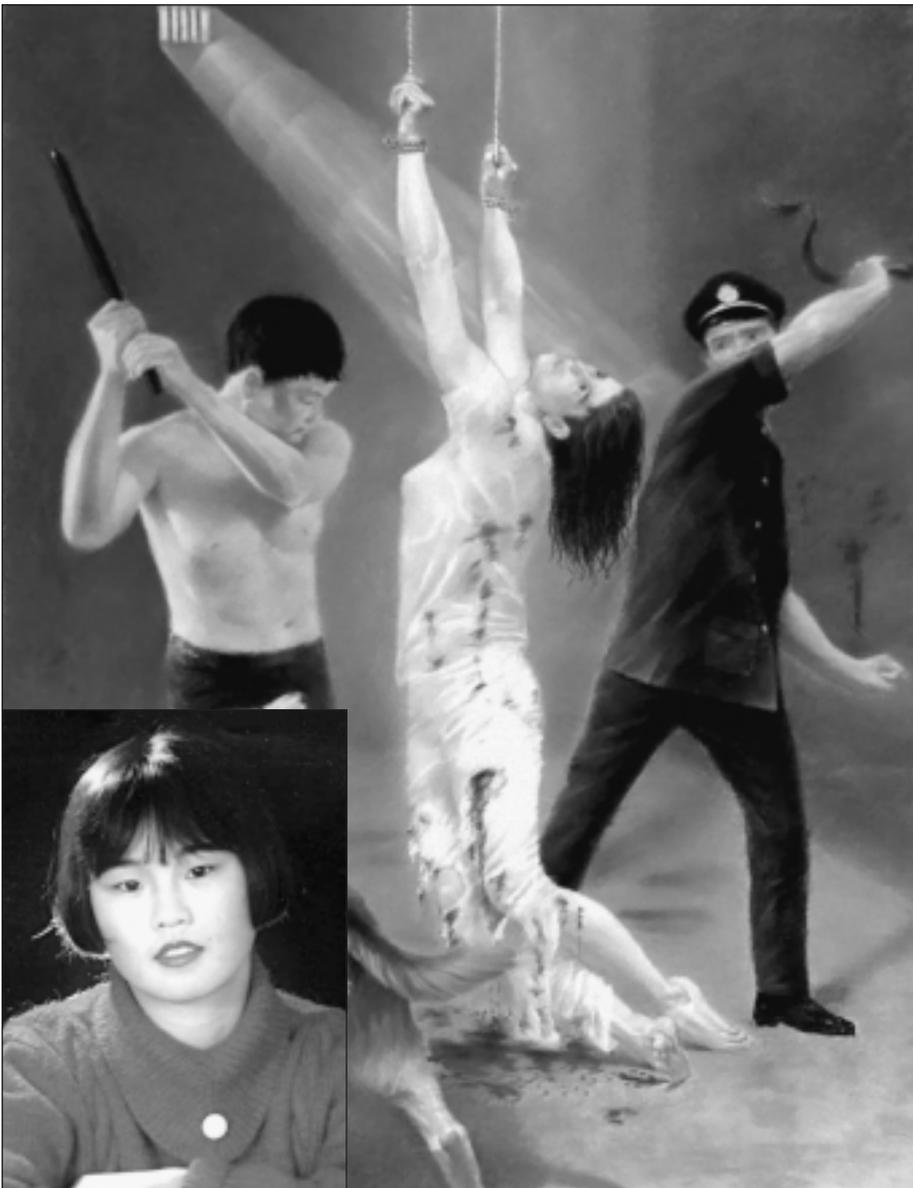


A SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE  
COUNCIL OF EUROPE  
PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

## FECRIS's Condoning of Religious Persecution in China Mandates Denial of its INGO Application



*Many Falun Gong practitioners have died from police beatings, including 19-year-old Chu Congrui inset. Arrested in December 2000 at the Haidian District Police Substation, after travelling to Beijing to protest the persecution, she was dead four days later. The doctor who examined her body told her family that her nose was broken, her face and lips severely swollen, her body bloody all over and both ears plugged with blood-soaked cotton swabs. Her fiancé and mother are now in hiding.*

**Y**ou are currently considering an application for INGO (international non-governmental organisation) status from an organisation called the European Federation of Research Centres against Sectarianism (FECRIS).

You should reject this application. To do otherwise would be to undermine the very principles that the Council of Europe stands for and expose the Council to severe political embarrassment.

