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PRESS CONFERENCE

VISIT BY WEI JINGSHENG

Wei Jingsheng, China's best-known dissident, will be visiting the UK for the first time, from 8 - 13 January. To highlight his visit and as part of Amnesty International's on-going work on the human rights situation in China there will be a press conference at:

11 am, Thursday 8 January 1998

**Amnesty International, International Secretariat
1 Easton Street, London WC1X 8DJ
(in the conference room)**

Please phone 0171 413 5562 to confirm attendance if possible.

Rory Mungoven, Programme Director for the Asia Region, and Arlette Laduguie, Researcher on China, will accompany Wei Jingsheng during the press conference. They will all be available for individual interviews after the press conference.

Biography

Wei Jingsheng is 47 years-old and has spent nearly half his adult life in prison for the peaceful expression of his political beliefs. On 13 December 1995 he was sentenced to 14 years imprisonment for "engaging in activities in an attempt to overthrow the government". He was due for release on November 2009, but was unexpectedly released on medical parole on 15 November 1997. After spending a few hours with his family he was put onto a plane to Detroit, USA.

During his time in detention, Wei Jingsheng has been nominated for, and awarded, a number of international prizes, including the 1994 Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award and the 1996 Sakharov Prize awarded by the European Parliament. There has also been a large scale international campaign nominating him for the Nobel Peace Prize. He is the author of *The Courage to Stand Alone: Letters from Prison and other Writings*, a collection of letters addressed from prison to his family and to the Chinese government.

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**For further information, please contact Mark Ogle in the Amnesty International Press Office on:
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