

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 17/15/98
Distrib:PG/SC

To: Health professionals
From: Medical Office / Asia Regional Program
Date: 6 July 1998

MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION

**Li Wangyang
CHINA (Hunan Province)**

Keywords

Theme: POC / ill-health / ill-treatment

Summary

Li Wangyang, born in 1954 and former chair of the Shaoyang Workers' Autonomous Federation - a group set up in Hunan Province in May 1989 during the 1989 pro-democracy protests - is serving a thirteen year sentence for counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement. Li Wangyang is reportedly seriously ill with what is said to be heart problems and a goitre. He was released on medical parole in July 1996, but eight months later he was taken back to Yuanjiang prison in the course of his treatment. His family has been appealing for assistance since he was returned to prison, contending that Li Wangyang's health is still very poor and that he needs to see a doctor. Li Wangyang was reportedly severely ill-treated in prison. Li Wangyang is a prisoner of conscience and Amnesty International is urging his immediate and unconditional release.

Recommended Actions

Letters are requested from health professionals to the addresses below:

- appealing for Li Wangyang's prompt and unconditional release as a prisoner of conscience;
- expressing serious concern at reports of Li Wangyang's medical problems;
- seeking information on his current state of health and asking for details of whatever medical treatment he is receiving;
- urging that Li Wangyang receive all necessary medical care in accordance with provisions set out in the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

If you receive no reply from the government or other recipients within two months of dispatch of your letter, please send a follow up letter seeking a response.

Addresses

1. Governor of the Hunan Provincial People's Government

YANG Zhengwu Shengzhang
Hunansheng Renmin Zhengfu
7 Wuyizhonglu
Changshashi 410011
Hunansheng
People's Republic of China

Salutation: Dear Governor

2. Chairman of the National People's Congress,

LI Peng Weiyuanzhang
Quanguo Renmin Daibiao Dahui
Great Hall of the People
Beijingshi
People's Republic of China

Salutation: Dear Chairman

Copies

Please send copies of your letters to:

Director of the prison
Jianyuzhang
Hunan no. 1
PO Box 101
Yuanjiang
Hunansheng
People's Republic of China

and to the Chinese diplomatic representatives in your country.

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 17/15/98
Distrib: PG/SC

Date: 6 July 1998

ILL-TREATMENT AND HEALTH CONCERN

**Li Wangyang
CHINA (Hunan Province)**

Summary

Li Wangyang, now aged 44, formerly a factory worker and head of the Shaoyang Autonomous Workers' Federation - a group set up in Hunan Province during the 1989 pro-democracy protests - is serving a thirteen-year-sentence for "counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement". Li Wangyang is reportedly seriously ill with what is said to be heart problems and a goitre. He was released on medical parole in July 1996, but eight months later he was taken back to Yuanjiang prison in the middle of his treatment. His family has been appealing for assistance since he was returned to jail, contending that "Li Wangyang's health is still very bad and he needs to see a doctor but the prison won't let him". Li Wangyang was reportedly severely ill-treated in prison. Amnesty International considers that Li Wangyang is a prisoner of conscience and is urging his immediate and unconditional release.

Background

On 20 May 1989 in response to the imposition of martial law in Beijing, a number of workers decided to establish their own independent labour unions. Li Wangyang became chair of the independent Shaoyang Workers Autonomous Federation in Hunan Province. He reportedly organized strikes and demonstrations, gave speeches and was a popular and influential figure locally in Shaoyang. Independent or autonomous workers' groups remain illegal in China and those seeking to establish independent workers' groups are at risk from arrest and harassment. The All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) is the only officially recognized trade union. It is government-controlled and maintains a monopoly on representing workers' interests in China.

Li Wangyang was arrested on 9 June 1989 a few days after the crackdown against civilians in Beijing. According to a report in the *Hunan Ribao*, Li Wangyang was accused of "putting up banners, issuing leaflets, carrying out liaison trips, spreading rumours, uttering reactionary slogans", inciting workers to go on strike and setting up the independent and autonomous workers organization in Shaoyang. He was charged with "counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement" and tried by the Shaoyang City Intermediate People's Court in early 1990.

Li Wangyang was reportedly first sent to Longxi Prison in Hunan Province and then transferred to Yuanjiang Prison. He was then sent to the Yueyang Labour Reform Farm. Li Wangyang has reportedly been severely ill-treated. Torture and ill-treatment are frequently reported by prisoners in China. Hundreds of political detainees were reportedly tortured in the months following the government's crackdown on the 1989 pro-democracy movement. Prisoners may be enforced by inmates appointed as "cell bosses" as well as by prison officers themselves. Prisoners have reported being tortured or ill-treated when they complain, do not fulfil work quotas, disobey orders or "resist reform". Since Li Wangyang's case has become known abroad, the authorities have reportedly offered to release him provided he "confessed to his crimes". Li Wangyang has so far refused to do so. He is due to be released in June 2002.

