

**PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC Dr Wan Yanhai (m), aged 38  
OF CHINA**

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Amnesty International is seriously concerned for the safety of Dr Wan Yanhai, a Chinese HIV/AIDS activist, who reportedly went missing on or around 24 August. It is feared that he has been detained by Chinese police.

Dr Wan Yanhai was reportedly last seen on 24 August in Beijing at a gay and lesbian film screening. All attempts by his family to contact him since then have failed. The Chinese authorities have not yet responded to requests for information about his whereabouts. He was allegedly under surveillance by plainclothes police as a result of his HIV/AIDS activism and his support for health issues concerning lesbians and gay men and sex workers in China.

Wan Yanhai is the founder of the Aizhi Action Project, a group which focuses on the promotion of HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention in China, and the advocacy of the rights of people with AIDS. Other members of the Aizhi Action Project have reportedly been subjected to surveillance and have been questioned since the group started organizing petitions to the government for better treatment.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

A former health official in Beijing, Wan Yanhai was expelled in 1994 from his post after receiving criticism by the Health Ministry for his involvement in HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns and for supporting equal rights for gays and lesbians.

Since founding the Aizhi Action Project in 1994, Wan Yanhai has played a prominent role in publicising the extent of the spread of AIDS throughout China, highlighting the connection between blood transfusions and HIV/AIDS, which caused many deaths in the central province of Henan. Wan Yanhai has published on the Aizhi Action Project's website ([www.aizhi.org](http://www.aizhi.org)) lists of people who apparently died in Henan province of HIV/AIDS related illnesses after selling blood between late 1980s and mid 1990s to government-sanctioned blood collectors.

In July, the Aizhi (AIDS) Action Project was forced to move out of its office when its partner institute allegedly received orders from the Chinese authorities to stop cooperating with the group.

According to Xinhua, the state-run news agency, the government is stepping up measures to keep the number of Chinese HIV/AIDS patients below 1.5 million by 2010. However, a UN report published in June 2002 estimates that by 2010 the number of HIV-infected people could rise to 10 million if effective measures are not taken.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Chinese, English or your own language:**

- expressing concern at reports that Wan Yanhai has been missing since around 24 August;
- urging the Chinese authorities to immediately investigate and clarify his whereabouts;

- if he is being detained, urging the authorities to release him immediately if he is not to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence;
- urging the authorities to ensure that Wan Yanhai receives full access to his family, lawyers and medical treatment if he is in custody;
- calling on the authorities to ensure that all human rights defenders in China can carry out their work without fear of detention without charge, or other human rights violations.

**APPEALS TO:** (Please note that Fax numbers and email addresses are often unreliable and hard to obtain, but please keep trying)

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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 14 October 2002.