

**Priority question for written answer P-003751/2026/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 144

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Subject: Communist pressure from the PRC and the Commission's withdrawal from the Ventotene Conference on Freedom and Democracy

On 10-12 September, a conference on freedom, democracy and the fight against authoritarianism, organised by the European Parliament, was held on the Italian island of Ventotene¹. The event brought together, among others, dissidents and democracy activists from Ukraine, Russia, China and Venezuela. One of the key guests was Taiwan's Vice-President Hsiao Bi-khim, whose participation was kept secret until the last minute for security reasons.

According to media reports, after it was announced that the Vice-President of Taiwan would be taking part in the Conference, the PRC authorities intervened, as a result of which the Commission Representation in Italy requested the removal of the Commission's logo from the Conference materials, and the Commission official, who was supposed to address the event and was already en route to Ventotene, was instructed to immediately withdraw his participation². The message to the world was clear: people who had been imprisoned for their opposition to dictatorships remained on the island. After a phone call from communist Beijing, Brussels cravenly withdrew from a discussion on human rights which it had organised.

In view of the above:

1. Who specifically at the Commission took the decision to urgently remove the Commission's logo from the Conference materials and immediately cancel the participation of its representative?
2. Before taking this decision, did the Commission or its representatives receive any protests, demands, warnings or other communications from the PRC authorities regarding the participation of Vice-President Hsiao Bi-khim?
3. If so, what was the substance of that interaction, who did it come from and how was it communicated?

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¹ <https://rome.europarl.europa.eu/Seconda-Conferenza-di-Ventotene-10-12-settembre-2026>.

² https://www.euractiv.com/news/european-commission-backs-out-of-conference-after-surprise-taiwanese-participation/?utm_source=euractiv&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_content=Zone+name&utm_term=0-0&utm_campaign=EN_BREAKING_ALERT.