

English:

Please Shut Down Yulin Dog-Meat Festival

Dear Governor Chen Wu:

We write to urge you and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region government to cancel the “Dog-Meat Festival” to be held on June 21 in Yulin. As foreigners who have great respect for the Chinese people and Chinese civilization, we are saddened to learn that the Yulin “Dog-Meat Festival” still exists in a rapidly modernising society. We believe that this event has no place in century. We oppose to the “festival” for the following five reasons:

First, China is the country with the second largest number of rabies cases in the world.

Yulin government itself admitted in 2007 that the city was one of the hardest hit by rabies outbreaks. According to a [news report](#), 338 rabies cases were reported in Yulin between 2002 and 2006. All the infected people died from this disease. The annual economic cost to Yulin amounted to 6.67 million Yuan. Based on the toll the disease is taking on the health of the city’s residents, the authorities in Yulin should be doing everything they can to prevent rabies. Dogs transported for days in crowded conditions to Yulin and with compromised immunity system are known to be vulnerable to the spread of illnesses. Allowing the “Dog-Meat Festival” to continue is a sign of a lack of vigilance at the very least. Given the national government’s policy on rabies prevention and control, it might even be construed as wanton contempt and total negligence. In the interest of public health, disease prevention, and enforcing the national government’s policies, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region government should put an end to the event.

Second, the “Dog-Meat Festival” can potentially undermine social stability, aggravate existing social conflicts, and sabotage the Central Government’s efforts to build a harmonious society.

A significant number of the dogs sold on the market, according to Chinese activist investigations, are stolen household pets or the watch dogs of the rural families. The recent lynching of dog thieves by victims of the dog theft indicates the potentially explosive nature of confrontations

between dog owners and the dog-meat industry. Frankly, the action by the villagers in Guangxi was a reaction to the fact that local law enforcement had long failed to protect the interest of the dog owners. Allowing the “Dog-Meat Festival” to continue is like endorsing dog theft, which supplies the dog-meat industry. It could seriously damage the authority of the government and the credibility of state laws. If dog theft continues, confrontations between dog owners and animal lovers and the dog-meat industry could intensify, potentially leading to mass unrest. For Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region government, a way to prevent such a situation from developing is to end the Yulin “Dog-Meat Festival.”

Third, the Yulin “Dog-Meat Festival” is a food safety danger.

Dogs sold on the market are sick and dying animals. They suffer from horrendous conditions during trans-provincial long-distance journeys. China does NOT have dog farms. There are no national or local standards to ensure the safety of dog-meat since dogs are not raised for food. Sick dogs can pass illnesses to humans in the course of transport, slaughter and food preparations. Contaminated dog-meat can also make the eaters sick. For sale in the market, there is also reportedly meat from poisoned dogs. Food safety is no small matter that the government can ignore. It is therefore imperative for Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region government to shut down the “Dog-Meat Festival” and prevent the onset of a SARS-like disease and mass deaths.

Fourth, the Yulin “Dog-Meat Festival” exposes young people to violence.

During the festival, the streets of Yulin flow with dog blood, since dogs are often slaughtered in public. Have the dog-meat dealers ever considered the reaction of the people who walk by? Have they ever considered the feelings of the young children who witness the brutality on their way to school? The wanton imposition of bloody scenes on the public can cause severe mental distress and psychological trauma to people, particularly school children. Studies have long shown that exposure to violence can desensitize youth and cause them to later commit acts of cruelty and abuse. Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region government and its official Women Federation are obligated to stand up and to protect the young people from being forced to witness this brutal spectacle.

Fifth, although the “Dog-Meat Festival” has been promoted as a local “folk custom,” it is not really a local culinary culture.

It is a commercial activity masquerading as a regional tradition. We have no interest in questioning an individual's eating habit or food choices. But the promotion of a food that is illegally sourced and poses food safety concerns is not an issue of individual choice or individual rights. It is still less a matter of a local culinary culture. No culture or local custom is a defense of a practice that runs counter to human progress. Despite strong resistance, foot-binding, opium-smoking, and arranged marriage, the so-called Chinese traditional practices, were ended without jeopardising the Chinese culture. In fact, Chinese civilisation has since experienced a spirited rejuvenation. And, China's pace of progress has not been slowed one bit. To glorify Chinese culture, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region government must eliminate outdated practices that represent forces of the past and that damage the reputation of the mainstream Chinese culture.

