

Dear President Xi Jinping,

We, the undersigned scholars, former diplomats, and others with an interest in understanding China and building bridges, are deeply concerned about the recent detentions of Canadian citizens Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor. We request that you immediately release Messrs. Kovrig and Spavor so that they may be reunited with their families.

Many of us know Michael Kovrig through his work as a diplomat in Beijing and as the senior expert for Northeast Asia at the International Crisis Group, an organization whose mission is to “build a more peaceful world.” In both roles, Kovrig regularly and openly met with Chinese officials, researchers, and scholars to better understand China’s positions on a range of important international issues. Michael Spavor has devoted his time to the task of building relationships between the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and China, Canada, the US, and elsewhere.

These meetings and exchanges are the foundation of serious research and diplomacy around the world, including for Chinese scholars and diplomats. However, Kovrig and Spavor’s detentions send a message that this kind of constructive work is unwelcome and even risky in China. We who share Kovrig and Spavor’s enthusiasm for building genuine, productive, and lasting relationships must now be more cautious about traveling and working in China and engaging our Chinese counterparts. That will lead to less dialogue and greater distrust, and undermine efforts to manage disagreements and identify common ground. Both China and the rest of the world will be worse off as a result.

We therefore respectfully ask you to free these two Canadian citizens.

January 21, 2019

Signatories (institutional affiliations are included for identification purposes only and do not imply institutional endorsement):

尊敬的习近平主席，

此信谨代表署名如下的学者、前外交官、以及其他致力于了解中国和搭建中外桥梁的人士，就加拿大公民康明凯（Michael Kovrig）及迈克尔·斯帕弗（Michael Spavor）近期被拘一事，深表担忧。我等请求中方立即释放康先生和斯帕弗先生，使他们得以与家人团聚。

我们中不少人和康明凯通过工作往来认识。康先生曾任加拿大驻北京外交官，现任国际预防危机组织（International Crisis Group）东北亚高级顾问。该组织以“建立一个更和平的世界”为宗旨。在此两个岗位上，康先生常与中国官员、研究人士和学者进行公开会面，目的是对中国在多项重要国际事务上的立场增进了解。迈克尔·斯帕弗一直致力于搭建朝鲜民主主义人民共和国与中国、加拿大、美国和其他国家之间的纽带。

此类会面和交流是全球学术研究和外交工作的基本组成部分，对中国学者和外交官也是如此。然而，对康明凯和斯帕弗的拘禁则传递了与此相悖的信息，即这样的建设性工作在中国不受欢迎，甚至存在风险。我们和康明凯及斯帕弗一样，热衷于与中国建立真诚、富有成效和长久的联系，但在当下的环境下必须对在华旅行、工作以及与中方同僚接触慎之又慎。这将减少对话并加深互疑，还将为管控分歧和寻求利益共同点造成障碍。中国与世界其他国家均将受损。

因此，我等恳请中方释放这两位加拿大公民。

肃此。敬颂

二〇一九年一月二十一日

署名（以下机构名称仅为标注身份所用，不代表署名人所在机构对此公开信的支持）

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