



# EU-China Human Rights Network



## Newsletter

November 2003



**Foreword**  
**by the European Commissioner for External Relations**  
**Chris Patten**

The European Union is deeply committed to the promotion of human rights worldwide. The EU welcomed the signing and ratification by China of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the signing of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. With over 140 countries having ratified these two major covenants, the argument that such rights are a “western construct”, and universality a distant dream, simply no longer rings true.

In the last two years, the *EU-China Human Rights Network* has underpinned the EU-China human rights dialogue by providing a valuable opportunity for academics to contribute to the promotion of Chinese legal reforms. The analysis of legal obstacles to the implementation of UN Covenants has fed into the EU-China human rights dialogue, giving new dimension to this process. I am convinced that the activities of the Network will deepen our joint understanding of human rights challenges in Europe and China and contribute to tangible progress on the ground.



All my best wishes of success to the Network and its participants!  
**Chris Patten, European Commissioner for External Relations**

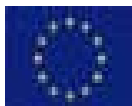
### Network Website

The EU-China Human Rights Network has launched a project website in three languages– English, French and Chinese. The site contains information on the Network, partner institutions and upcoming events. Select reports and materials from past events may also be accessed on the site:

<http://www.eu-china-humanrights.org>

### Upcoming Dialogue Seminar, Venice

The next EU-China Human Rights Dialogue Seminar will be held in Venice, Italy, from 15-16 December. The topics of this Dialogue Seminar will be Judicial Guarantees of Human Rights, and Capacity Building of NGOs. This event will build on the results of previous Network Seminars on Freedom of Association and Access to Justice. A report on discussions will be made available on the Network website in the aftermath of the Seminar.



*The EU-China Human Rights Network is a cooperation project funded by the European Commission. The opinions and views expressed in this information bulletin do not necessarily represent the views of the European Commission.*

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## Message from the European Director, Professor William Schabas

At the beginning of 2002, Chinese officials and academics began to seek out maps of Europe to identify the location of a small city called Galway, which would soon become the base for a new cooperation project between the EU and China on human rights matters.

Two years later, the Irish Centre for Human Rights and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences are together responsible for coordinating and directing a partnership of 30 universities spread throughout the EU and China, working



together on human rights issues. The Network now also bears responsibility for running the official EU-China Human Rights Dialogue Seminars, that is, the twice-yearly intergovernmental sessions co-hosted by the European Commission, Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Presidency of the European Union.

We have found that there is an appetite for regular information on the Network and its ongoing activities. Beginning with this issue, we will distribute periodic bulletins on activities of the Network and developments relevant to our work. As the first such bulletin, this issue focuses on introducing the Network in structural terms, but in the future we will also provide information on relevant developments in Chinese and international human rights law.

For me personally, and for my colleagues at the Irish Centre for Human Rights, the EU-China Human Rights Network has been a wonderful learning experience. It has allowed us to develop a better understanding of the experience of our Chinese counterparts, and indeed provides the opportunity to develop closer ties among universities and human rights institutes throughout Europe and China. It is also gratifying to consider that, through the Network, we as academics have a concrete opportunity to use our expertise to contribute to the ongoing process of legal change in China. I am grateful to the European Commission for providing the funding for these activities and opportunities.

I believe that the Network has an exciting future. On my own behalf and in the name of the Network Secretariat here in Galway, I look forward to continuing cooperation with the European Commission, all 30 currently participating universities, and the many individual experts who have to date taken part in Network events.

*Professor William Schabas,  
Director, Irish Centre for Human Rights.*

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## Message from the Chinese Director, Professor Xia Yong

The EU-China Human Rights Network is a long-term human rights cooperation that involves 30 Chinese and European educational and research institutes. This is an unprecedented event in the history of relationship between China and Europe since Marco Polo made his travel to China more than 700 years ago. The dialogue and exchange between Chinese and European scholars and experts in the field of human rights have deepened their mutual understanding and strengthened their desire to further expand and deepen the relationship between China and Europe. More importantly, in a time of globalisation and polarisation, the close political, legal and cultural cooperation between China and Europe, the birthplaces of such great thinkers as Confucius and Aristotle, is conducive to the protection of human rights, the maintenance of peace and order and advancement of civilisation in the whole world.

