

Australian MP Michael Danby's Speech at the Citizen Power Award Ceremony, the 12th InterEthnic/InterFaith Leadership Conference, Japanese Diet, Tokyo, Japan.

Firstly I would like to thank the Japanese Diet for hosting us here, and I would like to particularly like to thank Dr Yang and [Initiatives for China](#), for organising this wonderful gathering of supporters of democracy in China, for all the minorities from all over the world. I've come a long way to be at this conference, and I am really glad that I did (come). To see all of the people from East Turkistan, Inner Mongolia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Tibet- my dear friends from Tibet. Seeing all democrats of Chinese origin here in Japan- trying to see that universal human rights, and democratic rights are extended to all people. It's wonderful to believe as we do, that those rights are universal and democracy can exist in China one day.

China is an ancient civilisation that we all respect, its wonderful to hear of Dr. Ilham Tohtis understanding- just like the Dalai Lama, that one would like to work with the Chinese people, not against the Chinese people, but against some of the policies of big government, just as Mr Mandela did and many other who struggled for justice expressed.

Myth exposed

One of the myths that this conference undermines, that exists all around the world, that you often hear in industrialised countries is that China and democracy do not go together. Of course that is not true, of course Chinese people and all minorities want the same rights that we have in the rest of the world, and its proved by these young people here from Hong Kong, in Taiwan, in the way that the Tibetans elect their international representatives- even though they are in exile. And of course, democracy can exist along with economic development and a great history and a great culture like China has.

We're here sitting in Tokyo at this wonderful conference organised by *Initiatives for China*, and we shouldn't believe that maybe next year, there will not be a dramatic breakthrough, where all the democratic values that we express here are not shared in Beijing and Shanghai, and all the great cities of China. Lets' remember that in 1989 that soviet communist would fall down. No one believed that a playwright like Václav Havel would become the president of Czechoslovakia (or the Czech Republic after that). So it's very important for people not to give up hope, this is the importance (of this conference).

Dr Yang I want to congratulate you, and all of the people who have supported Initiatives for China, in keeping hope alive for the Chinese people. You are doing a great thing for them, not for yourselves, but for a great civilisation that deserves better than it gets now. It's ok to offer people economic progress- a few dollars more, a few more washing machines, a few more cars, but this is not life, this is not the end of life and it's so encouraging for me- as an Australian democratic to see these young people from Tibet here, and Hong Kong over there, to see all of you, it shows that we can keep hope alive, and that's what *Initiatives for China* have done.

No to extradition treaty

When I hear of what was done to Dr Tohti, all the things I know are going on in Tibet, the threats against Taiwan, I understand its worthwhile for people in the rest of the world standing up for the Chinese people. I'm very proud (of Australia) when I think about the many cases of disgraceful treatment of Liu Xiaobo. A Nobel peace prize winner for peace, basically judicially murdered by his own country, and no one no one says anything about it in the rest of the world.

So when, unfortunately the Chinese state is ruled by a ruthless communist party whose willing to do things like that, I'm proud that in Australia, democrats of all political persuasions stood together and said no we're not going to make an extradition treaty with China- because we think it's not a democratic country - with no rule of law, we can't send people who are allegedly guilty of commercial crimes to be treated fairly in that country.

So I want to congratulate you Dr, Yang and *Initiatives for China*, and everyone who has come here and made the effort from all over the world and the Japanese hosts, this is keeping hope alive, not for us, not for this conference, but for the greater people of China.