PUBLIC AI Index: ASA 17/030/2001

Extra 68/01 Death penalty / Fear of imminent execution

28 September 2001

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC Lu Jijin

OF CHINA (PRC) Lu Changhe

Four others, names not known

Six people, including the two named above have recently been found guilty of operating a gang engaged in the production and sale of fake coins with a reported value of 1 million Yuan (approximately US \$120,000). Lu Jijing and four others, whose names are not known, have been sentenced to death. Lu Changhe, has been sentenced to death with a two year suspension of execution.

The six defendants were found guilty by the Intermediate People's Court in Taizhou city, Zhejaing province. It is not known if they have appealed against their sentence, though successful appeals are rare.

It was also reported that a further 24 defendants were sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment for the same crime.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

China maintains the death penalty for a large number of offences, including non-violent crimes and economic crimes such as tax, financial fraud and counterfeiting. Execution is by shooting or lethal injection. The death penalty is used extensively, arbitrarily, and frequently as a result of political

interference. It is particularly used during periodic AStrike Hard@ anti-crime campaigns, when defendants may be sentenced to death for crimes which at other times are punishable by imprisonment.

There is currently a "Strike Hard" anti-crime campaign, which initially targeted violent organized crime, but this has been expanded to include a wide range of other crimes. Amnesty International is concerned that this campaign, which stresses "quick arrest, quick trial and quick results", may influence the proceedings and outcome of criminal trials. Previous anti-crime crackdowns have resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of people sentenced to death and a large number of suspected miscarriages of justice.

Amnesty International has recorded at least 2,960 death sentences and 1,781 executions in China in the 3 months from April to June 2001. These figures, taken from a limited number of sources, show that more people were executed in China between April and June than in the rest of the world for the last three years.

## RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible in English, Chinese or your own language:

- urging the Chinese authorities to commute the death sentences passed on Lu Jijin, Lu Changhe and the four other unnamed defendants in Zhejiang province;
- expressing deep concern at the arbitrary and massive use of the death penalty in China and its increased use for economic and non-violent crimes, and calling on the government to immediately commute any death sentences handed down as part of the

AStrike Hard@ anti-crime crackdown;

- acknowledging the right of governments to bring perpetrators of crime to

justice, but expressing opposition to the death penalty in all cases as the ultimate form of cruel and inhuman punishment and as a violation of the right to life, as guaranteed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; - noting that the death penalty has never been shown to have a unique deterrent effect on crime and is brutalizing to all involved in its application.

## APPEALS TO:

Premier of the People's Republic of China

ZHU Rongji Zongli

Guowuyuan

9 Xihuangchenggenbeijie

Beijingshi 100032

People's Republic of China

Telex: 210070 FMPRC CN or 22478 MFERT CN Telegram: Premier Zhu Rongji, Beijing, China

Faxes: c/0 Ministry of Communications - Fax: 00 86 10 6529 2345

Salutation: Your Excellency

President of the Supreme People's Court of the People's Republic of China

XIAO Yang Yuanzhang Zuigao Renmin Fayuan 27 Dongjiao Min Xiang Beijingshi 100726 People's Republic of China

Telegram: President, Supreme People's Court, Beijing, China

Fax: c/0 Ministry of Communications - Fax: 00 86 10 6529 2345

Salutation: Dear President

Acting Governor of the Zhejiang Provincial People's Government

**CHAI Songyue** Daishengzhang Zhejiangsheng Renmin Zhengfu Shengfulu, Hangzhoushi 310025 Zhejiangsheng

People's Republic of China

Telegram: Governor, Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, China

Salutation: Dear Governor

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## PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.