



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Tibet Lobby Day joint US, EU effort this spring

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The International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) will bring together its members, Tibetans and Tibet groups to lobby for Tibet on both sides of the Atlantic this spring.

ICT's Tibet Lobby Day 2020 will take place in Brussels, headquarters of the European Union, March 16-19 and Washington, DC, March 23-24.

This joint effort will emphasize Tibet's crucial role in global affairs by bringing Tibet supporters face-to-face with EU and US officials.

Three main issues

During Lobby Day, activists will ask members of the US Congress and European Parliament and their staffs to help the people of Tibet, a historically independent country that China has brutally occupied for more than 60 years.

Lobby Day participants will focus on three issues that are core to ICT's mission:

1. Making sure Tibetan Buddhists, not Chinese officials, decide the Dalai Lama's successor

China claims the Dalai Lama's eventual succession must be approved by the Chinese government.

But the Tibetan Policy and Support Act (TPSA), which the House Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously approved last month, will make it official US policy that only the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Buddhist community can decide on his successor—and will sanction any Chinese officials who attempt to appoint their own Dalai Lama in the future.

The bill must next be passed by the House and Senate, and other governments must speak out against this egregious attempt by China to violate Tibetans' religious freedom.

2. Demanding reciprocal access to Tibet

Even though Chinese citizens travel freely throughout the US and other countries, China almost always blocks access to Tibet for foreign tourists, diplomats and journalists.

In 2018, the US passed the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act (RATA), which denies entry to the US for the Chinese officials responsible for keeping Americans out of Tibet. Former High Representative of the European Union Federica Mogherini also stated in 2018: "We have called

on the Chinese authorities to allow reciprocal access to Tibet for European journalists, diplomats and families.”

During Lobby Day, participants will urge Congress to make sure RATA is fully implemented and will call on the EU to take similar measures.

3. *Protecting Tibet’s environment*

Tibet is warming nearly three times faster than the global average—and China’s reckless policies of mining, damming and forcibly resettling Tibet nomads are exacerbating the situation.

Since Tibet provides water to more than 1 billion people downstream, China’s building of dams on Tibet’s rivers and the destruction of Tibet’s environment are also a threat to global stability and security.

Lobby Day participants will discuss these proposals with European parliamentarians to forge a European-wide response to China’s oppression in Tibet, and they’ll ask members of Congress to advance the TPSA, which includes measures to address climate change and water security in Tibet

Quotes

Matteo Mecacci, president of ICT:

“The situation in Tibet impacts not only the Tibetan people, but the entire world. For the sake of our shared future, leaders in the US and EU must take action to protect Tibet’s environment, demand an end to China’s repression and forced isolation of Tibet and stand up to China’s attempts to violate Tibetans’ freedom to decide their own religious leaders, including a future Dalai Lama.

“ICT’s Tibet Lobby Day 2020 will demonstrate the significance of Tibet in world affairs, as well as the deep base of support for Tibet in both the US and Europe, where public opinion continues to overwhelmingly support the moral leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the just aspirations of the people of Tibet. This event has always been a rewarding and important undertaking for us and our members, and we look forward to another successful Lobby Day across the Atlantic this spring.”

Vincent Metten, EU Policy Director of ICT:

“The European Parliament has always been at the frontline of human rights struggles worldwide, including that of the Tibetan people. Following last year’s European elections, the Lobby Day will be a unique opportunity to deliver firsthand testimony on the situation in Tibet to new members of the European Parliament and look for concrete ways in which members can contribute to foster a more ambitious and pragmatic EU Policy on Tibet.”