

PUBLIC

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Further Information on UA 14/06 (ASA 17/001/2006, 19 January 2006) and follow-ups (ASA 17/047/2006, 22 August 2006; ASA 17/055/2006, 23 October 2006) – Fear for safety/death threats/incommunicado detention

CHINA **Gao Zhisheng (m), aged 42, human rights lawyer**

Human rights lawyer Gao Zhisheng has been released and reunited with his family.

He was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for "inciting subversion", on 22 December, by the Beijing Municipal No.1 Court. However, in an unusual move, the court ruled that the sentence should be suspended for five years. This means that he will not be imprisoned unless he commits other offences during this time. It is likely that appeals from the UA network and other activists, in China and abroad, influenced the authorities' decision in this case.

Gao Zhisheng and his family are reportedly still under close surveillance by the authorities, but are not thought to be in any immediate danger.

Amnesty International remains deeply concerned that Gao Zhisheng was convicted of "inciting subversion", as this a broadly defined crime in the Chinese criminal law that is regularly used to imprison activists in violation of their fundamental human rights to freedom of expression. He and his family remain under tight restrictions: Amnesty International will monitor their situation closely and take further action as appropriate.

No further action is requested from the UA network. Many thanks to all who sent appeals.