



His Excellency Mr Cheng Jingye
Ambassador of China
Embassy of the People's Republic of China
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cc: Senator the Hon Marise Payne
Minister for Foreign Affairs
PO Box 6100
Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
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20 February 2020

Your Excellency,

MEAA Media is the trade union and professional association for Australian journalists. I write to express our concern at the revoking of the press credentials of Australian journalist Philip Wen, a correspondent for the *Wall Street Journal*. He is one of three journalists from that newspaper that China has said it will expel. You would know that they have been given five days to leave the country.

It is particularly worrying because none of journalists were involved in the news article to which China has taken exception. Indeed, it appears that China is attacking three respected journalists who were not involved in either the opinion article or the particular headline that has offended China.

MEAA is concerned that not only is the withdrawal of three's press credentials an excessive and unnecessary action but it is also an assault on press freedom – particularly at a time when the world is looking at China for strength and leadership.

The expulsion of three foreign journalists also casts a shadow over the goodwill that is being extended to China right now – it strains relationships and chills the foreign media as they carry out their duties in difficult conditions and under immense workloads.

Mr Wen has a long and distinguished career as a journalist working for Australian news media (he was a member of MEAA in good standing) and he has been working in China as a highly-respected foreign correspondent for many years, joining the staff of the *Wall Street Journal* just last year.

We sincerely urge the Chinese Government to reconsider our colleague Philip Wen's expulsion and to restore his press credentials as a gesture of good faith.

We also urge the Government to find a more constructive and cooperative approach to express its concerns about the opinion article that has caused offence.

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Both these actions would reassure the foreign media as they carry out their reporting responsibilities at this crucial time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'MS', written in a cursive style.

Marcus Strom
Federal president
MEAA Media section