

EXTERNAL

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MEDICAL CONCERN

Ren Wanding
People's Republic of China

Ren Wanding is a prisoner of conscience who was arrested in June 1989 at the time of the pro-democracy demonstrations. He was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment and deprivation of his political rights for a further three years. He is reported to be suffering from eye problems and to risk losing his sight. He also has numerous other health problems which have become aggravated during the three years of his imprisonment. Ren Wanding is currently held in Beijing No. 2 prison, which is used to house long-term prisoners.

Background

Ren Wanding is a veteran human rights activist who has spent four years in prison on a previous occasion. He was a founding member of the "Human Rights Alliance" in the 1979 "democracy movement" and was first arrested in April 1979. During that period of imprisonment he was also adopted as a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International.

In late 1988, Ren Wanding issued a statement calling for the release of political prisoners in China and urging foreign countries and businessmen to assist China only if its human rights record improved. He also gave interviews to foreign journalists.

During the 1989 pro-democracy movement, Ren Wanding continued to write and distribute essays calling for respect for human rights, freedom of speech and the rule of law. He made several public speeches and was named as an "instigator" of the "counter-revolutionary rebellion" in the official account of the Beijing events given at the end of June 1989 by Beijing Mayor, Chen Xudong. He was arrested at his home on 9 June 1989 and brought to trial in January 1991 on charges of "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation".

Ren Wanding's health appears to have deteriorated considerably since his imprisonment. According to reports he first experienced problems with his vision in November 1989 when his left eye became painful, with shadows and decreased visual acuity. He received medical attention in January or February 1990 when he is reported to have been diagnosed at the Public Security Bureau Hospital as having degenerative macular haemorrhage. He is reported to have been prescribed herbal medicine, although he in fact was given no medicine. In July 1991 he was seen at Bun He Hospital where macular degeneration, bilateral cataract and bilateral vitreous clouding were diagnosed. He is said to have received oral and intravenous medicine; the shadows are said to have improved and his eyesight to have improved.

temporarily. In April 1992 the cataracts are reported to have become worse with the shadow in the left eye larger and more dense. In June this year his visual acuity was given as 0.3.

In addition to this, Ren Wanding has severe internal and external haemorrhoids and a chronic prolapsed rectum with bleeding and purulent discharge. He was operated in January 1992 for the prolapsed rectum, but both internal and external haemorrhoids persist and he is unable to sit for any length of time. He is also reported to have chronic lower back pain and sciatica, chronic sinusitis and upper respiratory tract infection. He also suffers from frequent and persistent gastritis.

Conditions in Beijing No 2 prison are reported to be harsh; lighting is poor in the cells and prisoners have little opportunity of fresh air or exercise. Last year Ren Wanding was one of six prisoners who were reportedly held in solitary confinement for several months following their transfer to Beijing No 2 prison from Qincheng prison north of Beijing (see Medical Concern, ASA 17/50/91, 8 August 1991).

Ren Wanding, 48, is married and has a teenage daughter. In May this year his wife was rehoused by the authorities after being evicted from the family's apartment. Police have, however, reportedly told her that she would eventually have to move to Tianjin, some 100 kilometres from Beijing where she and her parents were officially registered to live. Such a move would render visits to her husband more difficult.

Ren Wanding has not used or advocated violence and has been detained for the peaceful exercise of the right to freedom of expression. Amnesty International is seeking his quick and unconditional release from prison and proper medical care in accordance with the United Nations' Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

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To: Medical professionals
From: Medical Office / Research Department - Asia
Date: 17 August 1992

MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION

Ren Wanding
People's Republic of China

Keywords

Theme: POC/ ill-health

Summary

Ren Wanding is an adopted prisoner of conscience arrested in June 1989 and sentenced in January 1991 to seven years' imprisonment and a further three years' deprivation of his political rights. He is a human rights activist who made numerous speeches and distributed leaflets during the 1989 pro-democracy movement and who was arrested previously in 1979 when he spent four years in prison. Ren Wanding suffers from eye problems and is reported to be in danger of losing his sight and has numerous other health problems. Amnesty International is seeking assurances that he will receive proper medical care and treatment while he remains in prison and is seeking his unconditional release from prison.

Recommended Actions

Letters are requested from medical professionals to the addresses given below:

- expressing concern at the imprisonment of Ren Wanding and urging that he be released quickly and unconditionally
- expressing concern at the numerous health problems he suffers and at the risk to his eyesight
- seeking information on what medical and specialist attention he has received
- seeking assurances that his problems will be properly monitored and that he will have access to all necessary medical care and treatment, including specialist care, in accordance with the United Nations' Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners

Addresses

Premier
Li Peng Zongli
Guowoyuan
Beijingshi
Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo
People's Republic of China

Minister of Justice
Cai Cheng Buzhang
Sanlihe
Beijingshi
Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo
People's Republic of China

Chen Minzhang Buzhang
Minister of Health
Weishengbu
44 Houhai Beiyan
Gulou Xidajie
Beijingshi
People's Republic of China

Please send copies of your letters to:

Jianyazhang
Beijing Di Er Jianyu
Beijingshi
People's Republic of China

SHAO Huaze Zong Bianji
People's Daily [Renmin Ribao]
Jintaixi lu
Chaoyangmenwai
Beijingshi 100733
People's Republic of China

China Daily [Zhongguo Ribao]
15 Huixin Dongjie
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