



Coordination des Associations et des Particuliers pour la Liberté de Conscience

UPR OUTCOMES ON GERMANY

CAP Liberté de Conscience, a French NGO created in 2000 dedicated to the respect of the Right of Freedom of Religion and Belief. CAP LC is expert since now 20 years, in religious minorities' discriminations in France and Europe. CAP Liberté de Conscience organizes events, conferences, meetings to unite minority religions to counter discrimination mainly in France but also in Europe and worldwide.

On August 31, despite protests by the Red Cross, the German Evangelical Lutheran Church, and several NGOs, including mine, a member of The Church of Almighty God, Zhao Xueliang, was deported back to China from Germany. Her cell phone, money (she was left with 60 euros only), and even most of her personal belongings were confiscated and she was taken forcibly to the airport. She has now “disappeared” in China.

The Church of Almighty God is one of the largest and fastest growing new religious movements in China. It is listed by the Chinese government as a *xie jiao*, an “heterodox” and banned group, being active in which is a crime under Chinese law. Any member of The Church of Almighty God returned to China will be sent to jail, and probably tortured to extract information about other members of the Church. Instances of extra-judicial killings have also been reported.

China has tried to justify the persecution with massive campaigns of fake news, which have been debunked by Western scholars, although immigration authorities are often unfamiliar with the scholarly literature.

The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees keep asking for evidence that the asylum seeker has been personally persecuted. This is not required by international conventions, which only demand a credible fear of persecution. Whoever has studied both Chinese laws on *xie jiao* and scholarly accounts of The Church of Almighty God can have no doubt that, if repatriated to China, asylum seekers from this Church will be jailed or worse.

By delivering Sister Zhao to the Chinese police, Germany has committed an act of refoulement, which is against international conventions and, more importantly, is against humanity. There is nothing Germany can do for Sister Zhao right now. But it can avoid to commit other similar “mistakes” in the future.