

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 17/032/2005

29 September 2005

Further Information on UA 280/04 (ASA 17/051/2004, 6 October 2004) and follow-up (ASA 17/057/2004, 24 November 2004; ASA 17/001/2005, 06 January 2005) - Fear of torture

**PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC
OF CHINA**

**Mao Hengfeng (f)
New name: Wu Xuewei (m), her husband**

Mao Hengfeng was released on 12 September, on completion of her 18-month term of "Re-education through labour". However, she defied orders to stop protesting about this and other violations of her rights, and so the security forces have harassed and beaten both her and her husband, Wu Xuewei. Both are at risk of arbitrary detention and torture.

Since her release, Mao Hengfeng has given further details of the treatment she endured while she was in custody. On 9 August 2004, she was kneed repeatedly in the groin, causing her to lose control temporarily of her bladder and bowels. From 9 to 16 August and 9 to 11 November 2004, she says she was forced to lie on her back on a metal "bed" with both wrists and ankles bound tightly to the four corners with leather straps. She was prevented from going to the toilet and forced to drink a liquid that made her feel dizzy. She claims that her back broke out into ulcers as a result of this treatment.

On the day of her release, "Re-education through Labour" officials reportedly threatened Mao with "serious consequences" if she continued her protests. When she refused to stop protesting, the officials reportedly forced twelve other inmates to bind her hands, arms and legs. She was then bundled into a van and driven out of the RTL facility.

Following her release, Mao Hengfeng has continued her protests, together with her husband. At around 9am on 13 September they joined over 100 other petitioners who had gathered at Putuo district court in Shanghai to support Xu Zhengqing, who was facing trial in connection with his attempts to attend a memorial service for former Chinese leader Zhao Ziyang in Beijing. Wu Xuewei claims to have been severely beaten by police standing guard outside the court: one of them apparently put him in a headlock, while several others kicked and punched him all over his body.

After this they were detained by the police and taken to a nearby sports centre together with dozens of other petitioners. Mao Hengfeng managed to escape and tried to continue her protest on behalf of Xu Zhengqing. However, she was apprehended and escorted back to the district where she lives. The local police and government officials reportedly threatened to imprison her if she continued her protests and presented her with a formal police summons for investigation on suspicion of "disturbing the normal lives of others".

Wu Xuewei and the others were released later that day. However, he was detained again at midnight on 15 September. The police reportedly presented him with a document stating that he was under suspicion of the criminal offence of "illegal assembly" in connection with his protest on 8 September 2005 calling for the release of Mao Hengfeng. He was granted six months' release on bail to await trial.

Mao Hengfeng and her family were reportedly held under house arrest from 23 to 27 September, after she said that she would go to a UN representative office in Beijing to protest about these abuses. Seven police officers reportedly stood guard in front of her apartment, preventing her from leaving for any purpose.

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

- expressing concern that Mao Hengfeng and her husband Wu Xuewei have repeatedly been denied their right to petition the authorities in line with Chinese constitutional guarantees;
- urging the authorities to conduct a full, independent and impartial investigation into allegations that Mao Hengfeng was tortured during "Re-education through Labour", and to bring those responsible to justice;
- calling for a full, independent and impartial investigation into reports that Mao Hengfeng and Wu Xuewei were beaten when they tried to join a protest in front of the Putuo district court, Shanghai;
- urging the authorities to ensure that Mao Hengfeng and Wu Xuewei can carry out their legitimate activities in defence of human rights without being subjected to arbitrary detention, torture or ill-treatment, or other human rights violations.

APPEALS TO:

Director of the Shanghai Bureau of Justice

MIAO Xiaobao Juzhang

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Email: **contact_us@eastday.com**
 webmaster@justice.gov.cn
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Fax: **+86 21 64743029**

Salutation: **Dear Director**

Director of the Shanghai Bureau of Public Security

WU Zhiming Juzhang,

Shanghaishi Gong'anju

185 Fuzhoulu, Huangpuqu, Shanghaishi 200002,

People's Republic of China

Email: **gaj02@shanghai.gov.cn**
 shgajxfb@sh.china110.com

Salutation: **Dear Director**

Mayor of the Shanghai Municipal People's Government

HAN Zheng Shizhang

Shanghaishi Renmin Zhengfu

30 Fuzhoulu, Shanghaishi 200002, People's Republic of China

Email: **webmaster@shanghai.gov.cn**

Salutation: **Dear Mayor**

Director of Bureau of Re-education-Through-Labour of the Ministry of Justice of the People's Republic of China

LI Rulin Juzhang

Bureau of Re-education-Through-Labour Administration

Ministry of Justice, 10 Chaoyangmen Nandajie

Chaoyangqu, Beijingshi 100020, People's Republic of China

Email: **info-lj@legalinfo.gov.cn**

COPIES TO: diplomatic representatives of the 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 10 November 2005.