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## **China: 10 year sentence for veteran dissident**

The Chinese authorities should immediately release prominent pro-democracy activist Liu Xianbin, Amnesty International said today, after the dissident was jailed for 10 years for writing articles critical of the government.

"Ten years imprisonment for writing articles is an appalling sentence, and a travesty of justice," said Catherine Baber, Amnesty International's Deputy Director for the Asia-Pacific. "Liu Xianbin is not guilty of any crime. He is a prisoner of conscience and should be released immediately."

"The Chinese authorities are shooting the messenger rather than heeding the message, when even Premier Wen Jiabao has acknowledged the need for political reform," said Catherine Baber.

Liu Xianbin was convicted by a court in Sichuan province of 'inciting subversion of state power' in a trial that lasted only a few hours.

This is the third time Liu Xianbin has been imprisoned for his political beliefs and activism.

After his last release from prison in late 2008, Liu became a public signatory to the 'Charter 08', a proposal for legal and political reform that was co-authored by Nobel Laureate Liu Xiaobo.

He also published numerous articles online and in journals about democracy and human rights, which were critical of Chinese government repression.

Arrested again in June 2010, the high-profile dissident had been out of prison for less than two years. Local activists believed his arrest was a punishment for his continued activism.

Liu has previously served nine years of a 13-year sentence for 'subverting state power' due to his CDP activism in the 1990s, and two and a half years after his participation in the student democracy movement of 1989.