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CHINA: UPDATE ON ATTEMPTED ENTRY

The following information is an update on the attempted entry into China by Nicholas Howen, Amnesty International's delegate to the Seventh International Anti-Corruption Conference.

At 4am London time, an Amnesty International contact in Beijing telephoned Amnesty International in London (Anita Tiessen) to notify Amnesty International that Mr Howen had called him to say that he had arrived at the airport. He had been told that his visa was invalid, his passport was taken from him, and he was asked to wait in the passport control area.

Since then Reuters wire agency has reported that they had contacted British Airways in Beijing to confirm that Mr Howen was on the flight to London, which arrives at 4 pm London time. We are still trying to confirm this information directly with British Airways. We have had no direct contact with Mr Howen.

We will be preparing an external news service item, including in external form some of the information sent to sections in the internal note yesterday. This will be drafted before Mr Howen's arrival in London, but cannot be finalized until we have an opportunity to speak to him.

We have been informed by Associated Press that they may go to the airport to interview Mr Howen on arrival, and other news agencies may do this as well.

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