

FEATURE

Meng Wanzhou back in China

By Xinhua

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Meng Wanzhou waves to a cheering crowd as she steps out of a charter plane at Shenzhen Bao'an International Airport in Shenzhen, south China's Guangdong Province, Sept. 25, 2021. (Photo: Xinhua)

Meng Wanzhou, Huawei's chief financial officer, arrived in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen on Saturday night on a charter flight organized by the Chinese government, after being illegally detained for nearly three years in Canada.

At around 10 p.m., the charter flight touched down at the Shenzhen Bao'an International Airport.

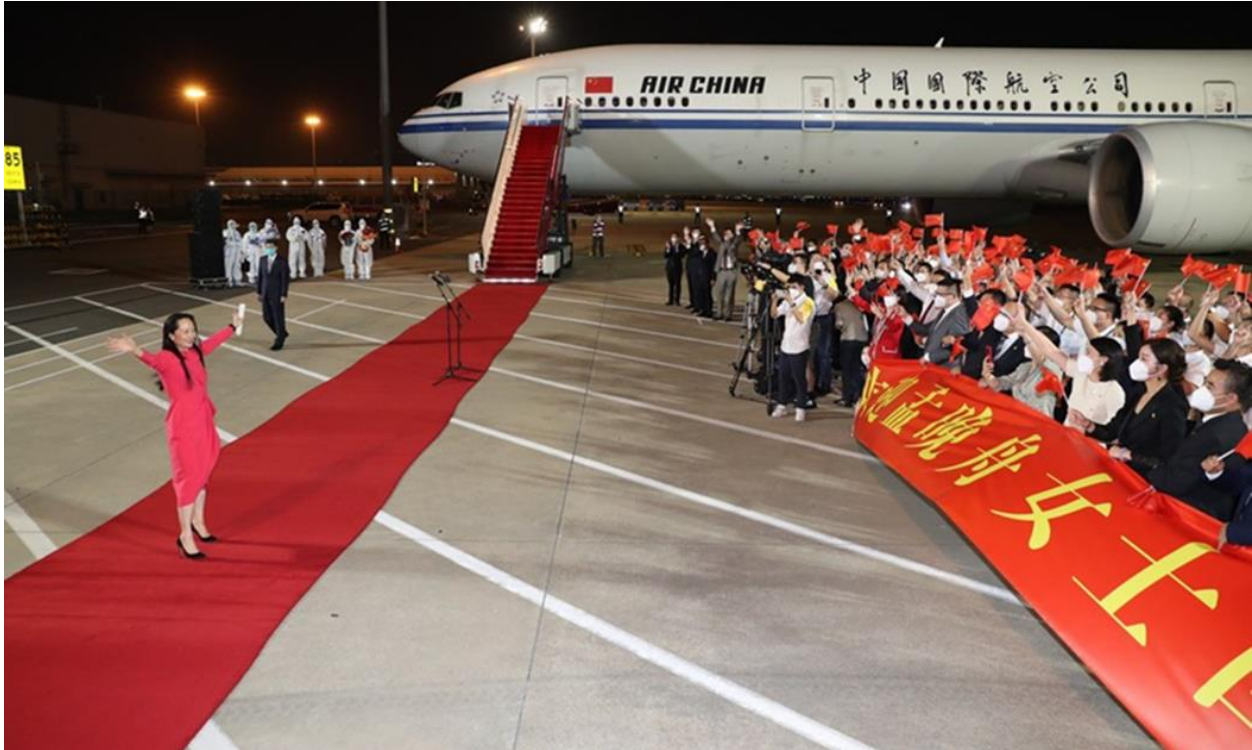
Meng, in a red dress, waved to the welcoming crowd after she stepped out of the cabin, which was emblazoned with China's national flag. As she walked down the stairs,

applause and cheers erupted from the crowd. Airport staff presented flowers to her.

The crowd held up a banner reading "Welcome home, Ms. Meng Wanzhou," waved national flags, and chanted "welcome home."

Meng's family members, central and local government officials, as well as her Huawei colleagues were among the more than 100 people waiting at the airport.

There were no handshakes or hugs due to epidemic prevention concerns. Meng made a brief speech at the airport.



Meng waves to the crowd after her arrival at the Shenzhen Bao'an International Airport.(Photo: Xinhua)

"After more than 1,000 days of torment, I am finally back in the embrace of the motherland," Meng said.

"I am back, motherland!" she chanted to the cheering crowd.

"As an ordinary Chinese citizen who had suffered this plight and been stranded overseas for nearly three years, there was never a moment when I did not feel the care and warmth of the Party, the motherland and the people," she said.

"President Xi Jinping cares about the safety of each and every Chinese citizen, including me. I am deeply moved," Meng said. "I also thank the relevant departments for their support and help. They have resolutely safeguarded the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese enterprises and citizens."

"The motherland provides us the strongest backing," Meng said. "As an ordinary Chinese person, I am proud of my motherland."

Meng bowed several times during her speech to the crowd, who cheered and applauded her emotional address.

The crowd broke into an impromptu rendition of the patriotic song "Ode to the Motherland" after the speech. Meng then sang together with them.

Meng was arbitrarily detained by Canada on a U.S. extradition request on Dec. 1, 2018 at Vancouver International Airport.

She has pleaded not guilty to all charges against her and reached a deferred prosecution agreement with U.S. prosecutors. The U.S. side has withdrawn its extradition request. Meng did not pay any fines.

Facts have proven that the targeting of Meng is a case of political persecution aiming to suppress Chinese high-tech companies, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said Saturday.

The so-called fraud charges against Meng are nothing but pure fabrication, she said.



Landmark buildings in Shenzhen exhibit giant slogans welcoming Meng's return. (Photo: Xinhua)

"What the United States and Canada have done is a typical case of arbitrary detention."

WELCOME HOME

The news of Meng's release has aroused a strong reaction among Chinese internet users. Her return, made possible after the Chinese government's unremitting efforts, was hailed as a major victory achieved by the Chinese people.

"I'm so excited, I'm on the verge of tears," said one comment.

Meng's arrival was broadcast by the state broadcaster. People in Shenzhen, where Huawei

is based, welcomed her return with enormous enthusiasm.

On Saturday night, many landmark buildings in the city exhibited giant welcome slogans, while drones flew in formations to form welcome messages. At the airport, patriotic songs were played in the terminal.

In accordance with epidemic control regulations, Meng will be quarantined at a designated hotel after her arrival.