

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 17/026/2003

11 June 2003

UA 167/03

Torture and ill-treatment/health concern

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC  
OF CHINA

Gong Shengliang (m), aged 47

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Gong Shengliang, a Protestant pastor and leader of the banned "*Huanan* (South China) Church" in the central province of Hubei, has reportedly been tortured and ill-treated by prison officials in Jingzhou prison, Hubei province. He is said to be in a serious condition and Amnesty International is deeply concerned for his safety and wellbeing.

According to an appeal to the international community, signed by his friends and members of his family, Gong Shengliang "is passing blood, has lost his hearing" and, in the last two weeks, "has been unable to leave his bed". The appeal states that his serious medical condition is the result of repeated beatings by prison officials at Jingzhou, where he was transferred at the end of 2002. He was apparently in a coma for several days after one beating. Gong Shengliang has reportedly been beaten "for professing his faith, for refusing to admit guilt and for requesting an appeal against his verdict". He is being held incommunicado in isolation and is under close surveillance. His family has not been permitted to visit him in prison since 14 April 2003. Gong Shengliang has not been given medical treatment for his injuries, and is at risk of further torture and ill-treatment.

Gong Shengliang and four others were originally sentenced to death in December 2001 in connection with their membership of the "*Huanan* (South China) Church", which was banned in April 2001. Their case was featured in EXTRA 01/02 (ASA 12/001/2002, 4 January 2002) and follow-ups. They were sentenced on charges including "using an evil cult to undermine the implementation of the law". Amnesty International is concerned that the convictions were based on evidence obtained through torture. Three female defendants in the same case said they were tortured by police to make them confess to having had sexual relations with Gong Shengliang, who was also convicted of rape. They said they were shackled, whipped and kicked, and beaten on their chests with electro-shock batons. In October 2002, the death sentences were commuted to long prison terms, including life imprisonment for Gong Shengliang, after a retrial was ordered because of "insufficient evidence and unclear facts". However, concerns remain that the verdicts were still partly based on confessions obtained through torture.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In China, torture and ill-treatment continue to be widespread and is reported in many state institutions as well as in workplaces and homes. Victims of torture include people detained on suspicion of criminal and political offences, bystanders at protests, migrant workers, vagrants and women suspected of prostitution. Common methods of torture include kicking, beating, electric shocks, suspension by the arms, shackling in painful positions, and sleep and food deprivation.

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

- expressing concern at reports that Gong Shengliang, held in Jingzhou prison, Hubei province, is seriously ill following beatings by prison officials;
- calling for the authorities to take immediate measures to guarantee Gong Shengliang's safety, including by ending his solitary confinement, providing him with appropriate medical treatment and giving guarantees that he will not be subjected to further torture or ill-treatment;
- calling on the authorities to provide him with access to his relatives and a lawyer of his choice;

- calling for a full, independent and impartial investigation into the allegations that Gong Shengliang has been tortured and ill-treated, for the results to be made public and for those found responsible to be brought to justice;
- expressing concern that Gong Shengliang's conviction remains unsafe and calling on the authorities to conduct an immediate review of the evidence used to convict him;
- pointing out that China ratified the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment in October 1988 but has failed to introduce effective measures and safeguards to prevent torture.

**APPEALS TO:**

Director of Jingzhou Prison

Jianguo Zhang  
Jingzhou Jianguo  
Jiaoyu zhongdui Rujian Dui  
Jingzhou Shi  
Hubei Sheng 4341001  
People's Republic of China  
**Telegram: Director of Jingzhou Prison, Jingzhou, Hubei Province, China**  
**Salutation: Dear Director**

Director of the Hubei Provincial Department of Justice

LU Dexi Tingzhang  
Sifating  
16 Hongshancelu  
Wuchang, Wuhanshi  
Hubeisheng 430071  
People's Republic of China  
**Telegram: Justice Department Director, Wuhan, Hubei Province, China**  
**Salutation: Dear Director**

Minister of Justice of the People's Republic of China

Zhang Fusen Buzhang  
Sifabu  
10 Chaoyangmen Nandajie, Chaoyangqu  
Beijingshi 100020, People's Republic of China  
**Telegram: Minister of Justice, Beijing, China**  
**Fax: + 86 10 65 292345 (c/o Ministry of Communications)**  
**E-mail: minister@legalinfo.gov.cn**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

Governor of the Hubei Provincial People's Government

LUO Qingquan Shengzhang  
Hubeisheng Renmin Zhengfu  
1 Beihuanlu  
Shuiguohu  
Wuchangqu, Wuhanshi  
Hubeisheng  
People's Republic of China  
**Telegram: Governor, Wuhan, Hubei Province, China**  
**Email: ( Please label your appeal "please forward to the Hubei Governor")**  
**Salutation: Dear Governor**

**COPIES TO:** diplomatic representatives of People's Republic of China accredited to your country.

**PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY.** Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 23 July 2003.