Finally, Guangxi has breathtaking natural beauty that attracts millions of domestic and international tourists.

The Yulin “Dog-Meat Festival” does not belong in this region. In June 2013, the “festival” was condemned by more than 40,000 people around the world within a short span of a few days. The event has already tarnished the reputation of Guangxi and can possibly cause a negative repercussion in the tourism industry of the Autonomous Region. We appeal to you to act in the interest of public health, food safety, child welfare, and the reputation of Guangxi and China. Yulin “Dog-Meat Festival” is no regional “folk custom.” It is a business operation that undermines the national and public interest. Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region government is at a historical juncture.

The “Dog-Meat Festival” must end.

Chinese:

海外爱国侨胞就取消玉林狗肉节致函

广西壮族自治区政府 (并抄送国务院、外交部、公安部、卫生部、农业部、国家食品药品
管理总局、国家旅游总局)

致陈武主席：

我们是分布在世界各地的爱国侨胞。祖国的繁荣兴盛，是我们的骄傲。祖国的文明进步，是我们的自豪。中共十八大以来的政策路线、生态文明建设的伟大思想，是建设真正强大国家的保障。作为爱国海外侨胞，一如既往地中华祖国喝彩。广西是美丽的南国边疆省份、它美丽的自然和文化景观，每年吸引无数外国游客，它是中国的一面镜子。在祝愿广西在经济、社会、民生和精神文明上取得新的突破，我们更希望广西给国际社会展现一个真实的、进步的、文我们今天给您致函 (抄送国务院总理、中国外交部、农业部、卫生部、公安部、国家旅游总局、国家食品药品管理总局)，呼吁广西壮族自治区政府，采取紧急措施、果断阻止玉林市在今年6月21日举行一年一度的“狗肉节”，并永久关闭这个危害国家、给中央政府拆台、有害民生、有害国家狂犬病防控体系、给中国国家抹黑的“狗肉节。”

广西玉林的“狗肉节”以及其他任何地方的“狗肉节”为什么必须取缔？

首先，“狗肉节”可能导致广西甚至全国狂犬病防控努力的失败。

狗肉节期间，上万只活狗从各地长途运输到玉林，陡然增加了狂犬病和其他疫病传染的机会。玉林市政府自己就曾承认，该市是全国狂犬病高发的重灾区 (见记者张爱林 2007年的报道 <http://gx.news.163.com/07/0102/14/33RCB62S006300CU.html>)。2002年到2006年间就有338例狂犬病的发生，受感染者全部死亡。因为狂犬病的发生，玉林每年的直接经济损失高达667万元。有这样狂犬病肆虐的经历，本应该让当地政府有比其他地区当政者更高的狂犬病防控意识才对。玉林市政府坐视“狗肉节”大操大办，从轻说是放松了狂犬病防控警觉性，从重说来是轻视国民健康、抗拒中央政府严防重大疫情发生的政策指示。本着老百姓的健康、疫病的防控、以及贯彻中央疾病防控政策路线，广西壮族自治区政府有必要责成玉林市政府立即宣布永远取消狗肉节。

第二，玉林“狗肉节”涉嫌破坏社会稳定、激化社会矛盾、妨碍中央建设和和谐中华的政策方针。

活狗交易中狗的来源不明，早已遭到社会各界的批评。从广西地区活狗交易的调查中发现，有相当一部分的活狗是他人的宠物或农村的看家犬，而且是偷来的。最近在广西发生的村民暴打盗狗贼的事件说明，这类违法犯罪活动已经到了激起民愤、甚至是群体民愤的程度。被害村民所以群起自发挥卫自己的权利、痛打盗狗贼，不就是广西地方执法部门长期不作为的结果吗？狗肉市场的存在、助长了盗狗这类藐视他人权利的偷盗行为。如果“狗肉节”得以继续办下去，偷狗的非法行为就会继续；政府对偷狗盗狗不作为，必然迫使被害人捍卫自己的权利。另外，狗肉产业滋生诸如开具假票证、假防疫证件种种非法犯罪行为，直接挑战国家法律。坐视这个产业和与它有关的偷盗行为而不作为，那么政府的公信力、政府的权威和法律的尊严就会受到极大的打击。所以说，“狗肉节”鼓励偷盗，激发受害者自发维护自己的权利，双方矛盾的上升只会大大妨碍和谐社会的建设，甚至可能导致重大群体事件的爆发。因此，为了社会和谐、公权力的尊严、人民生命财产的安全，广西壮族自治区政府有责任终止玉林“狗肉节”。

