

Independent Tribunal into Forced Organ Harvesting In China: Witness Testimony

Submission ID52416B – George Karimi

Statement

Dated October 15, 2018

On the 9th of October 2003 I was taken into detention in Beijing, China. In the beginning I was not told why. I was told there was a problem with my friend and they needed to ask me some questions. After 33 or 37 days, I received notice that I was being charged with resisting arrest. I was being held in the Beijing detention center. My friend, Milap, who was detained the same day as me was tortured extensively. I was taken to an interrogation room in the detention center frequently where I was chained for long hours to a chair, and many times I could hear Milap screaming in a room near mine. He was forced to sign a statement, written by the police, blaming me for counterfeiting American currency. Seven months after my arrest I was still in detention and I was informed that I was being detained for counterfeiting American currency. Milap was released a few months afterwards. When he returned to India, Indian authorities made a video. Milap had contracted AIDS in the Chinese detention center, and he was very weak and thinking that he might pass away. He did not want this false statement against me on his conscience, so he arranged for Indian authorities to make a video where he gave an affidavit saying that he had been tortured by the Chinese police and had been forced to say that George Karimi had done counterfeiting. His statement was that there had not been any counterfeiting and the charges were false. I was still in detention in 2006 when I was given a life sentence for counterfeiting American currency. The court documents specifically mention that I supposedly did this using my small office black and white printer that the police had confiscated. I served 4 years in the Beijing #2 prison, when I was the first foreign prisoner to be transferred out of the country. I was transferred to Sweden, my home country, where I served until 2015, when I was finally released. I vigorously defended myself against all the charges, mainly so the Swedish government representative could know that I was innocent. In China's judicial system one must accept all the charges. If the person wants to meet his family or apply for transfer, then one must accept the charges without defense.

In the old detention center all those that had to be executed were on the first floor. They generally take those to be executed at 5am. This is the time, we knew from the police officers that they take them at 5am. Some inmates after 11 or 12 at night they were starting to scream. We knew that they did the executions in the morning because we could hear them screaming. I have seen one of the prisoners, where they were dragging him on the floor. He was screaming and the way he was screaming and his face is something I cannot forget. The most devastating thing to me was that he was being dragged by another prisoner. He was in full chain, handcuffs and feet. They say it is 7 kilos. One of the prisoners was dragging him, with his back on the floor. My Taiwanese translator told me he would be executed the next day. The execution building was another building from the detention center. Apparently it is the building

where Mao's wife hanged herself. Another Chinese prisoner pointed out the building to me once. We could see it from the shower.

For a brief time I shared a cell with a high Communist Party official who was later executed. While we were discussing, he said, sometimes they send the CCP members to witness an execution. The reason is to make them understand that if they become traitors in the future, that can happen to them. It creates fear in them. I asked him, where he has witnessed such executions? He told me the same thing as the other Chinese prisoner below the courthouse.

In prison the prisoners talked about organ harvesting. It was very common but the prison officials did not talk about it. Government officials who were in the prison talked about it. Discussion about organ harvesting was mainly in the detention centers.

Around the 1st of July 2004 I was transferred to a new detention center, also in Beijing. My prison officer had 2 stars. I don't remember his name. He was in charge of my cell and another 2 or 3 cells. He didn't speak English, so another prisoner from Taiwan would accompany me and he would translate for us. Between April 2005 and May or June 2006, after the guards had arranged the killing of a Sierra Leone prisoner by having the prisoners in his cell beat him. I didn't know what happened to him after that, but I learned later that he had died of internal bleeding. In that period of time, I would meet the prison officer about 1 or 2 times per week to chat even though they were not supposed to speak with prisoners. Each time the Taiwanese prisoner would accompany me to translate. In that time we discussed forced organ harvesting maybe 5 or 6 times. He said, "In any case, they are criminals, and they will not be needing their organs after execution, so they don't need it, so it doesn't matter." One time he said, "You know they are cremating the bodies of the prisoners who have been executed. So what the families get are just the ashes. So what is the matter if we remove the organs or not. Anyway the prisoners are going to be executed. They don't have any use of their organs, so it is better to harvest the organs and use for others."

Another time he told me, "Recently a group of 24 or 25 Falun Gong members had to be executed. Only one of them was not executed because he or she was sick." So I asked why he or she was not executed. He proudly explained that, "If the person is sick, so the organs are of no use."

As long as a person is not convicted he is innocent. But on the Chinese detention and court documents, they write Criminal George Karimi. How can you call someone a criminal when the guy has not been convicted. The prison officers the way they punished us, it was personal. They were enjoying it. For Falun Gong practitioners it was 2 to 3 times worse.