https://acdn.net/spip/spip.php?article256

China and Tibet

Sun Xiaodi Received International Nuclear Activism Award

- Homepage - News - News Articles -

Publication date: Tuesday 12 December 2006

Copyright © www.acdn.net - All rights reserved

Gansu-based activist Sun Xiaodi, who has spent more than a decade petitioning the central authorities over radioactive contamination from the No. 792 Uranium Mine in the Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Gansu Province, was presented on Monday, 1st December, with the Nuclear-Free Future Award, described as the globe's most prestigious anti-nuclear prize.

Sun's award, recognizing his "moral courage to petition for an end to the toxic mismanagement corrupting Chinese uranium production," was presented at the Indigenous World Uranium Summit hosted by the Navajo Nation in Window Rock, Arizona on the evening of December 1. Because Sun remains under strict surveillance and cannot leave China, Human Rights in China (HRIC) Domestic Advocacy Program Officer Feng Congde attended the Summit to accept the award on Sun's behalf.

Sun began reporting the illegal resale of contaminated equipment, illegal mining and careless disposal of untreated water in 1988, while he was working as a warehouse manager at Mine No. 792. However, his repeated petitions to provincial and central government officials resulted in nothing more than his dismissal in 1994, and discriminatory treatment of his wife and daughter.

In the face of constant persecution and harassment, Sun continued his campaign against the illegal mining practices, which continued even after the mine was officially closed in 2002 and became a private company under the administration of the Gansu Province government and Ministry of Nuclear Industry, with many local officials as shareholders.

Sun observed how a region of green fields, clear waters and woodlands filled with wildlife has been transformed into a wasteland in which plants wither, livestock die and people suffer from birth defects and abnormal cancerous growths. Tibetan medical workers have attributed nearly half of the human deaths in the region to a variety of radioactivity-related cancers and immune system diseases.

In April 2005, Sun disappeared while petitioning in Beijing, shortly after meeting with foreign journalists to describe the environmental degradation in Gansu. After being secretly moved from place to place for eight months, he was finally released from Lanzhou Prison on December 27, 2005. Despite official warnings and restrictions on his movement, Sun resumed his petitioning, and was detained again in April 2006. He was released soon afterward, but remains under constant police surveillance, and is now forbidden even to talk on the telephone, much less leave China to attend an award ceremony.

The Nuclear-Free Future Award was endowed following the World Uranium Hearing in Salzburg, Austria in 1992, and since 1998 has been presented to individuals and organizations who have worked tirelessly to end the nuclear fuel cycle. The jury deciding this year's award included environmentalists, activists, scholars and journalists from the United States, Germany and France. Although unable to attend the award ceremony, Sun sent a recorded message to the gathering, accompanied
by a video prepared by HRIC:

Dear Chairman and Friends,

I regret very much that I cannot be here to accept the award personally. Since my release from detention, I have been in an extremely insecure situation in which I am threatened, intimidated and harassed. I felt tremendously honored and touched when I learned that I had been selected as this year's Nuclear-Free Future Award recipient, because I have seen the great power of world peace and development. At the same time, I feel a deep sorrow, because I have also helplessly witnessed the environmental problems caused by the failure to effectively contain

Copyright © www.acdn.net

and reduce nuclear contamination. Breaking through fear to fight for a nuclear-free environment requires a person to take a path full of hardship, bloodshed and tears, which could end up in either life or death. However, I firmly believe that if all people who are peace-loving and concerned with human destiny and upholding justice can come together and take action as soon as possible, a nuclear-free tomorrow can become a reality. I wish the conference great success! Thank you!

Sun Xiaodi, November 9, 2006

HRIC Executive Director Sharon Hom said, "This activism award to Sun Xiaodi sends an important message of international support and recognition not only for Sun and his family, but to all the courageous grassroots activists in China struggling under a difficult climate of repression and crackdown."

[-] **For further information on the Nuclear-Free Future Award, see**
http://www.nuclear-free.com/english/frames7.htm.

- About HRIC : Human Rights in China (HRIC) is an international monitoring and advocacy non-governmental organization based in New York and Hong Kong. Founded in March 1989 by Chinese students and scholars, it conducts research, education and outreach programs to promote universally recognized human rights and advance the institutional protection of these rights in the People's Republic of China. http://www.hrichina.org

Copyright © www.acdn.net