

## Chinese party unveils new leaders

**China's Communist Party has unveiled the leadership line-up that will steer the country for the next five years.**

President Hu Jintao won a second term as party and army chief, while four new faces joined the party's top body, the Politburo Standing Committee.

They included two men seen as potential successors to Mr Hu in 2012 - Shanghai party chief Xi Jinping and the head of Liaoning province, Li Keqiang.

Mr Xi ranked above Mr Li, suggesting he might be ahead in the succession race.

The changes were announced at the end of the party's five-yearly congress, which sets the political agenda for the future.

### 'Young comrades'

The nine members of the powerful Standing Committee appeared together in Beijing's Great Hall of the People, all wearing black suits and red ties.

#### **STANDING COMMITTEE**

Hu Jintao  
Wu Bangguo  
Wen Jiabao  
Jia Qinglin  
Li Changchun  
Xi Jinping \*  
Li Keqiang\*  
He Guoqiang\*  
Zhou Yongkang \*  
*\* denotes new member*

They walked out onto the stage in order of rank, with Xi Jinping at the head of the new appointees.

Chinese Communist tradition dictates that the first new face of the new generation becomes the heir apparent, says the BBC's James Reynolds in Beijing.

As things stand, Xi Jinping can expect to take over from Hu Jintao in 2012, our correspondent says.

Mr Xi, the son of a high-ranked party elder, has held top party positions in several provinces, most recently in Shanghai after the party leader there, Chen Liangyu, was sacked for corruption.

But the man who followed him on to the stage, Li Keqiang, is also seen as strong contender for the presidency.

A law graduate of Peking University, he won plaudits for his work to revitalise the economy in the north-eastern province of Liaoning.

Mr Hu did not indicate who he favours, saying as he presented them only: "Comrades Xi Jinping and Li Keqiang are two quite young comrades."

He Guoqiang, the party's organisation chief, and Zhou Yongkang, the minister for public security, were the other two new additions to the committee.

The four new members replace three of the country's most senior leaders - Vice-President Zeng Qinghong and lawmakers Luo Gan and Wu Guanzheng - who are stepping down.

A fourth committee member, Huang Ju, died in the summer.

### **Balance of power**

Premier Wen Jiabao was also reappointed to the committee. Both he and Mr Hu are expected to have new five-year terms as premier and president approved when parliament meets in March.

Analysts say President Hu has solidified his grip on power as a result of the eight-day conference.

The departure of Zeng Qinghong, an ally of 81-year-old former President Jiang Zemin, is seen as a boost to Mr Hu.

The new appointees to the Standing Committee now sway the balance of power away from those loyal to Mr Jiang, giving Mr Hu more room to proceed with his agenda of economic reform.

The party's decision to enshrine his "scientific outlook on development" into its constitution is also seen as a victory for the president.

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