

URGENT ACTION

NGO WORKER PRISON VISIT DENIED FOR MONTHS

Taiwanese activist Lee Ming-che, the first foreign NGO worker detained after China's new Foreign NGO Management Law came into effect, has been sentenced to five years' imprisonment for "subverting state power". His family is not allowed to see him since the last prison visit on 10 September 2018. His whereabouts remain uncertain.

Taiwanese activist **Lee Ming-che**, along with co-defendant and Chinese citizen Peng Yuhua, was sentenced to imprisonment for "subverting state power" in November 2017 by the Yueyang City Intermediate People's Court in Hunan province. Lee Ming-che has supported civil society organizations and activists for many years and was visiting China for personal matters when he was detained by state security authorities on 19 March 2017.

Lee Ming-che's wife, Lee Ching-yu, held a press conference in Taipei on 10 November 2018, revealing that Chinese authorities have denied her application to visit her husband for two months in a row. This comes amid concerns about Lee Ming-che's health and rumours that he has been transferred multiple times to different prisons without explanation.

Since Lee Ching-yu's last direct contact with Lee Ming-che in September 2018, prison authorities have twice denied further requests. First, she was told she could not visit her husband on 22 October 2018 due to his transfer to a different prison. Her subsequent application was again denied three weeks later. According to the prison authorities, the second refusal was due to an upgrade to the prison's information system, which precluded a prison visit.

Without any explanation on prison transfers in such a short period of time and on the rejections or postponements of visiting requests, there is serious concern about Lee Ming-che's health and his treatment in prison. Failure to facilitate regular contact between Lee Ming-che and his family or allow him to notify his family about transfers to other institutions is a breach of international standards on the treatment of prisoners.

Please write immediately in Chinese, English or your own language urging the authorities to:

- Immediately and unconditionally release Lee Ming-che as he has been imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of expression and has committed no crime;
- Pending his release, ensure that Lee Ming-che is protected from torture and other ill-treatment, and that he has regular, unrestricted access to family and medical care on request or as necessary while in detention

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 2 JANUARY 2019 TO:

Director
Liang Weixin
Hunan Chishan Prison
101 Mailbox, Yuanjiang Shi,
Nanzui Zhen,
Yiyang Shi, 413104 Hunan Sheng
People's Republic of China
Tel: +86 0737 2286311

Salutation: Dear Director

Minister of Justice
Fu Zhenghua
Ministry of Justice
No. 6 Nan Dajie
Chaoyang Men
Beijingshi 100020
People's Republic of China
Salutation: Dear Minister

And copies to:

Premier
Li Keqiang Guojia Zongli
The State Council General Office
2 Fuyoujie, Xicheng Qu
Beijingshi 100741
People's Republic of China
Tel: +86 10 6596 1109 (c/o Ministry of
Foreign Affairs)
Email: premier@mail.gov.cn

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the fourth update of UA 71/17. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/7334/2017/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Lee Ming-che, manager of an NGO in Taipei, Wenshan Community College, first went missing on 19 March 2017 after crossing the Gongbei border from Macao to Zhuhai, Guangdong, southern China. Ten days later, Chinese officials confirmed Lee Ming-che was being held on suspicion of “endangering national security”. Lee has supported civil society organizations and activists for many years in China. However, on this occasion, Lee Ming-che was on a personal visit to China to arrange medical treatment for his mother-in-law.

Lee Ming-che is the first foreign NGO worker imprisoned since the Foreign NGO Management Law took effect on 1 January 2017. Following a trial in September 2017, Lee was sentenced to five years’ imprisonment alongside Chinese citizen Peng Yuhua by the Yueyang City Intermediate People’s Court, in Hunan province. Peng Yuha was sentenced to seven years, also for “subverting state power”.

Prior to the trial, Lee Ming-che was held in incommunicado detention for six months. In his first public appearance since being detained, Lee appeared tired and seemed to recite a scripted “confession” during his trial, which was broadcast live on the court’s *weibo* social media account.

Lee Ming-che’s wife, held a press conference in Taipei on 10 November 2018, revealing that Chinese authorities had denied her application to visit her husband for two months in a row. This comes amid rumours that Lee Ming-che was transferred back to Hunan’s Chishan Prison two weeks after being moved to a prison in Hebei. To date, no explanation was given regarding the abrupt prison transfer. This has raised concerns over Lee Ming-che’s health, as he suffers from hypertension.

Name: Lee Ming-che
Gender m/f: male

Further information on UA: 71/17 Index: ASA 17/ 9417/2018 Issue Date: 21 November 2018