

International Steering Committee



The Nongovernmental
Process of the
Community of Democracies

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

International Civil Society Condemns Denial of Activists' Participation in Global Democracy Meeting in Poland

Krakow, Poland, 5 July 2010 - As members of the nongovernmental International Steering Committee of the Community of Democracies (ISC/CD), we are devoted to carrying out our organizations' mission of enabling and protecting civil society not only in member countries but also worldwide. We were outraged to learn that one of our delegates, a well-known Chinese defender of human rights, Mr. Guo Yushan, was barred from attending the 2-4 July High Level Democracy Meeting in Krakow as a direct result of government repression.

We deplore such acts which limit the rights of individual citizens and call on the Government of China to ensure that its citizens are allowed to pursue interests and goals which are in line with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We further call on the Government of China to accelerate democratic reforms to allow all its citizens the rights of political participation which are the hallmark of free democratic governance.

We would also like to acknowledge that other members of the civil society delegation were not present in Krakow due to the serious deterioration of democratic standards in their country of origin. ISC/CD member Dr. Chee Soon Juan of the Singapore Democratic Party was once again denied permission to travel by his government, which has bankrupted him through repeated lawsuits, targeting the most prominent voice for democratic reform in the country and prohibiting his voice from being heard at this important democracy meeting.

We also note that in Kyrgyzstan, Talekan Asanalievna Ismailova could not attend the Krakow meeting because she says she is in fear for her and her family's life from unknown elements. Activists in Zimbabwe and Belarus have also faced similar problems preventing them from attending this international democracy meeting.

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**The ISC/CD is a global network of civil society organizations committed to democracy and
human rights, related to the Community of Democracies.**