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FREEDOM NOW

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**11 MEMBERS OF CANADA’S PARLIAMENTARY FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
AND ITS SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CALL ON  
PRIME MINISTER HARPER TO ADDRESS CASES OF LIU XIAOBO AND GAO ZHISHENG**

Ottawa: 11 members of the Canadian Parliament, led by the Honourable Irwin Cotler, former Minister of Justice and Attorney General, urged Prime Minister Harper to ask Chinese President Hu Jintao at the G-20 Summit in Seoul, South Korea from November 11-12, 2010, to release Chinese prisoners of conscience Liu Xiaobo and Gao Zhisheng. In a letter dated November 4, 2010, 11 members of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development and its Subcommittee on International Human Rights, declared: “The Chinese government’s release of Gao Zhisheng and Liu Xiaobo would demonstrate to Canada and to the international community that the Chinese government is committed to its domestic and international legal obligations.”

“Regrettably, Mr. Gao and Dr. Liu’s imprisonment reflect the increased assaults on the rule of law and the repression faced by human rights advocates in China. Accordingly, the release of Mr. Gao and Dr. Liu is crucial in affirming a China that respects the rule of law and the protection of human rights,” said the Honourable Irwin Cotler.

“Grace, Peter, and I are so grateful for the support of these Members of Parliament,” said Gao’s wife, Geng He. “I beg Prime Minister Harper to help secure the release of Grace and Peter’s father.”

On October 4, 2010, Liu and Gao’s international legal teams released a letter from 29 members of the United States House of Representatives to President Obama requesting that he raise Liu and Gao’s cases with President Hu at the G-20. On October 25, 2010, Liu’s international legal team released a letter from 15 Nobel Peace Prize Laureates to the leaders of the G-20 countries and the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urging them to raise Liu’s case with President Hu at the G-20.

Liu Xiaobo is the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate. He is a renowned scholar and democracy activist whose role drafting Charter 08 led to his December 2009 sentence of 11 years in prison for “incitement to subvert state power.” Gao Zhisheng is a human rights lawyer known as the “conscience of China” who was disappeared by the Chinese government in February 2009. He was briefly released in March 2010 and again disappeared in April 2010. He is currently held *incommunicado* in an unknown location.

Freedom Now was retained by Liu Xiaobo’s wife, Liu Xia, to serve as his international *pro bono* legal counsel. In addition to Freedom Now, the team of international human rights specialists includes Jerome A. Cohen, Irwin Cotler MP, David Kilgour, and Yang Jianli. Freedom Now was also retained by Gao Zhisheng’s wife, Geng He, to serve as his international *pro bono* legal counsel along with international human rights specialists Jerome A. Cohen, Irwin Cotler MP, Albert Ho, David Matas, and David Kilgour.

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*Our mission is to free prisoners of conscience through focused legal, political and public relations advocacy efforts.*