

URGENT ACTION

CHINESE ACTIVIST AT RISK OF TORTURE

Mao Hengfeng, a Chinese human rights defender, is being held incommunicado at Shanghai City Prison Hospital. She is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment. She was previously held at the same hospital, where she was tied to a bed and forcibly given several injections against her will.

Mao Hengfeng was released from Re-education Through Labour (RTL) on medical parole on 22 February 2011. On 24 February, police officers and officials from Anhui Provincial Women's Re-education Through Labour facility where she had served a year of her 18-month term, came to her family home, and told her that she was going to be sent back to RTL on the grounds of having violated the terms of medical parole.

After the police officers and RTL officials had taken Mao Hengfeng away, her family contacted the authorities at the Anhui Provincial Women's RTL facility and found out that Mao Hengfeng had in fact not been brought back there. It was only in June that they were able to confirm her whereabouts. However, they have not been allowed to visit her at the Shanghai City Prison Hospital. They fear that Mao Hengfeng may be suffering from torture or other ill-treatment, as previously when she was held at the same hospital in 2008, she was tied to a bed, force fed and given several injections against her will.

Mao Hengfeng is due to be released from RTL on 24 August 2011.

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

- Calling on the authorities to release Mao Hengfeng immediately and unconditionally;
- Ensure that she is allowed access to legal representation of her choice, her family and independent medical assessment
- Guarantee that she is not tortured or otherwise ill-treated while she remains in custody;
- Initiate a full, independent and impartial investigation into allegations that Mao Hengfeng has been tortured or otherwise ill-treated and ensure that those responsible are brought to justice in accordance with international standards.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 25 AUGUST 2011 TO:

Mayor of the Shanghai Municipal People's
Government

HAN Zheng Shizhang
Shanghaishi Renmin Zhengfu
200 Renmindadao
Huangpuqu
Shanghaishi 200003
People's Republic of China
Fax: +86 21 63216537
Email: webmaster@shanghai.gov.cn

Salutation: Dear Mayor

Director of the Shanghai Bureau of Public
Security

ZHANG Xuebing Juzhang
Shanghaishi Gong'anju
128 Wuningnanlu
Qing'anqu
Shanghaishi 200042
People's Republic of China
Email: gaj02@shanghai.gov.cn or
shgajxfb@sh.china110.com

Salutation: Dear Director

Premier of the People's Republic of China

WEN Jiabao Guojia Zongli
The State Council General Office
2 Fuyoujie
Xichengqu
Beijingshi 100017
People's Republic of China
Fax: +86 10 65961109 (c/o Ministry of
Foreign Affairs)

Salutation: Dear Premier

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the third update of UA 95/10. Further information:

<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA17/019/2010/en>, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA17/031/2010/en> and
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA17/008/2011/en>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Mao Hengfeng was sent to 18 months' in Re-education Through Labour (RTL) on 4 March 2010 for "disturbing public order," in front of the Beijing municipal intermediate court on 25 December 2009, where she shouted slogans, ignored police warnings and attracted the attention of passers-by in support of human rights activist Liu Xiaobo, who had been on trial that day. In October 2010, Liu Xiaobo was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

According to her family, Mao Hengfeng has been repeatedly tortured and ill-treated in detention. From 13 May until 1 June 2010, Mao Hengfeng was on hunger strike in protest against the RTL centre, as they would not allow her to appeal her case. RTL facility officers force-fed her by putting a tube down her throat. According to Mao Hengfeng, the tube caused a lot of pain, scratches in her throat and bleeding.

When Mao Hengfeng ended her hunger strike in June, RTL facility officers used her family's money to buy food and then threw it away in front of her. Since RTL centres often only provide little food of poor quality, most inmates need their families to send money in order to buy more food.

RTL facility officers instructed other inmates to beat Mao Hengfeng, and she was beaten by about 10 people each time. This continued until November 2010, but it is unclear how many times it occurred. She was also forced to work over the northern hemisphere summer sorting rubbish in a toxic and dirty environment. Sometimes after work she was not allowed to take a shower.

On 9 September 2010, due to her protests about the human rights abuses in RTL, guards tied Mao Hengfeng's hands behind her back using rope, and also tied up her legs. They then put dirty plastic and clothes into her mouth. For four days she was left in this position and was not given any food or water. On 29 September 2010, RTL staff did this again to her for another four days. This form of ill-treatment is highly dangerous. As well as causing suffering, it places the victim's life at risk due to possible blocking of the airways, severe dehydration and a risk of kidney failure.

When Mao Hengfeng was released on 22 February 2011, an official told her this was due to her high blood pressure. She also has serious injuries caused by torture she suffered in detention. She said she has partially lost feeling on the left side of her body and could not move properly. Shortly before her release, Mao Hengfeng had been sent to two different hospitals for medical checks. A doctor did a CT scan on her head and found signs of bleeding in her brain.

Mao Hengfeng celebrated her unexpected release with a group of friends in an evening meal at a restaurant. Thereafter she was prevented from leaving her house, including in order to visit a doctor.

Name: Mao Hengfeng

Gender: f

Further information on UA: 95/10 Index: ASA 17/034/2011 Issue Date: 14 July 2011

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