

URGENT APPEAL - THE OBSERVATORY

CHN 002 / 0311 / OBS 050
Censorship
People's Republic of China
March 25, 2011

The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, a joint programme of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), requests your urgent intervention in the following situation in the **People's Republic of China**.

Description of the situation:

The Observatory has been informed by reliable sources about the closure of the website of the Aizhixing Research Foundation, a group which promotes the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS.

According to the information received, on March 15, 2011, the municipal information office of Beijing issued an order to shut down the Aizhixing Research Foundation's website¹ after it published an open letter in December 2010 about the trade in blood plasma and its role in spreading HIV.

Mr. **Wan Yanhai**, Founder of the group and Director of the Aizhixing Institute of Health Education, received several requests from the authorities to remove the letter. The letter was written by Mr. **Chen Bingzhong**, a former head of the China Health Education Research Institute. In this letter, Mr. Bingzhong accused two former party leaders of covering up the link between the government-supported sale of blood for transfusions and an epidemic of HIV.

The Observatory firmly condemns this act of censorship against the Aizhixing Research Foundation since it seems to merely aim at sanctioning its human rights activities and calls upon the Chinese authorities to take prompt action in order to immediately and unconditionally allow the Aizhi website to re-open.

The Observatory further calls upon the authorities in China to conform with the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 9, 1998, and other international human rights instruments ratified by China.

Actions requested:

Please write to the authorities in the People's Republic of China, urging them to:

- i. Guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity of the members of the Aizhixing Research Foundation;
- ii. Allow immediately and unconditionally the Aizhi website since its closure is arbitrary as it only aims at sanctioning the human rights activities of the Aizhixing Research Foundation;
- iii. Put an end to all forms of harassment, including at the administrative and judicial level, against the members of the Aizhixing Research Foundation as well as against all human rights defenders in China;

¹ www.aizhi.net

- iv. Conform with the provisions of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, especially:
- its Article 1, which states that “everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to promote and to strive for the protection and realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels”;
 - its Article 6, which states that “Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others: (a) To know, seek, obtain, receive and hold information about all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including having access to information as to how those rights and freedoms are given effect in domestic legislative, judicial or administrative systems ; (b) As provided for in human rights and other applicable international instruments, freely to publish, impart or disseminate to others views, information and knowledge on all human rights and fundamental freedoms ; (c) To study, discuss, form and hold opinions on the observance, both in law and in practice, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and, through these and other appropriate means, to draw public attention to those matters.
 - its Article 12.1 which provides that “everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to participate in peaceful activities against violations of human rights and fundamental freedom”;
 - and its Article 12.2, which states that “the State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration”;
- v. Ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments ratified by the People’s Republic of China.

Addresses:

- Mr. Wen Jiabao, Prime Minister of the People’s Republic of China, 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)
- Mrs. Wu Aiyong, Minister of Justice of the People’s Republic of China, Buzhang Sifabu, 10 Chaoyangmen Nandajie, Chaoyangqu, Beijingshi 100020, People’s Republic of China, Fax: +86 10 6529 2345, minister@legalinfo.gov.cn / pfmaster@legalinfo.gov.cn
- Mr. Dai Bingguo, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, Buzhang Waijiaobu, 2 Chaoyangmen Nandajie, Beijingshi 100701, People’s Republic of China, Fax: +86 10 6588 2594, Email: ipc@fmprc.gov.cn;
- Mr. Meng Jianzhu, Minister of Public Security of the People’s Republic of China, Buzhang, Gong’anbu, 14 Dongchang’anjie, Dongchengqu, Beijingshi 100741, People’s Republic of China, Fax: +86 10 63099216
- Ambassador Sha Zukang, Permanent Mission of the People’s Republic of China, Chemin de Surville 11, P.O. Box 85, 1213 Petit-Lancy 2, Geneva, Switzerland, Fax: +41 22 7937014, E-mail: mission.china@ties.itu.int
- Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in Brussels, Avenue de Tervuren, 463 1160 Auderghem, Belgium, Tel: + 32 2 663 30 10 / + 32 2 663 30 17 / +32 2 771 14 97 / +32 2 779 43 33; Fax: +32 2 762 99 66 / +32 2 779 28 95; Email: chinaemb_be@mfa.gov.cn.

Please also write to the diplomatic mission or embassy of the People’s Republic of China in your respective country.



The Observatory
for the Protection
of Human Rights Defenders

Paris-Geneva, March 25, 2011.

Kindly inform us of any action undertaken quoting the code of this appeal in your reply.

To contact the Observatory, call the emergency line:

- E-mail: Appeals@fidh-omct.org
- Tel and fax FIDH + 33 (0) 1 43 55 25 18 / +33 1 43 55 18 80
- Tel and fax OMCT + 41 (0) 22 809 49 39 / + 41 22 809 49 29