**Peace Prize winner's wife placed under house arrest**

Liu Xia detained after prison trip to tell her husband of Nobel award

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The wife of the Nobel Peace Prize winner Liu Xiaobo is under house arrest after a brief and emotional meeting with her husband, during which he dedicated his prize to the "lost souls" of the bloody crackdown on pro-democracy protesters in June 1989.

Liu Xia said on Twitter that she has been unable to make phone calls and told Human Rights in China that she was followed after she came back from visiting Mr Liu in Jinzhou, in Liaoning province, where he is serving 11 years in jail for subversion.

"This award is for the lost souls of 4 June," Mr Liu told his wife during the hour-long visit, saying that he had won the award because of the non-violent spirit of the protesters, who gave their lives for peace, freedom and democracy. He broke down in tears after delivering his message, she told the human rights group.

Mr Liu was jailed on Christmas Day last year for co-authoring "Charter 08", a manifesto for political reform. China is furious at the Nobel panel's decision, saying Mr Liu is a "criminal" and calling the award an obscene travesty that flies in the face of the spirit of the Nobel.

Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, however, criticised China's outraged reaction, saying the Chinese government does "not appreciate different opinions at all".

The Dalai Lama, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989, told the Kyodo News agency in Tokyo that building an open, transparent society was "the only way to save all people of China" but that some "hardliners" in the Beijing leadership were stuck in the "old way of thinking".

Norway said Beijing has called off a meeting with the Norwegian fisheries minister, after the Chinese government had previously warned that giving the award to the 54-year-old literary critic would harm relations between the countries, even though the Nobel committee is an independent non-governmental body.

The Norwegian Minister of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs, Lisbeth Berg-Hansen, arrived in China yesterday for the World Expo in Shanghai, and was supposed to meet China's Vice-Minister for Fisheries tomorrow, but the Chinese cancelled the meeting.

Mr Liu is one of three people to have been awarded the prize while being jailed by their own government. The other two are Burma's Aung Sang Suu Kyi in 1991 and the German pacifist Carl von Ossietzky in 1935.

Leaders around the world including US President Barack Obama – last year's Nobel Peace Prize winner – have praised Mr Liu and called on the Chinese government to release him immediately.

Four United Nations human rights experts have also called for Mr Liu's release, saying he is a "courageous human rights defender who has continuously and peacefully advocated for greater respect for human rights" in China.

The independently appointed investigators – Frank La Rue, El Hadji Malick Sow, Margaret Sekaggya and Gabriela Knaul, whose brief is to examine issues ranging from breaches of the right to free speech to arbitrary detention – called on China to release Mr Liu and "all persons detained for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression".

Ms Liu said that her communications had been cut and that both her and her brother's mobile phones have been interfered with, and she has been told she would have to be accompanied by police if she wanted to leave the building.

Uniformed guards at Ms Liu's apartment building have stopped European diplomats from entering the complex.

"We were told that we could only go in if we called somebody from the inside and if they came out to meet us. But of course, we can't call Liu Xia, because it's impossible to get through to her phone," Simon Sharpe, the first secretary of political affairs of the EU delegation in China, said.

The Chinese newspaper, the Global Times, launched a broadside against the Oslo committee in an editorial.

"The Nobel committee once again displayed its arrogance and prejudice against a country that has made the most remarkable economic and social progress in the past three decades," the editorial ran. "In 1989, the Dalai Lama, a separatist, won the prize. Liu Xiaobo, the new winner, wants to copy Western political systems in China. They are trying to impose Western values on China ... China's success story speaks louder than the Nobel Peace Prize."

The censors have gone into overdrive to stop news of the award spreading. Messages on social networks are disappearing. Searches on the issue are blocked on most search engines by the system of controls known as the "Great Firewall of China".