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Legal Concern

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**PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA: BAO Zunxin
 WANG Haidong
 LIU Zihou**

Bao Zunxin, an intellectual who took an active part in peaceful protests during the pro-democracy movement of 1989, went on trial in Beijing on 15 January 1991 on charges of "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation". Bao Zunxin was adopted by Amnesty International as a prisoner of conscience in May 1990. He was arrested during the crackdown on pro-democracy protesters which started in June 1989 and detained for several months without charge in Qincheng, a maximum security prison for political prisoners. Bao Zunxin was reported to be in ill health and to have been unable to communicate with his family since January 1990 (see Amnesty International, UA 414/90, 12 October 1990: *BAO Zunxin: Health Concern*).

Bao Zunxin was not known to have been charged, but an official notice seen outside the Beijing People's Intermediate Court (PIC) on 15 January announced the charges, which according to the Chinese Criminal Law carry a minimum sentence of 5 years' imprisonment. A researcher at the Institute of Chinese History of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences until his arrest, Bao Zunxin had signed public appeals and petitions during the first half of 1989, including one in February calling for the release of political prisoners.

A second man, Wang Haidong was named as due to appear before the PIC on 15 January. No further details on his case were known.

Liu Zihou, a 34 year-old worker at the Beijing Aquatic Products Company who was arrested on 18 June 1989 and accused of being the head of the illegal Capital Workers' Special Picket Corps, was charged on 11 January 1991 with "gathering crowds and inciting armed rebellion", according to a notice outside the Beijing PIC. Members of Liu Zihou's group have been accused of helping to erect the Goddess of Democracy sculpture in the centre of Tiananmen Square, setting up roadblocks to obstruct the movement of martial law troops and setting fire to military vehicles.

At least 17 dissidents are now known to have been brought to trial for activities related to the 1989 pro-democracy movement (see Amnesty International, UA 07/91, ASA 17/01/91: *Legal Concern*). Although official reports have indicated that "local residents" were allowed to attend the trials of some dissidents earlier this month, relatives of some of the accused reportedly said they were excluded from the trials. Relatives of at least one defendant have apparently indicated that they had not been officially informed of the proceedings. Foreign correspondents and diplomats in Beijing were also denied permission to attend the trials.

Trials in China fall far short of international standards for fairness. Defendants may be unable to obtain the assistance of the lawyers of their choice

and to call defence witnesses. In trials held earlier this month, defendants reportedly had to submit their defence statements to the court in advance for approval.

Amnesty International is concerned that Bao Zunxin is a prisoner of conscience held solely for the peaceful exercise of fundamental human rights and calls on the Government of the People's Republic of China to release him immediately and unconditionally. It is further concerned that Liu Zihou and Wang Haidong may be denied a fair and open trial in accordance with international standards for fair trials.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telexes/faxes/airmail letters:

- expressing concern that Bao Zunxin is held for the peaceful exercise of fundamental human rights and urging the authorities to review his case and release him immediately and unconditionally;
- urging the authorities to make public the trial proceedings against Liu Zihou and Wang Haidong and the evidence on which the charges against them are based;
- urging the authorities to ensure that the trials of Liu Zihou and Wang Haidong are open to the general public and conducted in accordance with international standards for fairness and to allow international observers to attend the trials.

APPEALS TO:

LI Peng Zongli (Premier)
Guowuyuan
Beijingshi
People's Republic of China

Telexes: 2100070 FMPC CN or 22478 MFERT CN

CAI Cheng Buzhang (Justice Minister)
Sifabu
Sanlihe
Beijingshi
People's Republic of China

Telexes: 210070 FMPC CN or 22478 MFERT CN
(Please forward to Cai Cheng Buzhang)

LIU Fuzhi Jianchazhang (Chief procurator)
Zuigao Renmin Jianchazhang
Donganmen Beiheyuan
Beijingshi
People's Republic of China

Faxes: +86 1 512 1158

Telexes: 2100070 FMPC CN or 22478 MFERT CN
(Please forward to the addressee)

COPIES TO:

JIANG Zemin Zongshuji (Party General Secretary)
Zhonggong Zhongyang Weiyuanhui
Beijingshi
People's Republic of China

SHAO Huaze Zong Bianji (Chief Editor, People's Daily)
Renmin Ribao
Jintaixilu 2
Chaoyangmenwai
Beijingshi 100733
People's Republic of China

and to diplomatic representatives of the PRC in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat or your section office if sending appeals after 27 February 1991.