



KUNGL.
VETENSKAPS-
AKADEMIEN

THE ROYAL SWEDISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Kungl. Vetenskapsakademien har till uppgift att främja vetenskaperna och stärka deras inflytande i samhället.
The Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences has as its aim to promote the sciences and strengthen their influence in society.

Stockholm 15 January 2019

Elisabeth Rachlew /ch

His Excellency Chen Quanguo Shuji
Party Secretary of Xinjiang Uighur
Autonomous Region, 479 Zhongshanlu
Urumqi, Xinjiang 830041
People's Republic of China

Your Excellency,

With this letter The Human Rights Committee of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities, the Swedish Academy and the Young Academy of Sweden write seeking your assistance with the situation of Rahile Dawut, an internationally respected Chinese ethnic Uighur ethnographer who disappeared more than a year ago while traveling to Beijing. We fear, based on information from reliable sources, that she is being held in secret detention without due process because of her research on Uighur cultural values and practices.

Professor Dawut, a professor of Uighur studies at Xinjiang University in Urumqi, vanished in December 2017. We understand that she is being held in state custody, seemingly in connection with her academic research on Uighur culture. Reportedly, Professor Dawut's current place of detention and her conditions of confinement are unknown. Also as far as we know she has had no access to legal counsel.

We understand that Professor Dawut has received a number of national and international grants and awards related to her scholarship on Uighur folklore and religious culture. Most worryingly, it has come to our attention that Professor Dawut is one of a considerable number of Uighur scholars who have disappeared or been detained since 2017 without any known evidence of having committed an internationally recognized crime.

Given the information above, we are concerned that Professor Dawut is detained simply for peacefully exercising her right to freedom of expression and that she is denied her right to due process, rights which are protected under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which China is a signatory. We respectfully request that you use your good offices to ensure that Professor Dawut is promptly and unconditionally released from detention. In the interim, we ask you to ensure that her conditions of confinement conform with the U.N. Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), in particular that she is allowed to communicate regularly with her family and receives access to legal counsel and to adequate medical care.

We thank you in advance, Your Excellency, for your urgent attention to this matter.

Sincerely yours,


Elisabeth Rachlew

Professor, Chairman of the Human Rights Committee

Copy: Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China
His Excellency Zhao Kezhi Buzhang, Minister of Public Security
His Excellency Shohrat Zakir, Chairman of the Xinjiang
Uighur Autonomous Region



KUNGL.
VETENSKAPS-
AKADEMIEN

THE ROYAL SWEDISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Embassy of Sweden Beijing
Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Sweden