



PRESS RELEASE:

THOUGHT CRIMES: *China's use of psychiatric institutions as detention centers*

-- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE --

## THOUGHT CRIMES: NEW REPORT SHOWS THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT'S CONTINUED USE OF PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTIONS AS PLACES FOR DETAINING POLITICALLY UNWANTED PERSONS

**CHINESE URGENT ACTION WORKING GROUP / 人权卫士紧急救援协会** -- Beijing, China, June 16, 2009 – A new report detailing the continued use of psychiatric institutions as detention centers for the politically unwanted, and especially the nationwide system of 'Ankang' (peace and health) hospitals, is being released today.

Ankang institutions exist in larger cities across the country, and are special custodial institutions where often the politically unwanted will find themselves. The system operates without any nationwide laws or regulations governing it, and in the criminal process is part of the administrative penalty system, meaning that no external oversight from the procuratorate or courts exists, leaving tremendous sway in the hands of local police to misuse these institutions.

The report, "THOUGHT CRIMES: China's use of psychiatric institutions as detention centers" presents the history of the misuse of psychiatric institutions, the current legal framework and its severe shortcomings, and presents different types of victims of these abuses.

– END OF PRESS RELEASE –

### About The Chinese Urgent Action Working Group

The Chinese Urgent Action Working Group (人权卫士紧急救援协会) undertakes direct interventions on behalf of Human Rights defenders in distress, through investigations, public advocacy, communication with international institutions and organizations, and through providing legal aid. The group is located inside mainland China, and was formed as a response to increased persecution of Human Rights defenders in the run up to the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

The report can be found online at <http://China-Action.org>

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**CHINESE URGENT ACTION WORKING GROUP**

人权卫士紧急救援协会

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A REPORT BY:

CHINESE URGENT ACTION  
WORKING GROUP

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