie
Chaoyangqu
Beijingshi 100020
People's Republic of China

Dear Minister,

We, the undersigned, are deeply concerned about Yang Tongyan who is serving a 12-year sentence for "subversion". His conviction was based on his writings in support of political and democratic change in China. He was also accused of receiving money from abroad for distribution to imprisoned dissidents and their families, and of planning to form a local branch of the banned China Democracy Party.

We consider him to be a prisoner of conscience, imprisoned for the peaceful exercise of his human rights to freedom of expression and association. We call on you to secure his immediate and unconditional release.

The ongoing imprisonment of Yang Tongyan and others for legitimate use of the internet in China runs counter to commitments made by numerous Chinese officials that human rights would improve in the run-up to the Olympic Games in Beijing and that there would be "complete media freedom" in China for the Games. Such abuses also contravene fundamental principles of the Olympic Charter relating to the preservation of human dignity and respect for universal, fundamental, ethical principles. We urge your administration to address such abuses with a view to ensuring a positive human rights legacy for the Olympic Games in August 2008.

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