

**DR. CAROLINE LUCAS**

Green Party

for the South East of England

HE Mr Zha Peixin  
Embassy of the People's Republic of China  
49-51 Portland Place  
London  
W1B 4JL

September 30<sup>th</sup> 2005

Dear Ambassador,

I am writing to enquire about reports of a nationwide crackdown in China against house churches and to urge that the right to freedom of religious expression and worship be upheld in China.

Specifically, reports have claimed that those Christians who do not register with the Patriotic Three-Self Movement are being harassed and subjected to repeated arrests and detentions, solely because of their faith or peaceful religious activities. Examples of this include the arrest of 100 pastors attending a church leadership training meeting at Qi County Detention Centre, in June of this year. The pastors were subjected to intensive interrogation and accused of engaging in an illegal religious gathering - at least one of those arrested is still being held in detention.

One month earlier, in May 2005, 3 women were interrogated at Yiyang County Detention Centre without any arrest warrants or release papers being issued. It is also reported that systematic welfare deduction, arbitrary fines and imprisonment are also used to punish individuals that are engaged in Christian worship.

I trust that you will be able to look into these matters and dealt with as an assurance that China's commitment to allowing freedom of worship is being upheld.

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Lucas - Green Party MEP