

China Activist Chen Suffers Malnutrition in Detention

After repeated beatings and malnutrition suffered in house detention, blind pro-life activist Chen Guangcheng's health is deteriorating quickly. Now, human rights organizations are pushing harder than ever for his freedom.

Women's Rights Without Frontiers and China Aid Association on Tuesday called for urgent action on Guangcheng's behalf. In order to drive more attention to the international cause, Women's Rights Without Frontiers released a new video demanding freedom for Chen and his family. (You can view the video at the end of this story.)

Guangcheng was arrested in 2006 for exposing evidence that 130,000 forced abortions and involuntary sterilizations were performed on women in Linyi County, Shandong Province in a single year. *Time Magazine* named him one of "2006's Top 100 People Who Shape Our World" and he was given the 2007 Magsaysay award, known as Asia's Nobel Peace Prize.

"The abuse of Chen Guangcheng is unconscionable and contrary to the rule of law," says Bob Fu, president of China Aid. "His mistreatment under house arrest is deplorable, including beatings, constant surveillance, as well as confiscation of his computer, cell phone, books, his blind cane and the toys of his young daughter."

Guangcheng spent four years, three months in prison. Since his September 2010 release, he continues to serve a sentence of home detention. Both in prison and under house arrest, he has experienced mistreatment and beatings. He and his wife and daughter are not allowed sufficient food and are isolated from all outside contact.

"Chen's wife sounded the alarm in a letter recently smuggled

out of China,” says Reggie Littlejohn, president of Women’s Rights Without Frontiers. “She said that Chen’s health is very fragile and worsening every day because of beatings, malnutrition and an intestinal illness. She is worried about his survival. Chen sacrificed everything to tell the world the brutal truth about forced abortion in China. He is a warrior for women’s rights. Now it’s our turn to sacrifice on behalf of Chen by fighting for his freedom.”

The groups are calling on the international diplomatic community to make official interventions on behalf of Guangcheng with the Chinese government and asking individuals to write Chinese embassies and consulates around the world and sign the petition to Free Chen Guangcheng at: