



LAWYERS FOR
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International Service
for Human Rights



FRONT LINE
DEFENDERS



Leitner Center
for International Law and Justice
AT FORDHAM LAW SCHOOL, NEW YORK CITY

Joint statement calling for the release of Li Yuhua

29 November 2022

On the International Women Human Rights Defenders Day, The 29 Principles, Lawyers for Lawyers, the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR), the International Bar Association's Human Rights' Institute (IBAHRI), the International Association of People's Lawyers (IAPL), Front Line Defenders, the Law Society of England and Wales, the Institute for the Rule of Law of the International Association of Lawyers (UIA-IROL), the Leitner Center for International Law and Justice, the American Association of the International Commission of Jurists, the Committee to Support Chinese Lawyers, the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe, Avocats sans Frontières, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada, The Rights Practice, Ordre des Barreaux Francophones et Germanophones de Belgique express their concern about the ongoing detention of Chinese human rights lawyers Li Yuhua. Li Yuhua has been detained in Shenyang City, the capital of the Northeastern province of Liaoning since October 2017. She was charged with "picking quarrels and provoking trouble". Although her case was tried last year, there is still no verdict and her release date remains unknown.

Li Yuhua is a veteran lawyer who started practising in the 1990s, taking on numerous human rights cases such as Falun Gong and Christian underground churches. She also represented Wang Yu, one of the most prominent lawyers arrested in the "709 crackdown" - a mass arrest of human rights lawyers and other activists in 2015. The arrest of Li was regarded as retaliation for her involvement in Wang Yu's case and other sensitive cases.

It is reported that she has been subjected to torture and ill-treatment while in detention, including insufficient food and being denied to receive adequate and appropriate medical treatment. Also, the authorities tried to force her to plead guilty and postponed her trial a few times until October 2021.

Having been detained for more than five years, her health deteriorated rapidly and she suffers from arrhythmia, fluttering in chest and tremors, coronary heart disease, unstable angina, hyperthyroidism, acute erosive gastritis, cerebral concussion, and cerebral ischemia.

Li's situation has already drawn the attention of the international community. In 2018, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention of the UN Human Rights Council [confirmed](#) that the deprivation of liberty of Li constitutes an arbitrary detention, and urged the Chinese government to take necessary steps to remedy her situation. In 2020, the European Union also [called](#) for her release and expressed its grave concern about her dire health condition.

The 29 Principles, Lawyers for Lawyers, the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR), the International Bar Association's Human Rights' Institute (IBAHRI), the International Association of People's Lawyers (IAPL), Front Line Defenders, the Law Society of England and Wales, the Institute for the Rule of Law of the International Association of Lawyers (UIA-IROL), the Leitner Center for International Law and Justice, the American Association of the International Commission of Jurists, the Committee to Support Chinese Lawyers, the Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe, Avocats sans Frontières, Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada, The Rights Practice, Ordre des Barreaux Francophones et Germanophones de Belgique call on the Chinese authorities to:

- Drop all charges against Li Yuhan and release her immediately and unconditionally;
- Allow Li Yuhan to receive the necessary medical treatment;
- Stop all forms of arbitrary detention and release all lawyers and human rights defenders who are arbitrarily detained;
- Respect and implement international human rights treaties and instruments, including the Convention against Torture and the United Nations Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers.