

Die Kirche des Allmächtigen Gottes

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OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting

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Working Session 14: Humanitarian issues and other commitments

Chinese Religious Refugees in Germany

Ladies and gentlemen,

I'm speaking on the name of the members of The Church of Almighty God from China who have unsuccessfully applied for political asylum in Germany.

Since the Church of Almighty God was established in 1991, it has been persecuted by the Chinese Communist Party and in 1995 it was put in the list of heterodox religious movements called *xie jiao* in China. Under article 300 of Chinese Criminal Code, being active in a *xie jiao* is a crime punished with a jail penalty of three to seven years "or more." It is not necessary to be a leader of the Church to be arrested. Being an ordinary member, and even being found in possession of literature produced by our Church, is enough to be arrested, detained, and sentenced to heavy jail terms.

At present, about 300 church members fled to Germany and applied for asylum there, while 255 of them have received negative decisions from the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF). Some officials from BAMF inferred that we were not persecuted in China because we could leave our country with our passport safely and legally, and they also think that only those who have outstanding position in the church are in danger. So they concluded that we would not be in danger if we were sent back to China.

Till now, the applications of five members of our Church were rejected in the court appeal. One of them was detained in the repatriation centre of Ingelheim for 52 days. Although several international human rights NGOs, the Red Cross and the German Evangelical Church intervened in the case, she was still sent back to China accompanied by German police on 31st August and delivered directly to Chinese police. The members of our Church who received a final negative

decisions are living day and night in fear of being sent back to China where they would be arrested, detained and tortured.

The Chinese Communist Party is carrying out a large-scale activity of “eliminating” The Church of Almighty God. We have evidence that there are at least 70 church members who were persecuted to death for the belief of The Church of Almighty God and Human Rights Without Frontiers has currently documented around 760 cases of prisoners belonging to our Church. Those who have sought asylum abroad are systematically regarded as particularly dangerous members of our Church and as disloyal citizens by the CCP(Chinese Communist Party). Consequently, they are prime candidates for harsher jail penalties, with a serious risk of torture and extra-judicial killing. In May 2017, a member of our Church, Wu Xin, was deported after her application in Switzerland was rejected, and was then arrested by the CCP(Chinese Communist Party). She was sentenced to 3.5 years in jail and fined her 30,000 RMB (3813EUR /4364USD). She is currently serving her sentence.

As we all know, Germany is committed to the protection of human rights and religious freedom. We appeal to the government of Germany to pay special attention to the members from The Church of Almighty God, not handing them to the killers by deporting them to China. Thank you very much!

Recommendations

We urge the German authorities not to deport the members of The Church of Almighty God but to grant them political asylum. None of them has committed any illegal act in Germany. At the same time, we call for the support of OSCE, to ensure our basic human rights in Germany and other OSCE participating states.