



freedom to write...
freedom to read

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His Excellency Hu Jintao
President of the People's Republic of China
State Council
Beijing 100032
The People's Republic of China

Your Excellency,

Sadly, on what should be an occasion of joy and celebration for China's recent National Day, we are troubled to learn of another Chinese writer apparently detained for expressing their critical views in writing.

We understand that on 29 September 2007 Lu Gengsong (吕耿松), a writer and human rights activist, was formally charged with "inciting subversion of state power". We are disturbed by the repeated use of this charge to silence dissidents and note that Mr Lu was arrested on August 24, 2007, following the online publication of articles critical of the authorities. We also note that there is a history of punishment of Lu Gengsong for his views, including his expulsion from university in 1993 because of his pro-democracy activities. Sydney PEN is therefore very concerned that Mr Lu is being detained in violation of Article 19 of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, to which China is a signatory. If this is indeed the case, we accordingly call for his immediate and unconditional release.

In the mean time, we ask you to ensure that Lu Gengsong is granted access to a lawyer.

As you will know from the number of letters we have felt compelled to write on behalf of writers in China, Sydney PEN is part of International PEN, a non-political, nongovernmental organisation in formal consultative relations with UNESCO.

As always, we welcome your comments in this matter.

Respectfully yours,

Chip Rolley
On behalf of Sydney PEN

cc: Procurator General Mr. Jia Chunwang, The Supreme People's Procuratorate
Dr Geoff Raby, Australian Ambassador to the People's Republic of China

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