

BY AIRMAIL

H.E. Mr Li Keqiang
Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China
Guojia Zongli
The State Council General Office
2 Fuyoujie Xichengqu
BEIJINGSHI 100017 **PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

Fax +86 10 65961109

Amsterdam, 12 May 2014

Subject: Mr Pu Zhiqiang

Your Excellency,

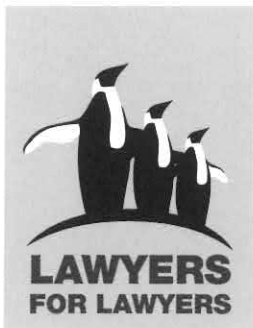
The Dutch Lawyers for Lawyers Foundation (*'Stichting Advocaten voor Advocaten'*), an independent foundation wholly funded by donations from lawyers, would like to draw your urgent attention to the ongoing threats against human rights lawyer Mr Pu Zhiqiang. Lawyers for Lawyers supports lawyers around the world who are not able to perform their work properly because of harassment and/or improper interference by their governments.

The reason for this letter is our grave concern about the recent arrest and consequent detention of human rights lawyer **Mr. Pu Zhiqiang** on Sunday morning the 4th of May 2014. According to our information Mr. Pu was arrested and jailed by the Chinese authorities, charged with 'causing a disturbance'. The arrest followed after his attendance at a Memorial Service commemorating the victims of the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989 on Saturday 3th of May 2014. It is said that after his arrest Mr. Pu has not been allowed to have contact with his family or friends. The authorities have confiscated his phone, computer and books. There is grave concern about his health and current well-being due to the lack of information and contact with the outside world.

Lawyers for Lawyers reiterates its grave concern for the treatment by the authorities of our colleague **Mr. Pu Zhiqiang**, especially given the precedent of torture in Chinese detention centers and against human right lawyers in China in the past in general.

The use of administrative or criminal detention of lawyers is an extremely serious threat to the rule of law, which can only function properly if lawyers are able to do their work without any improper interference or harassment by the government. In this case the detention of Mr. Pu seems purely to be to sanction him while he was practicing universally recognized fundamental human rights, especially the right of freedom of speech and to hold an opinion and the right of freedom of peaceful assembly.

In this respect, we refer in particular to paragraphs 16 and 17 of the United Nations Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers, from which it follows that governments are under an obligation *'to ensure that lawyers are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance,*



harassment or improper interference'. Further: 'Where the security of lawyers is threatened as a result of discharging their functions, they shall be adequately safeguarded by the authorities'.

According to paragraph 23, 'Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the right to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action of their membership in a lawful organization'.

These principles are universally applicable. Therefore, the Chinese government is under an obligation to adequately protect and support its lawyers and human rights defenders.

In view of the above, we therefore strongly urge the Chinese government to honor its international legal obligations and to release **Mr. Pu Zhiqiang** immediately and unconditionally. We urge your government to immediately and seriously investigate the reason for the detention of Mr. Pu, which seems to be aimed at intimidating him only. Furthermore, we urge your government to guarantee under all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of **Mr. Pu Zhiqiang** as well as that of all human rights lawyers and human rights defenders. We urgently request you to assure that, during his detention, **Mr. Pu Zhiqiang**, will be allowed to be visited by his family, have free choice of legal representation, obtain adequate food and are provided with any medical care he may require.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter. We are confident that the Chinese government will give this case the attention it deserves and will continue to monitor this case closely.

On behalf of the President of Lawyers for Lawyers, Phon van den Biesen,

Adrie van de Streek

Executive director, Lawyers for Lawyers