

PRESS RELEASE

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Release of Ai Weiwei and Hu Jia reveals cruelty of Chinese regime - McMillan-Scott

The release of two of his Chinese contacts, artist Ai Weiwei and environmentalist Hu Jia, in advance of the Chinese premier Wen Jiabao's visit to the UK and other European countries is not a sign of change in China but a reminder of the massive scale of human rights abuses committed by a cruel regime, a UK Vice-President of the European Parliament has warned.

Calling on David Cameron to consider the millions of people held in camps and prisons across China for speaking up against this regime, **UK Liberal Democrat MEP Edward McMillan-Scott, the Vice President of the European Parliament responsible for democracy and human rights**, said:

"Of course, we must talk about trade issues. To put China's rise at risk would harm not only our interests but also the millions of Chinese who are yet to share its new prosperity.

"But we cannot ignore the other side of China. We must show our support to those people willing to go to prison and face torture for speaking up in favour of reforms and basic human rights. These people are the future of China and should be made contact with and brought into the debate about the future of China.

"Let's not fool ourselves: the Chinese regime uses terror to keep its people under control. It is up to us to look beyond Wen Jiabao's smile and reveal the other, brutalised side of China."

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