Confucius said "The benevolent loves others"; Mencius said "Compassion is common to all men"; the Taoists advocate the "equality of all human beings" and the Buddhists stress the "equality of all living creatures". As the Chinese Director of the Project, I believe that the Chinese culture and civilisation will be greatly advanced by absorbing the positive elements of rights culture and liberalism in the western civilisation.

Meanwhile, from our European friends' curiosity about traditional Chinese culture and the attention they have paid to human rights discourse in China, we can see they are beginning to reflect on truly universal human rights concepts and institutions with cultural diversity.

During the past year, with the support of the Chinese Foreign Ministry and the European Commission, the project has been progressing smoothly and achieved remarkable results,

although improvements still need to be made. Apart from the CASS Law Institute, the Chinese participating institutions of the project include the following 14 famous universities: Beijing University, Remin University of China, China University of Political Science and Law, Foreign



Affairs College, Fudan University, Nanking University, Zhongshan University, Southwest University of Political Science and Law, Wuhan University, Shandong University, Nankai University, Jilin University, Zhejiang University, and Sichuan University. Under the project, scholars of the above 15 Chinese participating institutions have exchanged ideas and experiences with their European colleagues and collected many valuable academic materials. These ideas, experiences and materials are of great significance to the safeguarding of human rights, not only in China, but also in the whole world.

*Professor Xia Yong  
Director, Institute of Law, Chinese Academy of  
Social Sciences*

## INTRODUCTION TO NETWORK AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

The EU-China Network for the Ratification and Implementation of the UN Human Rights Covenants (“EU-China Human Rights Network”) formally commenced activities in April 2002. The project is funded by the European Commission, with the full cooperation of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The overall aim of this cooperation project is to assist China in the process of legal reform and advancing of practical protection of the substantive rights guaranteed by the UN Human Rights Covenants. The project aims to enhance mutual understanding between China and Europe, and allow for the exchange of ideas and experiences in the field of human rights. To this end, Network members work together on analysis of legal obstacles to the implementation of international human rights standards, specifically the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

The Network is a partnership composed of 15 European universities (one in each EU member-state) led by the Irish Centre for Human Rights and 15 Chinese universities led by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). The full time project secretariat is based at the Irish Centre for Human Rights, National University of Ireland, Galway. The Irish Centre for Human Rights and CASS are joined on the project Steering Committee by the three European co-partners: Universite Pantheon-Assas Paris II, the University of Milan and the University of Essex.

Activities are centered around a series of Seminars and working groups on a variety of human rights topics. “Network Seminars” are private, working-level meetings between European and Chinese members of the Network. These seminars are designed to build mutual understanding while examining domestic law and practice in the light of relevant international standards. Ultimately, Network Seminars are charged with formulating practical recommendations for revision of domestic law. The Network also engages in development of training materials for use in China, as well as hands-on training of relevant officials and professionals.

It is now also the case that the Network has an important role in the twice-yearly EU-China Human Rights Dialogue Seminars. These official “Dialogue Seminars” include the participation of academic experts and governmental officials from China and from European member states, and focus on two selected human rights issues per meeting. The Network now provides support to this process, with responsibilities including practical organisation of Dialogue Seminar on behalf of the co-hosts; provision of academic Working Papers; and reporting on discussions. It is hoped that involvement of the Network can lead to a steady improvement of the Dialogue process by ensuring a greater degree of continuity and institutional memory in the process; through contributing to a more practical focus in discussions, and by building on the findings of such events. In this way it is hoped that these activities can contribute to a steady improvement in human rights protection both in Europe and in China.



*One of the Working Groups in the Training Session On Minority Rights, Yunnan University, Kunming, November 2003*

### Impressions of the Minority Rights Seminar and Training Session, by Dr. Joshua Castellino

The subject of the latest round of interactions organised by the EU-China Human Rights Network was the treatment of minorities. In two separate events, a Seminar in Beijing and a training session at Yunnan University in Kunming, participants had robust exchanges on the challenges facing states as they seek to grant recognition, and create legislative systems that can fully accommodate minority groups.

These events involved a two-way exchange of views and expertise. Many on the European side learnt a great deal from the exchange: from these discussions, it became clear that China faces the same kinds of problems as are being faced in other states *vis-à-vis* the protection of minorities. Key to this challenge is the discussion on how to promote the development of impoverished groups

who have been persistently discriminated against, without necessarily forcing them to assimilate.

