

## Testimony of Zhou Fengsuo

### Tiananmen 25 Years Later: Leaders Who Were There

Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations

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Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Twenty-five years ago I was fortunate to be part of the great 1989 pro-democracy movement in Beijing and across China. I was inspired by the Declaration of Independence. I believed that we Chinese could enjoy the same freedom and rights articulated in the Declaration of Independence and that the government should be established to protect such rights, not to restrict them like the communists have been doing.

It was the only time in China's history that ordinary Chinese people were able to express themselves freely. There was a sense of joy and liberation when all of a sudden, freedom was so close, almost within reach. I could never forget that so many people came out of their shells to speak for the hope of a freer and better China and they realized that such hope were shared by the vast of the majority. By most accounts, it was the most peaceful demonstration ever in world history. It was a festival of freedom.

Such a display of people's will shocked the hardliners within the Communist ruling families clustered around Deng Xiaoping, they reacted with senseless brutality while the world was watching. We all know the story of the Tank man who stood fearlessly in front of the tank. Lesser known is fact that tanks chased the students after they withdrew from Tiananmen Square, and killed and wounded many. Children as young as nine years old were shot dead. I saw about 30 bodies of young students in the bicycle shed of FuXing Hospital.

The fact that such a regime survived and even thrives today is a challenge to human dignity and universal values. For 25 years, it always uses violence whenever possible against anyone who dares to protest, no matter how peaceful. Over 1 billion Chinese are held as hostages. The economic development and technology advancement only enable the Communist regime to be more entrenched in its paranoia. The benefit of globalization did not bear fruit in the democratization of China. On the contrary, it empowers the Beijing regime to export its model of brainwashing, censorship, prison, pollution and brutality. Sadly, there are willing followers of such a model even in the United States, from global companies who profit from the semi-slavery treatment of workers, to Christian churches eager to evangelize the vast population by cooperating with Beijing. A Harvard professor publishes a flattering biography about Deng, the mastermind of the Tiananmen Massacre, knowing very well that the self-censored Chinese version will be exactly what Beijing needs in its bogus credibility. Wall Street is welcoming Ma Yun, the businessman who hires the ruling family members and praised Deng for the Massacre. Even more troubling, right here in Washington D.C., Charles Freeman, who allegedly justified Tiananmen Massacre, was a top pick to head the National Intelligence Council.

Knowing that international community can pay at best lip service to the issues of human rights just as in 1989, Beijing now openly challenge any mention of its human rights record by punishing/torturing any citizens whom outside world shows supports for. In 2008, Hu Jia was

sentenced to years in prison before Beijing Olympics, of which President Bush was a willing guest. Ms. Cao Shunli was arrested when boarding a flight to a UN conference on human rights. She was sick while in prison, but never given proper medical treatment, while the UN and human rights group continuously called for her release. She died a few days after being released in critical condition in this past March. In another highly publicized case just weeks ago, 73 year old Hong Kong publisher Yao Wentian was sentenced to 10 years to prison for trying to publish a book criticizing Xi Jinping.

But the history of 1989 Democracy Movement cannot be changed. Every year brave people commemorate Tiananmen Massacre in face of relentless repression. So far this year, dozens were arrested all over China. They are human rights activists, professors, lawyers, journalists, Christians, and Buddhist monks, representing the broad social spectrum of the Tiananmen protesters. These are the people who carry on the dreams and ideals of 1989. Zhao Changqing has been imprisoned 4 times since 1989. His latest activity was to call for the disclosure of assets of government officials, the exactly same demand of the Tiananmen protesters 25 years ago.

What can the United States do to help these people?

1) Internet freedom. As Xi Jinping realized, the life of the communist regime depends on controlling the internet and blocking access of Chinese citizens to outside world. I have met many Chinese students in United States, whose first research in the United States were about Tiananmen Massacre. Among Chinese users of Twitter, the Tiananmen Massacre is one of the long lasting topics. By allocating more funds of BBG to developing technologies that circumvent the Great Fire Wall, more users can know the truth and ideals of 1989 Pro-democracy Movement.

2) Reject entry visas to the perpetrators on human rights violations. With the help of the Internet, we are able to gather information on these who actively and willingly participate in the persecution of dissidents, including these who killed protesters in 1989. If U.S. rejects visas to these people, it will directly help the freedom fighters of China.

3) Reciprocity in journalist visa. Beijing is rejecting more and more journalist visas to outspoken foreign journalists. No doubt this creates self-censorship for foreign journalists, who need to make a living too. At the same time, more and more Chinese state-owned media are setting up shops in the United States to broaden the reach of the totalitarian regime. This issue cannot be left to the media; the U.S. should firmly raise the issue of reciprocity as a strategic option.