

URGENT ACTION

HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYER EXTRADITED AND DETAINED

Lu Siwei, a renowned Chinese human rights lawyer, is being held in the Xindu Detention Centre in Sichuan province, southwestern China, after he was forcibly returned to China from Laos. There is no information about the charges against him. Over the years, Lu has been intimidated and harassed by the Chinese authorities for his peaceful human rights work and he is now at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

TAKE ACTION:

- Write a letter in your own words or using the sample below as a guide to one or both government officials listed. You can also email, fax, call or Tweet them.
- [Click here](#) to let us know the actions you took on **Urgent Action 102.23**. It's important to report because we share the total number with the officials we are trying to persuade and the people we are trying to help.

Wang Xiaohui
Communist Party Secretary of Sichuan Province
16 Shangye Jie
Qingyang Qu
Chengdu, Sichuan Province
610015, People's Republic of China

Chinese Embassy in the United States
Ambassador Xie Fang
3505 International Place, NW, Washington DC 20008
Phone: (202) 495-2266
Email: chinaembpress_us@mfa.gov.cn

Dear Secretary,

I am writing to express my grave concern about human rights lawyer Lu Siwei (卢思位), who is being held in the Xindu Detention Centre in Sichuan province, southwestern China, after he was forcibly returned to China from Laos. There is no information about the charges against him.

Lu has been intimidated and harassed for his human rights work by the Chinese authorities. Officials disbarred him in January 2021 for an online speech that allegedly “endangered national security” and imposed an exit ban on him in May 2021. Since his return to China, he has been denied regular access to his family and a lawyer of his choice; he is now at grave risk of torture and other ill-treatment. He should not be punished for his peaceful exercise of human rights and defending other human rights defenders or individuals deemed sensitive by the authorities. I am troubled to learn that Lu is suffering from psoriasis and needs to take medicine every day. Without access to medical care, his health is very likely to be negatively impacted.

Therefore, I urge you to: release Lu Siwei immediately and unconditionally from detention, unless there is sufficient credible and admissible evidence that he has committed an internationally recognizable criminal offence; pending his release, allow him regular access to his family and a lawyer of his choice; pending his release, ensure he has access to prompt and adequate medical care, and he is not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Lu Siwei lived in Chengdu, Sichuan. He is a renowned human rights defender and lawyer who has advocated for vulnerable groups and represented numerous political dissidents. He was detained by Lao police on July 28, 2023 on charges of travelling with fraudulent documents. He was planning to travel to the USA to rejoin his family. In Laos, he was not allowed to meet with a lawyer or representatives of his family. It appears that the Lao government has forcibly repatriated Lu, which could amount to a violation of its obligations under the UN Convention against Torture.

After many years taking “sensitive” human rights-related cases within mainland China, Lu rose to prominence for his role in seeking to defend one of the 12 Hongkongers who were arrested in 2020 after fleeing Hong Kong by boat and being intercepted by the Chinese Coast Guard. In response, provincial judicial authorities suspended Lu’s license. As the Chinese authorities have become increasingly intolerant of independent rights advocacy, they have intimidated and harassed Lu in different ways, including disbarment in January 2021 for online speech that allegedly “endangered national security”. Lu Siwei was also physically attacked while traveling to the hearing for his disbarment. Since then, Lu has been closely monitored by the Chinese authorities and subject to an exit ban since May 2021. Prior to this high-profile case, Lu was best known for working extensively to support human rights defenders, including representing the case of Chengdu Tiananmen Square commemorations, human rights lawyer Yu Wensheng, famous poet Wang Zang, and others in the Chinese legal community who had been targeted in the “709 crackdown” in 2015.

Lu’s case is also emblematic of a worrying trend of Chinese authorities pressuring other governments into forcibly returning vulnerable individuals back to China, where they have faced arbitrary detention, unfair trials, torture, enforced disappearances, and other forms of ill-treatment. Gui Minhai, a bookseller, was disappeared in Thailand in 2015 only to resurface in China without his passport. In August 2022, activists and media reported the disappearance of Chinese democracy activist, Dong Guangping, from Vietnam into Chinese custody. And in August 2023, Laos-based activist, Yang Zewei, was reported to be held in a Chinese detention center after being arrested in the Lao capital.

Many detainees in China, especially human rights defenders (HRDs), have reportedly been subjected to torture and other ill-treatment while in detention. Detainees with deteriorating health are often denied or unable to access adequate medical treatment. Amnesty International raised concern about arbitrary detention, torture and other ill treatment, and unfair trials in our submission to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group ahead of China’s fourth UPR January 2024.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English or Chinese

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: December 22, 2023

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PRONOUN: Lu Siwei (he/him)