

AI Index: ASA 17/52/99

## Global Petition Campaign

<http://www.june4.org>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### WANG DAN DEMANDS CHANGE IN CHINA

*150,000 Signatures Presented to Chinese Government on 50th Anniversary*

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(New York, September 29, 1999) -- On the eve of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC), former Tiananmen Square leader Wang Dan will present 150,000 signatures calling on the Chinese Government to take responsibility for the 1989 student massacre. The 50th anniversary of the founding of the PRC will be marked in Beijing with parades, fireworks and celebrations with international dignitaries.

Wang Dan launched a signature campaign at the beginning of 1999 to urge the Chinese government to respect basic human rights and to acknowledge responsibility for the 1989 massacre. Since that time, the Chinese government has intensified its recent crackdown on political and religious freedom.

Mr. Wang is to deliver his message and to present the 150,000 signatures collected in a worldwide petition campaign to the Chinese Consulate in New York at 2 p.m. on Thursday, September 30, 1999. "From Andorra to Zimbabwe, we are encouraged by the overwhelming support of ordinary people for the campaign," Wang Dan said from New York. "With these signatures, we hope to

send a strong message to the Chinese Government of the need to respect basic human rights and to learn from its mistakes."

Mr. Wang initiated the Global Petition Campaign to mark the tenth anniversary of Tiananmen Square. The petition calls on the Chinese Government to overturn of the official verdict on the 1989 pro-democracy movement, to release all political prisoners, and to respect international human rights covenants. Mr. Wang's campaign is backed by international human rights and labor organizations including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, International PEN, Human Rights in China, and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU).

The campaign's Internet Web site ([www.june4.org](http://www.june4.org)) received more than 20,000 electronic signatures from 125 countries. Amnesty International collected 40,000 signatures worldwide and the Hong Kong Alliance to Support Patriotic Democratic Movement in China gathered 67,000 signatures from Hong Kong.

News of the petition has broken through the Chinese government's information blockade. The campaign Web site received 2,000 signatures from the mainland. However, those who were trying to gather signatures within China were harassed, detained and arrested. In an earlier media report, Peng Cheng gathered 296 signatures in Jinan, the capital of Shandong province, before the authorities arrested him. Mr. Peng was sentenced to three years in labor camps on September 6, 1999.

Wang Dan is the most prominent leader of the student protest in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, in 1989. He headed China's "most wanted" list after the military crackdown on June 4, 1989. Wang was arrested in 1989 and again in 1995 and twice sentenced to a total of fifteen years in prison. Wang Dan was released on medical parole in April 1998 and exiled to the United States. He currently studies at Harvard University in Boston.

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