

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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## **Amnesty International calls for an investigation in to the allegations of torture of four lawyers in China**

Four lawyers have reported that they were tortured by the police after they were detained while investigating alleged violations in a detention centre holding Falun Gong practitioners.

Amnesty International is calling on the Chinese authorities to investigate these allegations with a view to bringing those responsible to justice.

Tang Jitian, Jiang Tianyong and Wang Cheng were released from Qixing Public Security Bureau Detention Centre in Jiansanjiang city, Heilongjiang province, northeast China, on 6 April after being administratively detained for 15 days for “using an evil cult to endanger society”.

The lawyers allege that the police tortured them in order to extract confessions, which is expressly prohibited in Article 50 of the People’s Republic of China Criminal Procedure Law. During detention at the Daxing District Public Security Bureau, Tang Jitian, Jiang Tianyong and Wang Cheng wrists were tied behind their backs and they were hung by their wrists, lifting their feet off the ground. They were then beaten and kicked in the chest, head, back and legs. The police also threatened Tang Jitian that they could “harvest his kidney alive” and “dig a hole and bury him”. Tang Jitian also recounted that he was beaten with a bat that had some soft materials attached to it, which he believes was to inflict pain but cause minimal bruising.

Previously, Zhang Junjie who was released on 27 March after five days in detention, posted testimony online containing details about his torture.

The four lawyers were investigating a so-called “legal education centre” in Qinglongshan farm at the time of their detention. Some of their clients, who are Falun Gong practitioners, are currently held at this “legal education centre”.

Dozens of supporters of the lawyers have been harassed and briefly detained by the police when they attempted to visit or get information about the lawyers and 15 of them are still detained: Jai Yanmin, Jiang Jianping, Zhang Rongping (Zhang Xingyu), Sun Dongsheng, Li Baolin, Chen Jinxin, Yuan Xiancheng, Li Fawang, Liang Yan, Zhao Yuan, Zhang Xiqing, Liu Xing, Li Dawai, Zhang Yan and Qi Jinchun. Amnesty International is urging the authorities to release them immediately and unconditionally.

Amnesty International is also concerned that following the abolition of Re-education Through Labour in China at the end of 2013, the authorities are increasingly using other forms of arbitrary detention such as “legal education centres” to hold people previously detained in Re-education Through Labour. “Legal education centres” are designed primarily as places where Falun Gong practitioners are coerced into renouncing their beliefs, often through torture and other ill-treatment.

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