

EXTERNAL

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To: Medical professionals
From: Medical Office / Research Department - Asia/Pacific Region
Date: 15 September 1992

MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION

Li Guiren
People's Republic of China

Keywords

Theme: ill-health/POC

Profession/association: Editor/writer

Summary

Li Guiren, a 49-year-old editor from Xi'an, Shaanxi Province in China, is reportedly seriously ill in prison with heart problems and gallstones. He has lost more than 10 kilos weight this year, and has lost his teeth. Li is currently being held in Shaanxi No.2 prison where he is reportedly not receiving effective medical care. International appeals organized earlier this year calling for a proper diagnosis and medical treatment have reportedly been ignored by the authorities. Li was sentenced in March 1991, a year after his trial, to five years' imprisonment in connection with his critique of government policies at the time of the pro-democracy demonstrations in mid-1989. Amnesty International is urging that he receive all necessary medical care and that he be released promptly and unconditionally on the grounds that he is a prisoner of conscience.

Recommended Actions

Letters from medical professionals, preferably written in English otherwise your own language, should be sent to the addresses below:

- referring to reports that Li Guiren is suffering several disorders including heart disease and gallstones
- express concern at the apparent serious state of Li Guiren's health and urge that he be assured necessary medical investigations and medical treatment, if necessary at a specialised hospital or clinic as specified in the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners
- urge that Li Guiren be released unconditionally on the grounds that he has not committed any recognizable crime

Publicity could be given to this case.

Addresses

Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, Xi'an

Sun Dianqi
Xi'an Shiwei Mishu
Zhongguo Gongchandang Xi'anshi
Weiyuanhui
Xi'an
Shaanxisheng
People's Republic of China

Vice-Governor of Shaanxi Province

Xu Shanlin
Shaanxisheng Fushengzhang
Shaanxisheng Renmin Zhengfu
Xixin Jie
Xi'an 710004 [sic]
Shaanxisheng
People's Republic of China

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Qian Qichen
Waijiaobu
225 Chaoyangmenneidjie
Beijingshi 100701
People's Republic of China

In addition you could write to the nearest diplomatic representative of the People's Republic of China.

Copies

Please send copies of your letters to :

The Secretary General
Chinese Medical Association
42 Dongsixidajie
Beijing 100710
China

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MEDICAL CONCERN

Li Guiren
People's Republic of China

Li Guiren is a 49-year-old editor and writer who was sentenced to five years' imprisonment for "counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement" for his activities at the time of the pro-democracy demonstrations in China in mid-1989. He is reportedly suffering from heart disease and other problems such as gallstones, significant weight loss (more than 10 kilos) and loss of his teeth. In late 1991 he complained of heart palpitations and his health is reported to have deteriorated markedly over recent months. According to reports he is still being deprived of a proper diagnosis and adequate medical care. Amnesty International believes that Li should be released as a prisoner of conscience and that he should be given immediate access to all necessary medical care.

Background

Li Guiren, editor-in-chief of the Hua Yue Literature and Art Publishing House in Shaanxi Province, was arrested at his home on 26 June 1989, three weeks after the military intervention in Beijing. The day after the military intervention Li urged workers at the Publishing House to sign a protest petition and to organize a strike. The proposal to have a strike was voted down.

Prior to this, Li had contributed a preface for a book by the Chinese dissident writer, Liu Binyan, now in exile. On 18 and 19 May 1989, Li participated in demonstrations in support of protesting students and workers in Xi'an and, after the declaration of martial law on 20 May 1989, sent a telegram to the former Communist Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang urging that the People's Liberation Army not be used against demonstrators; he made the contents of the telegram public.

At his trial in March 1990, Li was charged with "counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement" and in March 1991 he was sentenced to five years' imprisonment. His health deteriorated progressively in prison and at the end of 1991 he complained of heart palpitations but did not receive any medical attention. In February and March 1992 there were expressions of international concern about his state of health but these were apparently ignored and his health subsequently deteriorated rapidly since then. In April 1992 he was transferred to Shaanxi No.2 Prison in Weinan where again he was not provided with adequate medical care. Apart from heart disease and gallstones, he is reported to have lost more than 10 kilos weight and to have lost his teeth. At the end of July Li Guiren could reportedly no longer walk and his heart disease was said to be such as to make surgery to remove his gallstones risky.

The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules provide that "sick prisoners who require specialist treatment shall be transferred to specialized institutions or to civil hospitals" [Rule 22 (2)]. Amnesty International believes that failure to provide adequate health care renders the Chinese authorities in breach of international standards and urges that Li Guiren be guaranteed adequate medical treatment and that he be released without conditions.