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Arbitrary arrest / Fear for Safety

28 June 1995

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC
OF CHINA

Hongda Harry Wu (m) aged 58

Hongda Harry Wu, a naturalized citizen of the United States of America (US) and former political prisoner in China, was detained in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on Monday 19 June 1995. His place of detention since 23 June 1995 is unknown; he has reportedly been denied access to a representative of the US Embassy and there are serious concerns for his physical safety.

Harry Wu and a companion were stopped by the Chinese authorities at a town on the Kazakhstan/China border on 19 June 1995. They were initially taken to a guesthouse near the border town of Horgas, while the authorities reportedly investigated the legitimacy of their travel documents. While at the guesthouse, they were kept under guard, their movements were restricted and they were not permitted to contact the US Embassy or anyone else.

At dawn on 23 June 1995, Harry Wu's companion, also a US citizen, was taken from the guesthouse and later returned to the US. Also on that day the US Embassy in Beijing was informed of the detentions by the Chinese authorities who said that they were continuing to conduct an investigation into the validity of Harry Wu's travel documents.

Amnesty International believes that his detention may be related to his involvement in publicizing information about political imprisonment and human rights abuses in China and that he is, therefore, a prisoner of conscience.

Amnesty International also has well-documented concerns about routine ill-treatment of detainees in police custody and therefore fears that Harry Wu may be at risk of such treatment.

According to the *Laogai Research Foundation*, Harry Wu, whose legal name is Peter H. Wu, was travelling on a US passport with a visa issued by the Chinese authorities on 11 March 1995, valid for two entries into China and expiring on 11 September 1995.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Harry Wu was born in China and is the founder and Executive Director of the *Laogai Research Foundation*. He is a well-known human rights campaigner, particularly focussing on the *laogai* (labour camp) system in China. In 1960 he was arrested and spent 19 years in a labour camp for expressing his political ideas. He left China in 1985.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in English or Chinese or in your own language:

- requesting that the Chinese authorities immediately and unconditionally release Hongda Harry Wu;

- urging the authorities to ensure that, while in detention, Hongda Harry Wu is treated in accordance with international standards for the treatment of prisoners and that he is protected from all forms of ill-treatment;
- requesting that his place of detention be made public and he be permitted visits by a representative of the US Embassy.

APPEALS TO:

Premier of the People's Republic of China
Li Peng Zongli
Guowuyuan
9 Xihuangchenggenbeijie
Beijingshi 100032
People's Republic of China
Telexes: 210070 FMPRC CN or 22478 MFERT CN
Faxes: + 86 1 512 5810
(via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
Telegram: Premier Li Peng, Beijing, China
Salutation: Your Excellency

Director of the Department of Justice
Shayimu Rehefu Tingzhang
Sifating
Jiangkanglu
Wulumuqishi 830002
Xinjiang Zizhiqu
People's Republic of China
Telexes:
Faxes:
Telegram: Director of the Department of Justice Shayimu Rehefu, Wulumuqi, Xinjiang Autonomous Region, China

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Editor in Chief, Xinjiang Daily
* Zongbianji
Xinjiang Ribao
Wulumuqishi
Xinjiang Weiwuer Zizhiqu
People's Republic of China

and to diplomatic representatives of People's Republic of China accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 9 August 1995.