

2 September 2016

## China – Harassment against human rights defender’s family

On 30 August 2016 the son of human rights defender Mr **Wang Quanzhang** was denied permission to enrol in an elementary school in Beijing. The wife of the human rights defender, Ms **Li Wenzu**, was also forced out of her rented home on 27 August 2016 following threats which her landlord received from state security police.

[Wang Quanzhang](#) is a human rights lawyer who has been held incommunicado since his detention on 9 July 2015 and in January 2016 was charged with ‘subversion of state power’. While practising law, Wang Quanzhang had a history of taking on sensitive cases including defending Falun Gong practitioners, investigative journalists and democracy advocates. Front Line Defenders [issued](#) an Urgent Appeal regarding his case on 12 January 2016. If found guilty, the human rights defender could face up to 15 years imprisonment.

On 30 August 2016, a member of the state security police forcibly entered the same taxi as Li Wenzu while she travelled with her 3.5 year old son to enrol him in elementary school in Beijing. While completing the enrolment process, Li Wenzu was monitored by the member of the state security force. Following the payment of the tuition fee and signing of the contract, Li Wenzu was informed by a member of staff that the school could no longer accept her son’s enrolment following a discussion between state security agents and the principal of the school.

This is not the first case of harassment of the family of Wang Quanzhang. On 27 August 2016, Li Wenzu was informed by her landlord that he could no longer rent the apartment to her family because he had been detained in a police station for a number of hours and forced to evict the human rights defender’s family. The next day, Li Wenzu was followed by a state security agent while searching for another home, and a new landlord refused to rent an apartment to her after the state security agent spoke with him. In recent weeks, Li Wenzu has been constantly followed by state security police each time she leaves her home.

On 19 August 2016, Li Wenzu was followed by three unidentified persons from her home and while she travelled on the subway. When she exited the subway station, one of the men pushed her and took her bag, and later reported to police, that in fact Li Wenzu had hit him. She was subsequently detained at Beijing Xinyuanli police station for a number of hours.

Front Line Defenders is deeply concerned about the harassment against the family of Wang Quanzhang. It is further extremely concerned by the charge of 'subversion of state power' against Wang Quanzhang, which it believes to be directly linked to Wang Quanzhang's peaceful and legitimate work in human rights.

**Front Line Defenders urges the authorities in China to:**

1. Immediately cease all further harassment of **Wang Quanzhang**'s family;
2. Immediately drop all charges against Wang Quanzhang as it is believed that they are solely motivated by his legitimate and peaceful work in defence of human rights;
3. Cease targeting all human rights defenders in **China** and guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions.