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Amnesty International
International Secretariat
1 Easton Street
London WC1X 8DJ
United Kingdom

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**CHINA--A NEW STAGE IN THE REPRESSION: PROMINENT POLITICAL
DETAINEES FACE TRIAL FOR "COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY" OFFENCES**

Several prominent political detainees were charged in November with "counter-revolutionary" offences after being held without charge for over a year. They are among several dozen political detainees who are expected to be tried soon in Beijing for their role in the 1989 pro-democracy movement. They may face heavy prison sentences after unfair trials behind closed doors. The relatives of some of the prisoners were officially notified of the charges and expect them to go on trial soon. One of the detainees' wife, who made an unprecedented public appeal for her husband's release a few months ago, has expressed her helplessness in these terms:

"I feel tiny and weak, as insignificant as a droplet of water in the sea. When I call on behalf of my husband, I hear not a sound in response."

Amnesty International believes the prisoners are arbitrarily detained for the peaceful exercise of fundamental human rights and that they are unlikely to receive fair and open trials, in accordance with international standards. The organisation has called on the government to make public the identities of all people now facing trial in relation to the protests, full details of the charges against them, and the dates and places of the hearings. It has also urged the government to ensure that the trials are open to the public and conducted in accordance with international standards for fair trial, and to allow international observers to the trials.

THE DETAINEES AND THE CHARGES

Between 20 and 30 political detainees are expected to go on trial soon in Beijing. Among those known to have been charged recently are Wang Juntao and Chen Ziming, two intellectuals who were castigated last year in the official press as "instigators" of the protests; student leader Wang Dan; Liu Xiaobo and Liu Suli, two university lecturers; Lu Jiamin, a professor of the official trade unions organisation; and Zhou Yongjun, a student leader at the University of Politics and Law in Beijing. Ren Wandong, a human rights activist who was charged earlier this year, is also said to be among those due to go on trial shortly.

Trial proceedings against two student leaders also started in Beijing in November, though no verdicts have yet been announced. The two are Zhang Ming, 25, from Beijing's Qinghua University, and Zheng Xuguang, 21, from Beijing's Aeronautics University. Zhang Ming's trial is said to have started on 27 November 1990; other defendants reportedly included Zhang Jiangjing and Li Nan. Two other students charged with political offences, Pang Zhizhong and Li Yuqi, are reported to have been appeared in court in Beijing in mid-November, but no further details about them or the hearings are available.

All have been charged with carrying out "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation" - a blanket charge which has often been used in the past to imprison people who peacefully exercise fundamental human rights and which carries a minimum sentence of 5 years' imprisonment in the case of "ringleaders". Two of the accused - Wang Juntao and Chen Ziming - have additionally been charged with "conspiring to overthrow the government", a far more serious charge which carries penalties ranging from minimum 10 years' imprisonment to death.

According to press reports, two other prominent political detainees, Bao Tong and Gao Shan, have been named in an internal Chinese Communist Party (CCP) document issued in late November which reportedly recommended prosecution against 23 people. Neither of the two men, however, has been formally charged. Bao Tong, a member of the CCP Central Committee and a close adviser to former Party Secretary Zhao Ziyang, and Gao Shan, the deputy director of an official research institute, were officially accused last year of leaking information about the impending imposition of martial law in Beijing.

Among others who may soon face trial are leaders of the independent student and worker unions formed in Beijing during last year's protests, and several intellectuals who until recently were detained without charge. They include Bao Zunxin, an academic who was reported in October to have attempted suicide in prison (see UA 414/90 of 12 October 1990 - ASA 17/62/90); Chen Xiaoping, a lecturer at the University of Politics and Law; and Han Dongfang, leader of the Beijing Workers Autonomous Federation who was charged with "counter-revolutionary" offences in March this year.

FAIR TRIAL ISSUES

The Chinese authorities have not made public the number and identity of all those charged recently and have denied, in early December, that public prosecution had started against them. Indeed, according to Chinese law, it may take as long as three months for prosecution to start after a detainee is charged, and there is still a possibility during that period that charges may be quashed and the detainee released. In political cases, however, the possibility of release at this stage of the criminal process is extremely remote, unless the detainees accept to sign "confessions" admitting that they committed crimes. The detainees charged recently are reported to have refused to make such confessions. Should the judicial process follow its normal course, they are likely to go on trial before the end of February 1991.

The procedures for trial established in Chinese law do not meet the minimum standards for a fair trial set out in international human rights standards -- notably the right to have adequate time and facilities to prepare the defence, the right to be presumed innocent before being proved guilty in a court of law, and the right to cross-examine prosecution witnesses and to call witnesses for the defence to testify in court. Furthermore, in practice, the verdict and the sentence are generally determined by those in authority before the trial hearing even takes place. Chinese jurists openly refer to this practice as "verdict first, trial second", or "deciding on the verdict before the trial".

In political cases, the chances of a fair hearing is even more remote than in ordinary criminal cases and the verdict is usually a foregone conclusion. In a number of cases since the late 1970s, political detainees were brought to so-called "public" trials attended by selected members of various organisations who were given admission tickets in advance. Most political trials, however, are closed to the public, with only the defendant's close relatives allowed to attend. The defendants are not always allowed to choose their own lawyers and may have to accept one appointed by the state. Furthermore, lawyers are usually unable to challenge the legitimacy of the indictment and limit their role to one of mitigation.

According to unconfirmed reports, the authorities have already appointed a group of state lawyers to represent the detainees during the forthcoming trials. It is also expected that these trials will be closed to the public.

WHAT DID THEY DO ?

The detainees who face trial took part in different ways in the events which marked the pro-democracy demonstrations in Beijing from April to June 1989. Most of them either made public

speeches, or organised or took part in demonstrations, strikes, petitions or public appeals for democratic reforms. Some of them belonged to the China University of Politics and Law which, together with Beijing University (Beida), was at the forefront of the student demonstrations. Several of them also had a leading role in the various independent organisations formed by students, workers and intellectuals during the protests, which were banned by the authorities after the 4 June crackdown.

The best known of these organisations, the **Beijing Students Autonomous Federation** (BSAF), was formed in late April 1989 by student representatives from nine institutions of higher education in Beijing. Several other groups also appeared in May during the occupation of Tiananmen Square, including the **Beijing Workers Autonomous Federation** (BWAF), formed by a group of workers as an alternative to the official trade unions organisation, the **Beijing Intellectuals Federation** and the **Autonomous Federation of Beijing Residents**.

One less well-known group, the **Capital All Circles Consultative Joint Conference** (CACCCJC --also known as the Capital All Circles Patriotic Joint Conference to uphold the Constitution), was formed at the initiative of a number of intellectuals on 24 May, a few days after martial law was imposed in Beijing. Several of the detainees charged recently are said to have been involved in the group, including Wang Juntao, Liu Suli and Wang Dan. Rather than an organisation, the CACCCJC was a loose coalition of representatives from various other groups, which brought together intellectuals, students and worker leaders. The group held a number of meetings at the end of May 1989. It was formed primarily with the aims of defending the constitution and seeking a debate on the legitimacy of the imposition of martial law in the capital. According to information available to Amnesty International, the group never discussed or considered the possibility of undertaking violent actions in reaction to the imposition of martial law; neither did it take joint decisions in the name of the various groups represented in it. It appears to have functioned merely as a forum for exchange of opinions and debated mainly the question of the students' withdrawal from Tiananmen Square.

