



freedom to write...  
freedom to read

International PEN Sydney Centre Inc.  
ABN: 51 796 241 535  
14A Lonsdale Close, Lake Haven NSW 2263  
t: **1300 364 997** f: 02-4392 9410  
sydney@pen.org.au www.pen.org.au

20 September 2007

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

Your Excellency,

We write to you regarding the detention since 25 June 2007 of journalist Qi Chonghuai, who is being held at the Detention Centre of Tengzhou City, Shandong province. Sydney PEN fears that Qi Chonghuai may be detained in violation of Article 19 of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, to which China is a signatory, and if so calls for his immediate and unconditional release.

Our concern stems from the fact that this arrest follows the publication of an article, published in June 2007 on the *Xinhuanet* website, alleging corruption in the Tengzhou Communist Party. Freelance photographer Ma Shiping was arrested on 16 June 2007 in connection with photos published in the article, and after Qi Chonghuai's public support of Ma, the authorities reportedly sought to discredit Qi. Mr Qi was initially accused of "deception" for allegedly misrepresenting himself as a journalist, before officially being charged with "blackmail". We have been informed that his press card was seized along with his computer equipment when he was arrested. We are also disturbed to learn that he was held incommunicado until formal charges were laid.

Qi Chonghuai is known for his reporting on corruption and social injustice in Shandong province and has worked for a number of publications over the past several years.

Sydney PEN is part of International PEN, a non-political, nongovernmental organisation in formal consultative relations with UNESCO. Our members include some of Australia's best known and respected writers. We welcome your comments in these matters.

Yours truly,

Chip Rolley  
On behalf of Sydney PEN

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

**President**

Mara Moustafine

**Vice Presidents**

Kathy Bail  
Sally Blakeney

**Management Committee**

John Beale  
Carol Dettmann  
Jan Forrester  
Denise Leith  
Ashley Hay

Jane Palfreyman  
Ben Saul  
Sandra Symons  
Clare Waters

**Writers Advisory Panel**

Geraldine Brooks  
J.M. Coetzee  
Tim Flannery  
Helen Garner  
Kate Grenville  
Tom Keneally AO

Frank Moorhouse AM  
David Malouf AO  
John Tranter  
David Williamson AO  
Alexis Wright