

Action Page

COMPILED BY CAROL K. WANG

One of the first steps towards building social justice is to create a wider space for civil society. These three political prisoners—a petitioner and two writers—were merely exercising rights necessary for the construction of a vibrant civil society.

Xu Zhengqing (b. 1963), a housing activist and petitioner, was detained on January 29, 2005, after being forcibly returned to Shanghai from Beijing as part of group of 22 people attempting to attend Zhao Ziyang's memorial service. Xu was reportedly beaten severely by PSB officers, then detained for more than 50 hours by the Shanghai Puto District Public Security Bureau. On January 31, the PSB notified Xu's wife that he had been charged with "creating a disturbance in a public place." Xu was formally arrested on February 25, 2005, and on September 13 the Shanghai Puto District People's Court found him guilty of "creating a disturbance in a public place." On October 17, the Shanghai Puto District Appeals Court found him guilty of "inciting disorder" and sentenced him to three years in prison.

Zhang Lin (b. 1963), dissident writer and pro-democracy activist, was detained at the Bengbu City railway station in Anhui Province on January 29, 2005 upon his return from Beijing. Initially charged with "disturbing social order" in attempting to pay condolences to Zhao Ziyang's family, Zhang was ultimately tried on June 21 under a new charge of "endangering state security" based on the content of 192 of his online articles and postings. On June 28 the Bengbu City Intermediate People's Court sentenced Zhang to five years in prison and four years' subsequent deprivation of political rights. Zhang appealed the verdict, but on October 14, the Anhui Provincial Higher People's Court upheld the lower court's decision. Zhang is now being detained at the Anhui Hefei Nanjiao Chayouji Prison. He has suffered mistreatment in detention, and went on hunger strike from September 1-28.

Zheng Yichun (b. 1959), an ethnic Korean dissident writer and former English teacher at Liaoning University, was detained on December 3, 2004 in Yingkou City, Liaoning Province. Initially held at the Liaohe Hotel in Yingkou City, he was transferred to the Panjin No. 1 Detention Center on December 20. His family was notified on December 31 that Zheng had been charged with "incitement to subvert state power," but due to official warnings, they only broke silence after Zheng's arrest was reported by the *Yinkou Daily* on February 24, 2005. Seventy-seven of the articles Zheng had published on overseas Web sites were cited as evidence against him during his public hearings on April 26 and July 21, 2005. On September 20, 2005, the Yingkou Municipal Intermediate People's Court sentenced Zhang to seven years in prison and three years' deprivation of political rights.

Join the international community in calling for the immediate and unconditional release of these and other democracy activists. Please send letters to the designated addresses below, emphasizing the need for the rule of law, free flow of information and the right to exercise freedom of expression. Where necessary, express concern for medical conditions and demand immediate and appropriate treatment.

Xu Zhengqing: held at Shanghai Puto District Detention Center

Zhang Lin: held at Anhui Hefei Nanjiao Chayouji Prison in Hefei, Anhui Province

Zheng Yichun: held at No.1 Prison in Panjin City, Liaoning Province

Mayor Han Zheng

Shanghai Municipal People's Government
Shanghaishi Renmin Zhengfu 30 Fuzhoulu
Shanghaishi, 200002, PRC

Governor King Jinshan

Anhui Provincial People's Government
238 Funan Xijie
Hefeishi, 230061, Anhuisheng, PRC

Governor Zhang Wen Yue

Liaoning Provincial People's Government
45 Beilingdajie, Huanggu District,
Shenyang, 110032, PRC

Send copies of above appeals to:

President Hu Jintao

Chinese Communist Party
Yongdingmenjie
Beijing 100032, PRC

Ambassador Jiechi Yang

Embassy of the People's Republic of China
2300 Connecticut Ave. NW
Washington DC 20008
Fax: 1 202 328 2582

In addition, send copies of letters expressing concern for prisoners' medical conditions to:

Chinese Medical Association

42 Dongsi Xidajie
Beijing 100710, PRC
Fax: 86-10-6512-3754
E-mail: cmafrd@public3.bta.net.cn

Minister of Justice Wu Aiyang

Sifaju (Ministry of Justice)
10 Nandajie Chaoyangmen
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