

# URGENT ACTION

## FALUN GONG WOMAN RISKS EXTENDED TERM IN RTL

**Falun Gong practitioner Li Shanshan (李珊珊) who is held in a re-education through labour (RTL) camp in northern China, is being threatened with an extended sentence for refusing to renounce her faith. She is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.**

**Li Shanshan**, who is currently held in the Shijiazhuang City Womens' RTL camp, has been threatened with an extension of her two-year RTL assignment for refusing to renounce her faith. She was detained on 29 October 2011 in Tangshan, Hebei Province following her campaigning for the release of her husband, **Zhou Xiangyang** (周向阳). Zhou Xiangyang spent six years in prison before his release in 2009 on medical parole after months of hunger strike. He was then sent back to prison on 5 March 2011 before being released on 1 April, 2012.

From January 2006, Li Shanshan spent 15 months in RTL. This was punishment for her persistent campaigning on behalf of her husband. On 26 June 2011 Li Shanshan posted on overseas websites an open letter entitled "A Young Couple's Hardship: Waiting Seven Years, Nine Years of Unjust Imprisonment". She described the letter as a "love story" that recounted the hardships the couple experienced as they waited seven years to be able to marry, which they did after Zhou Xiangyang's release from prison in 2009, only for him to be rearrested in March 2011.

After her detention in October 2011 Li Shanshan was initially held at the Fengrun Legal Education Centre, a type of facility designated especially for the "transformation" of Falun Gong practitioners. This is a process that often uses torture and other ill-treatment with the aim to force them to renounce their beliefs. On 10 November 2011 the Tangshan City Public Security Bureau confirmed to Li Shanshan's mother and lawyer that she had been assigned to two years' RTL. Her husband, other family members, and lawyers have been repeatedly refused access to her. On 12 July after numerous attempts to see her, Li Shanshan's father was finally permitted to visit her. During the visit she informed him that RTL camp officials had threatened to extend her RTL term as a punishment for refusing to denounce Falun Gong. She also informed him that she was being forced to carry out hard labour.

### **Please write immediately in Chinese or your own language:**

- Calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Li Shanshan, who is a prisoner of conscience as she has been detained solely on the basis of exercising her rights to freedom of thought, conscience and belief.
- Calling on the authorities to guarantee that, for so long as she remains in detention she is treated humanely, not tortured or otherwise ill-treated, and not subjected to any pressure to renounce her beliefs.
- Calling on the authorities to allow Li Shanshan's family and lawyer to visit her in detention.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 JANUARY 2013 TO:**

Governor of Hebei Province  
Zhang Qingwei, Shengzhang  
Weiming jie 122  
Shijiazhuang City Qiaoxi  
Hebei Province 050051  
People's Republic of China  
Email: english@hebei.gov.cn  
Fax: + 86-311-87026092  
**Salutation: Dear Governor**

Mayor of Shijiazhuang City  
Jiang Deguo  
Zhong Shandong lu 216  
Shijiazhuang City, Hebei Province  
People's Republic of China  
Tel: +86-311-86688211, +86-311-86033528 (Chinese only)  
**Salutation: Dear Mayor**

**And copies to:**  
Director of Shijiazhuang City Women's RTL Camp  
Zhou Zhanquan Suozhang  
Shijiazhuang nuzi laoiaosuo  
Shitonglu  
Shijiazhuangshi, Hebeisheng  
People's Republic of China 050222  
Tel: +86-0311-8393-9188 (Chinese only)

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 335/11. Further information:  
<http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA17/047/2011/en>

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Falun Gong is a spiritual movement which gained large numbers of supporters in China during the 1990s. After it staged a peaceful gathering in Tiananmen Square in July 1999, the government outlawed the group and launched a long-term campaign of intimidation and persecution, directed by a special organization called the 610 Office. Tens of thousands of Falun Gong practitioners have been arbitrarily detained as a "threat to social and political stability" since the spiritual movement was banned. Practitioners have been held in psychiatric hospitals, re-education through labour (RTL) facilities - a form of administrative detention imposed without charge, trial or judicial review - sentenced to long prison terms, and been held in specialized detention centres whose mission is to "transform" Falun Gong practitioners, a process through which they are coerced into renouncing their spiritual beliefs, often through the use of torture and other ill-treatment.

Torture and other ill-treatment are endemic in all forms of detention, despite China's ratification of the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in 1988. Falun Gong sources have documented numerous deaths in custody of Falun Gong practitioners, believed to have been caused by torture and other ill-treatment.

Name: Li Shanshan (f), Zhou Xiangyang (m)

Gender m/f: Both

Further information on UA: 335/11 Index: ASA 17/056/2012 Issue Date: 13 December 2012