

URGENT ACTION

CHINESE ACTIVIST AT RISK OF TORTURE

Zhao Lianhai, father of a boy rendered ill by a batch of contaminated milk powder in China in 2008, has been campaigning for justice for other affected families. He was detained at his home in the Chinese capital, Beijing on 13 November, and is being held at the Daxing District Police Station, Beijing. Zhao Lianhai is a prisoner of conscience and is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

At around 10:30pm on 13 November, twelve police officers entered **Zhao Lianhai's** home in Beijing and presented him with a summons for his detention. When Zhao Lianhai refused to cooperate with them, as the summons had no reason for detention filled in, the police hastily wrote "provoking an incident" on the summons as the reason for detention. They then detained Zhao Lianhai and some of the police officers took him to the Daxing District Police Station whilst some police remained behind to search his home. The police officers confiscated two computers, USB memory 'sticks', some DVDs, campaign t-shirts, a camera, a video recorder and an address book all belonging to Zhao Lianhai.

On 14 November, the police gave Zhao Lianhai's wife a detention notice that states that her husband is under criminal detention on suspicion of "provoking an incident."

Zhao Lianhai's lawyer has not yet been able to meet with him.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Chinese or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to release Zhao Lianhai immediately and unconditionally, as he has been detained solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression and assembly;
- urging them to guarantee Zhao Lianhai will not be tortured or otherwise ill-treated;
- calling on them to ensure Zhao Lianhai has access to his family and lawyers, and to any medical attention he may require;
- calling on them to end use of vaguely-defined charges to crack down on human rights defenders.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 29 DECEMBER 2009 TO:

Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China

WEN Jiabao Guojia Zongli
The State Council General Office
2 Fuyoujie, Xichengqu
Beijingshi 100017
People's Republic of China

Fax: +86 10 65961109 (c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Director of the Beijing Public Security Bureau

MA Zhenchuan Juzhang
Beijingshi Gong'anju
9 Dongdajie, Qianmen
Dongchengqu
Beijingshi 100740
People's Republic of China

Fax: +86 10 65242927

Salutation: Dear Director

And copies to:

Director of Daxing District Public Security Sub-Bureau

Chen Debao Juzhang
35 Xi Dajie, Huangcun
Daxing Qu, Beijingshi 102600
People's Republic of China

Fax: +8610 69204640 (c/o Daxing District Government)

Salutation: Dear Director

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Parents whose children fell ill or in some cases died after drinking milk products tainted with the chemical melamine in 2008, have been campaigning for justice since. Zhao Lianhai's son was one of the victims of the contamination and he has been a leading figure in organizing the parents of those affected. He organized a parents' self-help group, a campaign calling for regular health check-ups for those affected, and launched a website called "babies with kidney stones" <http://www.jieshibaobao.com>. Zhao Lianhai also helped parents file a lawsuit against the companies that produced the contaminated milk by collecting and organizing information on individual cases.

Human rights activists in China who attempt to report on human rights violations, challenge policies which the authorities find politically sensitive, or try to rally others to their cause, face serious risk of abuse. There are many prisoners of conscience that have been imprisoned after politically motivated trials, while growing numbers are being held under house arrest with the police conducting intrusive surveillance and standing guard outside their homes.

Such patterns of police control, surveillance and arbitrary detention are increasingly being employed against activists in China and members of their families, particularly during significant public events. Prior to US President Barack Obama's trip to China on 16 November many activists and petitioners had police posted outside their homes in Shanghai, Beijing and elsewhere in the country, were detained or escorted out of Beijing.

UA: 311/09 Index: ASA 17/064/2009 Issue Date: 17 November 2009

