



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Global parliamentarians call for “immediate action” against Tibetan coercive labor program

Read online: <https://savetibet.org/global-parliamentarians-call-for-immediate-action-against-tibetan-coercive-labor-program>

September 22, 2020

In the wake of a new report exposing China’s coercive labor programs in Tibet, more than 60 parliamentarians from 16 countries are demanding urgent action against the Chinese Communist Party.

“We call upon our governments to take immediate action to condemn these atrocities and to prevent further human rights abuses,” say the parliamentarians, who are members of The Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China, which works to reform how democratic countries deal with China.

In a report released today, Sept. 22, 2020, scholar Adrian Zenz, the alliance’s ethnic minority advisor, documents a large-scale program in the Tibet Autonomous Region that pushed more than half a million rural Tibetans off their land and into military-style training centers in just the first seven months of 2020.

The TAR spans about half of Tibet, a historically independent country that China annexed more than 60 years ago.

Reuters carried an exclusive report on the findings and said it had “corroborated Zenz’s findings and found additional policy documents, company reports, procurement filings and state media reports that describe the program.”

After their coerced training, many of the Tibetans were sent to other areas of Tibet and China and pushed into low-wage factory and construction work.

The parliamentarians say this system is frighteningly similar to coercive labor in Xinjiang, where the Chinese government has detained more than 1 million Uyghurs and members of other Muslim ethnic groups.

“Following on from the global outcry in the wake of revelations of ‘vocational training’ programs in the Uyghur Region, this report shows that the current leadership of the People’s Republic of China remains undeterred in its refusal to respect basic human rights standards, and unswayed by criticism from the international community,” the parliamentarians say in a statement today.

Three steps for governments to take

In response to China’s egregious behavior, the parliamentarians outline three steps for their governments to take:

- Impose targeted sanctions on Chinese officials responsible for the forced labor program in Tibet in line with the US’ Global Magnitsky Act, which allows visa bans and other sanctions against foreign human rights abusers.

- Immediately revise risk warnings for businesses in order to keep their products free of goods and services tainted by Tibetan forced labor.
- Demand reciprocal access to Tibet to conduct an independent, international investigation into the situation of the Tibetan people.

The parliamentarians add that the UN secretary general should set up a special rapporteur to “investigate forced labor and ethnic persecution in the People’s Republic of China.”

The 63 parliamentarians represent 16 countries across the globe, including nations in Asia, Europe and North America.

From the United States, Sens. Bob Menendez, D-NJ, and Marco Rubio, R-Fla., and Rep. Ted Yoho, R-Fla., are all part of the group, while from the Netherlands, MPs Martijn van Helvert Henk Krol MP were there. From Germany, Margarete Bause MdB and Michael Brand MdB were among signatories. The list also included five MEPs, François-Xavier Bellamy MEP, Engin Eroglu, Sandro Gozi, Karin Karlsbro, David Lega, and Miriam Lexmann.

Assault on Tibetan identity

In their statement today, the parliamentarians note that the forced labor system includes “enforced indoctrination, intrusive surveillance, military-style enforcement, and harsh punishments for those who fail to meet labor transfer quotas.”

Zenz says the Tibet Autonomous Region began introducing those policies last year.

The policies include a number of racist assumptions about Tibetans’ “backwardness” and the need to reform their thinking and cultural identity while making them loyal to the Chinese Communist Party, which rules China as a one-party dictatorship.

The policies also seek to reduce the influence of Tibetans’ Buddhist religion.

Zenz’s report includes a number of disturbing photos of military-style training centers and Tibetans dressed in army fatigues.

There are also horrifying details of Tibetans having to abandon their traditional way of life and leave their ancestral land for degrading, low-pay work.

ICT quote

International Campaign for Tibet President Matteo Mecacci is a Tibetan human rights advisor to The Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China.

“We welcome the initiative of Adrian Zenz and IPAC as they show that Chinese authorities’ attempts to eliminate Tibetans’ traditional lifestyle and unique identity have reached a new level,” Mecacci said. “At the same time, as the 63 IPAC members noted in their statement today, the global outcry over forced labor in Xinjiang has not caused the Chinese government to stop its massive human rights violations.

“Countries around the globe should adopt the 63 parliamentarians’ recommendations as a way to promote meaningful change,” Mecacci added. “Only concrete action by the international community—as well as the efforts of the Tibetan people themselves—can bring an end to China’s coerced labor program,

which not only threatens to the survival of Tibetans, but also to the integrity of the global supply chain and the values of the democratic order.”

Below is the full list of signatories to the statement.

George Christensen MP (Australia)
Andrew Hastie MP (Australia)
Sen. Kimberley Kitching (Australia)
James Bezan MP (Canada)
Hon. Irwin Cotler (Canada)
Garnett Genuis MP (Canada)
Sen. Thanh Hai Ngo (Canada)
Pavel Fischer MP (Czechia)
Jan Lipavský MP (Czechia)
Uffe Elbæk MP (Denmark)
Isabelle Florennes MP (France)
Sen. André Gattolin (France)
Margarete Bause MdB (Germany)
Michael Brand MdB (Germany)
Enrico Borghi MP (Italy)
Andrea Delmastro Delle Vedove MP (Italy)
Paolo Formentini MP (Italy)
Roberto Giachetti MP (Italy)
Sen. Lucio Malan (Italy)
Sen. Roberto Rampi (Italy)
François-Xavier Bellamy MEP (EU)
Engin Eroglu MEP (EU)
Sandro Gozi MEP (EU)
Karin Karlsbro MEP (EU)
David Lega MEP (EU)
Miriam Lexmann MEP (EU)
Rep. Gen Nakatani (Japan)
Sen. Hiroshi Yamada (Japan)
Rep. Shiori Yamao (Japan)
Mantas Adomėnas MP (Lithuania)
Dovilė Šakalienė MP (Lithuania)
Martijn van Helvert MP (Netherlands)
Henk Krol MP (Netherlands)
Louisa Wall MP (New Zealand)
Joar Forssell, MP (Sweden)
Hampus Hagman, MP (Sweden)
David Josefsson, MP (Sweden)
Elisabet Lann (Sweden)
Fredrik Malm MP (Sweden)
Maria Nilsson, MP (Sweden)
Fabian Molina MP (Switzerland)
Nicolas Walder MP (Switzerland)
Lord David Alton MP (UK)
Steve Baker MP (UK)
Chris Bryant MP (UK)
Alistair Carmichael MP (UK)
Rosie Cooper MP (UK)
Judith Cummins MP (UK)
David Davis MP (UK)

Iain Duncan Smith MP (UK)
Damian Green MP (UK)
Baroness Helena Kennedy (UK)
Imran Ahmad Khan MP (UK)
Tim Loughton MP (UK)
Anthony Mangnall MP (UK)
Baroness Catherine Meyer (UK)
Craig Mackinlay MP (UK)
Andrew Selous MP (UK)
Alyn Smith MP (UK)
Henry Smith MP (UK)
Sen. Bob Menendez (USA)
Sen. Marco Rubio (USA)
Rep. Ted Yoho (USA)



International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) | 1825 Jefferson Place NW | Washington, DC 20036 | United States of America
Phone: (202) 785-1515 | Fax: (202) 785-4343 | info@savetibet.org

ICT Europe
Funenpark 1D | 1018 AK
Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Phone: +31 (0)20 3308265
Fax: +31 (0)20 3308266
icteurope@savetibet.nl

ICT Deutschland e.V.
Schönhauser Allee 163 | 10435
Berlin, Germany
Phone: +49 (0)30 27879086
Fax: +49 (0)30 27879087
info@savetibet.de

ICT Brussels
11, rue de la linière | 1060
Brussels, Belgium
Phone: +32 (0)2 609 44 10
Fax: +32 (0)2 609 44 32
info@save-tibet.eu