



Ilham Tohti Initiative e.V.

9 January 2025

Dear President Pavel:

We are respectfully asking for your help and appeal to you (1) to ask the Chinese government to release after 11 years in prison Uyghur's professor Ilham Tohti immediately, and (2) to promote within the international community the nomination of Ilham Tohti for the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize.

The Ilham Tohti Initiative, based in Germany, is an independent organization fighting to defend Human Rights. It has already greatly benefitted from your country's support, as the Vaclav Havel Prize was awarded to Ilham Tohti in 2019.

Ilham Tohti was also awarded the Sakharov Prize in 2019. A former professor of economics, he is the most renowned Uyghur public intellectual in the People's Republic of China. The Uyghurs are a Muslim Turkic people living mostly in modern China's northwestern Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

For over two decades Ilham Tohti worked tirelessly to foster constructive dialogue and mutual understanding between the Uyghur and majority Han Chinese communities. Yet he was sentenced to life in prison in September 2014, following a two-day show trial, on the charge of "separatism."

Today he remains in jail as a prisoner of conscience, his public advocacy silenced, but his voice and example still powerful through his body of writings reflecting a conspicuous moderation and spirit reconciliation.

Ilham Tohti never espoused direct confrontation. He never advocated separatism. His attitude was unfailingly pragmatic. He counselled harmonious cooperation and mutual respect between the Chinese authorities and the Uyghur people. He was convinced that he must do his utmost to help foster the emergence of a modern, well-educated generation of Uyghur elites such that his native region of Xinjiang might become prosperous, open and peaceful.

Such an attitude is lamentably all too rare in our tormented modern world. Even those espousing peaceful reconciliation have been crushed in China. This we can observe clearly through the Chinese party-state's ongoing ferocious and unrelenting repression of the Uyghur community's traditional religious and cultural life along with its political rights.

Awarding the Nobel Peace Prize to Ilham Tohti would testify to the world that we are waiting in hope for the emergence of a China where people like Ilham Tohti could help construct a great multicultural country, respectful of every citizen's life, dignity, rights and individual contributions. It would also send a signal to the too numerous other Uyghur prisoners of conscience that are now languishing in prison including Ms. Rahile Dawut, a renowned ethnologist, and Dr. Gulshan Abbas, sentenced to 20 years in jail for "extremism." And it would stand as an encouragement to such well-known peaceful fighters for democracy, a meaningful legal system, and vibrant civil society as Jimmy Lai, Joshua Wong, Xu Zhiyong, Ren Zhiqiang, Ding Jiayi ... The list of these Uyghur and Han Chinese innocent victims of a totalitarian State is so long that we cannot mention more than a tiny handful.

The world needs a democratic China, and we are persuaded that awarding the Nobel Prize to Ilham Tohti could trigger a strong positive reaction among all those within China who are denied their rights and suffering under a repressive government.

Please accept, President Pavel, our most respectful thanks for your attention and your good will.

Sincerely,

Signed :

Jewher Ilham, daughter of Ilham Tohti, Washington DC.

Enver Can, Founding President of IlhamTohti Initiative e.V., Munich

Wuer Kaixi, General Secretary of Taiwan Parliamentary Human Rights Commission, Taipei

Marie Holzman, member of ITI, President of Solidarité Chine, Paris

Rushan Abbas, Founding Executive Director Campaign for Uyghurs, Washington DC.

Prof. Vanessa Frangville, Universie Libre Brussels

Katerina Prochazkova, SINOPSIS, Prag

Dr. Ondrej Klimes, Czech Academy of Sciences, Prag

Susanne Kohler and Gerhard Keller Wahrheitskämpfer e.V. Vorstand, Frankfurt

Dr. Teng Biao, Chinese Activist and Lawyer, Lecturer at the China University of Political Sciences and Law in Beijing

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