

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 06, 2011

The Honorable Zhang Yesui  
Ambassador of the People's Republic of China  
to the United States of America  
3505 International Place, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20008

Dear Ambassador Zhang,

We are writing to draw your attention to the case of Fan Yafeng, a prominent human rights defender and Protestant house church leader in China who is currently under house arrest. Since October, 2010, Fan Yafeng and his family have been harassed, intimidated, and subjected to house arrest. They have been denied access to legal counsel and deprived of the right to speak and move about freely. Additionally, Fan Yafeng reportedly was tortured during a nine-day detention that began on December 9, 2010. We respectfully ask that you ensure Fan Yafeng's unconditional release and hold accountable the police and government officials who illegally detained and tortured him.

In January of this year, nineteen Chinese lawyers signed an open letter entitled "The State's Respect for and Protection of Human Rights Begins with the Strict Prohibition of Torture," exposing the police's use of torture against Fan Yafeng and Gao Zhisheng. Unfortunately, the letter is just one of numerous reports of the mistreatment of prominent human rights defenders by China's police force. Since February, the list of detained or missing human rights attorneys has grown significantly and now includes Gao Zhingsheng who has been missing since 2010.

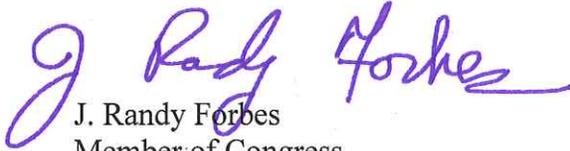
As you know, the United States has a proven commitment to promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout the world. At the core of this commitment is a tenacious belief in the fundamental rights of independent thought and free speech. It is the freedom of speech that allows human rights promoters to frequently highlight government policies and actions that fall short of international human rights standards. Their advocacy is a valuable means of assisting governments in honoring their human rights commitments. We ask that you improve human rights protections simply by allowing human rights advocates to engage in these fundamental freedoms of independent thought and free speech. Human rights defenders like Fan Yafeng, Gao Zhisheng, and Chen Guangcheng can be valuable assets in helping your country advance the rule of law and promote and protect human rights. These individuals represent a great hope for China's future and should not be treated or considered as subversives by the state.

In light of your commitment to advancing the rule of law and improving US-China relations, we ask that you facilitate the unconditional release of Fan Yafeng and other human rights defenders such as Gao Zhisheng and Chen Guangcheng. We urge you to hold accountable the police and government officials responsible for the torture and mistreatment of these human

rights advocates. In addition, we ask that your government strongly condemn the use of torture in detention, consistent with China's international commitments.

In the spirit of better bilateral relations, we await your reply.

Sincerely,



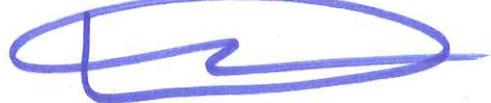
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