

# URGENT ACTION

## HUNGER STRIKING UIGHUR PRISONER CRITICALLY ILL

**Religious leader and ethnic Uighur, Abdukiram Abduveli, has been on hunger strike since mid-February in protest against being given an additional five year prison sentence. Despite having been initially sentenced to 12 years in prison, he has since been given additional sentences on five separate occasions and has been in custody for nearly 24 years. He is in critical ill-health and in need of urgent medical attention.**

**Abdukiram Abduveli** is held in Xinjiang No. 3 Prison in Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region in north-west China. His family was able to last meet with him on 8 April. According to them, he has been on hunger strike since mid-February when he was given an additional five year sentence. He had been due to be released in June 2014, and it is not known why he has been given the additional sentence.

Abdukiram Abduveli's family said that his health condition is serious. He is thin and malnourished, requires a wheelchair and does not even have the strength to hold a telephone for more than two minutes. Previously, the family had been informed that Abdukiram Abduveli had developed bone cancer. It is not known whether he is receiving the treatment he needs.

This is the fifth time Abdukiram Abduveli has been given an additional prison sentence. He was first detained in 1990 and sentenced to twelve years in prison in 1993 on charges including "organizing a counter-revolutionary group". On his scheduled release date of 16 November 2002, prison guards told his family that his sentence had been extended by three years. They were told this three more times in 2005, 2008 and 2011. His family has received a written court verdict explaining the additional prison sentences only once. According to that verdict, dated 1 July 2009, Abdukiram Abduveli was given four additional three year sentences for undermining the order of prison administration (Article 315 of the China's Criminal Law). According to the law, three years is the maximum sentence for this offence – only to be applied when circumstances are serious.

### Please write immediately in English, Chinese or your own language:

- Urging that the authorities ensure Abdukiram Abduveli receives immediate and adequate medical care;
- Urging the authorities to release Abdukiram Abduveli without delay;
- Urging the authorities to clarify the grounds on which he has been given an additional prison sentence, and to ensure he has access to legal representation of his choosing.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 4 JUNE 2014 TO:

#### President

Xi Jinping Guojia Zhuxi  
The State Council General Office  
2 Fuyoujie  
Xichengqu, Beijingshi 100017,  
People's Republic of China  
Fax: +86 10 6238 1025  
Email: gov@govonline.cn  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### Minister of Justice of the People's

Republic of China  
WU Aiyong Buzhang Sifabu  
10 Chaoyangmen Nandajie  
Chaoyangqu  
Beijingshi 100020  
People's Republic of China  
Fax: +86 10 65292345  
**Salutation: Dear Minister**

#### **And copies to:**

Director of Department of Justice  
Abuliz Usour Tingzhang  
Xinjiang Weiwuer Zizhiqu Sifating  
27 Renminlu  
Urumqi 830  
Xinjiang Weiwuer Zizhiqu  
People's Republic of China  
Fax: +86 99 1231 1590

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

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Prior to his imprisonment Abdukiram Abduveli often travelled within the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR) speaking about the Koran and advocating the spread of Islam and for economic equality between Han Chinese and Uighurs.

The copy of the verdict received by his family in July 2009 explained that Abdukiram Abduveli was given additional sentences for breaking prison administrative rules (Art 315 of the Criminal Law). It further states that according to the witness statements from other prisoners Han Qiang, Liu Xiaolin, Li Tianbao, Wang Chao and Du Xianfa and Yu Yaqi, Abdukerim Abduveli consistently refused to accept prison education, engaged many times in praying, announced a hunger strike, and swore at and hit his supervising inmates. The verdict furthermore states as a consequence, he has had his "reform points" deducted, was sent to solitary confinement and also that unspecified "precautionary weapons were used against him".

According to the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, every prisoner shall be allowed to satisfy the needs of his religious life. Furthermore, no prisoner should be punished twice for the same offence.

Denial of adequate medical care is common in all forms of detention in China and constitutes cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, in breach of China's international obligations as a state party to the UN Convention Against Torture. In March, a human rights activist Cao Shunli died from organ failure after being denied medical treatment while in detention in Beijing. Amnesty International has also documented the practice of using the other prisoners to monitor, carry out "thought work" or "re-education", and sometimes punish or torture other inmates. It is particularly common that common criminals who have proven their "reliability" to the prison authorities are used against political prisoners, and may be given sentence reductions, better food, living conditions, and other privileges for carrying out these actions.

The UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, has also raised concerns regarding "disturbing" practice of "re-education" in relation to political crimes, especially abolished "counter-revolutionary crimes", abolished from China's criminal code in 1997, saying that the combination of deprivation of liberty for the peaceful exercise of basic freedoms, with the practice of re-education through coercion, humiliation and punishment constitutes inhuman and degrading treatment.

Uighurs are a mainly Muslim ethnic minority who are concentrated in the XUAR in China. Since the 1980s, the Uighurs have been the target of systematic and extensive human rights violations. This includes arbitrary detention and imprisonment, incommunicado detention, and serious restriction of religious freedom as well as cultural and social rights. Local authorities might tighten control over religious practice, including prohibiting all government employees and children under the age of 18, from worshipping at mosques. Chinese government policies that limit the use of the Uighur language, severe restrictions on freedom of religion and a sustained influx of Han migrants into the region are destroying their customs and, together with employment discrimination, fuelling discontent and ethnic tensions. The situation has worsened following the attacks in the USA on 11 September 2001 as the Chinese authorities have used the context counter-terrorism, to attempt to justify further repression to the human rights of Uighurs. In December 2013, Communist Party of China launched a new "grand strategic plan" for the XUAR. This new plan pledged to make "maintaining social stability" the primary strategic goal within the XUAR. Similarly, on 16 January Beijing's Mayor, Wang Anshun, said that the government would tighten control of the internet in connection with anti-terrorism measures.

Name: Abdukiram Abduveli  
Gender m/f: male