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FREEDOM NOW

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
December 10, 2010

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LIU XIAOBO'S INTERNATIONAL LEGAL TEAM DEPLORES THE DECISION OF  
CHINESE GOVERNMENT TO PREVENT LAUREATE AND WIFE LIU XIA FROM  
ATTENDING AWARD CEREMONY

Oslo, Norway: The 2010 Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony commences today in the absence of the Laureate, Chinese intellectual and democracy activist Dr. Liu Xiaobo, and his wife, Liu Xia.

Maran Turner, Executive Director of Freedom Now, the organization engaged by Mrs. Liu to serve as international legal counsel for Dr. Liu, welcomed the award but expressed regret that the government prevented the Laureate and his wife from attending the ceremony. "We are thrilled that the Norwegian Nobel Committee chose to honor Dr. Liu with its Peace Prize in recognition of his long struggle to ensure respect for fundamental human rights in China. Sadly, because the government continues to illegally detain Dr. and Mrs. Liu, they were not able to join us in Oslo today to celebrate this great honor."

The Honorable Irwin Cotler, also a member of Dr. Liu's international legal team and Professor of Law at McGill University, noted that "Dr. Liu's chair will be conspicuously empty at today's award ceremony. This should remind the world that the government also kept other family members and human rights activists from leaving the country, in order to prevent them from attending the ceremony. Such actions are unfortunately representative of the gap between the promises China has undertaken in its Constitution and the reality on the ground, where respect for the rule of law has taken a back seat to economic reforms and development."

On Christmas Day last year, the government of China sentenced Dr. Liu to 11 years in prison for his political essays and co-authorship of "Charter 08," a document calling for peaceful political reform in China based on the principles of human rights, freedom, and democracy. Dr. Liu is now detained at Jinzhou Prison in Northeast China. Mrs. Liu was placed under house arrest in Beijing on October 10, 2010, after being escorted by authorities to inform Dr. Liu of the award. She remains under house arrest in Beijing.

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