

PUBLIC

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Medical concern/fear of torture or other ill-treatment

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Ouyang Wen (f), aged 48, Falun Gong practitioner

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Falun Gong practitioner Ouyang Wen began a two-year term of Re-education Through Labour (RTL) in June 2008. While in custody her eyesight began to deteriorate, to the point where she is now almost blind, but she has been given no medical treatment.

She was arrested without a warrant at her home in Beijing in May 2008, and sent to RTL, after she had been in custody for a month, for "hiding Falun Gong propaganda materials" in her home. At the RTL camp she was forced to study anti-Falun Gong pamphlets for 16 hours a day, every day, forced to take tests on the pamphlets, and told her scores would affect how long she would spend in RTL. After three months her eyesight began to deteriorate, when she was then made to take anti-Falun Gong tests designed for illiterate people.

Her eyesight has now deteriorated to the extent that she can only see lights and blurry shapes. She has lost over 10kg, is so weak she can barely walk, and suffers from dizzy spells. Because of this, she is no longer forced to take the tests or perform manual labour, but she is kept locked in her room.

This is the third time Ouyang Wen has been persecuted for her religious beliefs. She was arrested in November 2000, when she and a few friends flew a banner reading "Falun Gong is Good" in Tiananmen Square, in the centre of Beijing. Police searched her home but found insufficient evidence to prosecute her. She was held without charge until a family friend persuaded the police to release her, after 24 days.

She was arrested again in November 2001, with 14 other Falun Gong practitioners. She was held at Xicheng District Dewai Police Station for one month, and in protest at her treatment began a hunger strike with the other practitioners. In response the authorities handcuffed her to a bed, attached a drip to her arm and force-fed her. As she refused to give up Falun Gong, she was moved to Xicheng Law Center and tortured until she signed a letter renouncing Falun Gong and promising never to practice it again. She was verbally abused for hours at a time, and made to sit for 12 hours with her legs and arms crossed and tied tightly, causing extreme pain. Two weeks after she signed the letter, Ouyang Wen was released, in January 2002.

Shortly after her release Ouyang Wen resumed practicing Falun Gong and declared on a Falun Gong website that she regretted signing the letter and had been coerced into doing so. Fearing the government would punish her for this; she fled her home and became destitute. She travelled for the next six years, only occasionally visiting her family at home. Her arrest on 14 May 2008 was a result of her visiting home to celebrate her daughter's 17<sup>th</sup> birthday.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Tens of thousands of Falun Gong practitioners have been arbitrarily detained since the spiritual movement was banned as a "threat to social and political stability" in July 1999. Those accused of being Falun Gong leaders or organizers have been jailed. Others have been held in psychiatric hospitals, but the vast majority have been held in RTL facilities, a form of administrative detention imposed without charge, trial or judicial review. According to sources in China, torture of detained Falun Gong practitioners has been widespread, particularly those who refuse to renounce their belief in Falun Gong. Overseas Falun Gong organizations have documented over 2,000 deaths in custody of Falun Gong practitioners since the crackdown began.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Mandarin or your own language:**

- expressing concern that Ouyang Wen has been detained solely for the peaceful exercise of her rights to freedom of expression, association and religious belief, and calling on the authorities to release her immediately and unconditionally;
- asking the authorities to ensure that Ouyang Wen is protected from torture and other ill-treatment;
- urging them to ensure she has access to proper medical treatment while she remains in custody;
- urging the authorities to release Ouyang Wen on medical parole on humanitarian grounds;
- calling on the authorities to end the political crackdown against the Falun Gong spiritual movement, which has resulted in widespread torture and deaths in custody;
- urging the authorities to abolish Re-education through Labour and ensure that all offences punishable with deprivation of liberty are brought within the scope of the Criminal Law.

**APPEALS TO:**

Director of the Beijing Bureau of Re-education-Through-Labour

XIAO Shiming Juzhang

Beijingshi Laodong Jiaoyang Gongzuo Guanliju

7 Youanmendongjie

Xuanwuqu

Beijingshi 100054

People's Republic of China

**Email: BJJJ@bjlj.gov.cn**

**Salutation: Dear Director**

Director of Beijing Municipal Women's "Re-education through Labour" Camp

Beijing Municipal Women's "Re-education through Labour" Camp

12 Weiyonglu

Daxing District

Beijing

People's Republic of China

**Salutation: Dear Director**

Minister of Justice of the People's Republic of China

WU Aiyang Buzhang

Sifabu

10 Chaoyangmen Nandajie, Chaoyangqu

Beijingshi 100020

People's Republic of China

**Fax: + 86 10 65292345**

**Email: minister@legalinfo.gov.cn**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

Minister of Public Security of People's Republic of China

ZHOU Yongkang Buzhang

Gong'anbu

14 Dongchang'anjie, Beijingshi 100741

People's Republic of China

**Fax: +86 10 63099216 (it may be difficult to get through; please keep trying)**

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

**COPIES TO:** diplomatic representatives of China accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 13 April 2009.