Mr. Lin Yiyiing  
Chief Prosecutor  
People's Procuratorate  
Guangdong Province  
6, Huaqiang Rd, Tianhe Qu,  
510000 Guangzhou, Guangdong  
People’s Republic of China  

Paris, August 2nd, 2019

Mr. Chief Prosecutor,

Reporters Without Borders (RSF), an international organization defending freedom of information, demands the immediate release of Yang Zhengjun, Wei Zhili, and Ke Chengbing, who worked as editors for workers’ rights news outlet iLabour.

The three journalists were arrested on the vague and groundless accusation of “picking quarrels and provoking trouble” in January and March, respectively. They are apparently still detained incommunicado under the detention system, Residential Surveillance at a Designated Location (RSDL), which deprives detainees of their rights and exposes them to torture and mistreatment.

These journalists were serving the public interest by exposing life-threatening labour violations. According to a 2017 study by scholars of Tongji University in Shanghai, 25 million Chinese workers are exposed to such undue occupational hazards each year.

Clearly, this arrest never should have happened, as the Constitution of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) enshrines freedom of the press (Article 35) and emphasizes the importance of labour protection and safe working conditions (Article 42).

I also draw your attention to the fact that the conditions of detention of these three journalists are clearly incompatible with Articles 37 and 38 of the Chinese Constitution, which guarantee the freedom and dignity of citizens, and with the United Nations Convention against Torture that China ratified in 1988.
In light of this situation, I hereby request that you show your care for justice and the rule of law by immediately releasing these three journalists, as well as any other reporter or blogger in your jurisdiction.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration,

Christophe Deloire
Secretary-General

Copy to:

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