For Immediate Release February 22, 2018

**Public Statement**

**The Law Society of Ontario expresses grave concern about the sentencing of lawyer Jiang Tianyong in China**

Toronto, ON — The Law Society of Ontario expresses grave concern about the sentencing of lawyer Jiang Tianyong in China

I write on behalf of the Law Society of Ontario\* to voice our grave concern over the sentencing of lawyer Jiang Tianyong. When serious issues of apparent injustice to lawyers and the judiciary come to our attention, we speak out.

Further to our letters dated February 23, 2017 and October 13, 2017, copies of which are enclosed, we express our concern regarding continued violations of Jiang Tianyong’s human rights. Since the Law Society’s intervention in October 2017, Jiang Tianyong has been sentenced to two years in prison after being found guilty of “inciting subversion of state power”.

There is reason to believe that Jiang Tianyong was subjected to torture or extreme duress before his apparent confession was made. We are concerned that Jian Tianyong has been sentenced as a result of this apparent confession made under these circumstances.

The Law Society is deeply troubled by Jiang Tianyong’s situation and urges Your Excellency to comply with China’s obligations under international human rights laws, including the United Nations’ *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers*.

Article 16 of the *Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers* states:

Governments shall ensure that lawyers (a) are able to perform all of their professional functions without intimidation, hindrance, harassment or improper interference; (b) are able to travel and to consult with their clients freely both within their own country and abroad; and (c) shall not suffer, or be threatened with, prosecution or administrative, economics or other sanctions for any action taken in accordance with recognized professional duties, standards and ethics.

Article 17 states:

Where the security of lawyers is threatened as a result of discharging their functions, they shall be adequately safeguarded by the authorities.

Article 18 states:

Lawyers shall not be identified with their clients or their clients' causes as a result of discharging their functions.

Furthermore, Article 23 provides:

Lawyers like other citizens are entitled to freedom of expression, belief, association and assembly. In particular, they shall have the right to take part in public discussion of matters concerning the law, the administration of justice and the promotion and protection of human rights and to join or form local, national or international organizations and attend their meetings, without suffering professional restrictions by reason of their lawful action or their membership in a lawful organization.

The Law Society urges the Government of China to:

* 1. reverse the conviction against Jiang Tianyong immediately and unconditionally;
  2. release Jiang Tianyong immediately and unconditionally and ensure that he is returned home;
  3. ensure that Jiang Tianyong is not subjected to torture or other ill-treatment, has regular, unrestricted access to his family, lawyers of his choice, and medical care;
  4. guarantee all the procedural rights that should be accorded to Jiang Tianyong in accordance with his right to a fair trial;
  5. guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of Jiang Tianyong;
  6. guarantee that adequate reparation will be provided to Jiang Tianyong if he is found to be a victim of human rights abuses;
  7. put an end to all acts of harassment and acts of violence against lawyers in China;
  8. ensure that all people in China, including lawyers and judges, are able to exercise freely their freedom of association, peaceful assembly, opinion and expression, including when such expression is critical of government institutions and actions;
  9. ensure that all lawyers and judges in China are adequately safeguarded by the authorities such that they are able to carry out their professional duties and activities free from intimidation, hindrance, harassment, improper interference, the threat of criminalization, or other human rights violations; and
  10. ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments.