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Director Ma Xuebo
Pudong Branch of the Shanghai Public Security Bureau
655 Dingxiang Road
Pudong, Shanghai 200120
People’s Republic of China

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Dear Director Ma,

**I am writing to express my grave concern for citizen journalist Zhang Zhan (张展), who is currently detained at Pudong New District Detention Centre on charges of «picking quarrels and provoking trouble» (寻衅滋事罪). These charges are baseless; she has merely exercised her right to freedom of expression and to defend the rights of others.**

Efforts by her family to arrange a lawyer have been unsuccessful. After meeting with her family, human rights lawyer Fan Biaowen was taken away by Shanghai police and held in custody for nearly eight hours before being released. Zhang’s family have also faced intimidation and threats from the authorities to prevent them from disclosing details of Zhang Zhan's case to the international community.

Such treatment is deeply concerning given that it comes mere months following her release from prison, after serving an unjust four-year sentence, on 13 May 2024.

In late August, it was reported that she had been taken into custody by police from Shanghai, well over 1000 km away from Gansu, the northwestern province in China. Prior to this, she had been regularly and repeatedly taken in for police questioning while in Shanghai, with some interrogations lasting over 10 hours.

As of 8 October, Zhang Zhan has been detained for over 37 days. Under China’s Criminal Procedure Law (CPL), authorities can detain a person for a maximum of 37 days, after which they must either formally arrest, apply a different article of the CPL, or release them. The lack of further information from law enforcement or judicial authorities raises serious concerns about the legality of her situation and about the risks she may face while in custody, including of torture and other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment.

**I therefore call on you to:**

* **Release Zhang Zhan immediately and unconditionally;**
* **Pending her release, ensure that Zhang Zhan has regular, unrestricted access to family and is not subject to torture or other ill-treatment;**
* **Ensure Zhang Zhan has regular, unrestricted access to the lawyers of her or her family’s choice, and that these lawyers can exercise their rights to defend her effectively;**
* **Stop harassing and threatening her family and other human rights defenders who are supporting this case.**

Yours sincerely,

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**Copie**

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