FECRIS claims to be a network made up of “anti-cult” organisations in various states of the Council of Europe. In fact, it is mostly a French body and receives more than 90% of its funding from the French government. The French anti-cult organisations, UNADFI and CCMM are both government funded and are leading members of FECRIS. They tend to dominate FECRIS’s agenda.

Because of pressure coming from certain quarters in France, FECRIS’s application for INGO status is on course to be approved by the Council of Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly some time in January. This would be a severe blow to human rights, however, as FECRIS and its member groups have condoned the campaign of torture, death and persecution of the Falun Gong by the Chinese government. This is a campaign so destructive that the UN Special

*Continued on page 8*

# FECRIS:

## *Condoning Brutalities in China*



*“In order to force feed me, the doctors at the Harbin City Detention Centre used a metal clamp to pry open my teeth and then pushed a thick rubber tube down to my stomach.... They would beat us to the point where we were almost unconscious before tying our arms and legs down and forcing the tubes through our noses and down into our stomachs. We were tied up to prevent us from pulling the tubes out because of the excruciating pain”— Falun Gong member Wang Yuzhi.*

In November 2000, Mr. Jean-Pierre Bousquet traveled to Beijing on behalf of both FECRIS and its leading French member group CCMM to attend an “International Symposium on Destructive Cults.” He was accompanied by the director of CCMM, Patricia Casano, CCMM representative Hayat El Mountacir, and the president of the French government’s former “Interministerial Mission to Fight Against Sects (MILS).”

The Chinese government’s official newspaper, *People’s Daily*, boasted of this conference in a November 9, 2000, article. The *People’s Daily* article, whose rhetoric is strikingly similar to that disseminated by FECRIS itself, may be found at [http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/english/200011/09/eng20001109\\_54760.html](http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/english/200011/09/eng20001109_54760.html).

France, it appears, was the only Western European nation where a government official was present. The French government may well have regretted MILS’ participation. In June

2002, the president of MILS resigned amidst controversy and was subsequently criticised for his polemics and counter-productive actions by the French Minister of the Interior. The French government disbanded MILS in November 2002.

CCMM afterwards published a detailed and highly favorable report of the conference in its newsletter. CCMM’s report concluded that “the French delegation returned with the feeling that beyond the real differences of approach, there is a real possibility for constructive dialogue between our worlds faced with sectarian deceit.”

CCMM also included in its newsletter an article excerpted directly from Chinese government literature and entitled “Why Falun Gong is a sect.”

Declaring that it should be of concern to everyone that a country as large and populous as China has become preoccupied with the Falun Gong, CCMM’s report stated that the Chinese authorities had therefore

decided to organise an “international symposium on destructive cults.” CCMM proudly announced that “the French delegation invited to the symposium received a warm welcome and were listened to attentively” and that in China “France is often mentioned as an example because of its large and coherent moves against the danger of the cults.” CCMM gave four separate presentations at the conference.

“During the time they were there, the French delegation met with many political or religious authorities concerned with sectarianism,” the newsletter stated, adding “The Chinese have told us that they want to create a non-government organisation with aims and structures similar to CCMM.” In fact, such an association, called the Chinese Anti-Cult Association, was formed just a few days after the conference, and exists to this day, with its own website ([www.anticult.org](http://www.anticult.org)). In March 2001, representatives of the association came to France and visited UNADFI and CCMM. UNADFI’s current president, former MP Catherine Picard, has also admitted to meeting with the Chinese government’s leader of religious affairs to discuss their handling of “cults.”

### Mass Human Rights Violations

It is inconceivable that FECRIS and CCMM representatives could have been unaware at the time of the



*A photograph from CCMM’s newsletter describing its attendance at a symposium organised by the Chinese government to justify its persecution of the Falun Gong.*

Chinese government's repression of religious minorities. Not only had the facts been widely reported in international media, but eight months previously, Amnesty International had published an extensive report titled "People's Republic of China: The crackdown on Falun Gong and other so-called 'heretical organisations.'" Amnesty International called on the Chinese government to end the "mass arbitrary detentions, unfair trials and other human rights violations", noting, "thousands of other people have been detained across the country for peacefully protesting against the crackdown. Many have been sent to labor camps without charge or trial for periods of up to three year's detention for 're-education through labour.' Others have been detained repeatedly by police, and fined, threatened or dismissed from their jobs. Many of those detained subsequently reported being held in poor and unsanitary conditions, and being beaten or otherwise ill-treated in detention."

