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CHINA | Visiting Democracy Activist to Address European Parliament Hearing on Human Rights in China

Dr. Yang Jianli, a US-based Chinese democracy activist, arrives in the UK on Nov. 28 as part of a visit hosted by Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) to the UK and Brussels. He will address the European Parliament's Subcommittee hearing on Human Rights in China on Dec. 6. Dr. Yang will focus on Freedom of Religion or Belief, jailed Nobel Peace Prize laureate Liu Xiaobo and dialogue between the Communist Party and civil society.

Dr. Yang was studying in the US when he returned to China to participate in the student uprisings in 1989. After witnessing the massacre at Tiananmen Square, he went back to the US where he established Initiatives for China, a non-profit organization committed to peaceful transition to democracy in China and produces the online Chinese language magazine, Yi Bao. The magazine is widely recognized inside China as one of the most respected commentaries on social and political issues. In 2010, Dr. Yang represented jailed Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo at his Nobel Peace Prize ceremony and in the same year, co-chaired the committee on Internet Freedom at the Geneva Summit for Human Rights and Democracy.

Dr. Yang will be in London from Nov. 28 to Dec. 2 and then in Brussels until Dec. 8. In London he will meet with MPs, representatives from the Foreign Office and NGOs, and speak at an event by the Henry Jackson Society, "Three Chinas and Liu Xiaobo," on Nov. 29.

In Brussels, Dr. Yang will meet with MEPs and representatives from the European External Action Service and EU Member State missions, in addition to addressing the European Parliament's Subcommittee hearing on Human Rights in China on Dec. 6. He will also participate in the EU-NGO Forum on the role of regional mechanisms in promoting universality of human rights and their cooperation with civil society, on Dec. 6 and 7.

CSW's Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas said, "CSW is pleased to host Dr. Yang Jianli on his visit to Europe, and we hope that his work will serve to highlight some ongoing challenges with regard to human rights in China, in particular Freedom of Religion or Belief. We also commend the European Parliament's commitment to raising human rights concerns with China and urge the EU to encourage the Chinese government to work towards greater freedom and democracy for its citizens."