

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

AI Index: ASA 17/25/94
Distr: UA/SC

UA 267/94

Unfair trial / Prisoners of Conscience

15 July 1994

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC
OF CHINA

Hu Shigen, 37, lecturer
Kang Yuchun, 28, doctor
Wang Guoqi, 30, unemployed
Lu Zhigang, 24, law student
Liu Jingsheng, 39, chemical worker
Wang Tiancheng, 29, law lecturer
Wang Peizhong, 24, graduate student
Chen Qinglin, 24, cadre at meteorological station
Chen Wei, 24, unemployed
Zhang Chunzu, 41, unemployed
Rui Chaohuai, 23, factory worker
Xing Hongwei, 25, cadre at coalmine
Xu Dongling, 37, paper mill worker
Zhang Guojun, 31 restaurant owner

A major political trial began in Beijing on 14 July 1994 to try the 14 prisoners of conscience named above who have been detained for more than two years on charges of "counter-revolution". This is the first major political trial in Beijing since 1991 and the defendants are the largest group of prisoners of conscience to be jointly tried in many years.

The trial, which has been postponed several times since September 1993, apparently due to foreign policy considerations, will be a test of how the authorities are prepared to deal in future with political dissenters. Several dozen pro-democracy activists arrested in Beijing and other cities since March 1994 are still being held without charge or trial.

Most of the 14 defendants were arrested in May and June 1992. Two others who were arrested at around the same time were later released on bail on medical grounds, but it is not clear whether they are also being tried. The 16 men were accused of carrying out "counter-revolutionary" activities for forming or joining three underground dissident groups, writing and printing political leaflets and planning to distribute them before 4 June 1992, the third anniversary of Tiananmen.

As yet, little is known about the trial, and it is not clear if the defendants' relatives have been granted access to the court, but Amnesty International is concerned that, given past cases, the 14 are unlikely to get a fair trial, with full facilities to defend themselves, in accordance with international human rights standards. The organization is calling for their immediate and unconditional release as prisoners of conscience jailed solely for the peaceful exercise of their fundamental human rights.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Political trials in China are closed to foreign observers, including journalists and diplomats, and when an audience is admitted it is selected in advance by the authorities. The right to defence is limited and trial procedures fall far short of international standards for fair trial. Furthermore in political cases, the verdict is usually decided before the trial by political authorities.

For more information and details on the cases of the 14 detainees above, see *China - Dissidents Detained Since 1992: Political Trials and Administrative Sentences* (January 1994, ASA 17/05/94).

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes and airmail letters either in Mandarin, English or in your own language:

- expressing concern that the 14 defendants named above were arrested and jailed for two years for using their fundamental rights to freedom of expression and association;
- urging the authorities to release them immediately and unconditionally in accordance with international human rights standards;
- expressing concern that the trial appears to be closed to the public and foreign observers, and urge the authorities to disclose information about the procedures followed at the trial and to ensure that they conform to international standards for fair trial.

APPEALS TO

1) Premier of the State Council

Li Peng Zongli

Guowuyuan

9 Xihuangchenggenbeijie

Beijingshi 100032

People's Republic of China

Telexes: 210070 FMPC CN or 22478 MFERT CN

Faxes: + 86 1 512 5810 (via Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Telegrams: Premier Li Peng, Beijing, China

Salutation: Your Excellency

2) Minister of Justice of the People's Republic of China

XIAO Yang Buzhang

Sifabu

Xiaguangli

Sanyuanqiao

Chaoyang Qu

Beijingshi 100016

People's Republic of China

Telexes: 210070 FMPC CN or 22478 MFERT CN (Please forward to Xiao Yang Buzhang)

Faxes: + 861 467 7351

Telegrams: Minister of Justice Xiao Yang, Beijing, China

Salutation: Your Excellency

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Mayor of Beijing Municipal People's Government

Li Qiyuan Shizhang

Beijingshi Renmin Zhengfu

2 Zhengyilu

Dongchengqu

Beijingshi 100744

People's Republic of China

and to diplomatic representatives of the People's Republic of China accredited to your country

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat,

or your section office, if sending appeals after 30 August 1994.