Since June 1989, the authorities have sought to justify the military crackdown on protesters by claiming that a "small group of people" had engineered the protests as part of a "planned conspiracy" to overthrow the government. All the evidence available, however, suggests that the student movement was spontaneous and that it developed as a mass movement due to circumstances largely outside the control of any "small" group of people. The protests were peaceful until the army intervention on 3 June and, according to many sources, neither the student or worker leaders, nor the intellectuals who became key figures in the movement did at any point advocate the use of violence. Some of the prisoners who are now facing trial had for many years openly advocated political reforms and some, such as Wang Juntao and Chen

Ziming, had taken part in previous protest movements, notably in 1976 and 1979. Their activist past and the influence they exerted through their work or writings are believed to be as significant a factor in their imprisonment as their involvement in the 1989 events.

PRISONERS PROFILES

Wang Juntao, 32, an economist at the Beijing Research Institute of Social and Economic Sciences and an editor of the Economics Weekly, was arrested in early November 1989 in South China together with Chen Ziming and several other people who were trying to leave China via Hong Kong. Regarded by the authorities as one of the main "instigators" of the students protests, he was, with Chen Ziming, one of the most wanted men in China after the 4 June crackdown. His name appeared on a list of intellectuals for whom "internal" (non-public) arrest warrants were issued by the Ministry of Public Security in June and October 1989.

Wang Juntao had been involved in unofficial movements for democracy since 1976 when, at the age of 17, he was imprisoned after taking part in peaceful demonstrations held in Tiananmen Square in April 1976 against the rule of the "Gang of Four" and in support of Deng Xiaoping who had then fallen from power. Released after the fall of the "Gang of Four", Wang Juntao joined the Communist Youth League and entered Beijing University in 1978. He was active again during the "democracy wall" movement of 1978-79, founding and editing the unofficial journal Beijing Spring. In 1980, he presented himself as a candidate in local elections held in the Beijing University district. After graduating in physics from Beijing University in 1982, he found a job in an atomic research institute 100 miles from Beijing. In 1984, Wang Juntao moved to Wuhan, where he formed a private company, then returned to Beijing in 1987 where he joined the Research Institute of Social and Economic Sciences founded by Chen Ziming. He later became editor of Economics Weekly.

Together with other intellectuals, he was actively involved in the 1989 pro-democracy movement, and is said to have been close to some student leaders. He was subsequently accused by the authorities of being one of the "black hands" who pulled strings "behind the scenes" of the democracy movement. On 24 November 1990, his relatives were informed that he had been charged with carrying out "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation" and "conspiring to overthrow the government", but the date for his trial was not announced.

Wang Juntao is held at Qincheng prison, north of Beijing. Despite numerous requests, his wife, Hou Xiaotian, has not been allowed to visit him in prison. On 10 July 1990, Hou Xiaotian made a public appeal to the authorities to release her husband or give him a fair trial. In it she said:

"As a citizen, as a family member of one who is detained,
I have my rights to appeal to the Party, the people and

the government. Firstly, I appeal for fair and just treatment of Wang Juntao and all other innocent intellectuals. Wang Juntao was always reasonable. The more you arrest reasonable men like him, the more unreasonable people there will be in society, the more unstable elements will emerge. Also I appeal to the entire society to protect the treasure of our nation -- its talent -- and preserve their right to contribute their talent to the people and country that they so love. If there is a trial it should be conducted by the people ... He [Wang Juntao] never advocated turmoil, was never involved in any conspiracy, much less is organizing a counter-revolutionary rebellion". (The London Independent, 11 July 1990).

Chen Ziming, 38, the director of the Beijing Research Institute of Social and Economic Sciences and publisher of the now-banned Economics Weekly, was arrested in early November 1989 near Guangzhou together with his wife Wang Zhihong, Wang Juntao and several other people, while trying to flee China. Chen Ziming and his wife were on a list of intellectuals for whom "internal" (non-public) arrest warrants were issued by the Ministry of Public Security in June 1989 and again in October 1989. He was mentioned in the official account of the Beijing events presented on 30 June 1989 by Beijing Mayor Chen Xitong to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress. The report named Chen Ziming and others as "elitists" who had "indulged in unbridled propaganda through the press" and who had participated in a forum in Beijing on 19 April 1989 which was sponsored by the Shanghai newspaper World Economic Herald and the New Observer. The forum had interalia given its unequivocal support to the students' demonstrations.

