

Witness biography

Peter Humphrey

Peter Humphrey is a 68-year-old British citizen from Surrey, England, with almost 50 years of experience with China. He holds a first class honours degree in Sinology from Durham University and is an external research associate of Harvard University's Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies. He spent two decades as a foreign correspondent both in communist Eastern Europe (as it was at the time) and in the China region, mostly with Reuters. He then spent 15 years as an anti-fraud and due diligence consultant inside China with Kroll, PwC, and, for the final ten years, running his own consultancy, ChinaWhys. He is viewed by many as the pioneer of the due diligence industry in China. In July 2013 he and his wife were arrested and imprisoned on charges of illegal information gathering after conducting an investigation for a well-known multinational pharma company. They spent two years in Chinese prisons during which time Peter developed advanced prostate cancer as medical treatment was deliberately withheld in a bid to coerce a false confession. He was the first prominent member of the foreign business community in China to be imprisoned by the Xi Jinping regime and the case attracted extensive media coverage. He was also the first foreigner to be paraded in a cage on Chinese television in a notorious broadcast of a false and forced TV confession.

Since his release Peter has fought his cancer and many non-medical battles. He published a viral, harrowing account of his ordeal in the Financial Times Weekend Magazine in 2018. He won an out of court settlement from his former client in 2022 after six years of litigation in the American courts. He successfully fought a campaign against Chinese state-owned TV which resulted in the UK regulator Ofcom removing CGTN's UK broadcast licence. He wrote a series of exclusive investigation reports for the Sunday Times around Christmas 2019 exposing the use of forced labour among foreign prisoners in China, centred upon the packaging of Tesco Christmas cards and Quaker oats by foreign prisoners. He filed a complaint to the Chinese government after his release, exposing those responsible for his arbitrary imprisonment, which has been ignored. Peter is today a mentor to many families suffering similar ordeals. He has built his own prisoner support and intelligence network, which includes released prisoners. Peter has also advised on many documentaries on China in recent years and is often interviewed by the media for his insights into justice and imprisonment in China. He has lobbied legislatures in the UK, EU and America to build awareness about the wrongful incarceration of foreigners in China.