

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 150/95 (ASA 17/43/95, 28 June 1995) - Arbitrary arrest / Fear for Safety

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA Hongda Harry Wu, aged 58, human rights activist

The Chinese authorities announced on 8 July 1995 that human rights activist Harry Wu had been formally arrested by the Wuhan Public Security (police) Bureau and accused of stealing state secrets, disseminating those secrets to institutions and organizations outside China, and attempting to enter China using an assumed name. He is reported to have been held in the town of Horgas in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region until 29 June when he was transferred to a detention centre somewhere in Wuhan city, Hubei province.

After having been held incommunicado since 19 June, Harry Wu was permitted to speak to a United States (US) consular official on 10 July for 30 minutes by telephone through a glass partition. According to the US official, Harry Wu said that he was not being ill-treated and that he was receiving sufficient food. A number of prison officials were present throughout the meeting. Harry Wu had reportedly seen a doctor for eye and back problems, but was not satisfied with the standard of treatment he had received.

Government authorities had initially said that they were investigating the validity of Harry Wu's travel documents. According to the *Laogai Research Foundation*, Harry Wu's documentation was in order on this and all previous visits to China and have documentary evidence to prove it. The US State Department does not believe there is any basis for the accusation that Harry Wu violated Chinese immigration law.

Amnesty International believes that Harry Wu's detention is 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. The organization is calling for his immediate and unconditional release.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In China during 1994 and 1995, a growing number of people have been arrested and sentenced on charges of "leaking state secrets", raising concern that the legal provisions concerning state secrets are being used to repress fundamental freedoms. Amnesty International considers some of those held on such charges to be prisoners of conscience. The definition given to "state secrets" in China is very broad, encompassing matters which would be the subject of public scrutiny in other countries, and going far beyond what is needed to protect national security. In recent years, people accused of leaking state secrets and considered to be prisoners of conscience have been sentenced to terms of imprisonment ranging between 2 to 10 years.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/airmail letters in Chinese, English, or your own language:

- calling for the immediate and unconditional release of 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;
- urging that he receive adequate medical treatment for eye and back complaints.

APPEALS TO:

Director of the Hubei Department of Public Security

TIAN Qiyu Juzhang

Gong'anting

Fujiapo, Wuchang

Wuhanshi 430070

Hubeisheng

People's Republic of China

Telegrams: Director, Department of Public Security, Wuhan, Hubei Province, China

Salutation: Dear Director

Premier of the People's Republic of China

LI Peng Zongli

Guowuyuan

9 Xihuangchenggenbeijie

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People's Republic of China

Telexes: 210070 FMPC CN or 22478 MFERT CN

Telegrams: Premier Li Peng, Beijing, China

Salutation: Your Excellency

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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 28 August 1995.