



President Xi Jinping
The Peoples Republic of China

Copenhagen March 9th, 2020

Dear Mr. President

The lack of respect for human rights that China has shown by the conviction and sentencing of Swedish-Chinese writer, publisher and bookseller Gui Minhai to 10 years in prison on completely unsubstantiated charges, is appalling and appears to be in retaliation for his work as a publisher and writer and in response to international calls for his freedom.

In 2016, Gui Minhai was kidnapped in Thailand and later imprisoned in China. This case has gained increasing attention in Scandinavia and internationally. When Swedish PEN awarded Gui Minhai the Tucholsky Prize in November 2019, the Chinese Ambassador to Sweden, Mr. Gui Congyou, threatened the organisation that it would “come to feel the consequences of its decision.” And when confronted with the fact that the Swedish Minister of Culture Amanda Lind aimed to hand out the prize despite this critique from China, the Ambassador threatened to refuse the Minister of Culture future entry into China. Many Swedish journalists, editors, publishers, politicians, organisations, and researchers have since been victims of the embassy’s harassments.

We, the undersigned Danish organizations, join the international call for the Chinese authorities to cancel his conviction and release him immediately and unconditionally. We believe that Gui Minhai was convicted solely for exercising his right to freedom of expression and that the hard sentence he now faces is politically motivated.

Further we call for the Chinese authorities to respect his freedom of speech and allow him to be reunited with his family in Sweden. Gui Minhai should also be permitted consular assistance from Sweden immediately in order to facilitate a clarification of his Swedish citizenship.

We strongly condemn the statements of the Chinese ambassador to Sweden. We cannot accept any attempts by official Chinese representatives to hinder Scandinavian civil society, by way of threats and intimidation, in exercising the freedom of expression and supporting basic human rights.

Sincerely

Per Øhrgaard, president, Danish PEN

Morten Visby, Chair, The Danish Writers Union

Peter Adolphsen, Chair, Danish Writers of Poetry and Fiction

Bo Dybkær, CEO, The Danish Booksellers Association

Tine Johansen, Chair, The Danish Journalist Union

Lars Boesgaard, Chair, Danish Publishers