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Legal Concern

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PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA: LI Haitao, prisoner of conscience

Li Haitao, an academic imprisoned since June 1989, was sentenced on 29 August 1990 to four years' imprisonment after being convicted on charges of counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation and disrupting transportation during the 1989 pro-democracy protests.

Li Haitao is reported to have appealed against his sentence to the Provincial High Court in Hubei Province and, at this crucial stage of the judicial process, it is thought that appeals and publicity could result in his case being reviewed.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 16 June 1989 the Public Security Bureau of Wuhan Municipality arrested Li Haitao, and 13 months later he was sentenced by the Intermediate People's Court of Wuhan Municipality. According to official sources he was accused of making public speeches and of organizing students in Wuhan to demonstrate against the suppression of the pro-democracy students in Beijing. Li Haitao was also accused of organizing a memorial meeting at Wuhan University on 5 June 1989 for those killed during the military intervention in Beijing. The charge of disrupting transport was made by the authorities in connection with a sit-in allegedly organized by Li Haitao on the Yangzi River Bridge. Li Haitao is being held in the No. 1 Detention Centre, Wuhan.

Li Haitao is a Doctor of Philosophy at Wuhan University (Wuda), in central Hubei Province. He has been described to Amnesty International as a brilliant philosopher. He was born in 1956 and has a four-year-old child.

Li Haitao is one of over 700 detainees known to Amnesty International who are being held for their involvement in last year's pro-democracy movement. Many are being held for the peaceful exercise of their right to freedom of association and expression and have been detained for over a year without charge.

Amnesty International is concerned that trial procedures in China do not generally meet internationally agreed standards for fair trial. Many of those detained are believed to be held incommunicado without access to relatives or lawyers.

Amnesty International believes that Li Haitao is being detained solely for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of expression and association. He is not reported to have used or advocated violence and Amnesty International is calling for his immediate and unconditional release.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telexes/airmail letters:

- expressing concern that Li Haitao has recently been sentenced to a four year prison term for the peaceful exercise of his right to freedom of association and expression;
- urging that Li Haitao be released immediately and unconditionally.

APPEALS TO:**Prime Minister LI:**

LI Peng Zongli
Guowoyuan
Beijingshi
Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo
People's Republic of China

Telexes: 210070 FMPRC CN; 22478 MFERT CN
(Please forward to LI Peng Zongli)

Justice Minister CAI:

CAI Cheng Buzhang
Sifabu
Sanlihe
Beijingshi
Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo
People's Republic of China

Telexes: 210070 FMPRC CN; 22478 MFERT CN
(Please forward to CAI Cheng Buzhang)

Supreme People's Court President REN:

REN Jianxin Yuanzhang
Zuigao Renmin Fayuan
Beijingshi
Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo
People's Republic of China

Telexes: 210242 SPC CN
(Please forward to REN Jianxin Yuanzhang)

COPIES TO: Diplomatic representatives of the People's Republic of China in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 4 December 1990.