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UA 85/09 Fear of torture and other ill-treatment

CHINA Wei Liangyue (m), aged 44] husband and wife

Du Yongjing (f)

Human rights lawyer Wei Liangyue and his wife Du Yongjing were detained on 28 February in the city of Harbin, Heilongjiang Province, reportedly for attending a Falun Gong meeting. They are currently held at Nangang District Detention Centre in Harbin. The authorities have warned the family not to discuss the case publicly and not to hire a lawyer to represent them. Amnesty International believes they are at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

Wei Liangyue is held under investigation on suspicion of "gathering a crowd to disturb social order". Du Yongjing is held under investigation on suspicion of "using a heretical organization to undermine implementation of the law".

Wei Liangyue is a lawyer with the Heilongjiang Jiaodian Law Firm. He has been practicing law for more than 21 years and has often provided legal aid to local people who face human rights abuses, including Falun Gong practitioners who have been detained by the Chinese authorities simply for their beliefs.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Human rights activists in China who attempt to report on human rights violations, challenge policies which the authorities find politically sensitive, or try to rally others to their cause, face serious risk of abuse. Many are jailed as prisoners of conscience after politically motivated trials, while growing numbers are being held under house arrest with the police conducting intrusive surveillance and standing guard outside. Since the beginning of 2009, a year that marks several sensitive anniversaries in China, the crackdown on human rights activists has intensified. Family members of human rights activists, including children, are increasingly targeted by the authorities in the crackdown.

Tens of thousands of Falun Gong practitioners have been arbitrarily detained since the spiritual movement was banned as a "threat to social and political stability" in July 1999. Those accused of being Falun Gong leaders or organizers have been jailed. Others have been held in psychiatric hospitals, but the vast majority have been held in Re-education Through Labour facilities. Re-education Through Labour is a form of administrative detention imposed without charge, trial or judicial review.

# RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Mandarin or your own language urging the Chinese authorities:

- to release Wei Liangyue and Du Yongjing immediately and unconditionally;
- to guarantee that they will not be tortured or otherwise ill-treated while they remain in custody;
- to ensure Wei Liangyue and Du Yongjing have access to legal assistance, their families and any medical treatment they may require;
- to take effective measures to ensure that all human rights defenders can carry out their peaceful activities without fear of arbitrary detention, imprisonment, hindrance or intimidation, in line with the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

#### **APPEALS TO:**

Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China

WEN Jiabao Guojia Zongli

The State Council General Office

2 Fuyoujie

Xichengqu

Beijingshi 100017

People's Republic of China

Fax: +86 10 65961109 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Salutation: Your Excellency

## Minister of Justice of the People's Republic of China

WU Aiying Buzhang

Sifabu

10 Chaoyangmen Nandajie

Chaoyangqu

Beijingshi 100020

People's Republic of China

Fax: +86 10 65292345 Email: pfmaster@legalinfo.gov.cn

**Salutation:** Dear Minister

#### Director of the Heilongjiang Provincial Department of Public Security

Sun YongboTingzhang

Heilongjiangsheng Gong'anting

145 Zhongshanlu

Nangangqu

Ha'erbinshi 150008

Heilongjiangsheng

People's Republic of China

Salutation: Dear Director

**COPIES TO:** diplomatic representatives of China accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 7 May 2009.