



courtesy China Aid

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CHINA Gao Zhisheng confirmed alive: Missing Christian lawyer reappears after a year's silence

On March 28, 2010, Gao Zhisheng spoke to his family and fellow human rights lawyers for the first time since his mysterious disappearance over a year ago. Western news reporters were able to speak with him by phone from Shanxi province, where he confirmed he is living at a Buddhist retreat.

China Aid (CA) reported that Gao's wife, Geng He, and two children were overwhelmed with emotion at the news he is alive. They spoke to Gao on Sunday morning. The family left China to take up asylum in the US shortly before Gao's disappearance on 4 February 2009, when he was hauled away by Chinese officials.

Since his disappearance, the international community has repeatedly pressed the Chinese government for information regarding the Nobel Peace Prize nominee's whereabouts and condition. There were fears for his safety, as he has been tortured in previous detention. Last week, CSW and China Aid attended high-level meetings at the European Union to increase pressure on his case and held meetings in London, including an event at the House of Lords.

Li Heping, a former legal colleague and friend of Gao Zhisheng, spoke to him on Sunday. Gao reportedly said that he has "friends around him", suggesting he is still under surveillance. Gao told him that he was unable to speak freely or give information regarding his condition or exact location.

CSW's Advocacy Director, Tina Lambert said, "CSW welcomes the news that Gao Zhisheng is alive and that he has been allowed to contact his family. We now call upon the Chinese government to release him fully and unconditionally and allow him to see his family again."