

# PRESS RELEASE

One year on,  
the CCBE denounces once again the crackdown on Chinese lawyers

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## The CCBE has once again written to denounce the crackdown on lawyers in China.

Saturday 9 July 2016 marked the **one-year anniversary of the so-called “709 crackdown”** which began with the detention of rights lawyer Wang Yu and her family, and led onto hundreds of lawyers, law firm staff, and family members being subject to **intimidation, interrogation, detention as criminal suspects, and forced disappearances.**

To mark the occasion, the CCBE has written a [letter](#) to the Chinese government urging them to take effective steps to drop all charges against the lawyers, and to order the immediate release of those who are detained, as it is believed that the charges against them are **solely motivated by their legitimate and peaceful work in the defence of human rights.**

For the second time, the CCBE also **co-signed a letter from China Human Rights Lawyers Concern Group** marking the anniversary of the crackdown, and once again calling on the Chinese government to respect due process and uphold the rule of law, and to release 36 illegally detained human rights lawyers and defenders. The co-signatories included the International Commission of Jurists, the *Union internationale des avocats*, and Lawyers for Lawyers.

The CCBE has been actively following this case and has written **six human rights letters condemning the treatment of lawyers in China** since July 2015. The CCBE also granted its **CCBE Human Rights Award 2015** to the Chinese Law Firm Fengrui, a law firm which was particularly targeted by the attacks on human rights defenders which took place in last summer.

Furthermore, in January 2016, CCBE President Michel Benichou co-signed an open letter calling for Chinese President Xi Jinping to free all Chinese lawyers that are still being detained. This initiative was launched by ACAT organisation and was

supported by **many prominent lawyers, judges and members of the legal community**, including Robert Badinter, past Minister of Justice of France, and Manfred Nowak, a past United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture. This letter received wide media coverage. The CCBE also **co-signed global joint statement** by the China Human Rights Lawyers Concern Group and Taiwan Support China Human Rights Lawyers Network marking the six-month anniversary of the crackdown. The petition was co-signed by 106 worldwide organisations, such as UIA, Lawyers for lawyers, IDHAE, Foundation Day of the Endangered Lawyer, etc.

### About the CCBE:

The CCBE represents the bars and law societies of 32 member countries and 13 further associate and observer countries, and through them over one million European lawyers. Since 2007, the CCBE has annually granted its Human Rights Award to a lawyer or lawyers' organisation that has brought honour to the legal profession by upholding the highest values of professional and personal conduct in the field of human rights. More information about past recipients and criteria for the award is available [here](#).

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