

URGENT ACTION

DETAINED ACTIVIST ENDS HUNGER STRIKE

Imprisoned Chinese Human Rights Defender Yang Maodong (better known by his pen name Guo Feixiong) ended his hunger strike on 18 August after being moved to another prison and promised humane treatment. He is a prisoner of conscience and should be released immediately and unconditionally.

Guo Feixiong ended his hunger strike on 18 August after being transferred to Yingde Prison in Guangdong province in southern China. Guo Feixiong's brother, Yang Maoquan, visited him on 22 August in Yingde Prison. Guo Feixiong told his brother that he decided to start eating again after the prison authorities assigned him to another prison and told him that they would treat him humanely and with dignity, and would allow his family to send him books.

Guo Feixiong is currently in the prison hospital. According to his brother, Guo Feixiong was still very frail after staging a hunger strike for over a hundred days. Guo Feixiong told his brother that a medical check-up he received revealed that he had oral and gastrointestinal bleeding and spine problems. Guo Feixiong has had restricted mobility, occasionally having trouble standing up. He has also lost his ability to undertake any form of prison work. More recently, the authorities did not allow his sister to visit him at the prison hospital.

Amnesty International considers him a prisoner of conscience.

Please write immediately in English, Chinese or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Guo Feixiong, who is a prisoner of conscience;
- Ensure that as long as Guo Feixiong remains in detention his treatment is in accordance with the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) including the ability to receive visits from his family;
- Ensure that he has access to a qualified health professional who can provide health care in compliance with medical ethics, including the principles of confidentiality, autonomy and informed consent.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 10 OCTOBER 2016 TO:

Director,
Pan Hao
Yingde Prison,
1 Sihaolu
Chengbei Jinzishandadao
Guangdongsheng 513000,
China.
Fax: +86 07633165017
Email: jyj_ydiy@gd.gov.cn
Salutation: Dear Director

Director,
Li Jingyan
Guangdong Prison Administrative Bureau,
298 Guangyuanzhonglu,
Baiyun District,
Guangzhoushi,
Guangdongsheng 510405,
China.
Email: jyj_bgs@gd.gov.cn
Salutation: Dear Director

And copies to:
Premier
Li Keqiang 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)

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY MR LIU XIAOMING, Embassy of the People's Republic of China, 49-51 Portland Place W1B 1JL, 020 7299 4049, press_uk@mfa.gov.cn

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the third update of UA 99/16. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/4597/2016/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Guo Feixiong, the better-known pen-name of writer and human rights defender Yang Maodong, has been detained since 8 August 2013. He took part in a protest against media censorship in January 2013, after Communist Party officials had sparked outrage by changing a front page editorial of the "Southern Weekly" newspaper that had called for greater civil and political rights as well as adherence to China's Constitution. On 27 November 2015, he was convicted of "gathering a crowd to disrupt order in a public place" and "picking quarrels and provoking trouble" and given a six-year prison sentence.

Guo Feixiong is a writer, rights defender and was once a legal adviser with the Beijing-based Shengzhi Law Office. He has supported various human rights causes in the past decade. In 2005 he participated in a hunger strike in response to a call by prominent human rights lawyer Gao Zhisheng for a "hunger strike group" to protest the government's crackdown on human rights activists. The hunger strike was also a protest against his previous detention and beatings following his legal support of Taishi villagers who were calling for the ouster of a village official they had been accused of corruption in 2005.

Guo Feixiong had been previously detained in February 2006 and sentenced to five years in prison in November 2007 after being convicted of the crime of "illegal business activity", after he published a book entitled Shenyang Political Earthquake. Guo was subjected to several forms of torture while in detention, including being hung from the ceiling by his arms and legs while he was beaten, and being shocked with an electric baton to the face and genitals. Guo Feixiong states that he was tortured into confessing this crime, leading him to attempt suicide. Guo was released from prison in September 2011.

In September of 2015, Guo won the prestigious Frontline Defenders Award for his human rights activism.

Starting from 4 May, more than 1000 activists in China and overseas have signed a pledge to join a 24-hour hunger strike relay to support Guo Feixiong and demand his release. So far, over 200 people have participated in the hunger strike.

Further information on UA 99/16: Index: ASA 17/4718/2016 Issue Date: 29 August 2016