

## Ethics complaint to World Health Organization (WHO),

**Attention:** The WHO Office of Compliance, Risk Management and Ethics (CRE) - [ethicsoffice@who.int](mailto:ethicsoffice@who.int)

**Attention:** Margaret Harris (media) - [harrism@who.int](mailto:harrism@who.int) ([mediainquiries@who.int](mailto:mediainquiries@who.int))

**Attention:** Ruel E. Serrano (WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific) - [serranor@who.int](mailto:serranor@who.int)

**Attention:** Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom

Submitted February 26, 2020 by Safeguard Defenders

## Background

On August 27, in 2013, the predecessor of today's CGTN (China Global Television Network), namely CCTV International, aired its English language broadcast of Mr. Peter Humphrey supposedly confessing to alleged crimes. Mr. Humphrey, British citizen and a former Reuters journalist, had undergone torture, drugging and deprivation of medical care prior to this incident. China's state broadcaster CCTV and other Chinese state journalists gathered in a detention center cell while Mr. Humphrey was forced to sit inside a metal cage in handcuffs and locked to an iron chair, pointing cameras aimed at him through the cage bars, as a police interrogator posed as a journalist and asked questions, and in some cases instructed him how to answer in front of the journalists.

After broadcasting this widely in China, CCTV's international arm produced an English language broadcast based on this forced fake interview, not only repeating the same information (of which much was provably false), but also adding further journalistic sins by intentionally **wrongfully translating the Chinese original of Mr. Humphrey's responses into English, putting words such as "illegally" into his mouth to paint Mr. Humphrey as confessing guilt to a crime.**

The victim Mr. Humphrey was in effect tried and convicted by CCTV and CGTN and its news anchor, long before any real judicial trial or even any indictment, thus depriving Mr. Humphrey of a fair and transparent trial, which is a cornerstone of international law and human rights.

That news presenter who packaged the English broadcast was the well-known CCTV journalist and anchor Mr. James Chau. About a year later, once again *before* Mr. Humphrey was formally tried, Mr. **Chau presided over yet another** such CGTN broadcast, dooming Mr. Humphrey, who was then further incarcerated and was caused to contract an avoidable cancer due to the deliberate withholding of appropriate medical treatment in captivity. One of these two broadcasts also includes an American victim, Mr. Humphrey's wife.

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James Chau **has refused to comment** on these broadcasts when contacted by New York Times journalist Paul Mozur, and by the NGO Safeguard Defenders, and very importantly, has **refused to respond to contact** by his victim, Peter Humphrey, who seeks to clarify further circumstances of this abuse.

## **What is this document?**

This is a complaint to the World Health Organization (WHO) who have chosen to appoint James Chau as a goodwill ambassador. As a person who has worked to commit *several* gross human rights violations by depriving the victim, Peter Humphrey and his American wife, also put on TV before her trial, of the right to a fair trial, it is clear that, purely from an ethics point of view, James Chau is not fit to be a goodwill ambassador for the WHO or any other UN-affiliated institution.

*“As a specialized agency of the United Nations, WHO is committed to the UN Charter and staff members are expected to uphold and promote the human rights standards enshrined in the international frameworks of human rights.” – Paragraph 47, WHO Code of Ethics.*

We **request that you investigate James Chau's suitability as a WHO goodwill ambassador**, and upon verification of the information herein presented, to terminate that relationship without undue delays, in order to avoid any further damage to the WHO's reputation. James Chau has worked to deny victims key rights of several international laws, customary international law and codes of conduct mentioned in WHO's own code of ethics.

## **Basis for complaint**

WHO claims to bind itself to the highest standard of conduct in its [Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct](#). It furthermore states publically that its Office of Compliance, Risk Management and Ethics (CRE) shall promote ethics standards and awareness. The [full](#) code of ethics defined a collaborator as a non-staff member, and on that basis, WHO may act in accordance with below in dealing with Goodwill ambassador James Chau. It further specifies in article 2.6 that the full code of conduct applies to collaborators.

It specifies that in [case of violation of its ethics policy](#), WHO may

- terminate any contract with the contractor or [collaborator](#) immediately upon written notice to the contractor or collaborator, without any liability for termination charges or any other liability of any kind; and/or
- exclude the contractor or [collaborator](#) from participating in any ongoing or future tenders and/or entering into any future contractual or collaborative relationships with WHO.

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The underpinning of WHO's ethics code is integrity, respect for dignity and impartiality, amongst others, all of which James Chau has not only failed to follow, on multiple occasions, but actively sought to deprive others of.

**About James Chau (twitter [@jameschau](#), weibo [weibo.com/jameschau](#))**

James Chau (周柳建成) (b. December 11, 1997), London-born to Chinese parents from Hong Kong and Indonesia, was educated at City of London school (graduating in 1996) and Cambridge University, graduating with a degree in English literature.

Chau's journalism career began after moving to Hong Kong in 2001, working in the newsroom of TVB Pearl, a Hong Kong TV broadcaster, and later as an anchor.

Chau moved to Beijing in 2004 and became a news anchor with CCTV International's English language channel. From April 2010 he co-hosted its flagship program *China 24* and also hosted CCTV's *News Hour* (both shows are now defunct, having been replaced by similar programming under GCTN under different names). Chau left his position in August 2014, becoming a special contributor.

Besides CCTV, Chau has also written a column for China's state-owned ultra-nationalist English language newspaper the *Global Times*.

