

10 **A RESOLUTION CONCERNING THE SAFETY OF POLITICAL DISSIDENTS**

20 **WHEREAS:** As of April 18th 2007 Yu Ling, husband of Wang Xiaoning, sued the Internet company Yahoo for
30 giving information to the Chinese government about her husband, who is currently imprisoned in
40 China for political dissidence; and,

50 **WHEREAS:** The PRC (People's Republic of China) detains individuals for exercising their rights to freedom
60 of association, freedom of religion and freedom of expression, including the right to impart and
70 receive information; and,

80 **WHEREAS:** The total number of persons in China detained without charge, sentenced administratively to
90 reeducation or reform camps, or held by other means, solely for peacefully exercising these rights
100 is unknown however that figure is estimated to be far in excess of the approximately 3,000
110 individuals that the PRC currently acknowledges imprisoning for "counter-revolutionary" or
120 political crimes; and,

130 **WHEREAS:** Many of those detained are held under circumstances that constitute clear violations of due
140 process. Such violations include lengthy detention without charge or trial and depriving
150 defendants of access to legal counsel; and,

160 **WHEREAS:** Although the Chinese Constitution guarantees freedom of association and assembly, national
170 regulations severely limit association and give the authorities absolute discretion to deny
180 applications for public gatherings or demonstrations. In practice, only organizations that are
190 approved by the authorities are permitted to exist, and any organization that is not registered is
200 considered "illegal"; and,

210 **WHEREAS:** In this manner, independent advocacy on labor, human rights, environmental, development or
220 political issues are effectively outlawed. The CCP-controlled labor union and women and youth
230 organizations are the only permitted avenues for organizing in these areas. Unofficial labor
240 groups have been a particular target for suppression. In December 1994, the Beijing Intermediate
250 People's Court imposed severe sentences of between 15 and 20 years' imprisonment on three
260 prisoners of conscience, convicted of "leading counter-revolutionary organizations"; and,

270 **WHEREAS:** Although the PRC's 1982 Constitution guarantees citizens freedom of expression and of the
280 press, its preamble mandates adherence to "four basic principles"-- the CCP's leadership,
290 socialism, dictatorship of the proletariat and Marxism-Leninism Mao Zedong Thought. In
300 practice, the PRC employs a wide range of controls that violate the right to free expression and
310 interfere with independent media. These include severe restrictions on contact between foreign
320 news media and Chinese viewed by the government as critical of the regime. An extensive
330 censorship bureaucracy licenses all media outlets and publishing houses and must approve all
340 books before publication; and,

350 **WHEREAS:** The primary mechanism of control over the news media and publishing is self-censorship.
360 Chinese journalists, editors and publishers are expected to make the information they disseminate
370 conform to CCP Propaganda Department guidelines. Sanctions for infringements range from
380 official criticism of the coverage to the demotion, firing or imprisonment of the individuals
390 responsible and the closing or banning of the offending publication; and,

400 **WHEREAS:** Foreign correspondents from the British Broadcasting Corporation, Newsweek, Reuters, United
410 Press International, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, U.S. television networks
420 (NBC, CBS) and other foreign media outfits have been detained and interrogated by PRC police
430 regarding their work as journalists, including the interviewing of Chinese dissidents and students
440 and filming in Tienanmen Square; and,

450 **WHEREAS:** Although China became party to the UN Convention Against Torture in 1988, the government
460 has not taken effective measures to diminish the risk of prisoners being tortured or ill-treated.
470 Despite strong evidence of torture in several cases of death in custody, state prosecutors have

480 refused to release autopsy results to families or to initiate investigations. In many detention
490 centers, beatings, inadequate food and poor hygiene appear to be a routine part of the process of
500 eliciting confessions and compliance from detainees. Such treatment is applied to ordinary
510 prisoners as well as political detainees; and,

520 **WHEREAS:** According to prisoner reports, methods commonly used by guards include: beatings using electric
530 batons; rubber truncheons on hands and feet; long periods in handcuffs and/or leg irons, often
540 tightened so as to cause pain; restriction of food to starvation levels; and long periods in solitary
550 confinement. Furthermore, corrupt authorities at detention centers, prisons and labor camps have
560 extorted large sums of money from families of detainees for the state's provision of "daily
570 supplies" and "medical expenses."

580 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That the Maryland Student Legislature recommends that the Federal
590 Government pass legislation constituting a heavy fine for any United States company that
600 releases the information of political dissidents to the Chinese government; and,

610 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:** That if the companies continue to divulge information in the face of
620 government sanctions that the government take steps to prevent to the offending companies from
630 doing business in the United States

640 **MANDATES:** President George W. Bush
650 Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House
660 Harry Reid, Senate Majority Leader
670 Mitch McConnell, Senate Minority Leader
680 Stenny Hoyer, House Majority Leader
690 John Boehner, House Minority Leader

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