

## **An Open Letter from Zi Su (CHRD translation)**

*“Proposal for Democratic Direct Elections at the 19<sup>th</sup> National Congress and Nomination of Mr. Hu Deping as New General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party”*

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Secunder: Zhu Delong

The Chinese Communist Party is at a turning point in history, and the question is: Will it follow the historical trend towards democratic constitutionalism, or instead go down dictatorship's timeworn road to collapse?

Mr. Xi Jinping has been in office for five years since being elected general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party at the 18th Party Congress in 2012. In judging his overall record, I think that Mr. Xi Jinping has served with some distinction. His main achievement has been to confront the corruption that festered during the previous administration of Hu Jintao. He has punished several corrupt officials. However, Xi's crucial mistake has been to imitate Mao Zedong by creating a personality cult around himself and focusing on concentrating his power. This has been manifested by Xi heading up more than a dozen groups and committees, which goes against the democratic constitutional orientation of reforms to the political system.

Xi also has launched an unbridled attack on human rights defenders and democracy activists, while increasingly suppressing free speech online. His anti-corruption drive has been conducted under a one-party dictatorship, with Xi making substantial use of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection to investigate corruption cases of Party and government officials. However, the campaign has been executed selectively, and even without transparency about the standards of criteria used [to target officials]. Xi's biggest mistake has been to institute the “Seven Taboos” and comprehensively restoring the ideology of the Maoist era. Such a policy was fervently opposed by Deng Xiaoping, Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang, and other past Party leaders who advocated policies of reform and opening.

In view of this, many people inside and outside the CCP believe that Xi Jinping is unsuitable to continue in the role of General Secretary of the Central Committee. I propose launching a direct election for the upcoming 19<sup>th</sup> National Congress of the CCP [in the fall of 2017]. I personally suggest that Mr. Hu Deping, the son of former General Secretary Hu Yaobang, assume the post of general secretary. Since Hu Deping's political philosophy leans toward democratic constitutional reform, it provides the Party and the country an opportunity to reverse the course of Maoist-era restoration that is occurring at this historical juncture.

For the future of both the CCP and China, I think it is the responsibility and duty of every Party member and Chinese citizen to select a CCP and national leader who can conform to the historical trend toward democratic constitutionalism. I invite those inside and outside the Party who agree with my opinion to sign this proposal.

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