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Health/Ill Treatment/Legal Concern

18 February 1991

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA : SHA Zhimei

Amnesty International has recently received information about Sha Zhimei, a 72-year-old woman imprisoned in Shanghai since 1987 who is reported to be in poor health due to the conditions of her imprisonment.

(Photograph of Sha Zhimei included in print version)

Sha Zhimei, a former primary school teacher and member of an independent protestant church in Shanghai, is reported to have been arrested at her home on 3 June 1987 and accused of "counter-revolutionary" offences for allegedly encouraging her son to run away from Shanghai. Her son was apparently wanted by police for demonstrating in favour of religious freedom in November 1986 in Shanghai, and publishing his family history in January 1987. At the time of her arrest, Sha Zhimei was reportedly beaten by police with an electric baton, and police took away some letters and bibles from her home.

Sha Zhimei was tried in November 1987 and sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment. Held at Shanghai municipal prison, she has reportedly been beaten by prison guards on several occasions for not finishing the work required of her when she was ill. She is reported to be in poor health due to an insufficient prison diet and long hours of work. She was imprisoned previously for six years during the Cultural Revolution because of her family background and their involvement in religious activities.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters:

- expressing concern that Sha Zhimei, a 72-year-old woman, is reported to be imprisoned at Shanghai municipal prison for alleged "counter-revolutionary offences", and that she is said to be ill and to have been beaten in prison;
- urging the authorities to investigate without delay her situation and alleged ill-treatment, and to release her immediately and unconditionally on humanitarian grounds.

APPEALS TO:

ZHU Rongji Shizhang (Mayor of Shanghai
Shanghaishi Renmin Zhengfu Municipality ZHU)
Shanghaishi
People's Republic of China

Telexes: 33289 SHFAO CN (please forward to ZHU Rongji
Shizhang)

SHI Zhusan Jianchazhang (Shanghai Municipal
Shanghaishi Renmin Jianchayuan Chief Procurator SHI)
Shanghaishi
People's Republic of China

Telexes: 33289 SHFAO CN (Please forward to SHI Zhusan
Jianchazhang)

CAI Cheng Buzhang (Minister of Justice CAI)
Sifabu
Sanlihe
Beijingshi
Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo
People's Republic of China

Telexes: 210070 FMPC CN or 22478 MFERT CN
(Please forward to CAI Cheng Buzhang)

COPIES TO:

Wenhui Bao
149 Yuanmingyuan Lu
Shanghai Shi
People's Republic of China

and to diplomatic representatives of People's Republic of China in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,
or your section office, if sending appeals after 1 April 1991.