



**Herman Van Rompuy**  
President of the European Council

Brussels, 11 May 2011  
Our Ref: B1081

Dear Mr Van Rompuy,

**Place human rights on the EU-China agenda**

Ahead of your forthcoming visit to China, we urge you to raise human rights concerns at the highest level of leadership. The People's Republic of China, while emerging as a global power, remains susceptible to the views held by its strategic partners. For this reason, we call on the EU to raise its voice on China's deteriorating human rights situation.

We are deeply concerned about the widening crackdown on dissent and the impact on freedom of expression within Chinese society, and the continuing persecution of religious and ethnic minority groups. Since February, scores of Chinese activists have been detained and harassed by the Chinese authorities in an apparent attempt to block anti-government demonstrations inspired by protests across the Middle East, including the world-renowned artist and political critic Ai Weiwei. We are sharing with you, in confidence, the attached list of activists, lawyers and bloggers affected by the recent clampdown.

Repression of ethnic and religious minorities has also intensified over recent months. On 16 March 2011, Phuntsok, a young Tibetan monk from Kirti Monastery, in Ngaba County, Sichuan province, set himself on fire in protest against the repressive government policies in the Tibet Autonomous Region and other Tibetan-populated areas in China. His death triggered further protests, which resulted in dozens of monks being detained. The persecution of the religious group Falun Gong has continued for over twelve years. The deaths of three Falun Gong practitioners while in detention were reported to have occurred within a two-week period in March at the Jiamusi Prison in Heilongjiang province.

In view of the serious human rights situation in China, Amnesty International urges you to call on the Chinese authorities to:

- Release Ai Weiwei and others detained or gone 'missing' for peaceful activities.
- Take effective measures to guarantee the freedoms of expression, association and assembly.
- Release ethnic minorities detained or imprisoned for exercising their right to free expression and freedom of religion, including ethnic Tibetans, Uighurs, and Mongolians.
- Cease the persecution of individuals for exercising their right to freedom of religion.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Nicolas J. Beger  
Director

Cc:

Catherine Ashton, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, European Commission Vice President

Viorel Isticioaia-Budura, Managing Director Asia Department, EEAS

James Moran, Head of Asia Department, EEAS

Véronique Arnault, Head of Human Rights and Democracy Department, EEAS

Markus Ederer, Head of the EU Delegation to China

Attachments:

- List of cases of activists, lawyers and bloggers affected by the recent clampdown (non-public document)
- Letter of 28 March 2011 to High Representative Catherine Ashton on urgent request for EU support for human rights activists in China
- Letter of 6 October 2010 to President Herman Van Rompuy on the 2010 EU-China Summit
- Amnesty International Briefing to the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue – June 2010