Chen Ziming had been involved in unofficial movements for democracy since 1976. He was imprisoned for two years following the suppression of popular demonstrations against the "Gang of Four" in Beijing on 5 April 1976. During the democracy movement of the late 1970s, he took part in the editorial organisation of Beijing Spring, one of the unofficial journals which flourished during that period. In 1985, he founded a publishing company and, together with other people, went on to establish several research groups as well as two correspondence universities which became rapidly successful. In 1986, he helped to establish the Research Institute for Social and Economic Sciences, which within three years became a prominent centre for research and debate on political and economic reforms. It carried out over 40 research projects, organised a succession of conferences and published continuously on subjects of public debate. During the 1989 pro-democracy movement, the institute organised meetings and provided support to students on hunger strike. Chen Ziming was subsequently branded by police as one of the "black hands" who manipulated students "behind the scenes". His wife, Wang Zhihong, who is said to have been seven months pregnant at the time of their arrest, gave birth prematurely in prison, but the baby did not survive. She was released in mid-November 1990 after being held for a year without charge. On 24 November 1990, Chen Ziming's

relatives were officially informed that he had been charged with "carrying out counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation" and "conspiring to overthrow the government."

Wang Dan, 25, a history student at Beijing University, has been detained since 6 July 1989. One of the main leaders of the Beijing Students Autonomous Federation, he was number one on a government list of 21 "most wanted" student leaders issued after the 4 June massacre in Beijing. Held at Qincheng prison since his arrest, he is said to have been subjected to constant interrogations and put under strong pressure to provide incriminating information about himself and others involved in the protests.

Wang Dan was involved in various discussion groups, including a democracy salon held at Beijing University, before the student demonstrations started in April 1989. He is also said to have been close to some intellectuals who promoted political reforms. In March 1989, he wrote an article which examined political developments in East European countries and advocated similar reforms in China. He has been described by various sources as a modest and altruistic person who wanted to bring about changes in Chinese society through peaceful means. After the 4 June crackdown, Wang Dan was criticized by name on numerous occasions in the Chinese official media and was named as one of the leaders of the "counter-revolutionary turmoil" in a report presented on 30 June 1989 by Beijing Mayor Chen Xitong to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (China's parliament.) He was reportedly charged in late November 1990 with "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation", after being held for over 16 months without charge. According to information available to Amnesty International, Wang Dan, like other leaders of the student movement, neither used nor advocated violence.

Zhou Yongjun, (pseudonym Wang Jie), 23, a student at Beijing's University of Politics and Law, was arrested at an unknown date some time after the 4 June 1989 crackdown. A native of Sichuan province, he was the first chairman of the Beijing Students Autonomous Federation (BSAF), but lost his position as chairman after opposing plans for a big demonstration in late April 1989, and later advocating return to classes. In late May 1989, Zhou Yongjun joined the preparatory committee of the Beijing Workers Autonomous Federation and became a member of its standing committee. He reportedly helped to organize the workers' marshalls which were in charge of order and security in Tiananmen Square. Zhou Yongjun is said to have been charged in late November 1990 with "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation".

Ren Wanding, 45, an accountant and former prisoner of conscience, was arrested at his home in Beijing on the evening of 9 June 1989. A veteran campaigner for human rights, Ren Wanding is reported to have said before his arrest: "I must speak, it is my fate to do these things".

A founding member of the "Human Rights Alliance" in the 1979 "democracy movement", Ren Wanding was arrested for the first time in April 1979 and imprisoned for four years. In late 1988, he 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. At the time he also gave interviews to foreign journalists.

During the 1989 pro-democracy movement, Ren Wanding continued to write and distribute essays calling for human rights, free speech and the rule of law. Prior to the June 1989 crackdown, he had reportedly predicted that China had to change or face "a whirlwind of discontent". "I am no longer afraid", he was quoted as saying, "I have already died once in prison. Once you have been there, you are never really afraid again".

