

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 262/91 (ASA 17/46/91, 26 July 1991 and follow-up ASA 17/49/91, 6 August 1991) - Solitary Confinement/Health Concern

note new concern: Ill-Treatment

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA (PRC): Wang Juntao
 Chen Ziming
 Ren Wandong
 Bao Zunxin
 Wang Dan

Wang Juntao, who had threatened in July 1991 to start a hunger strike in protest against his prison conditions, has reportedly done so on 13 August 1991 after receiving a visit by members of his family. **Chen Ziming** started a hunger strike on 14 August 1991, according to family friends. Both men demand better conditions, medical care and a restoration of their wives' visiting rights, the London newspaper The Guardian reported. **Wang Juntao, Chen Ziming, Ren Wandong, Bao Zunxin and Wang Dan**, all prisoners of conscience adopted by Amnesty International, remain in solitary confinement in Beijing's Prison No 2. Agence France Presse (AFP) news agency has reported that **Wang Juntao** is being kept chained by the hands and feet.

On 17 August 1991, a spokesman for the Justice Ministry was quoted by Reuters news agency as stating that Wang Juntao and Chen Ziming were "in normal health" but did not confirm or deny reports that they were refusing food. On 14 August 1991, the semi-official China News Service (CNS) news agency said that Wang Juntao had taken food on 13 August 1991 when visited by his parents and brother, but did not say whether he had taken any food since that time.

Wang Juntao's wife, Hou Xiaotian, and Chen Ziming's wife, Wang Zhihong, were denied the right to visit their husbands following their efforts to draw international attention to their situation. Other relatives have reportedly also been denied future access to the prisoners.

Family sources were quoted as saying that the authorities had allowed medicines to be sent to Wang Juntao and that he appeared to be in better spirits. They remained concerned that he still suffers from a liver disease, Hepatitis B. The CNS report denied this, saying that tests made on 24 July 1991 showed that "his kidney and liver were in good condition". Chen Ziming suffers from a skin disease but his relatives were reportedly unable to obtain further details about his health.

CNS quoted prison spokesmen as saying that Wang Juntao was held in solitary confinement partly because some other prisoners "were angry with [him] and might pose danger to him", and partly because solitary confinement would help "educate" and "liberate" him.

CNS said that **Bao Zunxin**, whose stools were found to contain blood, "was hospitalized and has undergone an operation. He returned to prison after 50 days in hospital". His present state of health is not known.

Amnesty International is concerned that the continuing isolation of the five men may be in contravention of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners and may constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment. The Standard Minimum Rules provide that disciplinary punishment may be applied to prisoners only for conduct

which constitutes a disciplinary offence (Articles 29, 30) and that "close confinement" may be imposed only to prisoners medically certified as fit to sustain it (Article 31), who must be visited daily by a medical doctor. Both the reasons given for the solitary confinement of Wang Juntao and the apparent lack of daily medical attention to him and his co-detainees appear to contravene the provisions of the Standard Minimum Rules.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telexes/faxes and airmail letters:

- expressing concern at reports that Wang Juntao and Chen Ziming have started a hunger strike which may further weaken their health and urging the authorities to ensure that the internationally-recognised rights of the detainees be respected;
- expressing concern that the prolonged solitary confinement of all five men in conditions which do not appear to accord with the provisions of the Standard Minimum Rules may constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment and urging the immediate end of such punishment;
- urging that, as prisoners of conscience, they all be released immediately and unconditionally.

APPEALS TO:

1. Minister of Justice:

CAI Cheng Buzhang

[Salutation: Your Excellency]

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3. Beijing Municipal Procurator:

HE Fangba Jianchazhang

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People's Republic of China

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

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat if sending appeals after 30 September 1991.