

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0566/04
by Marco Cappato (NI)
to the Commission

Subject: Music censorship in China

The Commission is apparently ready to upgrade its policy of cultural cooperation with the People's Republic of China under the UNESCO General Assembly negotiations aimed at the creation of an international instrument for the preservation of cultural diversity, as Commissioner Reding stated to the House during the debate on the Prets report last January 2004 in Strasbourg.

It would appear that the rock star David Bowie's concert at the Hong Kong Exhibition and Entertainment Centre next month is under threat because of his drummer's links to the Falun Gong movement.

A spokeswoman for the Hong Kong Association of Falun Gong has declared: 'I am confident that the authorities in Hong Kong will still allow freedom of expression ... ', but the Hong Kong Immigration Department has refused to comment on the rumours and has not yet confirmed its authorisation.

1. What information does the Commission have about this issue?
2. How does the Commission intend to approach the Chinese authorities in order to ensure that Mr Bowie's professional artistic activities will not be subject to the same sort of political censorship as that suffered by the Falun Gong movement?