

URGENT ACTION

FALUN GONG PRACTITIONER DENIED MEDICAL CARE

Chinese Falun Gong practitioner, Guo Xiaojun, has developed a serious eye condition while in prison. He is being denied medical treatment and risks serious deterioration of his health.

On 18 January **Guo Xiaojun** underwent a medical examination in the prison hospital. He claims that following the examination, the prison doctors diagnosed him as having a serious eye condition. Initially prison authorities granted him "sick status" [or status as an inmate with a serious illness] which exempts individuals from taking part in forced labour and other harsher aspects of prison life, and grants them certain privileges, which in his case included permission to wear a hat to protect his head and eyes. Guo Xiaojun enjoyed this special status for several weeks then it was retracted by the prison authorities who refused to recognize his illness. The heightened stress and exhaustion associated with forced labour is thought likely to rapidly aggravate his eye condition.

Guo Xiaojun sent a letter to his wife describing these events, and also told her during a visit on 10 March that his eye condition was seriously deteriorating. He said that over 3 weeks prior to her visit, he had suffered 6 or 7 incidents of near total blindness in both eyes, which are symptoms of his illness. Prison authorities have refused to give his wife a copy of the medical report, although she has asked repeatedly to see it.

Guo Xiaojun is serving a four year prison term on the charge of "using a heretical organization to subvert the law". He previously served five years in prison for his Falun Gong beliefs.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in English, Chinese or your own language:

- Call on the authorities to immediately release Guo Xiaojun as he is a prisoner of conscience imprisoned solely because of his beliefs and is in need of urgent medical care;
- Call on the authorities to provide him all medical care available within the prison hospital until he is released on medical parole;

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 12 MAY 2011 TO:

Tilanqiao Prison Warden
Liu Jinbao
147 Changyang Road,
Shanghaishi
200082
People's Republic of China
Salutation: Dear Warden

Director of the Shanghai Bureau of Justice,
Juzhang, Shanghai Sifaju,
225 Wuxing Road
Shanghaishi 200030
People's Republic of China
Salutation: Dear Director

And Copies to:
Juzhang Party Secretary, Shanghai Political and Legal Committee
Wu Zhiming
9 Wangping Rd.
Shanghaishi, 200030
People's Republic of China
200030

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 257/10. Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA17/049/2010/en>

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Falun Gong is a spiritual movement which gained large numbers of supporters in China during the 1990s. After it staged a peaceful gathering in Tiananmen Square in July 1999, the government outlawed the group and launched a long-term campaign of intimidation and persecution, directed by a special organization called the 610 Office. Tens of thousands of Falun Gong practitioners have been arbitrarily detained since the spiritual movement was banned as a "threat to social and political stability". Practitioners have been held in psychiatric hospitals, re-education through Labour (RTL) facilities - a form of administrative detention imposed without charge, trial or judicial review -- or sentenced to long prison terms.

Torture and other ill-treatment are endemic in all forms of detention, despite China's ratification of the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in 1988. Falun Gong sources have documented numerous deaths in custody of Falun Gong practitioners, believed to have been caused by torture and other ill-treatment.

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