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Conference documentation

The Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament organised the **"Olympic Rights for Human Games"** Conference on 15 May. The choice of China to host the Olympic Games has raised many questions. The deterioration of human rights in China and the recent events in Tibet have called for a reaction of the international community. The boycott of the opening ceremony is on everyone's mind. Can we expect China to respect its pledge in the run-up to the Games? What responsibilities does the IOC have for choosing Beijing and how the Games are run? What role can athletes play while respecting the Olympic Charter? Will the EU be capable of speaking with one voice? Will the press be free to do its job? Are Olympic values compatible with economic and commercial interests?

RSF's **Robert Ménard**, **Philippe Rochot** from France 2 and the Dalai Lama's Special Envoy to the EU, **Kelsang Gyaltsen**, were among several international experts, journalists, NGOs and Olympic Committee representativesthe Group invited to debate these core issues during three discussion panels. Regrettably, both the future French Presidency of the EU and the Chinese authorities declined.

Co-President **Monica Frassoni** opened the conference by expressing sympathy and sincere condolences on behalf of the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament to the Chinese people following the terrible earthquake that hit the country on 12 May.

Following an entire day of discussion, two main conclusions were drawn: The Olympic Games have strong political implications and significance and, in the words of Co-President **Daniel Cohn-Bendit**, it is therefore right to continue to call heads of states and governments to boycott the opening ceremony unless substantial and immediate progress is made in terms of human rights in China.

Read the full report

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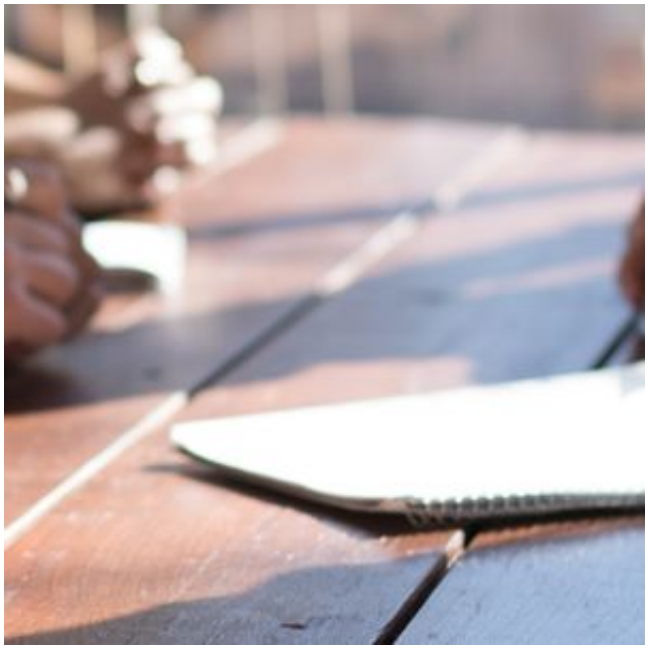

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