Chinese participants particularly appreciated the variety of backgrounds on the European side, which enabled broad comparisons across regions in terms of legislative strategies and debates. For instance in one training session in Kunming, the discussion on minority rights took a comparative approach that examined legal remedies in Europe, the Inter-American and the African system. A significant part of the discussion also focused on the possibilities of an Asian system for human rights law and the methods and strategies for strengthening its possibilities. The Irish Centre for Human Rights also presented the Chinese delegates with a CD Rom of cases that have come before international and regional organisations.

## Brief review of past Network events

Over the course of the past year of activities, a number of human rights topics have been addressed at Network events.

### *Galway Network Seminar, April 2002:*

The first Expert Network Seminar of the EU-China Human Rights Network was held in April 2002 at the National University of Ireland, Galway. This seminar addressed the topic of Transparency and Regulation of the Mass Media. It was a successful event at which good working relations were built between participating universities, and discussions were open and quite productive. A report on the event was produced for input into the May 2002 Dialogue Seminar as a measure towards the concretisation of the Dialogue discussions.

### *Spanish Dialogue Seminar, May 2002:*

The May 2002 Dialogue Seminar held under the Spanish Presidency of the European Union was the first official inter-governmental Dialogue organised by the Network. The two topics addressed on this occasion were: Freedom of Expression and Regulation of the Mass Media; and Institutional mechanisms for the Implementation of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Discussions were wide-ranging, with high quality academic contributions, and participation of governmental representatives from China and each European member-state.

### *Copenhagen Dialogue Seminar, October 2002:*

In October 2002 under the Danish Presidency of the European Union, the Copenhagen Dialogue Seminar addressed the topics of Prevention of Torture; and National Human Rights Institutions. This Seminar involved a number of structural innovations, including visits of participants to the Danish Institute

for Human Rights and the International Rehabilitation Council for Victims of Torture (IRCT). These visits ensured that working groups could apply the discussions of the Seminar in a very practical setting.

### *Beijing Network Seminar, March 2003:*

During March 2003, Beijing was the location of the Network Seminar on Access to Justice. European experts were joined by over 40 Chinese academics and officials in a very open discussion of issues including fair trial guarantees, models of legal aid, and the system of 'Re-education through Labour'.

### *Chongqing Training Session, March 2003:*

While in China, European Network members also took part in a related human rights training session in Chongqing. This event gave over 60 lawyers, judges and prosecutors from western China their first introduction to human rights law and its impact on their positions and professional responsibilities.



*Participants in the Network Seminar on Access to Justice, Beijing, March 2003.*



*Professor Liu Hainian of CASS and Professor William Schabas, pictured at the Galway Network Seminar on Freedom of Expression and Regulation of Mass Media. National University of Ireland, Galway, April 2002.*

### *Galway Network Seminar, September 2003:*

After a gap in activities due to the impact in China of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), the third EU-China Network Seminar was held in Galway on the topic of Freedom of Association. Issues including regulations restricting the set-up and operation of NGOs and trade union rights were analysed by participating experts. Further information on this event is included on page 8 of this Newsletter.

### *Beijing Network Seminar and Kunming Training Session, November 2003*

Most recently, a Seminar and Training Session were held in China during November 2003 on the topic of Minority Rights. The initial remarks and impressions of one participant in these events are included on page 3 of this Newsletter.

## Recent Publications

*A number of texts relevant to China and human rights have recently been published by a variety of institutions. The following information is provided as a reference point only.*

### ***How to Eradicate Torture: A Joint Chinese-Danish Research on the Prevention of Torture (Chinese/English)***

The publication is the first in the series “China Forum on the Rule of Law”. It is the product of a two-year joint research project between the Danish Centre for Human Rights and the Law Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. The book outlines the stages and experiences in the protection of the rights of suspects and detainees in different cultural and political settings. Its approach is to examine the problem not only as a legal matter, but also as an issue involving culture, traditions, habits, institutional design and vested interests. It also tackles the question of implementation. The book consists of 29 chapters and is divided into the following eight sections: Philosophical and historical Backgrounds, International and Regional Background, International and Regional Background, Legal Sources, The Police System, Investigation Procedures, Complaints and Remedies, Complaints and Remedies, Rehabilitation of Victims, and the Death Penalty.

