

Buzek on the death of Kim Jong-il

Monday 19/12/2011

The President of the European Parliament Jerzy Buzek made the following statement on the death of Kim Jong-il:

"Under the leadership of Kim Jong-il the North Korean people suffered unspeakable hardships. Under his autocratic reign his own people were terrorised. I hope the leadership of North Korea will understand the signs of the time. The stability of the region is paramount in these difficult days of transition, but a new start is needed now. This regime cannot continue like it did in the past. The European Parliament sends a strong message of support to the Korean people.

The European Parliament is deeply concerned that human rights in North Korea are denied. We urge North Korea to stop restrictions on freedom of information, association and assembly of religious groups and to respect freedom of religion or belief. It is the North Koreans who are suffering.

The European Parliament urges the North Korean authorities to make concrete and tangible steps towards improving human rights conditions, and calls on the authorities to allow inspection of all types of detention facilities by independent international experts, and to allow UN Special Reporters to visit the country. North Korean authorities should lift restrictions on international staff's ability to monitor the distribution of aid, and to ensure that international aid reaches the needy. I urge the leadership of North Korea to engage constructively in human rights dialogues with the EU.

We believe that North Korea can and must change in its attitude towards human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is the hope of the EP that North Korean society will be able to enjoy these shared fundamental rights and values in the near future."