

Testimony by Ti-Anna Wang
Daughter of Dr. Wang Bingzhang
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
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Thank you honorable members of Congress for giving me the opportunity to testify today. My name is Ti-Anna Wang, and as the world prepares to commemorate International Human Rights Day, I'd like to tell you about my father, Wang Bingzhang, a political prisoner currently serving a life sentence in China.

My father, Wang Bingzhang, is a New York-based permanent US resident and a prisoner of conscience currently serving the 11th year of a life sentence for his pioneering work in pro-democracy activism. He is the founder of the overseas Chinese democracy movement and dedicated his life to promoting rule of law, freedom and human rights in China by starting the dissident magazine, China Spring, and several opposition organizations.

In 2002, my father was kidnapped in Vietnam and forced back into China where he was taken into custody by Chinese police. After being held incommunicado for 6 months, he was subjected to a sham trial and found guilty of 'espionage' and 'terrorism'. My father was sentenced to life in prison and has been serving his solitary confinement ever since.

In a country without meaningful rule of law, my family has no means to legally appeal my father's conviction, despite having secured exonerating evidence for the graver charges against him. The lawyers we've retained on his behalf are routinely intimidated by authorities, obstructed from visiting him and threatened with disbarment.

My father will be turning 67 in a few weeks. The past decade of confinement has taken an irreversible toll on his physical and mental health. While he languishes in prison, I have spent the past decade campaigning for his release by telling his story on public platforms and lobbying the American and Canadian governments for assistance. As a result, the Chinese government apparently decided that I too needed to be punished: since I began speaking in public, the Chinese government has refused to issue me a visa. It's now been five years since I've been able to visit my father.

I'm joined here today by four young women whose circumstances are disturbingly similar to my own. Each of us have had our young lives defined by our father's wrongful imprisonment.

So I speak on behalf of the five of us when I urge the United States to intervene more assertively on our behalves.

First, I unabashedly ask the leaders of the US government, including President Obama, Vice-President Biden, Secretary of State Kerry, and Ambassador Powers to seize all diplomatic opportunities with China to seek the release of our fathers. I believe high-level diplomacy is our fathers' best chance for freedom, and their releases must be discussed on occasions such as Vice-President Biden's recent trip to Beijing. I request the help of all members of Congress in conveying this message to the administration and in compelling them to act on our behalves.

Second, I ask the Obama administration to meet with the five of us and listen to our first hand experiences as witnesses of China's human rights abuse. I want our stories and our efforts to be heard, acknowledged, and taken into serious consideration when the US devises its foreign

policy with China. And again, I ask members of Congress to help us secure such a meeting with top US leadership.

I'd like to end my statement by reminding everyone that it was the very values espoused by the United States and other democracies that inspired activists like our fathers. If we cannot ask this government and its leaders to advocate for their release, to whom else can we turn?