Ren Wanding made public speeches on several occasions during the pro-democracy movement and was named as an "instigator" of the "counter-revolutionary rebellion" in the official account of the Beijing events given on 30 June 1989 by Beijing Mayor Chen Xitong. Ren Wanding was accused in the Mayor's speech of being one of a number of people who "spread a lot of fallacies" at a "democracy salon" organized at Beijing University in early 1989. Even before arrests had begun, Ren Wanding had reportedly been mentioned in private official meetings as one of the "very few counter-revolutionaries" who eventually would be blamed "for the whole movement".

Ren Wanding is believed to be held in Qincheng prison, north of Beijing. His wife Zhang Fengying, who is unemployed, has not been allowed to visit her husband although she was able to send him books and clothes. They have a 12-year-old daughter. Ren Wanding was charged with "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation" in March 1990, but has not yet been tried.

Liu Xiaobo, 35, a well-known literary critic and lecturer in the Chinese department of Beijing Normal University, was arrested in Beijing on 6 June 1989. He was one of four intellectuals who started a hunger-strike on Tiananmen Square on 2 June. The hunger-strikers negotiated the withdrawal of students from the square with the army during the night of 3-4 June 1989.

The Chinese official media gave great prominence to his arrest on 23 June, accusing him of "instigating and participating in the rioting". They said that he had close ties with an "anti-communist" group in the USA, the Chinese Alliance for Democracy, and that he had met the head of the group, Hu Ping, during a visit to the USA in November 1988. The Chinese Alliance for Democracy, which publishes the magazine China Spring, was banned in China as a "reactionary" organization in 1988. Liu Xiaobo returned to Beijing in April 1989. The Beijing Daily said on 24 June that he was "well-known overseas for his anti-Marxist position and his academic views attacking Chinese culture". On 23 June a Beijing television news reader read out a long statement vilifying Liu Xiaobo for supporting the student protesters. It also accused Liu Xiaobo of having said during a telephone conversation on 2 June:

"we must organize armed forces among the people". This alleged statement by Liu Xiaobo was later repeated in a report presented by Beijing Mayor Chen Xitong to the National People's Congress, as an example of "evidence" that "organizers of the turmoil" were preparing violent action. According to information received by Amnesty International, however, this alleged statement by Liu Xiaobo, which was printed in a Hong Kong Chinese language newspaper, is a mistranslation of the English record of a telephone conversation between Liu Xiaobo and a leader of the Chinese democratic movement in New York. Various sources who know Liu Xiaobo well have told Amnesty International that he had not advocated violence. On 3 June, in fact, he urged students to return weapons which civilian protesters had seized from soldiers earlier that day. Detained at Qincheng prison, Liu Xiaobo faces a single charge of "spreading counter-revolutionary propaganda", and may face trial soon. His wife was notified of the charge on 17 November 1990.

Liu Suli, 30, a lecturer at the University of Politics and Law in Beijing, was arrested in mid-June 1989 for his role in the pro-democracy movement. A native of Huling, in Heilongjiang province (north-east China), Liu Suli graduated from the department of International Politics at Beijing University, then taught at the University of Politics and Law. During the students' demonstrations in May 1989, he was reportedly in charge of a liaison committee dealing with relations between students, workers and intellectuals, and spent most of his time in Tiananmen Square after the imposition of martial law in Beijing on 20 May. Like Chen Xiaoping, a member of the same university, Liu Suli took part in some meetings of the Capital All Circles Consultative Joint Conference, formed on 24 May after the imposition of martial law. Held at Qincheng prison, Liu Suli was charged on 19 November 1990 with "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation".