[How to Eradicate Torture: A Joint Chinese-Danish Research on the Prevention of Torture (Chinese/English language), Social Sciences Documentation Publishing House, Xianxiao Hutong, Beijing 100050. Email contact: [ssdphzh\\_cn@sohu.com](mailto:ssdphzh_cn@sohu.com); website: <http://www.ssdph.com.cn>]

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### ***Chinese language edition of Nowak “Covenant on Civil and Political Rights Commentary”***

Manfred Nowak’s authoritative “Commentary on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights” is now available in Chinese translation.

This book, published in the English language in 1993, provides an in-depth analysis of all substantive and procedural provisions of the Covenant and its two Optional Protocols. Commentary on the articles of the Covenant is based on an analysis of drafting history in both the Commission on Human Rights and the General Assembly, in addition to 16 years of practice of the Human Rights Committee. The Commentary covers the practice and jurisprudence of the Committee up to the end of 1992, by which time the Committee had examined over 170 State Reports, published 21 General Comments and rendered decisions on approx. 500 individual communications. Reference is also made to academic literature on the Covenant and to the jurisprudence produced under the European Convention on Human Rights, and the Inter-American system for the protection of human rights.

This translation is the first publication in the “Civil Rights Translation Series”, edited by the CASS Law Institute and published by SDX Joint Publishing Company. Coming out soon in this series will be a collection of translated papers on the right to property and another one on the freedom of association.

[U.N. Covenant on Civil and Political Rights: CCPR Commentary Chinese Edition: SDX Joint Publishing Company, 22 Meishuguan Dongjie, Beijing 100010 China, Fax: (010) 64002729]

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### ***Public Law Review of China***

The fourth volume of the Public Law Review of China, focusing on the laws of evidence, was published in June 2003. The Public Law Review of China is a non-periodical published irregularly by the CASS Law Institute. Its purpose is to bring together legal scholars who share the same interests, collect the best works on public law, whether written by Chinese or foreign scholars, and to contribute to the promotion of the research, translation, as well as education in the field of public law in China.

The publication contains the following regular contents: Theme Discussion, Theoretical Frontier, Proposals of Legal Reform in China, International Human Rights Treaties and Chinese Law, Mass Media and Law, Academic Dialogue, Book Review, Excerpts from Excellent Dissertation of Students, and Bibliography. The contents of this publication are drawn primarily from the fields of public international law, constitutional law, criminal law, legal procedure, mass media law, human rights theories, legal philosophy and traditional Chinese political philosophy.

The Editor in Chief of the Public Law Review is Xia Yong. To date, the series consists of four volumes in total. The first volume (edited by Xia Yong, published in December 1999) is a special edition in celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the second volume (edited by Xia Yong, published in December 2000) focuses on the rule of law; and the third volume (edited by Xin Chunying, published in December 2001) focuses on judicial reform. The fourth and most recent volume (June 2003) focuses on theories on the laws of evidence, and was edited by Professor Wang Minyuan.

[Public Law Review in China, Law Press China, Lianhuachi Xili, Fengtai District, Beijing 100073, China; <http://www.lawpresschina.com>; email: [pholaw@puboic.bta.net.cn](mailto:pholaw@puboic.bta.net.cn);

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### ***Chinese Edition of ‘Human Rights of Women’***

The publication “Human Rights of Women” is now available in Chinese translation, through the China Social Sciences Publishing House. It was translated and published with the financial support of the Ford Foundation.

*(Continued on page 6)*

**Recent Publications, continued...**

*(Continued from page 5)*

The volume, edited by Rebecca J. Cook, provides analysis of how international human rights law applies to women in cultures worldwide, and also attempts to develop strategies to promote equitable application of human rights law at international, regional and domestic levels. In addition to analysis of relevant international law, the publication includes a mixture of practical reports and case-studies. In the years since its original publication, it has been recognised as a particularly valuable text by numerous practitioners and academics. For example, Gender and Development reviewed the text in the following glowing terms: "The book's embrace is gigantic... Not only will Human Rights of Women appeal to a wide audience, it should be read by everyone who has any interest in human rights." The publication of this text in Chinese translation is a welcome development for Chinese academics and professionals working in the field of human rights. Also included in the series are translated books on property rights and freedom of expression.

