

Statement Submitted for the Record by Wen Yunchao

May 24, 2016

Honorable Representative Christopher Smith, Senator Marco Rubio, and CECC:

I, Wen Yunchao, hereby solemnly declare that the following narrative and news coverage about me and my family are true facts.

I arrived in the United States on December 27th, 2012. I lodged my application for political asylum in July, 2013. I have been waiting for the decision on my application. During this period, I have been subjected to tremendous pressure and harassment from the Chinese government.

In March 2016, the Chinese government suspected I was related to the publication and distribution of an "Open Letter Calling on Comrade Xi Jinping to Resign from All Party and State Leadership Positions." My parents and other family members and the family members of my wife Liu Yang in Guangdong were harassed, blackmailed, and threatened numerous times and were forced to disappear. My parents and brother were taken away by authorities on March 22nd and were released a week later. My wife Liu Yang's parents, brother and sister-in-law have been barred by the Chinese government from leaving China. Her parents had to cancel their plan to visit the United States in April. Liu Yang's brother and his wife have been subjected to disturbances in their daily work and life.

The facts in the following report by New York Times about me and the forced disappearance of my relatives in China are all true.

Wen Yunchao, a Chinese activist living in New York, said in a telephone interview that his parents and younger brother in southern China had been missing since Tuesday (Mar. 22, 2016), after police officers and officials warned his parents that Mr. Wen should tell them what he knew about the letter. Mr. Wen said he had nothing to do with distributing the letter on the Internet, and so refused to bow to the demands.

The letter, signed by "Loyal Communist Party Members," was sent by email to people with ties to China around the time it appeared on Wujie, shortly after 12:01 a.m. on March 4.

On Twitter, Mr. Wen, the activist, urged President Obama to ask Mr. Xi to release his parents and brother. "He kidnapped them on March 22," Mr.

Wen wrote. Mr. Xi is expected to visit the United States next week for a summit meeting on nuclear security.

Mr. Wen said in the interview that his sister-in-law had told him that his parents and his younger brother, Wen Yun'ao, a driver for a local government, were all missing. Mr. Wen said his sister-in-law had given no details of when or how his parents disappeared but had said Wen Yun'ao, her husband, was taken away by officials.

Starting this month, Mr. Wen said, the police and officials repeatedly visited his father, Wen Shaogan, 71, and mother, Qiu Xiaohua, 64, at their home in Jiexi County, Guangdong Province, and told them that Mr. Wen had to admit to helping spread the letter.

“At the start, they said they wanted to know if I had anything to do with the open letter calling for Xi Jinping to resign,” Mr. Wen said. “But on the 17th (Mar 2016), they said directly that they knew I hadn't written the letter but believed I had something to do with spreading it. They promised that if I told them who wrote the letter and passed it on to me, and how I spread it around, then I would not be held culpable and it would not be held against my family. Otherwise, they said, my younger brother might lose his job.”

Mr. Wen, a vocal critic of the Chinese government who is also known by the pen name Bei Feng, said he had passed on a message to the officials through his parents that he had nothing to do with writing or distributing the letter.

“I told them very clearly that I could not admit to something that had nothing to do with me,” Mr. Wen said. “I told them very clearly that I didn't write the letter and had not helped anyone to distribute it, and I had not issued the letter on any websites.” (The New York Times: China Said to Detain Several Over Letter Criticizing Xi, By EDWARD WONG and CHRIS BUCKLEY, Mar 25, 2016)

Please see below a report by AFP about me and the release of my relatives after they were forced to disappear. The facts in the article are all true.

Two overseas dissidents said on Wednesday (March 30) that Chinese police had released family members they claimed were detained as part of an official probe into a letter calling on President Xi Jinping to resign.

Wen told AFP that his father, mother and brother had been released after being held in the southern city of Guangzhou in southern Guangdong province.

The three were not charged with any crime and security officials accompanied them to tourist sites during their detention, he added.

"I think my family's release is related to Xi Jinping's visit to the US," he said, referring to the Chinese President's participation in a Washington summit this week.

Wen earlier claimed that his father warned before his detention that officials in Guangdong believed the exiled activist had "helped spread" the letter. (AFP: Dissidents say China relatives released in letter probe, Mar. 30, 2016)

Around the anniversary of the Tiananmen Massacre in 2015 and during the annual sessions of China's National People's Congress and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in March 2016, my New York home's WiFi network was under DDOA attacks. I was unable to use the Internet properly. Days before the 25th anniversary of the Tiananmen Massacre in 2014, and just before Xi Jinping visited the U.S. in September, 2015, a number of Chinese government officials harassed my parents in Guangdong. They warned me not to criticize the Chinese government, especially not to criticize Xi and the Chinese economy.

Furthermore, I have been a frequent target of systematic online attacks and harassing phone calls since I left China in 2010. I believe these attacks are related to the Chinese government. For details, please refer to my testimony on June 25th, 2013, at the CECC hearing, "Chinese Hacking: Impact on Human Rights and Commercial Rule of Law."

Wen Yunchao