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CHINA Demonstration at Chinese Embassy to mark International Human Rights Day

Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) will join Burmese and North Korean exiled communities on 10 December in a protest outside the Chinese Embassy in London to mark International Human Rights Day.

Burma and North Korea have two of the worst human rights records in the world. The protest in London, from 12noon until 1pm, will call for China to use its influence with both regimes to pressure them to stop perpetrating crimes against humanity against their citizens. China is a key source of economic, political and diplomatic support to the regimes in North Korea and Burma, and therefore has significant influence in the region.

Both North Korean and Burmese regimes are accused of crimes against humanity such as murder, extermination, enslavement/forced labor, forcible transfer of population, arbitrary imprisonment, torture, persecution, enforced disappearances of persons, and other inhumane acts against their populations. In light of these persistent human rights violations, CSW has repeatedly called for the establishment of a UN Commission of Inquiry to investigate crimes against humanity in both North Korea and Burma.

CSW wrote to the Foreign Ministers of all EU member states on 20 August, urging them to support calls for the establishment of a UN Commission of Inquiry to investigate crimes against humanity in North Korea. The UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Burma, Tomas Ojea Quintana, has recommended the establishment of an inquiry into crimes against humanity in Burma.

In Burma, despite the recent release of Aung San Suu Kyi, the military regime has been conducting a campaign against ethnic civilians which involves military attacks, forced labour, torture and rape as a weapon of war. This campaign of violence has intensified since the country's sham elections on November 7, and tens of thousands of refugees have fled to the Thailand-Burma border.

CSW's Advocacy Director Andrew Johnston said, "On International Human Rights Day, it is vital that the world turns its attention to two of the worst situations in the world, North Korea and Burma. As a rising global power with extensive political, diplomatic and economic influence with its neighboring countries, we believe China has a crucial role to play in encouraging change. The regimes in North Korea and Burma contribute to instability in the region, and for that reason China should have an interest in playing a constructive role in influencing these regimes to change their behavior. China must exercise its power responsibly, and that means helping to end the dire suffering of the people of Burma and North Korea."

Notes to Editors:

1. If you would like to find out more about participating in the protest on 10 December outside the Chinese Embassy, 49-51 Portland Place, London W1B 1QD , please email admin@csw.org.uk or call 0845 456 5463.