Lu Jiamin, 45, a trade union theorist and professor at the Chinese Workers Movement Institute, a training college for cadres of the official All-China Federation of Trade Unions, has been detained since 11 July 1989. He participated in two meetings called by intellectuals during the protests in May 1989 in Beijing, and his institute is said to have taken part in demonstrations and supported the students. As far as is known, however, Lu Jiamin was not actively involved in the protests. He is believed to be held mainly because of his long-standing acquaintance with Wang Juntao and his involvement in a previous democracy movement during a brief period of liberalisation in the late 1970s. He contributed at that period to the unofficial journal Beijing Spring, edited by Wang Juntao, which like other such journals advocated democratic reforms. The journals were soon banned and most of their editors were arrested between 1979 and 1981. Lu Jiamin had previously been imprisoned for three years between 1969 and 1971. In 1982, he graduated with a Master of Arts from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and then started teaching at the Chinese Workers Movement Institute. He wrote several books on the history of the labour movement and carried out research into contemporary issues, such as how the trade unions could increase their own reform and play a larger role in the state. He was widely respected by the cadres

in the trade union world. Lu Jiamin is married to Zhang Kangkang, a well-known writer in China. Since his arrest, he has been held at Qincheng prison, north of Beijing. He is reported to have been charged in late November 1990 with carrying out "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation", after being held for over 16 months without charge.

Zheng Xuguang, 21, a student at Beijing's Aeronautics College, was arrested in Guangzhou (Canton) in late July 1989. A leading member of the Beijing Students Autonomous Federation (BSAF), he was one of the 21 "most wanted" student leaders on a list issued by the government on 13 June. He was reportedly arrested while trying to escape from China.

After the students' demonstrations started in Beijing in April 1989, Zheng Xuguang represented his college on the BSAF standing committee and was involved in the movement until the crackdown in early June. He is said to have been a member of a joint committee which was in charge of administration in Tiananmen during the students' occupation of the Square. Like other student leaders, he objected to violence and never advocated its use. In late November 1990, Zheng Xuguang and other students appeared for hearing of their case before the Beijing Intermediate People's Court, but no verdict was announced. He was charged with "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation" and illegally trying to leave the country. It is not known whether his trial has been completed.

Zhang Ming, 25, a student at the Automobile Engineering Department of Beijing's Qinghua University, is reported to have been arrested by police in Shenzhen, in south China, sometime before 14 September 1989. A native of Jilin province in north-east China, Zhang Ming was a leading member of the Beijing Students Autonomous Federation formed during the 1989 protests. After the 4 June crackdown, his name appeared on a wanted list of 21 student leaders issued by the government on 13 June. Together with other student leaders he is held at Qincheng prison, north of Beijing. Zhang Ming and several other students, including Zheng Xuguang (see above), are said to have appeared in front of the Beijing Intermediate People's Court on 27 November 1990, but the hearing of their case appears not to have been completed and no verdict was announced. He was charged with "counter-revolutionary propoganda and agitation".

Han Dongfang, 27, a maintenance worker at a Beijing railway factory and main leader of the Beijing Workers Autonomous Federation (BAAF), was arrested in late June 1989. The BAAF had been established on 19 May 1989, one day before martial law was imposed in Beijing. In late May 1989, when three members of the BAAF were briefly detained by the Beijing Public Security authorities, Han Dongfang led pickets protesting against their detention. On 14 June his name appeared on a list of "wanted" workers issued by the government in its crackdown on pro-democracy activists. Han Dongfang is believed to have been harshly treated in detention. In early 1990 he was reported to be ill and to have

been taken to a police hospital in Beijing for the sixth time since his June 1989 arrest. Amnesty International learned in April 1990 that he had been formally charged with "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation", and that he had been moved from the Paoju detention centre, in the east of Beijing, to the Banbuqiao detention centre, which is located close to Beijing Prison No.1. He has not yet been tried.

When asked before his arrest whether he feared the consequences of his involvement in the Beijing WAF, Han Dongfang said: "No, I have no fear. People will always find a way to live on. I only wish to have an organization that can truly speak for the workers. The situation will be worse if we retreat now". In a statement made before 4 June 1989 he said he would not oppose Communist Party rule if reforms were implemented.

