

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 17/009/2006

15 February 2006

Further Information on UA 32/06 (ASA 17/008/2006, 9 February 2006) Fear of torture and ill-treatment

**CHINA**            **Yang Maodong (also known as Guo Feixiong) (m) aged 39, human rights defender**

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Human rights activist Yang Maodong was released from detention in Fuyou police station in Beijing on 9 February and was handed over to police officers from his home city of Guangzhou. The police officers escorted him back to Guangzhou, and he arrived at his home the following day. He was not tortured or ill-treated in detention but was not permitted contact with family and friends. Since his return home, police have kept him under "residential surveillance".

Immediately after Yang Maodong's return, around 20 police officers were said to be standing guard outside his house. When he left his house to buy necessities, 11 officers reportedly followed him. Since 13 February, the number of police guards outside the house was reportedly reduced to seven, while four officers followed Yang Maodong when he had to go out. Yang Maodong's wife and two sons, aged four and nine, are also said to be followed by two police officers when they leave the house. Amnesty International fears that this heavy police presence is an attempt to intimidate Yang Maodong and stop him speaking out on human rights issues. It is not known for how long this "residential surveillance" will continue.

Yang Maodong was detained on 8 February as he carried out a public hunger strike in Beijing in response to a call by prominent human rights lawyer Gao Zhisheng for a "hunger strike group" to protest the government's crackdown on human rights activists and the earlier detention and beating of Yang Maodong on 4 February in Guangzhou.

In an open letter published on 8 February Yang Maodong called on the Chinese government to enter a dialogue to address the human rights violations highlighted by Chinese human rights activists and lawyers.

Human rights defenders and other activists in China remain at serious risk of human rights violations. Many have been arbitrarily detained, beaten, harassed and intimidated on account of their peaceful and legitimate rights activities. Some have been sentenced to prison terms, while others have been placed under official surveillance, including forms of 'house arrest'. Those attempting to challenge such restrictions are at high risk of torture or ill-treatment.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Many thanks to all who sent appeals on behalf of Yang Maodong. Amnesty International will continue to monitor his case, and will take further campaigning action as necessary. Please send a final round of appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Chinese or your own language:**

- welcoming Yang Maodong's release from police detention, but urging the authorities to lift all remaining restrictions placed on Yang Maodong and his family as a result of 'residential surveillance';
- expressing concern that Yang Maodong has been frequently detained because of his legitimate human rights activities;
- expressing concern over numerous recent reports of the use of violence either by the police or those allegedly acting at the behest of the authorities against human rights defenders in China;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that all human rights defenders in China are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities in line with constitutional guarantees on the protection of human rights and international human rights standards.

**APPEALS TO:**

Prime Minister

Wen Jiabao Guojia Zongli  
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**Fax: + 86 10 65961109 or 2260 (c/o Minister of Foreign Affairs)**  
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**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Secretary of the Guangdong Provincial Party Committee

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**Salutation: Dear Secretary**

**COPIES TO:**

Director of the Guangdong Provincial Bureau of Public Security

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and to diplomatic representatives of China accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.**