

URGENT ACTION

MAO HENGFENG SENT BACK TO RTL

Mao Hengfeng, a Shanghai-based human rights defender, was released from Re-education Through Labour (RTL) on medical parole on 22 February. On 24 February she was sent back to RTL on the grounds of having violated the terms for medical parole. She is at risk of torture.

According to **Mao Hengfeng's** husband, Shanghai Yangpu district police came to their home at about 4:00 pm on 24 February 2011 and said they wanted to talk with Mao Hengfeng. They were soon joined by officials from Anhui Provincial Women's Re-education Through Labour (RTL) facility, and in total over 30 police surrounded their house.

The police told her that she had committed activities which violated the terms of her medical parole, and was being sent back to RTL. She was not allowed to change her clothes or pack anything she needed before being taken away.

When Mao Hengfeng was released on 22 February, an official told her this was due to her high blood pressure. She also has serious injuries caused by torture she suffered in detention. She said she has partially lost feeling on the left half of her body and could not move properly. Shortly before her release, Mao Hengfeng had been sent to two different hospitals for medical checks. A doctor did a CT scan on her head and found signs of bleeding in her brain.

After being unexpectedly released on 22 February, Mao Hengfeng celebrated with a group of friends in an evening meal at a restaurant. Thereafter she was prevented from leaving her house. On 23 February she attempted to visit a doctor, but was stopped by the police. According to her family, Mao Hengfeng did not confront the police and stayed at home. Later on 23 February, several friends came to visit her but were stopped by police and detained. More people heard about her situation and tried to visit her but they were all stopped and sent away.

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

- calling on the authorities to release Mao Hengfeng immediately and unconditionally;
- ensure that she is allowed access to her family, independent medical assessment and any medical treatment that she may require;
- guarantee that Mao Hengfeng will not be tortured or ill-treated while she is in custody;
- initiate a full, independent and impartial investigation into reports that Mao Hengfeng was tortured or ill-treated in the Re-education Through Labour facility and ensure that those responsible for torture or ill-treatment are brought to justice in accordance with international standards.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 7 APRIL TO:

Director of the Anhui Provincial Bureau
of Re-education-Through-Labour
Administration

WANG Yinghui Juzhang
Anhuisheng Laodong Jiaoyang Guanliju
310 Anqinglu, Hefeishi 230061
Anhuisheng
People's Republic of China
Fax: +86 551 2828979
Email: ahlijbgs@ahlij.gov.cn

Director of the Shanghai Bureau of
Public Security

ZHANG Xuebing Juzhang
Shanghaishi Gong'anju
128 Wuningnanlu, Qing'anqu
Shanghaishi 200042
People's Republic of China
Email: gaj02@shanghai.gov.cn or
Salutation: Dear Director

And copies to:

Premier 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: Dear Premier

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 second update of UA: 95/10 Further information: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA17/019/2010/en> and <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA17/031/2010/en>

**AMNESTY
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Mao Hengfeng was sentenced to 18 months' Re-education Through Labour (RTL) punishment on 4 March 2010 for "disturbing public order," in front of the Beijing municipal intermediate court on 25 December 2009, where she shouted slogans, ignored police warnings and attracted the attention of passers-by in support of human rights activist Liu Xiaobo, who had been on trial that day. In October 2010, Liu Xiaobo was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

According to her family, Mao Hengfeng has been repeatedly tortured and ill-treated in detention. From 13 May - 1 June 2010, Mao Hengfeng was on hunger strike in protest against the RTL centre, as they would not allow her to appeal her case. RTL facility officers force-fed her by putting a tube down her throat, causing a lot of pain. According to Mao Hengfeng, the tube caused a lot of pain, scratches in her throat and bleeding.

When Mao Hengfeng ended her hunger strike in June, RTL facility officers used her family's money to buy food and then throw it away in front of her. Since RTL centres often only provide little food of poor quality, most inmates need their families to send money in order to buy more food.

RTL facility officers instructed other inmates to beat Mao Hengfeng, and she was beaten by about 10 people each time. This continued until November 2010, but it is unclear how many times it occurred. She was also forced to work over the summer sorting rubbish in a toxic and dirty environment. Sometimes after work she was not allowed to take a shower.

On 9 September 2010, due to her protests about the human rights abuses in RTL, guards tied Mao Hengfeng's hands behind her back using rope, and also tied up her legs. They then put dirty plastics and clothes into her mouth. For four days she was left in this position and was not given any food or water. On 29 September, RTL staff did this again to her for another four days.

Since 2004, Mao Hengfeng has been repeatedly detained for her work defending women's reproductive rights and victims of forced evictions, and her support of human rights defenders. Often her family have not been allowed to visit her and they have since found out that it was at these times that she has been tortured.

Further information on UA 95/10 Index: ASA 17/008/2011 Issue Date: 24 February 2011

