

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2196/08
by Vincent Peillon (PSE)
to the Council

Subject: Human rights in the People's Republic of China and the Olympic Games

It has now emerged during the run-up to the Beijing Olympics that the authorities of the People's Republic of China, far from pursuing the more open approach required by the Olympic Charter, have chosen to harden the regime in place.

1. Meeting on 29 March 2008 in Brdo (Slovenia), the Council failed to reach a consensus on a joint European approach allowing the upcoming Olympic Games to be taken as an opportunity to work towards improving the human rights situation in China and, in particular, pressure to be exerted on China so as to put an end to Chinese repression in Tibet. Has the Council, since then, abandoned any attempt to reach agreement on joint action – or at least concerted action – in relation the Olympic Games?
2. Has the Council undertaken any specific negotiations with a view to freeing imprisoned journalists and dissidents in China, notably Hu Jia and Yang Chunlin? If so, are these negotiations moving in the right direction?
3. Is the Council, together with the European Commission, carrying out any initiatives to promote clearer inclusion of the need to respect human rights in international trade agreements, particularly with China? What are these?