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## CHINA

### CHINESE DIRECTOR ARRESTED OVER PROTEST DOCUMENTARY

Chen Pinlin, director of the documentary 'Urumqi Middle Road,'(乌鲁木齐中路) has been arrested. His film showcases the "White Paper Movement," which consists of peaceful protests against prolonged COVID-19 lockdowns and China's strict censorship. Chen uploaded the documentary on the internet to mark the one-year anniversary of the movement. On January 5, 2024, he was detained at Baoshan Detention Centre in Shanghai, facing charges of "picking quarrels and provoking trouble." If convicted, Chen could serve up to five years in prison.

#### **Write to the Chief Procurator of Shanghai People's Procuratorate urging him to:**

- Release Chen Pinlin immediately and unconditionally.
- Pending his release, ensure he is not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment while in detention.
- Stop threatening, harassing, and arresting Chen's family, other individuals associated with the White Paper Movement, and anyone who peacefully exercises their rights to freedom of expression and association.

#### **Write to:**

Chief Procurator Chen Yong  
Shanghai People's Procuratorate  
75 Jian'guo West Rd, Shanghai, 200020  
People's Republic of China  
Salutation: Dear Chief Procurator Chen Yong

#### **And copy:**

Mr. Yong Zhao  
Minister & Chargé d'affaires, a.i.  
Embassy of the People's Republic of China  
515 St. Patrick Street  
Ottawa, ON K1N 5H3  
Tel: (613) 789-3434,3513,8422/762-3769 (24h) Fax: (613) 789-1911  
Email: [chineseembassy.ca@gmail.com](mailto:chineseembassy.ca@gmail.com)

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

During the White Paper Movement, Chen Pinlin and his friends captured extensive video footage on Urumqi Middle Road, a major protest site in Shanghai. To commemorate the first anniversary of the movement in November 2023, Chen finalized and uploaded his documentary titled "Urumqi Middle Road," also known as "Not the Foreign Force." The film highlights the peaceful protests against prolonged COVID-19 lockdowns and censorship in China.

In the documentary's closing narration, Chen reflects on the essence of protesting despite suppression and misinterpretation. He quotes Churchill, emphasizing courage as a vital human trait and declares his readiness to protest again if necessary, criticizing the government's fear of dissent:

*Some people say, what is the point of protesting on the streets? In the end, it's still the same, suppressed, shielded and misinterpreted. But as Churchill said, 'Courage is one of the most important traits of humanity, and with courage, all other human traits are naturally available.' We have lacked experience and have been cowardly and shaky, but today we have the courage to stand up and to speak out. What we lacked this time, we can do better next time. If I were to do it again, I would still choose to be there. Because a government that is afraid of even a white paper can't crush the justice in the hearts of the people.*

Shortly after, in late November 2023, Chinese authorities detained Chen for "picking quarrels and provoking trouble." By January 5, 2024, he was formally arrested and is currently held at Baoshan Detention Center, with his case moved to prosecution by February 18.

This case marks the second arrest documented by Amnesty International for sharing information about the White Paper Movement. The first involved a Uyghur university student, Kamile Wayit. Amnesty suspects these instances are just the beginning, with potentially many more undocumented cases of detention, arrest, or disappearance since the protests in November 2022. However, the exact number and extent of these cases are likely unattainable due to the rapid and severe governmental response.

Amnesty has been documenting [torture and ill-treatment in Chinese detention centers](#) since at least 2015, as detailed in their report "No End in Sight - Torture and Forced Confessions in China" and the China entry of the [2023 Annual Report](#).

On November 24, 2022, a deadly fire in an Urumqi apartment building, attributed by many to restrictive COVID-19 measures, sparked the White Paper Movement. Despite government denials that lockdowns were to blame, the incident led to widespread protests across Xinjiang and later nationwide. Starting with a student from Nanjing Media College protesting with a blank sheet of paper on November 25, the movement rapidly spread, with demonstrations emerging in major cities like Beijing, Guangzhou, Shanghai, and Wuhan.

Protesters mourned the Urumqi fire victims and demanded an easing of lockdowns, an end to censorship, and some called for President Xi's resignation. Numerous protesters were detained, with the exact number still unknown. Police brutality was evident in online videos of the arrests.

The movement also featured significant participation from overseas Chinese students, demonstrating globally in solidarity with their compatriots. On the first anniversary of the movement, Amnesty International highlighted the experiences of six individuals, showing how the movement profoundly influenced their lives. the absolute international prohibition against torture and ill-treatment.

***Please take action as soon as possible until June 30, 2024! The UA will be duly updated should there be the need for further action.***