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CHINA | Pastor's Wife Released on Bail

Jiang Rong, a member of Early Rain Church and the wife of Pastor Wang Yi, was released June 10 after six months in detention. Pastor Wang and several church members remain in detention.

News of Jiang's release was posted on the Facebook page *Pray for Early Rain Covenant Church* and confirmed by CSW sources. According to the post, Jiang was released on bail pending trial and was reunited with her son. The post also reported that another church member was released on bail at the same time.

Jiang was detained in December along with her husband, Pastor Wang Yi, and over 100 other church members. Families and individuals who attended the church face ongoing harassment from police and landlords under pressure from authorities. Dozens of church members have been detained for short periods under administrative detention. Wang and Jiang are both accused of inciting subversion.

There has been a rapid tightening of restrictions on churches in China since revised regulations on religious affairs came into effect in February 2018. Across the country, authorities have forced unregistered churches to close, harassing leaders and members, while registered churches have been forced to remove religious symbols and have been prohibited from allowing children to engage in religious activities. In several parts of the country, churches have been demolished.

CSW's Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas said, "While we welcome the news that Jiang Rong has been released on bail and reunited with her son, we strongly condemn her six-month long detention and the charges against her, which are completely unfounded. For half a year, Jiang has been arbitrarily deprived of her liberty and kept apart from her son. We call on the Chinese authorities to drop all charges against Jiang, to release immediately and without condition all Early Rain Church members still in detention, and to cease all forms of harassment against the church."