

## EU Visa Policy for Taiwan

Recalling the resolution on Taiwan adopted by the 50th Congress of Liberal International on October 28th in Ottawa/Hull, Canada, in which tribute is paid to the democratic achievement in Taiwan, in which the election by popular vote of human rights activists Chen Shui-bian and Annette Lu as President and Vice President of the Republic of China (Taiwan) is welcomed as a further step in the democratic development in their country and in which any suggestion is rejected that the present political status quo on Taiwan can be changed other than by the consent of its people,

Recalling the resolution adopted by the European Parliament on June 13th this year concerning the ASEM process (Asia Europe Meeting) in which, on the initiative of the ELDR Group, the issue of granting visa to Taiwanese officials is addressed with great clarity,

Acknowledging the constructive role of the US Administration and Congress in support of democracy on Taiwan and cross-strait relations and giving credit to the US decision to grant President Chen Shui-bian a transit visa for New York on his way from Taipei to Central America earlier this year,

Welcoming the fact that both the People's Republic of China and Taiwan are expected to join WTO in the near future which will contribute to their mutual integration in the world economy, international contacts, cross-strait co-operation and detente,

Paying respect to Chen Shui-bian, the 2001 Liberal International Freedom Prize laureate, and Annette Lu, Patron of the International Network of Liberal Women (INLW), who have been imprisoned for their belief in liberal values and human rights such as freedom of speech, conscience and assembly, parliamentary democracy, social justice, emancipation of men and women and the rule of law,

Deploring the fact that liberal leaders Chen and Lu are now in fact imprisoned in their own country because many foreign governments deny them visa to make private visits possible,

Being of the firm conviction that it is a human right to travel,

Stating that the issue of visa to the directly elected President and Vice President of Taiwan in their private capacity does not imply any change in the appreciation of the political status of Taiwan nor does it constitute a different direction in the political relations with the People's Republic of China,

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Rejects therefore the so-called common understanding among the Member States of the European Union that no visa will be issued to the democratically elected Taiwanese officials mentioned above, even if they travel in a private, non-official capacity,

Calls on the European Union and its Member States to adopt the rule that without exception Taiwanese officials travelling in their private capacity will not be denied visa for the fact that they have been democratically elected or appointed according to the constitution of their country.

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