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One Hundred Thirteenth Congress
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May 31, 2013

His Excellency Xi Jinping
President, People's Republic of China
c/o Embassy of the People's Republic of China
3505 International Place, N.W.
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to express my grave concern regarding your government's continued forced repatriation of North Korean refugees. According to reports, a group of nine refugees located in Laos were transferred to China this week. Upon arrival in China, they were quickly deported to North Korea, apparently without consideration for the dismal fate that awaits them.

As a signatory to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol, the People's Republic of China is obligated to respect the rights of those that fear significant persecution in their homeland. These nine individuals, some as young as 15, now face extreme punishments in North Korea, including torture and execution. I am disappointed that your government continues this mistreatment of North Korean refugees, and I respectfully request that you put an immediate end to these forced repatriations.

My understanding is that China continues to categorize these refugees as migrant workers. Having met many of these refugees myself, I can assure you that they flee their homeland because of severe persecution. Furthermore, North Korean refugees are allowed to resettle in South Korea pursuant to Articles 2 and 3 of the Republic of Korea Constitution, making China's policy of deportation to North Korea fully unnecessary.

The U.S. and China must work together to address the serious challenges that North Korea poses to the world community. I strongly encourage the Government of the People's Republic of China to work closely with the U.S. and others to find an alternative to forced repatriations. I am encouraged by China's recent actions to curtail financial flows to North Korea as a result of that country's third nuclear test. I hope that the matter of human rights will receive the same level of attention and international cooperation by your government.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ed Royce".

EDWARD R. ROYCE
Chairman