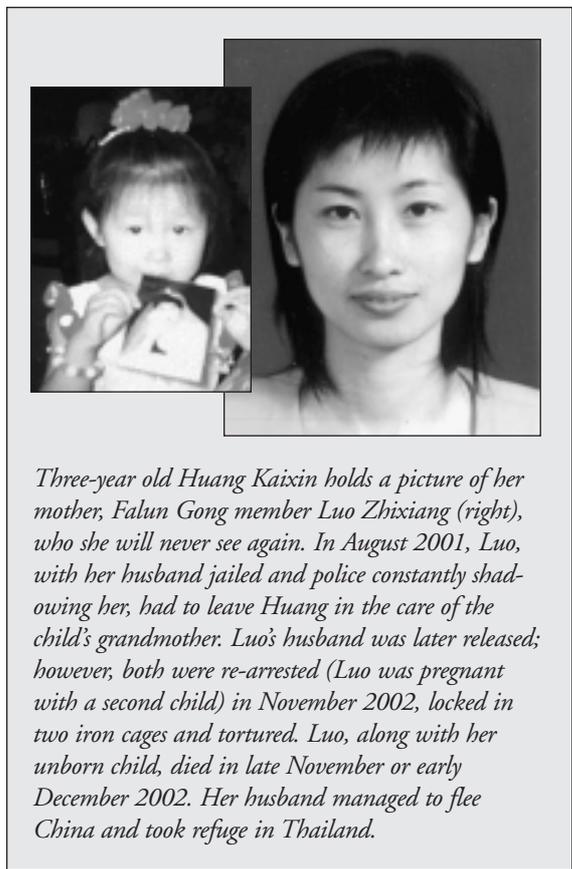
Defenders of FECRIS have pointed to the participation at the conference of the Beijing representative of the United Nations Development Program, Ms. Kerstin Leitner, whose presence is touted by *People's Daily*. However, Ms. Leitner subsequently defined the reasons for her attendance as a plea for gaining more understanding of the situation of the members of the Falun Gong and a treatment of their followers "in line with international human rights norms and standards and the best standards of governance."

In the last four years, more information has come to light regarding the treatment of the Falun Gong in China. The 2004 United Nations Reports on China's Persecution of Falun Gong is a collection of reports issued by the Special Rapporteurs of the United Nations Human Rights Commission on China's violent, and often deadly, persecution of Falun Gong practitioners. Contained in the book are reports issued by Rapporteurs from a number of different areas, including the Special Rapporteur

on the Question of Torture, the Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary and Arbitrary Executions, the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief and the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression.

An example of the findings is the statement of the Special Rapporteur for Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions: "The Special Rapporteur continues to be alarmed by deaths in custody in China. Reports describe harrowing scenes in which detainees, many of whom are followers of the Falun Gong movement, die as a result of severe ill treatment, neglect or medical attention. The cruelty and brutality of these alleged acts of torture defy description."

Of the more than 50 cases listed by the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, one concerns a University student from Chongqing City: "According to information received, on 13 May 2003, several policemen took her to a cell in Baihelin detention centre in Shapingba district and forced two female inmates to strip her. One of the uniformed policemen reportedly pushed her to the ground and raped her as the other inmates watched.



*Three-year old Huang Kaixin holds a picture of her mother, Falun Gong member Luo Zhixiang (right), who she will never see again. In August 2001, Luo, with her husband jailed and police constantly shadowing her, had to leave Huang in the care of the child's grandmother. Luo's husband was later released; however, both were re-arrested (Luo was pregnant with a second child) in November 2002, locked in two iron cages and tortured. Luo, along with her unborn child, died in late November or early December 2002. Her husband managed to flee China and took refuge in Thailand.*

Police reportedly botched a violent attempt to force-feed her when she went on hunger strike, seriously injuring both her trachea and esophagus, leaving her unable to speak."

The book also documents more than 30 torture methods commonly used on Falun Gong practitioners throughout China, many of which are demonstrated in photographs taken by victims inside China.