In a reply to the International Labour Organization on 5 January 1990, the Chinese government accused Han Dongfang of having made speeches in Tiananmen Square encouraging people to oppose the government and to set up a trade union of their choice. According to the government, Han Dongfang had called for the overthrow of the government and assembled more than 10,000 people to demonstrate in Tiananmen Square. To Amnesty International's knowledge, however, Han Dongfang has not used or advocated the use of violence. Amnesty International believes he is being held solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of association and opinion.

Born in Beijing, Han Dongfang grew up in his ancestral village in Shaanxi Province and joined the People's Liberation Army at the age of 17. He married in 1988 and is described by his colleagues as "a man of wisdom", with a quiet personality of mild and calm manners. His wife has not been allowed to visit him in prison; she is unemployed and without any means of support.

Bao Zunxin, a philosopher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) as well as a magazine editor and historian, was arrested on 7 July 1989. He was one of seven intellectuals for whom "internal" (i.e. non-public) arrest warrants were issued by the Public Security authorities in June 1989. Since then, he was mentioned on numerous occasions by the official Chinese media as one of the intellectuals whom the authorities regard as "instigators" of the protests. He took an active part in the pro-democracy movement, signing public appeals and petitions issued by a group of intellectuals, including on 13 May a poster entitled "We can no longer remain silent", which called on intellectuals to support the students' hunger strike which had just began on Tiananmen Square, and on 14 May a petition called "Our Urgent Appeal for the Current Situation" which urged the authorities to reappraise the student demonstrations as a patriotic democratic movement. In late May 1989, he joined the Capital All Circles Consultative Joint Conference and edited the magazine Xinwen Kuaixun (News Express). Before the student demonstrations started, Bao Zunxin had joined in an appeal for the release of political prisoners in China, which was addressed to the authorities by a group of Chinese intellectuals in February

1989. He was an associate researcher at the History Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), the editor of a well-known magazine, "Going towards the future", the author of many books and a member of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Shortly after his arrest, all his books were banned, he was fired from his post at the CASS and expelled from the CCP.

Bao Zunxin is being held at Qincheng prison, north of Beijing. He was reported in October 1990 to have attempted twice to commit suicide in prison. Since 24 January 1990 he has not been able to communicate with his wife. He is reported to suffer from high blood pressure and a heart disease, for which he must take medication every day. According to some sources, he is among the detainees who were charged in late November, but this has so far remained unconfirmed.

Chen Xiaoping, 29, a law lecturer at the University of Politics and Law in Beijing and a specialist of constitutional law, has been detained since June 1989. He reportedly turned himself in to the authorities shortly after 4 June 1989. A graduate of law from Beijing University, Chen Xiaoping had taken part in previous student movements for democracy. While a third year law student during the 1985 student demonstrations, he wrote in a wall-poster: "China's constitution guarantees freedom of expression and assembly. Yet they tear down posters and arrest peaceful demonstrators. China should either follow its own laws or face up to its actual policies honestly, and delete these bogus rights from the constitution". Though he was not arrested at the time, upon graduation, he was turned down for a prestigious job with the Law Commission of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and assigned to teach at the University of Politics and Law. He is said to have been close to Wang Juntao and contributed to the Economics Weekly (Jingji Xuebao), which Wang edited. Chen Xiaoping was actively involved in the 1989 pro-democracy movement and is said to have played a role in the formation of the Autonomous Federation of Beijing Residents, initially set up to gather support for the students' demands. Held at Qincheng prison, he was reportedly notified of the charges against him in late November 1990, though this has so far remained unconfirmed.

Li Nan, a student at the Veterinary School of the Zhejiang Agricultural University, was arrested after 4 June 1989 for organizing demonstrations, making speeches and putting up posters. His trial was announced on 19 November 1990 by the Beijing Intermediate People's Court, but no verdict was announced. He was charged with "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation".