

**EXTERNAL**

**AI Index: ASA 17/67/95**

**8 September 1995**

**EXTRA 102/95**

**Death**

**PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA      Liu Shushu, aged 19**

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**On 4 September 1995, Liu Shushu, a 19-year-old student from southern Guangdong Province was sentenced to death for bombing Guangzhou City railway station on 5 August 1995.**

**A home-made bomb was thrown into the crowd queuing up for tickets in the main square of Guangzhou City railway station on 3 August 1995 and at least two people were injured in the blast.**

**Liu Shushu is reported to have lost both an arm and a leg in the explosion and was admitted to a military hospital for treatment. Liu Shushu reportedly confessed to the bombing after he regained consciousness. According to reports, Liu Shushu reportedly set off the bomb after hearing that his college, Hunan Advanced Mechanical Institute, had threatened to expel him for 'constant trouble'.**

**Under Chinese law, defendants have between three and 10 days after the passing of sentence to appeal to another court. If no appeal is lodged, the sentence will be automatically referred for review to Guangdong Province High People's Court. This court must then rule on the appeal or review the case within one and a half months. This process can be accelerated and review of death sentences can take place within only a few days after the trial. Successful appeals are rare.**

**In cases involving crimes which 'seriously endanger public security' or are otherwise regarded as serious, Article 110 of the Criminal Procedure Law is overruled and the time limit for appeal is changed from 10 days to three. Liu Shushu was convicted only 32 days after the reported crime. The speed of the trial and sentencing suggests that this case is being seen as serious. It is possible that the authorities may want the execution to take place as soon as possible after the sentence. It is not known whether Liu Shushu has appealed against his death sentence. If he has not, the earliest he could have been executed would have been 7 September 1995.**

**Amnesty International is concerned that the speed of the conviction process may not have allowed Liu Shushu enough time to lodge an appeal and that he may be executed imminently.**

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**The death penalty is used extensively in China. In 1994, Amnesty International recorded 2,496 death sentences and 1,791 executions, although it believes these figures to be well below the actual number of death sentences and executions carried out. The increased use of the death penalty in China since the late 1980s occurs in the context of continuing "anti-crime" campaigns.**

**Amnesty International is concerned that death sentences in China are meted out following trials which fall far short of international standards for fairness. Defendants do not always have access to lawyers. In death penalty cases, lawyers, when available, usually have no more than one or two days to prepare a defence. Death sentences are often decided in advance of the trial by "adjudication committees" whose decision is seldom challenged by the courts. Chinese legal experts have in recent years criticized the practice of pre-trial verdicts, but it is reported to be still widespread.**

**Amnesty International is also concerned that the use of the death penalty in China appears to be discriminatory; it tends to apply disproportionately to people of low social standing who have neither the social nor the political status to defend themselves against the accusations. Furthermore, cases have been reported in which death sentences were imposed on the basis of confessions extracted through coercion or torture.**

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

- urging that the death sentence passed on Liu Shushu be commuted;**
- expressing concern that the death sentence passed on Liu Shushu has been passed only one month after the alleged incident;**
- expressing opposition to the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate form of cruel and inhuman punishment and as a violation of the right to life as guaranteed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.**

**APPEALS TO:****Governor of Guangdong Province****ZHU Senlin Shengzhang****Guangdongsheng Renmin Zhengfu****305 Dongfeng Zhong Lu****Guangzhoushi 510031****Guangdongsheng****People's Republic of China****Telexes: 44563 OFAGDCN****Telegrams: Governor Zhu Senlin, Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China****Salutation: Dear Governor****President of Guangdong Provincial High People's Court****MAI Chongkai Yuanzhang****Guangdongsheng Gaoji Renmin Fayuan****26 Cangbian Lu****Guangzhoushi 510090****Guangdongsheng****People's Republic of China****Telegrams: President of Provincial High People's Court, Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China****Salutation: Dear President****President of the Supreme People's Court of the People's Republic of China****REN Jianxin Yuanzhang****Zuigao Renmin Fayuan****27 Dongjiao Min Xiang****Beijingshi 100726****People's Republic of China****Telegrams: President of the Supreme People's Court Ren Jianxin, Beijing, China****Salutation: Your Excellency****COPIES TO:****Chief Editor, Southern Daily****Nanfang Ribao****729 Dongfang Donglu****Guangzhou Shi****People's Republic of China**

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**and to diplomatic representatives of the 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 6 October 1995.**