

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

## Public Statement

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### **China: Canadian Uighur sentenced to life in prison**

Husein Dzhelil, a Canadian citizen, was sentenced today to life imprisonment by the Urumqi Intermediate People's Court for "plotting to split the country" and to 10 years in prison for joining a "terrorist organization".

Amnesty International is concerned that Dzhelil was convicted of political offences after an unfair trial and based on a confession that may have been extracted through torture.

Dzhelil was first arrested in Uzbekistan, and subsequently extradited to China in June 2006, where he was tried on 2 February 2007 in Urumqi, the capital of the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region in northwest China.

During the 5-hour trial Dzhelil claimed that his earlier confession had been extracted through torture. These claims are not known to have been investigated. Since his detention in China, he has been denied access to Canadian consular representatives and family members. Dzhelil was also denied the right to appoint a lawyer of his choice. Representatives of the Canadian government were not allowed to attend the February trial or the hearing today. Dzhelil's mother, who attended the hearing, reported that her son's court-appointed lawyer did not make any statement on Dzhelil's behalf. She reported that after the verdict was read by the judge, Dzhelil shouted "All is a lie, nothing is true. Everything is a lie. I do not accept anything that has been read now."

Dzhelil's life sentence follows only days after the sentencing of Ablikim Abdiriyim, a son of former prisoner of conscience Rebiya Kadeer, to 9 years in prison on political charges of "instigation and engaging in secessionist activities" following an unfair trial. This was the latest in a series of actions by the Chinese government targeting Ms Kadeer's family members in China. Abdiriyim had reportedly been severely beaten in detention.