



To: Health Professional Network

From: Health and Human Rights Team

Date: 23 February 2006

Health professional action
Hu Jia, HIV/AIDS activist
China

Summary

Prominent HIV/AIDS activist Hu Jia went missing on the morning of 16 February. His current whereabouts are unclear, but it is feared that he is detained by the Chinese authorities. His family have contacted various government departments, including the police, to ask where he is detained, but none has admitted holding him.

Hu Jia reportedly suffers from hepatitis B and, according to those close to him, needs to take medication on a daily basis. He has been detained on numerous occasions in the past in connection with his peaceful human rights activities.

Amnesty International urges the Chinese authorities to clarify Hu Jia's whereabouts. If detained, he should be given access to appropriate medical treatment and released immediately unless he is charged with a recognisable criminal offence.

Background information

Several Chinese activists who have supported or participated in a series of protest hunger-strikes since 4 February have been detained by the police or gone missing. The relay hunger-strike protest was started by prominent defence lawyer Gao Zhisheng, who wished to draw attention to recent beatings and detentions of human rights activists and lawyers who sought to defend them.

Gao began by fasting for 48 hours and was quickly joined by others wishing to show their solidarity, who took turns in fasting. Several participants or supporters, including Hu Jia, have reportedly been detained or gone missing.

Hu Jia was also detained by the police on several occasions in 2004 to stop him from publicly commemorating the 15th anniversary of the 4 June 1989 crackdown. In June 2004, he was held by police in an underground basement. The police reportedly told his family that he would be released immediately if they agreed to sign a statement that Hu Jia had a psychiatric illness. The family refused and Hu Jia was detained for several days.

Hu Jia is the co-founder of the Beijing Aizhixing Institute of Health Education and an outspoken advocate for people with HIV/AIDS; he has publicly criticised the authorities over their treatment of people with AIDS and other issues. He recently resigned from Loving Source, another non-governmental organization he co-founded in 2003 that helps children who have lost parents to AIDS-related illnesses, in order to prevent the authorities from harassing the group. According to Hu Jia, some international donors who helped to fund the operations of the organization withdrew their support to the group under pressure from the Chinese government and its volunteers were intimidated.

Recommended action

Please write to the authorities below, using the following as a guideline:

- Explain that you are a health professional and are writing about the case of Hu Jia, who reportedly went missing on the morning of 16 February;
- Express concern that his whereabouts are unknown and that he reportedly is in need of medical treatment;
- Urging the authorities to clarify his whereabouts, and if detained, to provide him with access to full and appropriate medical care immediately;
- Urging the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Hu Jia unless he is charged with a recognisable criminal offence;
- Urging the authorities to ensure that all human rights defenders in China can carry out their legitimate and peaceful human rights activities without fear of arbitrary detention, harassment or other human rights violations.;
- Invite a response to your letter.

Addresses

Prime Minister

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Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Public Security

Zhou Yongkang Buzhang

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Salutation: Dear Minister

Minister of State Security of the People's Republic of China

XU Yongyue Buzhang

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People's Republic of China

Fax: +86 10 63070952

Salutation: Your Excellency

Please also write to diplomatic representatives of China accredited to your country.

If you receive no reply within six weeks of sending your letter, please send a follow-up letter seeking a response. Please send copies of any letters you receive to the International Secretariat, attention of Health and Human Rights Team.