Human Rights of Women: National and International Perspectives. English edition: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994. Chinese edition: China Social Sciences Publishing House, Jia 158, Gulou Xidajie, Beijing 100720. Email contact: zbs@cssph.cass.net.cn ]

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**China and ICCPR**

A recent publication by the China Legal System Publishing House focuses specifically on the question of ratification and implementation of the ICCPR in China.

The study is the result of a cooperation project between the Research Centre for Criminal Law and Justice at the China University of Political Science and Law in Beijing, and the International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy in Vancouver, Canada.

In an article-by-article examination of the provisions of the Covenant, some of the obstacles to ratification by China are identified and discussed. The basic conclusion of the authors is that ratification of the Covenant by China is indeed possible. It is claimed that although ratification would require amendment of some laws, overall there would be no need to enter a reservation on most of the provisions of the Covenant. However, the authors consider that "China should make a statement to explain that the implementation of the provisions on the freedom of expression and the right of association is subject to the Chinese Constitution, the Law on Trade Union and other relevant laws".

The Joint Editors of the publication are Professor Chen Guangzhong, one of the drafters of the Chinese Criminal Procedure Law 1996; Professor Vincent Yang, Programme Director at the International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal Justice Policy in Vancouver, Canada, and Professor Cheng Weiqiu, China University of Political Science and Law, Beijing.

[A Study on the Issues of Ratifying and Implementing of International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, published by China Legal System Publishing House. Edited by Chen Guangzhong, Vincent Yang and Cheng Weiqiu. April 2002.]



Professor William Schabas, Prof. Liu Hainain, Dr. Vinodh Jaichand (ICHR), and Prof. Kevin Boyle (Essex University) at the Galway Network Seminar, September 2003.

**Chinese experts speak in favour of abolition of the Death Penalty**

During December 2002, a very successful seminar on the use of the Death Penalty in China was held in the University of Xiangtan, Hunan. The event was organised by 2 institutes participating in the Network, that is the Institute of Law, CASS and the Danish Institute for Human Rights, working together with the University of Xiangtan, Hunan.

Practically all participating Chinese academics spoke in favour of strict restrictions on the imposition of the death penalty in China, and on abolition as a goal for the future. Many participants also spoke of these measures as necessary steps in view of any proposals to ratify the ICCPR.

The event attracted a great deal of media attention in China, and has already had an influence on Chinese legal research and scholarship in the field. The fact that over 300 Chinese students were permitted to observe the seminar and learn from the expertise of the expert participants also holds promise for the future.



Professor Manfred Nowak and Professor Xia Yong, Director of the Law Institute of CASS, at the Beijing Network Seminar on Access to Justice. (March 2003)

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## Celebrating the 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Institute of Law, CASS



The Institute of Law, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, is a national-level legal research institute located in Beijing, to the northeast of the Forbidden City and to the east of Jinshan Hill. Preparations for the establishment of the Institute began in 1956. In October 1958, the Institute was officially established under the Department of Philosophy and Social Sciences of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. In 1966, before the “Cultural Revolution”, the Institute had about 50 scholars; In 1979, it became part of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS).

Today, the Institute comprises of 11 research departments and 11 research centres, it publishes two national Chinese-language law journals and one English-language law journal. It offers Masters degree in

law in 9 fields and a Doctorate in law in 5 fields, and houses a law library, human rights documentation centre, and one law firm. By September 2002, excluding honorary professors, visiting professors, and specially invited professors both from China and abroad, the Institute has a total working staff of 114, including 4 life-tenure professors, 24 doctoral supervisors, 38 supervisors of master's students, 36 professors, and 34 associate professors. Among the research staff, 35 hold a doctoral degree and 43 have master's degrees.

The main tasks of the institute are: first, to carry out professional academic researches in a wide range of fields of public, private and social law, covering not only jurisprudence and legal history, but also branch law and legal practice, with equal importance given to both domestic and international laws. Second, to provide high-level legal education, namely, to enrol, with the authorisation of the State Council and the Ministry of Education, master's and doctor's students in law, to accept Chinese and foreign scholars and experts to engage in advanced studies at the Institute, and to offer advanced legal training to public servants, judges, prosecutors and lawyers. And finally, the Institute also participates in major legislative, judicial, and administrative policy-making initiatives of the State.