Chau was selected as a goodwill ambassador for WHO for Sustainable Development Goals in February 2016.

Alongside his work with CCTV, Chau has earlier appeared as a guest presenter on BBC World News, and has participated in events with the British Council, and is affiliated with China's state-censored online Sohu news portal.

On social media, Chau can often be seen taking selfies with a combination of celebrities, beautiful women and 'elites', and exhibiting aspects of a narcissistic and luxury lifestyle.

**The offending broadcast**

The broadcast that victimised Mr. Humphrey and violated his rights includes many direct lies and intentional distortions. CCTV International's staff and the anchor Chau were not present in the prison cell at the recording of the forced and falsified "confession" (a CCTV crew with cameras labeled CCTV were present) . For this reason, from among many wrongs in the broadcast, we only cite here those that are either directly perpetrated by the CCTV International program China 24 and its lead anchor, Chau, even though there are many additional transgressions.

The United Kingdom's TV-regulator OFCOM is currently investigating this offending state TV channel and the two broadcasts herein mentioned. OFCOM has officially accepted the complaint

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filed and has launched an official investigation, one which is likely to conclude in spring 2020. Due to the very clear and very severe violation of the UK broadcasting code, it is very likely that the TV station, CGTN, will be found guilty, based on precedents set in previous cases involving other broadcasters. A complaint about Chau's two broadcasts, along with other broadcasts of a similar nature by CGTN, is also being filed with the United States' TV-regulator, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

The most outrageous **direct lie**, purposely perpetrated by CGTN staff, is that Mr. Humphrey says, in *Chinese*, in the "confession" he recorded, "we obtain personal information." The English narration and translation used in the broadcast, added by CGTN, **adds the word "illegally"**, which Mr. Humphrey is not heard to say in Chinese. You can hear his Chinese behind the English narration, and it simply contains the phrase "we obtained personal information," which was indeed a function of his job as a due diligence analyst but not an illegal function. And his words are obviously slurred due to the fact he was drugged before being paraded on camera and is not speaking with a free will.

The presenter states that police have arrested the two people in the newscast, Mr. Humphrey and his American wife Ms. Yingzeng Yu, **on charges of selling personal information. This is a lie.** They were not arrested for selling personal information (a more severe charge) and were never charged with this far graver offence. The broadcast goes on to re-report this, through both its second and third reporters/narrators. The couple had in fact been preliminarily charged, though not yet indicted, tried or convicted, which was known by CCTV/CGTN at that time, with the minor charge of *illegally obtaining personal information*, never with selling. This presentation prompted all Chinese newspapers and some international newspapers to use even worse language when they reported that the couple had engaged in "trafficking of information", despite the fact no such language had been used in any legal charge.

The broadcast again falsely states the couple obtained and illegally sold such data, implying that it was a profit-making activity. After a **direct lie** about what they were charged with, the newscast then seeks to distort facts, to present them as people arrested for *trafficking* in personal data. The fact Mr. Humphrey was charged only with *illegally obtaining personal information* (a charge that was nonetheless also false) was well known by the China 24 team, unless they were incompetent in their jobs. However, even in the same broadcast they later contradicted their earlier contention by saying that such information was obtained for screening (i.e., due diligence), which by implication means not for selling.

The broadcast finishes this section by stating that the reports created by the couple contained information that violated Chinese people's rights. However, at this time, the couple had not been indicted, tried, or convicted, and the charge against them was merely under investigation. Yet **CGTN still brands them as guilty**, despite not having been tried or convicted of the crime in question.

Almost a year later, in a second broadcast, following yet another forced TV interview of Mr. Humphrey while he remained in captivity, Chau correctly starts off by stating that they were arrested on a charge of illegally obtaining personal data, but he does not correct the earlier untrue statement about having reported them as being charged with a much more serious crime, i.e., *selling* personal data.

### Broadcast 1

**Title of Broadcast:**

Identity theft / Personal data protection  
– Shanghai arrests husband and wife  
over misuse of personal data

**Program:** China24

**Channel:** CGTN

**Date of broadcast:** 2013-08-27

### Broadcast 2

**Title of Broadcast:**

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) China private-  
eye agents indicted in Shanghai for  
illegal investigation

**Program:** News Hour

**Channel:** CGTN

**Date of broadcast:** 2014-07-14

### Why release this information?

Since his days with CCTV, Chau has gone on to become a *goodwill ambassador* at the World Health Organization (WHO), and in the same timeframe much information has been published revealing the reality behind Mr. Humphrey's and many other forced TV confessions, including the details of how Mr. Humphrey's forced and falsified "confessions" were extracted and recorded under illegal duress amounting to torture. Those revelations have also been very widely reported on, and any journalist working with China would be hard pressed to be ignorant to this.

Despite this widespread public knowledge, Chau **maintains his silence** on this piece of his past, **refusing to apologise**, either in public or to the victims Peter Humphrey and Yingzeng Yu of his handiwork.

Chau's failure to provide such an apology, whether private or public, and refusal to answer or comment when approached by well-respected international journalists about CCTV's and CGTN's involvement in extracting and broadcasting forced falsified TV confessions, and about his own involvement in these broadcasts, leads us to believe that Chau is unrepentant and therefore should have no role to play as a journalist, a goodwill ambassador, or indeed any public role at all. His presence will ultimately be a stain on any public organisation.

### Safeguard Defenders

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