September 24, 2019

His Excellency Xi Jinping

President, People’s Republic of China

c/o His Excellency XU Hong

Embassy of the People’s Republic of China

Willem Lodewijklaan 10

2517 JT The Hague

The Netherlands

Dear Mr. President:

On September 24, 1982, the People’s Republic of China signed the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. By signing this agreement the PRC agreed to share international concerns and protocols for refugees. As you know the Korean family remains divided and those living under the Kim Jong Un regime in the North suffer unspeakable atrocities and crimes against humanity leading many to flee the country and become refugees. The UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the DPRK (COI) concluded in February 2014 in describing the Kim regime: “The gravity, scale and nature of these violations reveal a State that does not have any parallel in the contemporary world.”

We appeal to you as China’s leader with this specific request: please provide safe passage to refugees coming into China from North Korea and cease returning them to North Korea. Those returned under your current policies face certain torture, certain imprisonment and even public execution.

We respect China’s concerns about refugees crossing its border when fleeing persecution and deprivation in North Korea, and we ask that your government resolve this refugee crisis in a way that fulfills the goals of the Convention and Protocol. Unlike any other refugee crisis in the world, North Korean refugees have a place to go for immediate resettlement as citizens of South Korea under Articles 2 and 3 of the Republic of Korea Constitution. In addition to South Korea, other countries have willingly resettled these refugees.

North Korean refugees need not be a burden and concern for China as the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHRC) will help China quickly and safely resettle these refugees. We believe working together with the international community, and the UNHCR, China can resolve this crisis quickly, safely, and according to international law.

We look forward to your response to our request, and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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