



4.11.2012

CHINA | Tulip Prize winner Ni Yulan and husband sent to jail

Chinese lawyer Ni Yulan has been jailed along with her husband, Dong Jiqin, according to media reports.

Ni Yulan, a housing rights activist, was put on trial with her husband in Beijing in December 2011 for “creating a disturbance”, and gave evidence from a hospital bed while on oxygen. The trial did not reach a verdict and the couple was detained in Beijing. However, the BBC reports that Ni Yulan has now been sentenced to two years and eight months in jail, while her husband was handed a two-year term, on charges of “picking quarrels, provoking trouble and willfully destroying private and public property”.

Ni Yulan’s defense of Beijing residents whose homes were demolished to make way for the 2008 Olympics resulted in her being imprisoned on several occasions. She has also worked on a number of high-profile religious freedom cases, and is confined to a wheelchair as a result of beatings received in prison, which left her unable to walk and in poor health.

Ni Yulan was awarded the Dutch Government’s Tulip Award for Human Rights Defenders following her nomination by Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) and China Aid, but was detained in Beijing and prevented from attending the ceremony earlier this year.

CSW’s Advocacy Director Andrew Johnston said, “CSW is deeply concerned at the imprisonment of Ni Yulan and Dong Jiqin, who have been detained since April last year. Their trial in December was not open to public scrutiny, and CSW believes that the charges brought against them are completely unjust. It is clear that Ni Yulan and her family have paid a heavy price for simply defending basic human rights and assisting their fellow citizens in housing disputes. CSW calls on the Chinese government to review her case and release her and her husband from prison.”