

Artist and poet, Liu Xia, has been placed under illegal "house arrest" since her late husband, Liu Xiaobo, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2010. She suffers from severe depression, and there are fears that her psychological condition has worsened in light of, her ongoing imprisonment with repeated empty promises by the Chinese authorities to allow her to leave China, the deaths of her father in September 2016, her mother in April 2017 and her husband in July 2017.

She has been diagnosed with a heart condition and suffered a heart attack in January 2014, but authorities prevented her from receiving the treatment she needed. Also, she reportedly received surgery to remove uterine fibroids in 2017. In addition to her physical health, there are continued concerns for her mental well-being as her depression is feared to be 'extremely severe.'

I call on you to end the illegal house arrest, surveillance and harassment of Liu Xia and allow her to travel freely.

I also call on you to take effective measures to ensure that all human rights defenders and their families, including Liu Xia, can carry out their peaceful activities without fear of hindrance, intimidation, arbitrary detention or imprisonment, in line with the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

At the same time, I urge you to take effective measures to ensure the right to freedom of expression is upheld and in line with Chinese constitutional guarantees and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which China has signed and repeatedly stated its intention to ratify.

Thank you for your prompt attention to the above.

Sincerely yours,