

Deal Undone? Activist Now Wants To Leave China

BY ALEXA OLESEN AND MATTHEW LEE
Associated Press

BEIJING — The blind Chinese dissident who boldly fled house arrest and placed himself under the wing of U.S. diplomats balked Wednesday at a deal delicately worked out between the two countries to let him live freely in China, saying he now fears for his family's safety unless they are all spirited abroad.

After six days holed up in the U.S. Embassy, as senior officials in Beijing and Washington tussled over his fate, Chen Guangcheng left the compound's protective confines Wednesday for a nearby hospital for treatment of a leg injury suffered in his escape. A shaken Chen told The Associated Press from his hospital room that Chinese authorities had warned he would lose his opportunity to be reunited with his family if he stayed longer in the embassy.

U.S. officials verified that account. But they adamantly denied his contention that one American diplomat had warned him of a threat from the Chinese that his wife would be beaten to death if he did not get out of the embassy.

"I think we'd like to rest in a place outside of China," Chen told the AP, appealing again for help from Washington. "Help my family and me leave safely."

Only hours earlier, U.S. officials said they had extracted from the Chinese government a promise that Chen would join his family and be allowed to start a new life in a university town in China, safe from the rural authorities who had abusively held him in prison and house arrest for nearly seven years.

That announcement had been timed to clear up the matter before strategic and economic meetings start Thursday between Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner and their Chinese counterparts — and to show the U.S. standing firm in its defense of human rights in China while engaging on other issues.

Clinton spoke to Chen on the phone when he

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CHEN GUANGCHENG

left the embassy and, in a statement, welcomed the resettlement agreement as one that "reflected his choices and our values."

But the murky circumstances of Chen's departure from the embassy, and his sudden appeal to leave China after declaring he wanted to stay, again threatened to overshadow talks that were to focus on the global economic crisis and hotspots such as North Korea, Iran, Syria and Sudan.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry signaled its unhappiness with the entire affair, demanding that the U.S. apologize for giving Chen sanctuary at the embassy.

"What the U.S. side has done has interfered in the domestic affairs of China, and the Chinese side will never accept it," Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Weimin said in a statement.

Chen, 40, became an international human rights figure and inspiration to many ordinary Chinese after running afoul of local government officials for exposing forced abortions carried out as part of China's one-child policy. He served four years in prison on what supporters said were fabricated charges, then was kept under house arrest with his wife, daughter and mother, with the adults often being roughed by officials and his daughter searched and harassed.

Blinded by childhood fever but intimately familiar with the terrain of his village, Chen slipped from his guarded farmhouse in eastern China's Shandong province at night on April 22. He made his way through fields and forest, along roads and across a narrow river to meet the first of several supporters who helped bring him to Beijing and the embassy — his guards

unaware for three days that he was gone.

In Washington, State Department spokesman Mark Toner disputed Chen's claim that he was left alone by the Americans at the hospital.

"There were U.S. officials in the building," the spokesman told reporters. "I believe some of his medical team was in fact with him at the hospital." He said U.S. officials would continue visiting Chen while he was there.

Chen's supporters in the U.S. called on Clinton to meet him directly, and one of them, Republican Rep. Christopher Smith of New Jersey, said it appeared the resettlement agreement "seems to have been done under significant duress."

"If ever there was a test of the U.S. commitment to human rights, it should have been at that moment, potentially sending him back to a very real threat," he said.

But no one appeared to know precisely what to make of Chen's change of heart. He had welcomed a deal that let him stay in China and work for change, telling his lawyer Li Jinsong on the way to the hospital, "I'm free, I've received clear assurances," according to Li.

Toner said three U.S. officials heard Chen tell Clinton in broken English on the phone that he wanted to kiss her in gratitude. Chen told the AP that he actually told Clinton, "I want to see you now."

Nor is it clear how the U.S. could be party to an agreement on Chen's safety inside China when it has no power to enforce the conditions of his life there.

Ai Xiaoming, a documentary filmmaker and activist, said the Chinese government fails to ensure people's rights, so the best solution would be for Chen and his family to go to America.

"In the first place, Chen Guangcheng should not have to ask a foreign country to protect his rights," Ai said. "His rights should be protected by his own country, through the constitution. But it is obvious that this cannot be done."

UN Imposes Sanctions On Three N. Korean Companies

BY EDITH M. LEDERER
Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS — The U.N. Security Council ordered all countries Wednesday to freeze the assets of three North Korean state-owned companies to punish Pyongyang for its failed rocket launch last month.

The April 13 long-range launch, which Pyongyang called a failed attempt to put a satellite into space, violated earlier Security Council resolutions prohibiting North Korea from engaging in nuclear and missile activity. The rocket broke into pieces shortly after liftoff.

The Security Council's committee that monitors sanctions against North Korea approved the sanctions Wednesday and ordered all countries to freeze the assets of the three companies. The European Union, U.S., Japan and South Korea proposed additional entities for sanctions, but the committee acts by consensus and China, North Korea's closest ally, only approved the three companies.

U.S. Ambassador Susan Rice told reporters the three companies are "very much involved in ... illicit missile and nuclear programs."

The three sanctioned companies — Green Pine Associated Corporation, the Amroggang Development Banking Corporation and The Korea Heungjin Trading Company — play a role in

financing, exporting and procuring weapons, the U.N. Mission to the U.N. said in a statement.

Green Pine is responsible for about half of the arms and weapons exported by North Korea, the U.N. statement said. Amroggang Development Banking is managed by Tanchon Commercial Bank, which is "the main North Korean financial entity for sales of conventional arms, ballistic missiles and goods related to the assembly and manufacturer of such weapons," the statement added. It described Korea Heungjin as a trading company that has been used to procure an advanced digital controller with applications in missile design.

Rice said the sanctions committee also approved additional items and technology that are prohibited for transfer to or from North Korea on two key lists dealing with missiles and nuclear-related material, and approved a new work plan for the committee's panel of experts aimed at intensifying efforts to monitor and improve the implementation of sanctions.

The Missile Technology Control Regime, a group of 34 countries, monitors the transfer of missile equipment, material and related technologies that can be used to deliver weapons of mass destruction. The Nuclear Suppliers Group

comprises countries that have established export rules to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Both list items banned for export; they were last updated in 2009.

"The committee's package of new measures constitutes a serious and credible response to North Korea's provocation," Rice said in a statement. "These measures will increase North Korea's isolation and make it harder for Pyongyang to move forward with its illicit programs."

The Security Council unanimously approved a presidential statement on April 16 strongly condemning the failed rocket launch. The council gave the sanctions committee, which includes all 15 council members, 15 days to prepare new additions for the sanctions list.

The European Union proposed about 40 additions to the sanctions and the missile and nuclear lists, and the United States, Japan and South Korea also submitted lists, diplomats said, speaking on condition of anonymity because talks have been private.


China did not respond until just before the deadline Tuesday night, and approved sanctions against the three companies and updates to the two lists, the diplomats said.



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5. The days we shared were sweet. I long to see you again in God's heavenly glory.
6. Your courage and bravery still inspire us all, and the memory of your smile fills us with joy and laughter.
7. Though out of sight, you'll forever be in my heart and mind.
8. May the light of peace shine on your face for eternity.
9. May God's angels guide you and protect you throughout time.
10. You were a light in our life that burns forever in our hearts.
11. May God's graces shine over you for all time.
12. You are in our thoughts and prayers from morning to night and from year to year.
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