To grant INGO status to an organisation that condones such atrocities would be a travesty of the entire INGO mechanism. ■



*Before and after photos of Xin Zhao, a 32-year-old assistant professor at the Beijing University of Business and Industry, who was arrested in June 2000 for doing Falun Gong exercises. Police officers severely beat and tortured her because she refused to renounce her beliefs. The beating fractured three neck vertebrae, paralyzing her from the neck down. She died from her injuries in December 2000.*

# Where does FECRIS's money come from?

**C**ontrary to its claim to represent a network of European organisations, FECRIS is predominantly a French organisation and would collapse without French government support. According to its report to its own general assembly on March 29, 2004, 91.4% of FECRIS's income for 2003 came from the French government, while "membership and correspondent contributions" amounted to a mere 2,936.23 euros, representing only 7.3% of its annual funding.

The French government may be unique among Council of Europe member states in providing funds to private organisations that agitate against minority religious organisations. In Germany, the Federal Administrative Court ruled in 1992 that it violates the religious freedom guarantees of the German Constitution for the government to provide funds to such groups. If it is unconstitutional in Germany, it should certainly be unconstitutional

in France, which prides itself on the principle of secularity.

However, FECRIS's report to the General Assembly records no government support other than from France. The French government funds not only FECRIS, but UNADFI, which is by far FECRIS's most active member group. Documents obtained under the Freedom of Information Act reveal that in 2003, the French government provided 394,781.90 Euros in support funds to UNADFI.

Although UNADFI and its French sister group CCMM portray themselves as private organisations devoted to protecting families, the image is ambiguous. An organisation concerned primarily with defending the family would be unlikely to work hand-in-hand with the Renseignement Generaux (RG), a French police intelligence organisation certainly not noted either for its rigorous defense of family values or its uncompromising commitment to human rights. It is revealing that in an application for public sector funding, ADFI characterised its "close collaboration with the RG [as] essential to its functioning."

CCMM was founded by Roger Ikor, an intolerant demagogue who said, "If we listened to ourselves, we would put an end to all this balderdash, from cults, but also from the great religions."

In the year 2000, UNADFI and CCMM received 1.5 million Euros in public funds from the French government, about 85% of the funding of these purportedly "private" groups. According to UNADFI's 2000 balance sheet, they received a grand total of 19,884 FF\* in membership fees that year – not even enough to pay half the tax on the 1.24 million FF paid to their nine employees.

The picture was not much different in 1999: ADFI's balance sheet revealed that membership fees only amounted to 21.168 FF out of more than 1,900,000 FF of resources. The

\* 1 euro equals approximately 6.56 FF

balance consisted almost entirely of ministry subventions.

These extraordinary figures do not even include additional subventions granted to the local ADFI offices by local authorities. Thus, ironically, the only support ADFI gets from "the people" is enforced through government subventions the public have no say over.

The picture is similar for CCMM: financial records for the "Centre Roger Ikor" reveal 1,240,192 FF in federal subventions in 2000. This compares to the 87,435 FF they received in membership fees.

Without substantial French government monetary subsidies, UNADFI and CCMM would wither away through lack of interest and support from the public; without ADFI and CCMM propping up FECRIS, it would collapse; and without French government support, FECRIS would be unable to support itself financially. ■

**While more than 91% of FECRIS's funding comes from the French government, its private sector support is negligible.**

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# *European Court of Human Rights Criticises FECRIS Member Group*

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**T**he European Court of Human Rights has criticised FECRIS member group Pro Juventud in an October 14, 1999 judgment for being involved in a violation of Article 5 (1) (right to liberty and security) of the European Convention on Human Rights.

In a case that involved the illegal detention and false imprisonment for ten days of members of a minority religious movement, the European Court noted, “it was true that it was the applicants families and the Pro Juventud association that had borne the direct and immediate responsibility for the supervision of the applicants during their ten days loss of liberty....”

Summarising the background to these events, the Court stated, “... the Public Safety Department of the government of Catalonia received through Pro Juventud, an association formed to fight against sects, a request for help from several people who alleged that members of their families had been ensnared by a group known by the name of CEIS....”

“... they [the applicants in the case before the Court] were taken... to individual rooms under the supervision of persons recruited for the purpose, one of whom remained permanently in each room, and they were not allowed to leave their rooms for the first three days. The windows were firmly closed with wooden planks and the panes of glass had been taken out. While at the hotel the applicants were allegedly subjected to a process of ‘deprogramming’ by a psychologist and a psychiatrist at the request of Pro Juventud.”

This finding by Europe’s highest judicial authority in the field of human rights was glossed over by a rapporteur assigned by the Parliamentary Assembly’s Legal Affairs Committee to look into FECRIS’ application for

INGO status, based on concerns raised by three members of parliament.

The rapporteur’s report was issued in May 2004 and recommended that FECRIS be granted consultative status. However, this conclusion was only made possible because the rapporteur constructed a set of arbitrary procedures that enabled him to ignore the fact that FECRIS groups and their members have been convicted more than a dozen times in 7 countries over the last fifteen years for offenses ranging from false imprisonment to defamation. Instead of conducting a thorough investigation, the rapporteur merely took the very limited and incomplete data provided and then sought FECRIS’s response. He looked no further.

The rapporteur’s report specifically argued that “it is untrue that the Strasbourg Court has criticised it [Pro Juventud] in the case cited’ because “the authorities (police and judicial) were in fact responsible for the decisions and actions resulting in the applicant’s detention... Pro Juventud (along with the families) was merely responsible for their ‘supervision’ during that period, and only ‘requested’ (rather than, for example, administered) the alleged ‘deprogramming.’”

**The European Court of Human Rights described the active participation of a FECRIS member group in the illegal detention and false imprisonment of members of a minority religion.**

There is no judicial finding that the method of ‘deprogramming’ is illegal.”

Such an interpretation is mere wordplay and completely ignores not only how FECRIS and its member groups work, but much of what the Court stated.

Police and judicial authorities do not operate in a vacuum; they are incited to act against targeted groups based on inflammatory reports, frequently false, distributed by FECRIS member groups to the authorities and to the families of members who belong to these groups.

It is ironic that the Spanish government, in its defense submitted to the Court, placed the blame for the applicants’ illegal detention squarely on Pro Juventud, noting that the hotel rooms where they were detained had been reserved and paid for by Pro Juventud and that Pro Juventud had recruited and paid the individuals responsible for “supervising” the applicants during their detention. “The Government did not dispute that the applicants had been deprived of their liberty... In the Government’s submission, the responsibility for the alleged deprivation of liberty lay with the members of the applicants’ families and with the persons belonging to the Pro Juventud association and not at all with the authorities and officials of the Catalan government.”

Indeed, the Catalan authorities were not even present throughout the 10 day “deprogramming” attempt.

The Court concluded “the fact that, once free, the applicants lodged a criminal complaint alleging false imprisonment and other offenses against officials of the Catalan government and all others responsible clearly shows that they had been confined in the hotel against their will.”

The Court’s judgement clearly shows that Pro Juventud was an active agent in the applicants’ deprivation of liberty from start to finish. For the rapporteur to claim otherwise is to deny the intent of the judgment and to undermine the principles of tolerance, pluralism and freedom of conscience that the Council of Europe represents. ■

# Civil and Penal Convictions Involving FECRIS and member groups

## AUSTRIA

Mr Friedrich Griess is a Vice-President of FECRIS, webmaster of the FECRIS web site and Board Member of the Austrian FECRIS group GSK (Gesellschaft Gegen Sekten Und Kultgefahren or Association against Dangers of Sects and Cults)

He has been convicted for defamation against a minority Christian religious movement called the Norwegian Movement on the following occasions:

1. Court case: 17Cg 15/96d in Vienna Commercial court in Sept. 1996.
2. Court case: 17Cg 15/96d in Vienna Commercial court in March 1997.
3. Court case: 37Cg 77/98x in Vienna Commercial court on Sept 1998.
4. Court case: 17 O 85/98 in Stuttgart County Court in Germany – June 1998.
5. Court case: 37Cg 19/00y in Vienna Commercial court in March 2000.
6. Court case: GZ 8E 3407/00w in Klosterneuburg District Court.
7. Judgement procedure GZ 8F 2687/02 s-3 in Klosterneuburg District Court.

## FRANCE

UNADFI is the French-language FECRIS group (ADFI founded FECRIS). (UNADFI is the national coalition group covering different regional groups in France, each called “ADFI” and the region or city name.)

1. 27th May 1992. ADFI Paris was condemned by the Paris County Court (Tribunal de Grande Instance) to pay damages for defamation regarding Mrs. Josiane Henri and Mr. Ian Combe.

2. 4th January 1994. The Paris Court of Appeal confirmed the judgment regarding the declaration of culpability of Mrs. Tavernier, UNADFI president, and the punishment imposed on her in the civil proceedings by the Paris County court on 22nd June 1993.

3. 15th January 1997. The Douai Court of Appeal condemned Mrs. Ovineur-Dewynter, president of ADFI Nord, to pay damages for defamation regarding the Cultural Association of the Jehovah's Witnesses in France.

4. 29th March 2002. The Marseille County Court condemned Jacky Cordonnier, member of UNADFI and FECRIS, to pay damages for defamation regarding the association of Jehovah's Witnesses.

5. 20th November 2001. The Paris County Court condemned Janine Tavernier, president of UNADFI, in the civil proceedings for public defamation regarding Daniele Gounord, Church of Scientology.

6. 5th February 2003. The Paris Court of Appeal confirmed the judgment in the civil proceedings against Janine Tavernier and UNADFI.

## GERMANY

The German Federal Supreme Court ruled on 27 March 1992 that it was unconstitutional for the State to provide funding for organisations such as AGPF and Sect-Info Essen, both FECRIS member groups. The Court held that, “The state cannot disconnect from [its] legal obligations by asking for the help of some private association which makes use of freedom of opinion under the constitution in a manner that is close to slander.”

In a final judgement on 19th December 2001 by the Munich State Court, Ms. Heide-Marie Cammans, founder of FECRIS member group Sect-info Essen, was ordered to cease circulating falsehoods about Takar Singh (an Eastern religious group) on pain of being fined up to 500,000 DM or, if not paid, jailed for up to 6 months. Sect-info Essen was forbidden to circulate a book it had been distributing about Takar Singh.

## SWITZERLAND

In 1990, two members of FECRIS member group SADK were sentenced to prison in connection with a violent deprogramming attempt on a member of the Hare Krishna movement. A Mr. Rossi, who at the time was the spokesman for SADK, spoke out loudly in favour of the deprogramming (during which the victim had been subdued with tear gas) saying “We support and approve of the deed.”

## SWEDEN

A member of FECRIS group FRI has been convicted in connection with a deprogramming attempt on a member of a Christian group in Gothenburg Sweden. In this judgment of December 18, 1990, FRI member Eva Pehrsson (later Pohl) was sentenced for the illegal deprivation of liberty of Sara Gustavsson.

## UNITED KINGDOM

Cyril Vosper, at the time an executive board member of FECRIS member group FAIR, was convicted in Germany for false imprisonment and causing bodily harm in December 1987. He was not expelled from FAIR.

Ian Haworth is a FECRIS founding member and runs the Cult Information Centre (CIC). He had a court decision against him on 26 Oct 1989, when the Supreme Court of Ontario (Canada) ordered he pay \$10,000 in libel damages to a philosophical group. At the time Mr. Haworth was involved in a similar group to CIC in Canada. ■

# What FECRIS Condones

Anyone who really wants to know why the Council of Europe should resoundingly reject FECRIS' application for INGO status is invited to log on to [www.falunhr.org](http://www.falunhr.org), where they can view terrible and disturbing images that document the appalling brutality and cruelty of the Chinese government's treatment of Falun Gong practitioners – treatment that FECRIS and CCMM have condoned and never condemned.

One particularly harrowing story is that of an attractive 36-year-old woman, Ms. Gao Rongrong, an employee of the finance office of Shenyang City's Luxun Fine Arts Institute in Liaoning Province. Fired from her job soon after the persecution began in 1999, she was arrested in July 2003 as a Falun Gong practitioner and sent to the Longshan Labor Camp.

On March 22, 2004, because she refused to denounce Falun Gong, the deputy chief of the second brigade in the labor camp dragged her from her bed, took her by the throat and hauled her outside. Guards then cuffed her to a heating pipe, punched and kicked her and continuously shocked her with electric batons on her head, face, neck, hands and feet for over half an



*Before and after pictures of Ms. Gao Rongrong, who was arrested in July 2003 and sent to a labour*

*camp where she was systematically tortured because of her refusal to denounce Falun Gong (shorn of all her hair at one point, it had grown back when this picture was taken).*

hour. Later the director of the labor camp said to her, "This is a despotic place; otherwise what's the use of handcuffs and electric batons here? I don't believe we cannot handle you, Gao Rongrong."

That, unfortunately, was not the worst of it. Now suffering from liver pain, stomach pain, vomiting, loss of appetite and intermittent fever, Ms. Gao became deaf in one ear. The chief of the first brigade in the camp then ordered prisoners to humiliate her by cutting the hair from the top of her head down to the scalp.

On May 7, 2004, the deputy chief of the second brigade in the camp took Ms. Gao to an office and cuffed her to the heating pipe again. He and the "group chief" continuously shocked her with electric batons for 6-7 hours. Her face was left swollen, blistered, charred and deformed beyond recognition. Her hair was stuck to the bloody pus on her scorched skin. Her swollen face reduced her eyes to mere slits, and her mouth was also distorted due to the swelling. Even the inmates could not recognize her.

That same day, Ms. Gao was forced out of the window of the labor camp on the second floor. After she was sent

to the hospital, she was diagnosed with two fractures of her pelvis, her left leg was severely fractured and the bone in her right heel was split. Due to her weak physical condition, the hospital could not even perform surgery on her.

Her physical situation has continued to worsen and appeals have been made to the United Nations to safeguard her life.

Ms. Gao's story, horrifying as it is, is but one of thousands that tell of the barbarities practiced against Falun Gong practitioners by Chinese government authorities. It is in the light of these facts that the Council of Europe should consider FECRIS's application, along with French member group CCMM's chilling boast that in China "France is often mentioned as an example because of its large and coherent moves against the danger of the cults," that "the Chinese have told us that they want to create a non-government organisation with aims and structures similar to CCMM", and that FECRIS and CCMM returned from China "with the feeling that beyond the real differences of approach, there is a real possibility for constructive dialogue between our worlds faced with sectarian deceit." ■

**1,170 Falun Gong members confirmed dead**

**More than 100,000 illegally sent to labor camps**

**More than 6,000 sentenced to prison terms of up to 18 years**

**Hundreds of thousands illegally arrested and detained**

## Council of Europe Should Deny INGO Status

*Continued from page 1*

Rapporteurs on Torture, Summary Executions, Violence Against Women, Religious Freedom and Freedom of Expression have published detailed reports in 2004 documenting the campaign of persecution.

The current president of French member group UNADFI, former MP Catherine Picard, has admitted to meeting with the Chinese “leader of religious affairs” regarding their treatment of “cults”. Neither FECRIS, UNADFI or CCMM have ever criticised the persecution; on the contrary, CCMM attended a Chinese government symposium intended to justify its persecution of Falun Gong, reproduced Chinese government propa-

ganda about Falun Gong on its website and publicly announced that the Chinese wished to emulate the approach taken by CCMM against “sects” in France to crack down on Falun Gong. No group that has participated in such a symposium or implicitly supported and condoned the brutal and violent suppression of millions of members of Falun Gong – one of the great human rights tragedies of the last few years – should be approved by the Council of Europe.

### Engaged in Deprogramming

Individuals associated with FECRIS and its member groups have also engaged in extremist activities such as deprogramming – the odious and illegal process of kidnapping and false imprisonment of individuals in an attempt to forcibly change their personal religious associations and beliefs.

For FECRIS to achieve consultative status would represent a major step back for religious freedom, tolerance and pluralism in Europe. Resolution (2003) 8 of the Council details the conditions for obtaining International Non-Government Organisation (INGO) status. The Resolution requires that INGOs undertake “to promote the respect of the Council of Europe’s standards, conventions and legal instruments in the member states, and assist in the implementation of these standards”.

Yet, the actions of individuals associated with FECRIS member groups, condemned in judicial decisions, completely contravene Council of Europe standards of religious freedom, tolerance, dialogue and respect for the rule of law.

According to Professor Ben Vermeulen of the University of Amsterdam, “It is evident, that an organisation which through its aims and purposes, or the means that it employs, acts in a way which is inconsistent with these standards should not be given INGO status. For instance, the fact that an organisation uses ‘deprogramming’, a technique that seems to be used by AIS/Pro Juventud

**At the time they attended the Beijing symposium, it is inconceivable that CCMM and FECRIS representatives could have been unaware of the Chinese government’s persecution of the Falun Gong.**

**“Reports describe harrowing scenes in which detainees, many of whom are followers of the Falun Gong movement, die as a result of severe ill treatment, neglect or medical attention. The cruelty and brutality of these acts of torture defy description.”**

– UN Special Rapporteur for Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions

– allegedly a member group of FECRIS – which according to the European Court of Human Rights is a violation of Article 5 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) in as far as the government is involved (14 October 1999, Ribera Blume v. Spain), is a strong argument against allowing INGO status to such an organisation. Such an organisation acts against the spirit of the ECHR, and thus does not live up to the aforementioned standards.”

We therefore call on you, members of the Parliamentary Assembly, to unequivocally reject FECRIS’ application. ■

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