

Director Heng Xiaofan

Public Security Department of Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region
No. 15, Hailaerdong Lu,
Xincheng Qu, Huhhot
010020, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region
People's Republic of China

Dear Director Heng:

I am writing to express my concern about the ongoing crackdown against peaceful protesters in Inner Mongolia that began in early September 2020.

According to media reports, at least 23 individuals, including pregnant women and middle school students, have been arrested so far for "picking quarrels and provoking trouble" after participating in or sharing information about peaceful protests against the recent "bilingual education policy".

On 2 September 2020, the Horqin District Branch of the Tongliao City Public Security Bureau released the names and photos of 129 individuals wanted for "picking quarrels and provoking trouble".

No one should be arrested or prosecuted for taking part in a peaceful protest or sharing information about a protest. Such measures violate the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly under international human rights law and standards.

Furthermore, I find it extremely distressing that no information about the whereabouts of the arrested individuals has yet been made public. I am deeply concerned about their wellbeing and fear that they are at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

I therefore call on you to:

- **Release peaceful protesters immediately and unconditionally unless there is sufficient credible and admissible evidence that they have committed an internationally recognized offence and are granted a fair trial in line with international standards;**
- **Refrain from further arrest and prosecutions of individuals who have simply exercised their right to peaceful assembly.**

Yours sincerely,