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Fled China to escape the CCP's persecution, now seeking asylum in Europe

– HRWF calls upon the relevant Spanish authorities to grant asylum to Wang Dongdong and other members of The Church of Almighty God whose case is similar.

HRWF (30.06.2020) – Wang Dongdong is from Jiaozuo City in Henan Province, China. In 2001, his family all joined The Church of Almighty God and so he has been a member since childhood. He once had a happy family, but it was torn apart by the CCP's arrests and persecution. In May 2015, he managed

to escape China and reach Spain to seek asylum.

The following is Wang Dongdong's personal experiences under the CCP's persecution that he shared with *Human Rights Without Frontiers* (HRWF).

Arrested at the age of 12, forced to drop out of school

"One day during the spring of 2002, someone reported that my parents were preaching the gospel to the police. About eight police officers arrested my father and three other church members on charges of 'illegal preaching' and took away all of their faith-related books. My father was released one day later. After that, the police would regularly come and raid our home, intimidating and threatening us by saying that they were going to take my father away to be re-educated through labour. In order to avoid another arrest, my father had to run away from home and go into hiding.

The harassment by the police and the CCP's persecution had a long-lasting impact on my mental and emotional wellbeing. Even today, I am overwhelmingly fearful when I see police on the streets in Spain, and I panic. My entire body shakes uncontrollably.

In 2003, when I was 12 years old, I was arrested while preaching on the streets. The police informed my school and my teachers began discriminating against me. For example, I was disqualified from exams. Later, I had to drop out of school because of this."

Mother died due to being in hiding and unable to see a doctor

“In November 2011, the CCP carried out a massive repression campaign in Henan Province. They frantically arrested and persecuted Christians everywhere: 29 leaders of our Church as well as many members were arrested in our area. My parents had to leave the region to escape capture.

Afterwards, the police learned that my parents were custodians of church funds. They went to our home and turned it upside-down during their search for them. My home was a total mess after that, as if it had been cleaned out by looters. Fortunately, my parents had transferred the church's money when they had fled home. The police didn't find the funds, so they arrested my older brother and waited at our home until the evening, hoping to capture all four members of my family.

In order to avoid being caught by the CCP, my parents hid in a cave for a long time. Due to the lack of clothing and food, they suffered from extreme cold and hunger. They lived in fear the entire time. My mother soon fell ill. My parents didn't dare go to the hospital because they were afraid of exposing their whereabouts after showing their ID cards. Unable to receive treatment, my mother passed away.

When I heard about my mother's death, I was absolutely devastated and am heartbroken to this day. I wish I could have seen her one last time before she died but that was made impossible. It was the CCP's persecution that separated us and broke my family.

Unexpectedly, I met my father one day. When I saw him, I was shocked. He had become so thin, aged and haggard. Almost all of his hair had turned white. His eyes were swollen, and he looked defeated. I held my father tightly in my arms and we cried. The passing of my mother is an anguish that will never end for us.”

Arrested again in 2013

“In 2012, I faced great difficulties in my attempts to reach Sichuan Province to spread the gospel. On the morning of 29 March 2013, I was meeting two church members at the Guangyuan City Wetland Park when, within five minutes, we were surrounded by twenty to thirty heavily armed special force officers, all of them pointing their guns at us. An older member tried to run, but several police rushed up to her and violently kicked her onto the ground. They forced us in police cars and drove us to the police station.

The police took away my two cell phones, my watch, and RMB 1,500 (approximately 212 USD) in cash. After they had searched me, they yelled at me and violently kicked me onto the floor. They kept kicking if I made even the slightest movement. Later, they took me to the interrogation room and cuffed me to a tiger stool, without allowing me to relieve myself, and while denying me any food or water.

That evening, the Cangxi County National Security Brigade Police escorted me to the Cangxi County Detention Center.”

Torture and forced labour

“On the morning of 30 March 2013, the police cuffed me to an iron chair and interrogated me with the aim of extorting information about myself and the church. When I told them nothing, they threw burning cigarette butts on my face. For more than half a month, I was threatened and interrogated every day. They showed me many photos of church members and pressed me to identify them. They told me details about phone conversations I had with other church members. It was then that I realised that they had already been tracking us for at least half a year using video cameras, wiretapping our phones, and recording our conversations.

While I was incarcerated at the detention center, I was forced to make tin foil for up to ten hours every day. This tin is poisonous, and if you continually breathe it in, you will eventually get cancer. After working for a long period of time, every inmate there developed numerous red blotches on their skin which were insufferably itchy, and our mouths were also festering.

One time, a flu was spreading amongst the inmates, but the guards refused to give us medicine and forced us to continue working. According to one inmate, the work of just our cell alone would net them over one million yuan in one year. We ate moldy rice and rotten vegetables boiled in water, without any salt or oil. We never had enough to eat. Apart from that, two video cameras were installed in every cell to monitor us 24 hours a day.

I was detained under these horrendous and dangerous conditions for three months and eleven days.”

Fleeing China and arriving in Spain

“On 28 May 2014, the CCP accused members of our Church of a horrifying homicide at a McDonald’s in Zhaoyuan, Shandong. This tragic incident was used by the CCP to justify a large-scale mobilisation of armed police and military troops to arrest leaders and members of our Church. Fellow followers of the Church of Almighty God were captured one by one and so I had to relocate many times. In 2017, Dr Massimo Introvigne investigated this criminal case and uncovered the CCP’s deliberate deception in an article published in The Journal of Cesnur.

In 2015, as there was a high risk of being re-arrested, I somehow managed to obtain a passport. After many challenges, I finally escaped China and have now reached Europe where I am applying for asylum.”

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