Your Majesty,

on 10th December, the representatives of the European Union will receive the Nobel Prize for Peace 2012 from your hands. In this regard, please kindly allow a comment by the German PEN Centre, member of the World Association of Writers, which is also addressed to the Norwegian Nobel Committee, its chairman Thorbjørn Jagland and the prime minister of Norway:

We, the seven hundred writers of the German PEN, ask you, Your Majesty, the representatives of the European Union, the Nobel Committee and the Norwegian Government to pause for a second in this ceremonial moment. Please remember the first Chinese writer living in the People’s Republic in China who was not allowed to accept the Nobel Prize in December 2010. Back then, we were looking at an empty seat.

In December of 2009, Liu Xiaobo, the other important Chinese writer and former president of the Independent Chinese PEN (ICPC), was condemned to eleven years of imprisonment. His wife, the poet and photographer Liu Xia, has been living under strict house arrest since then.
Your Majesty, I beg you to stand up for the release of the Chinese Nobel Peace Prize laureate and his wife. They do not have any power, but your word makes a difference. We will not be able to enjoy the Nobel Prizes awarded in Oslo and Stockholm this year as long as Liu Xiaobo cannot live as a free writer in the People’s Republic of China. The ceremonies in Oslo and in Stockholm should send a European, a world-wide signal.

Yours respectfully

Herbert Wiesner     Tienchi Martin-Liao
The elected Secretary General     President of the Independent
of German PEN Centre     Chinese PEN Centre