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CHINA Country confirms human rights lawyer “went missing” in September

A Chinese official has just confirmed that human rights lawyer, Gao Zhisheng, “went missing while out on a walk” on 25 September last year. Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) remains gravely concerned for his well-being.

This news was communicated in a telephone call between a policeman and Gao’s brother, Gao Zhiyi, earlier this week, according to US-based rights group ChinaAid. It is the first time a Chinese official has acknowledged that Mr. Gao is no longer in Chinese custody.

The Nobel Peace Prize nominee disappeared on 4 February 2009 after he was seen being hauled away by Chinese officials. His wife and children have since escaped to the US, where ChinaAid reports that his daughter is hospitalised due to the stress of her father’s disappearance.

CSW’s Advocacy Director, Alexa Papadouris said: “Despite repeated requests from the international community for information on Gao Zhisheng’s case, the Chinese government have failed to give any. New suspicions about Mr. Gao’s welfare have naturally arisen following this most recent development, and the lawyer’s family now deserve to know more specific details. CSW calls upon the Chinese Government to urgently rectify this situation”.