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Mr. Zhang Bencai

Chief Procurator
of Shanghai People’s Procuratorate

No 648, Jianguo West Road

Xuhui Qu

Shanghai City - 200030

**People’s Republic of China**

Dear Chief Procurator Zhang,

As a member/supporter of ACAT-Switzerland, the Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture and the Death Penalty, I am writing to express serious concern

**for the life and health of citizen journalist Zhang Zhan** (张展),

who has been on partial hunger strike to protest her incarceration. Being a prisoner of conscience detained solely for peacefully exercising her right to freedom of expression when she reported about COVID-19, Zhang Zhan should be released immediately and unconditionally.

It is extremely alarming to learn that, due to her dire health condition, Zhang Zhan’s family **does not expect her to live through the winter**. Recently it has been reported that she is incredibly weak, has no energy to walk nor raise her head and, with yellowed skin, looks to be suffering from a life-threatening condition.

On 15 November, her family submitted a medical bail application to Shanghai’s Women’s Prison and has not received a response yet. The application was submitted pursuant to the criteria listed in the ”Notice of the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the Ministry of Public Security, and Other Ministries on Issuing the Provisions on Temporary Service of Sentences Outside Prisons“ (最高人民法院、最高人民检察院、公安部等关于印发《暂予监外执行规定》的通知) .

In order to protect the life and health of Zhang Zhan, I therefore urge you to:

* **accept the medical bail application for Zhang Zhan;**
* **pending her release, ensure that Shanghai Women’s Prison immediately provides Zhang Zhan with urgent, regular and adequate medical care, including a full medical check-up;**
* **to guarantee her regular and personal contacts with her family and her lawyers;**
* **to protect her from any form of torture or other ill-treatment**

As a Member State of the United Nations, the People’s Republic of China adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules) and is a Party to the UN Convention against torture. These texts protect the rights of Zhang Zhan and must be respected by the People’s Republic of China.

Yours sincerely,

**Copy:** Embassy of the People’s Republic of China, Kalcheggweg 10, 3006 Bern, Switzerland