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Dear Minister,

Human rights advocate Gao Zhisheng has represented human rights defenders in court and taken on politically sensitive cases. His commitment to human rights has made him well-known in China. Immediately after several open letters in which Gao Zhisheng made critical remarks about the government were issued, the Beijing judicial authority revoked his license to practice law back in late 2005. More than ten years later, Gao Zhisheng was reported missing by his family on August 13, 2017. As the authorities refuse to disclose his whereabouts, he has since been considered a victim of enforced disappearance at risk of torture or ill-treatment. His family still knows nothing about his health or the reasons for his detention. Gao Zhisheng has been a victim of enforced disappearance and was detained as a nonviolent political prisoner before. Back then, he was repeatedly tortured, according to his own statements. Despite all of this, Gao Zhisheng continued to advocate for human rights publicly up until the time of his re-disappearance.

Please disclose the whereabouts of Gao Zhisheng and ensure that he is released immediately and unconditionally. Ensure that the human rights defender is not tortured or ill-treated in detention. He must also be granted regular unrestricted contact with his family, legal counsel of his choice, and appropriate medical care until his release.

Yours sincerely

Copy:

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