



FREEDOM NOW

Honorary Chair
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Media Release

Freedom Now Welcomes Release of Chen Kegui, Nephew of Blind Activist Chen Guangcheng

Washington – On July 29, 2015, the Chinese government released Chen Kegui, the nephew of renowned blind barefoot Chinese lawyer Chen Guangcheng. Chen Kegui was arrested in May 2012 and sentenced to three years and three months in prison on charges of “intentionally inflicting injuries” on a local Chinese communist party official. The official was among a group of state-sponsored thugs that invaded Chen Kegui’s home on the night that Chen Guangcheng escaped illegal house arrest to flee to the U.S. Embassy in Beijing. Both Chen Kegui and his father Chen Guangfu were beaten by a large group of invaders, none of whom were ever charged with trespassing, let alone assault.

Michel Forst, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, has previously said: “It is difficult to see the conviction of Chen Kegui as anything else but retaliation against Chen Guangcheng for defying the Chinese government.” In 2014, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention found that Chen Kegui’s detention was arbitrary and in violation of international law.

Chen Guangcheng noted, “I think it’s hard to find a place on earth where people who invade your home won’t face any prosecution for their violence and damages done; however, this happens under the Chinese Communist Party’s leadership in China.” The Chinese government has never fulfilled its promises to investigate the abusive treatment of his family, he added.

Although Chen Kegui was released on July 29th, he continues to suffer from stomach pains that developed during his imprisonment. He is unable to seek immediate medical treatment due to the fact that he does not possess the residency permit that was moved with him when he was imprisoned. So far, the Chinese government has not yet transferred his residency permit back to his home. Without the correct permit Chen Kegui cannot secure medical attention from a local hospital.

“It is of the utmost urgency for the Chinese government to expedite the process of Chen Kegui’s new residency permit to ensure he can receive much needed medical treatment,” said Freedom Now Founder Jared Genser. “To refuse or fail to provide him with adequate medical care constitutes cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment and could amount to torture over time,” he added.