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Peter Humphrey Biog

Peter Humphrey has spent 45 years involved with China. He is the founder of ChinaWhys, a risk management consultancy firm which specialised in China fraud prevention for corporate clients until it was arbitrarily shut down by Shanghai police in 2013. He and his business partner and wife Yingzeng Yu (a China-born American citizen) were incarcerated for two years in Shanghai on trumped-up charges of “illegally obtaining citizens’ information”, and their 10-year-old business was destroyed. In captivity he developed cancer due to the denial of necessary medical treatment as he refused to sign a confession to crimes that he denied. The authorities finally released him and his wife in June 2015 in response to mounting international media attention around Peter's health.

Peter was a prominent member of the British community in China for many years, a long-serving active member of the British Chamber of Commerce where he was a regular speaker and thought leader on due diligence and fraud prevention, a judge for the British Business Awards, President of the Rotary Club of Beijing, Assistant Governor of Rotary China, and President of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners China Chapter, as well as being a rescuer for British companies with fraud problems in China.

Peter obtained First Class Hons in Chinese Studies at Durham University in 1979. His subsequent career spanned academia, journalism and corporate investigation and the geographies of China, Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Before entering business in 1998 he spent almost two decades as a foreign correspondent with Reuters, which he exited after covering Hong Kong's return to China. He then served as China head for the US sleuthing consultancy Kroll and as head of China investigations at PwC, as well as undertaking several humanitarian assignments including a kidnap recovery. He founded his own anti-fraud firm ChinaWhys in Shanghai and Hong Kong in 2003 which practiced for 10 years.

In addition to holding his sinology degree, Peter was a fellow of Harvard University's Russian Research Centre in 1994-1995 and was an honorary professor of the University of St Gallen China EMBA Program and of the Forensic Accounting department of the China University of Politics and Law in Beijing 2008-2013. He is fluent in Mandarin and has knowledge of several other foreign languages. He is a member of Chatham House and the Society of Authors of Great Britain, and is an external research affiliate of King's College London and of Harvard University's Fairbank Centre for China Studies. He has spoken at several leading UK and US universities on the subject of false imprisonment ordeals, most recently at the Cambridge Human Rights Law Society in February, and at Oxford's China Centre last October.

Since his release from China in June 2015, Peter has continued to follow developments in China closely, especially justice, human rights and the rule of law. He has been undergoing treatments for cancer, PTSD, and physical ailments caused by his captivity conditions. He filed a detailed complaint to the Chinese government at the end of 2015 against the Shanghai authorities' unlawful treatment of him and his wife. He filed suit in a US court against the Anglo-American pharma firm GSK in Nov 2016 over its fraudulent engagement of ChinaWhys to investigate a whistleblower who was working for the PRC government. He filed regulatory complaints to Ofcom against Chinese state TV in November 2018 over its role in extracting and broadcasting forced confessions in collusion with the Chinese police, then airing these broadcasts in the UK and globally. He has re-entered part-time journalism as a commentator and analyst. In December 2019 he wrote a series of viral front-page exclusives for the Sunday Times exposing the use of foreign prisoners in Qingpu Prison as forced labour to package products including Tesco Christmas cards and Quaker Oats cereals.