

World loses 'principled champion,' says UN rights chief on death of China's Liu Xiaobo

13 July 2017 – The top United Nations human rights official today expressed his deep sorrow at the news that China's 'iconic' peace and democracy figure, Liu Xiaobo, has died at the age of 61.

'The human rights movement in China and across the world has [lost a principled champion](#) who devoted his life to defending and promoting human rights, peacefully and consistently, and who was jailed for standing up for his beliefs,' said UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein in a statement.

Mr. Liu reportedly died at the hospital where he was receiving treatment for liver cancer.

Mr. Liu was jailed in 2009 after calling for political reforms in China. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2010 while in prison.

The High Commissioner described Mr. Liu as 'the true embodiment of the democratic, non-violent ideals, the definition of civic courage and human dignity a poet and intellectual who wanted, and strove for, a better future for his country, and a man who, despite all he suffered, continued to espouse the politics of peace.'

Extending heartfelt condolences and deepest respects to his wife, Liu Xia, his family and friends, Mr. Zeid said Mr. and Mrs. Liu were a courageous couple and absolutely devoted to one another.

'I urge the Chinese authorities to guarantee Liu Xia's freedom of movement, and allow her to travel abroad should she wish so,' he said.

Despite the imprisonment and separation from the wife he adored that could have fuelled anger and bitterness, Mr. Liu declared that he had no hatred for those who pursued and prosecuted him.

'He was and will continue to be an inspiration and an example for all human rights defenders,' Mr. Zeid said.