The Institute of Law this year celebrates its 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a number of events scheduled for October 2003.

Further information is available from the Institute of Law website (<http://www.iolaw.org.cn>) or by email enquiry to the CASS Anniversary Office: [anniversary45@law.cass.net.cn](mailto:anniversary45@law.cass.net.cn)

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## Profile of the Irish Centre for Human Rights

The Irish Centre for Human Rights is located at the National University of Ireland, Galway. Affiliated with the University's Faculty of Law and located in a prestigious heritage building near the entrance to the campus, the Centre opened its doors in the year 2000. The Centre is building a strong reputation for the excellence of its teaching and research, and for its engagement in the protection and promotion of human rights within Ireland and throughout the world.

Since 2000, the Centre has developed a range of programmes at post-graduate level, individual and contract research projects, and advocacy activities. Master and doctoral-level students are engaged in research projects on a diverse set of issues, from racism and hate propaganda, children's rights and refugees, to crimes against humanity and genocide. Besides its flagship LLM in Human Rights, the Irish Centre for Human Rights has developed a cross-border LLM programme in association with Queen's University Belfast. Student interns are regularly posted to Belfast and Palestine where they work with non-governmental organisations. Faculty members and students are also engaged in human rights monitoring within Ireland and overseas.

The Centre is directed by Professor William A. Schabas, an



*President of NUI Galway Dr. I. O' Muircheartaigh with Dr. Nelson Mandela following his conferral with an honorary doctorate, June 2003.*

eminent human rights scholar who, in addition to his duties at the University, is currently serving as one of the international members of the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

During June 2003, the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and first President of democratic South Africa Nelson Mandela visited the University to receive an Honorary Doctorate in Laws. The Centre also frequently hosts leading academics for short periods of research and/or teaching, for example Professor David Kretzmer, former member of the UN Human Rights Committee, who is was in Galway until July 2003.

## Focus on the EU-China Network Seminar on Freedom of Association, Galway, 1-2 September 2003.

At the beginning of September, the third EU-China Network Seminar was held in Galway on the topic of Freedom of Association. Eleven countries and 16 human rights institutions in all were represented at this Seminar. The Chinese Delegation was led by Professor Liu Hainian, Director of the Centre for Human Rights Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, while his counterpart on the European side was Professor William Schabas, Director of the Irish Centre for Human Rights.

The discussions of this Seminar were exceptionally open and frank in nature, and the consensus among participants was that this was a good beginning to ongoing consideration of the question of freedom of association at Network events. A full report on the Seminar will be posted on the EU-China Network website, but as an example, some of the elements of discussion were as follows:

- Difficulties of terminology and language were highlighted in relation to the concept of civil society. It was agreed that there can be no single model of civil society. However, it was agreed that the term relates to a self-organising, self-generating space for entities and groups separate from the State and big business.
- Distinctions in the legal order as between the city and countryside in China were discussed at some length, together with consideration of how best to address such disparities in the future
- The question of NGO registration was discussed in detail, with an eventual compromise position being that although registration systems are not in themselves objectionable, they must not be oppressive or abusive. Incentives to register were felt to be perfectly reasonable, and the best approach was therefore seen as one of open-mindedness towards the outcome of any particular registration process.
- Extreme restrictions on freedom of association, and conditions under which it is permissible to ban or disband associations were discussed, with the central importance of tolerance in the EU framework on freedom of association being highlighted.
- Valuable insight on the growth and current state of civil society in China was provided by Chinese experts.
- A detailed discussion was held on the topic of Reservations to the UN Human Rights Covenants. Although opinions differed on whether the Chinese statement in relation to Article 8 of ICESCR was a declaration or reservation, it was commonly held by the Group to be legitimate under international law.
- The so-called 'monopoly' position of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions was also discussed in some detail.
- Methods to ensure internal accountability of NGOs and other organisations were also considered.

Further information on this event will be made available in the near future on <http://www.eu-china-humanrights.org/>



*Participants in the Galway  
Network Seminar on  
Freedom of Association,  
September 2003.  
National University of  
Ireland, Galway.*

The Network is preparing a publication of select presentations drawn from the events of 2002 and 2003. Further information to follow in the next issue of the Newsletter

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This Bulletin is produced by the Network Secretariat at the Irish Centre for Human Rights.

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