

URGENT ACTION

ETHNIC MONGOLIAN ACTIVIST DETAINED IN CHINA

Sodmongol, an activist from the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in the People's Republic of China, may be facing prosecution, after being detained while on his way to a United Nations meeting on Indigenous Peoples in New York. His family have not seen him since April, and he is at risk of torture, ill-treatment and enforced disappearance.

Sodmongol, who works to promote the rights of ethnic Mongolians living in China, has not had any contact with relatives and lawyers since 18 April, when he was detained by police at Beijing airport. He had been trying to board a plane to New York, where he was due to attend the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The authorities have not confirmed that they are holding him, or where he is, and his family has been denied the right to visit him. However, sources in China suggest that he is in custody in the city of Chao Yang, in Liaoning Province, which borders the Mongolia autonomous region. According to the same sources in China, the People's Procuratorate in Chao Yang has begun investigating his case, suggesting he will be prosecuted. He is believed to be accused of "having links with people and organizations that have a 'complex and hostile' background", apparently because of his plans to attend the meeting in New York. Sodmongol appears to be a prisoner of conscience, held for exercising his right to freedom of expression.

Sodmongol, as part of his efforts in advocating for the freedoms of speech, press and association of ethnic Mongolians in China, created and administered two popular internet forums. On 13 June 2009 he was questioned by the Chinese authorities about his activities and in October 2009 the internet forums he managed were shut down. The forums had provided a space for ethnic Mongolians to advocate for and promote the protection of their right to maintain their culture and language. Sodmongol also organized workshops, seminars and events to educate ethnic Mongolians on how to protect their legal rights.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Mandarin, Mongolian, English or your own language:

- √ Calling on the authorities to release Sodmongol immediately and unconditionally as he appears to be a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for his peaceful exercise of the right to freedom of expression;
- √ Urging the authorities to guarantee that Sodmongol will not be tortured or otherwise ill-treated while he remains in custody;
- √ Urging the authorities to ensure that Sodmongol is allowed access to legal assistance of his choosing, and to his family.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 26 AUGUST 2010 TO:

Procurator of Chaoyang City People's
Procuratorate

Jianchazhan
30 Fengming Street
Shuangtaqu
Chaoyangshi 122000
Liaoningsheng
People's Republic of China
Salutation: Dear Procurator

Acting Governor of the Liaoning
Provincial People's Government

CHEN Zhenggao Shengzhang
Liaoningsheng Renmin Zhengfu
45 Beilingdajie
Huangguqu
Shenyangshi 110032
Liaoningsheng
People's Republic of China
Fax: +86 24 86892175
Email: lnsfxc@ln.gov.cn
Salutation: Dear Governor

Procurator-General of the Supreme
People's Procuratorate of the People's
Republic of China

CAO Jianming Jianchazhang
Zuigao Renmin Jianchayuan
147 Beiheyandajie
Beijingshi 100726
People's Republic of China
Salutation: Dear Procurator-General

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives of China accredited to your country. Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ethnic Mongolians represent one of the biggest minorities within China and are concentrated in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. They, like other ethnic minorities in China, face limited and ineffectual political participation, inequitable and discriminatory development and inadequate protection of cultural identity.

Expressions of cultural identity on the part of ethnic minorities are often perceived as threats to state security by the Chinese government and can incur harsh punishment. Restriction on the civil and political freedoms of ethnic minorities, as well as inequalities in basic social services such as education, healthcare, employment discrimination, and inequitable development have contributed to rising tensions between them and the Han Chinese majority in recent years.

In 2008, another ethnic Mongolian man, Naranbilig, was also prevented by the Chinese authorities from attending the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. He was detained for 20 days and then put under house arrest for one year.

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