

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: ASA 17/57/91
Distr: UA/SC

17 September 1991

Further information on UA 262/91 (ASA 17/46/91, 26 July 1991 and follow-ups ASA 17/49/91, 6 August 1991, ASA 17/51/91, 19 August 1991 and ASA 17/55/91, 9 September 1991) - Solitary Confinement/Health Concern/Ill-treatment

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA: Wang Juntao
Chen Ziming
Ren Wanding
Bao Zunxin
Wang Dan

Sources close to Chen Ziming's family said on 15 September 1991 that Chen Ziming had agreed to call off his hunger-strike after being told that Wang Juntao had been moved to a prison hospital for medical treatment. Chen Ziming and Wang Juntao had started a hunger-strike on 13 August 1991. The men were sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment for their involvement in the 1989 pro-democracy protests and their hunger-strike had been started in protest against their prison conditions. The official New China News Agency had denied on 1 September 1991 that Chen Ziming and Wang Juntao were on hunger-strike and said that the two men were getting proper medical treatment.

Amnesty International remains concerned about the well-being of Chen Ziming, Wang Juntao and that of three other prisoners of conscience who were all held in solitary confinement at Beijing Prison no. 2. According to private sources Chen Ziming is reported to have lost weight and to be undergoing treatment for a serious skin rash. During his hunger-strike Chen Ziming refused prison food but reportedly accepted humanitarian treatment and food from doctors. Following international concern about Chen Ziming's prison conditions, the authorities have reportedly agreed to install a brighter light in Chen's room to allow him to read at night.

The report that Wang Juntao has been sent to a prison hospital in Yan Qing indicates that he may be receiving some form of treatment for hepatitis but there is no independent confirmation that Wang Juntao has himself called off his hunger-strike. The authorities refused to allow Hou Xiaotian to visit her husband Wang Juntao on 13 September 1991. Family visits are reportedly permitted once a month. It is believed Hou Xiaotian was not allowed to visit her husband because she has publicised the prison conditions endured by her husband, Chen Ziming and others in Beijing Prison no. 2.

In response to international concern about the well-being of Wang Juntao and Chen Ziming the Chinese authorities released a film on 10 September 1991 which shows Wang Juntao being weighed in prison and looking comparatively fit. Another man who is featured in the film is thought to be Chen Ziming.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telexes/faxes and airmail letters:

- expressing concern that Chen Ziming, Ren Wanding, Bao Zunxin and Wang Dan remain in solitary confinement in Beijing Prison no. 2;
- noting that prolonged solitary confinement can amount to cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment in contravention of the UN Convention against Torture ratified by China in October 1988;

- urging that independent observers, including physicians, be allowed to meet Chen Ziming, Wang Juntao and the other prisoners named above who were reportedly placed in solitary confinement in April 1991;

- expressing concern that all five prisoners named above are held for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of association and expression and urging that they be released unconditionally.

APPEALS TO:

1.

Minister of Justice:

CAI Cheng Buzhang

[Salutation: Your Excellency]

Sifabu

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2.

Director of Reform-through-Labour:

YAO Yunhui Juzhang

[Salutation: Dear Sir]

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3.

Beijing Municipal Procurator:

HE Fangba Jianchazhang

[Salutation: Dear Sir]

Beijingshi Renmin Jianchayuan

Beijingshi

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China Daily (an English-language newspaper)

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Beijingshi

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, or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 October 1991.