



TIBET INTERGROUP

**The President Thomas MANN
Member of the European Parliament**

PRESS RELEASE

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Imprisonment of human rights activist Hu Jia - A bad omen for the Olympic Games

This Thursday, after only a one-day trial, the Chinese human rights activist and cyber-dissident Hu Jia was sentenced to three and a half years of prison for criticizing the ruling Communist Party as well as an alleged incitement of subversion of state power.

Thomas Mann, President of the Tibet Intergroup of the European Parliament (EPP-ED Group), strongly condemned this verdict: "China shows once more how little it respects human rights. Free speech is a value that we cannot cherish highly enough. The fact that diplomats and journalists were refused admittance to the trial demonstrates that Beijing has not learned anything," the CDU-MEP said.

Thomas Mann pointed to the emergency sitting of the European Parliament on January 17th, where the plenum condemned the arrest of Hu Jia and unanimously passed a resolution demanding his immediate release.

**Tibet Intergroup des
Europäischen Parlaments**

Thomas Mann MdEP, Präsident

Sekretariat
Rue Wiertz, ASP 15 E 107
B-1047 Bruxelles/Brüssel
Tel.: 00 32 - 2 - 2 84 53 18
Fax : 00 32 - 2 - 2 84 93 18
E-mail: tmann@europarl.eu.int

"For years, Hu Jia has passionately devoted himself to the fight for human rights. I especially want to point to his participation at our press conference on human rights in Brussels in October 2007 through a live broadcast. That was very courageous," Mann added.

The President of the Tibet Intergroup appealed to Beijing to finally realize that a politics of systematic restriction of human rights is ostracized by the world community. The conviction of Hu Ja should further reduce the chances to smoothly conduct the Olympic Games. "I appeal to the International Olympic Committee to insist that the Chinese comply with the commitment they made when they were awarded the Olympic Games: that they will improve the human rights situation."

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