第三，玉林“狗肉节”是个重大的食品安全隐患。

狗肉节上的狗肉的来源有两大渠道，一事长途跨省贩运到玉林的。这些狗饱受苦难，疾病缠身而且相互传染，屠宰时已病得很厉害。中国并不存在肉狗养殖场，国家也没有狗肉的安全检验标准，也不应该有。狗肉的安全性完全不在国家肉品安全的掌控范围内，因此不能成为食物。病狗屠宰和处理过程中，都可能导致从业人员感染疾病，污染的食物也可能导致食客得病。另外一部分狗肉是来自被毒杀的狗，此类肉品对消费者的危害是不言而喻的。作为地方执政者，食品安全是人命关天的大事，广西壮族自治区政府有责任查处此类有毒食品，关闭玉林“狗肉节”可以是该行动的第一步。野生动物的过度消费一度导致非典SARS的狂虐，狗肉消费的安全隐患必须得到地方执政当局的高度警惕。

第四，玉林“狗肉节”是对少年儿童的心理迫害。

在“狗肉节”期间，玉林的街头就成了血流满地的屠宰场。此类当街屠宰，因为其对环境的破坏和对社会风尚的贻害，早已被其他国家用法律的形式禁止。玉林的狗肉商铺，什么时候考虑过行人、体恤过上下学的小朋友的心理感受？这种将血淋淋和野蛮的场面强加给路人、甚至强加给上下学的小朋友的心理暴力行为，政府怎么可以听任其存在？心理学研究早就指出，将残酷呈现到年幼的孩子面前，会打掉他们对他人的同情心。我们谴责广东路人对小悦悦的冷漠、我们不理解为什么老人跌倒了没有人扶，这些谴责都没有错。但是，我们更要谴责那些制造冷漠的行为。玉林“狗肉节”以其当街杀狗、光天化日下炫耀暴力，就是在制造冷漠。广西自治区政府和自治区妇联作为青少年的保护者，有责任站出来，终止玉林“狗肉节”这个制造冷漠、对青少年进行精神迫害的“节日”。

第五，玉林“狗肉节”是文化习俗，还是打着文化、民俗的幌子进行的商业牟利活动？

这个问题值得广西壮族自治区政府认真思考。个人吃什么，是个人的权利，大家对此没有异议。但是，打着“文化”和“民俗”的招牌，把有食品安全隐患、对涉及偷盗的食品的消费，说成是一个地区的风俗，就值得商榷。即使某个吃法、某种事物来源完全合法并带有一定的地方特征，这也不是维持某个落伍习惯的理由。中国妇女以前裹小脚，残酷至极，也曾被当着“文化传统”抵抗铺天盖地的谴责声。人类的文明进步脚步，从来不会因为某些落伍的、残酷的“文化”而停下来。粉碎裹小脚、抽鸦片、包办婚姻等文化陋习后，中国优秀文化得以更加发扬光大，中国得以进步的更快。玉林“狗肉节”的文化和民俗说，应该休矣。为了中国文化不被落伍的习俗所拖累，广西壮族自治区政府有责任终止玉林这种打着文化旗号、破坏中华文化、破坏中华主流饮食文化名声的残酷和非法饮食陋习。

最后，作为热爱中华祖国、心系祖国同胞、爱惜国家声誉的侨胞，玉林地方几年来因“狗肉节”给广西甚至全中国带来的名誉上损害，让我们海外侨胞痛心。

去年6月21日前后，仅在48小时内，玉林狗肉节就吸引了多达4万多来自各国人士的谴责。这些外国人中的大多数都对华友好，和我们一样对玉林当局无视国民健康、无视国家形象的不作为感到失望。好山好水的广西，有中国大陆最著名的旅游景点，也是国际友人最喜爱的观光地。玉林“狗肉节”不仅破坏玉林的名声，也破坏国家的旅游事业，更是破坏了国家的声誉。我们呼吁广西壮族自治区政府，体惜国家外交人员在国外为国争光而努力，坚决取缔玉林“狗肉节”这个破坏国家外交政策的行为。

玉林“狗肉节”是广西之耻，我们期望广西壮族自治区政府果断采取行动。

抄送：

国务院总理办公室

中国外交部

国家农业部

国家食品药品管理局

国家卫生部

国家旅游局

中国在北美、欧洲、澳洲侨胞

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