



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Pelosi, others discuss Tibet at China Olympics hearing

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House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and colleagues from both sides of the aisle called out China's abuses in Tibet at a hearing this week on Beijing's controversial hosting of the Olympic Games next year.

The hearing, "China, Genocide and the Olympics," brought together US senators, representatives and experts on the Chinese government's massive human rights violations. The hearing was a joint effort of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission and the Congressional-Executive Commission on China.

During [her remarks](#), Pelosi, D-Calif., called for a "diplomatic boycott" of the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, saying, "Let's not honor the Chinese government by having heads of state go to China to show their support for their athletes."

Pelosi cited China's atrocities against the Uyghurs, which the US government has deemed a genocide.

Tibet

Pelosi also talked about the situation in Tibet, which China [annexed more than 60 years ago](#) after forcing the [Dalai Lama](#) into exile.

As a result of China's decades of [severe human rights abuses against the Tibetan people](#), Tibet now ranks as the [least-free country on Earth](#) in a tie with Syria, according to the watchdog group Freedom House.

In her testimony, Pelosi mentioned a [rare Congressional visit to Tibet](#) that she took part in in 2015.

"We went, and what we saw was a Potemkin village," she said. "They just had created a situation that wasn't real. But they wanted us to think that it was."

Pelosi added that Rep. James McGovern, D-Mass., who was part of the trip, "fought very hard for there to be a consulate in Lhasa [Tibet's capital], also to be able to have a better access to Tibet for many people."

During her remarks, Pelosi also quoted [written testimony that the International Campaign for Tibet submitted](#) for the hearing. The testimony says the decision to award the Olympics to Beijing "was a mistake which ignored the downward spiral of human rights-related developments."

The testimony notes that ICT has joined calls for the International Olympic Committee to act on its obligation to verify that China abides by its code of ethics and commitments, and for governments to commit to a diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Games if China does not change. It says, "If the IOC does

not see itself in the position to act accordingly, it should resolve to revoke its decision to award the 2022 Games to Beijing.”

Pelosi quoted ICT’s testimony:

“The history of human rights violations has taught us a clear lesson. Silence equates with license and that those who turn away from crimes against humanity bear responsibility for them. If the IOC does nothing to address irrefutable, decades-long, persistent severe human rights violations in Olympic host countries like China, it becomes complicit.”

Watch Speaker Pelosi quote the International Campaign for Tibet:

[<https://youtu.be/YqkW9ixWtbw>]

US legislation

Pelosi mentioned that Congress recently passed the [Tibetan Policy and Support Act](#), which McGovern and Chris Smith, R-N.J., introduced in the House of Representatives alongside Marco Rubio, R-Fla., and Ben Cardin, D-Md., in the Senate.

The TPSA prohibits China from opening a new consulate in the United States until it allows a US consulate in Lhasa. The legislation also dramatically upgrades [US support for Tibetans](#) and takes aim at China’s attempts to [interfere in the succession of the Dalai Lama](#).

McGovern and Rubio also helped introduce the [Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act](#), which became law in 2018. RATA pressures the Chinese government to give [US journalists](#), diplomats and ordinary citizens the same level of access to Tibet that their Chinese counterparts have to the United States.

Other references to Tibet

Several other legislators and experts who took part in the hearing also addressed China’s crimes in Tibet.

Smith, who is co-chair of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, described China’s persecution of Uyghurs and other Muslims as “the same cruel script that we have seen in Tibet, where the Chinese Communist Party has long sought to erase the culture of a proud people.”

Chen Quanguo, the Chinese Communist Party secretary in Xinjiang (which Uyghurs know as East Turkestan), previously held the same position in the Tibet Autonomous Region, where he [pioneered many of his repressive systems](#).

McGovern—who is also co-chair of the human rights commission and the Congressional-Executive Commission on China—said the Chinese government is “brutally repressing Tibetans and other ethnic minorities.”

Those who testified at the hearing included Dr. Yang Jianli, founder and president, Citizen Power Initiatives for China; Susan V. Lawrence, specialist in Asian affairs, Congressional Research Service; Rayhan Asat, human rights lawyer and advocate; Samuel Chu, managing director, Hong Kong Democracy Council; Reggie Littlejohn, president, Women’s Rights Without Frontiers; and Sophie Richardson, China director, Human Rights Watch.

Watch the full hearing, “China, Genocide and the Olympics”

[<https://youtu.be/8-t58ftKUJ4?t=3737>]



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