



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

European Parliament freezes Comprehensive Agreement on Investment with China

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May 20, 2021

BRUSSELS — The European Parliament adopted today a [resolution](#) on Chinese counter-sanctions on EU entities that freezes the EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investments (CAI) until the Chinese sanctions are lifted before dealing with the CAI, without prejudice to the final outcome of the CAI ratification process.

Parliament members consider that the move by Beijing is an attack on fundamental freedoms and democratic life of the EU and its Member States and urge the Chinese authorities to lift these wholly unjustified restrictive measures.

A total of 599 members voted in favor of the resolution, 30 opposed it and 58 members abstained.

Furthermore, European deputies call on the European Commission to use the debate around CAI as a leverage instrument to improve the protection of human rights and support for civil society in China. The deputies also remind the Commission that it will take the human rights situation in China, including in Hong Kong, into account when asked to endorse the CAI.

The European Parliament considers the Chinese sanctions against members of parliament (including five members of the European Parliament), entities and think tanks, which lack any legal justification and are entirely unsubstantial and arbitrary, as an attack against the European Union and its Parliament as a whole, as well as an attack against freedom of research.

Abuse of Uyghurs

The Chinese sanctions follow the restrictive measures the European States adopted under the [EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime](#) against four Chinese officials and one entity responsible for serious human rights violations, including the large-scale arbitrary detention and degrading treatment of Uyghurs and people from other Muslim ethnic minorities in Xinjiang (which Uyghurs know as East Turkestan).

The motion highlights the gradual move of the Chinese Communist Party leadership toward a confrontational approach, including by targeting the EU with disinformation and cyberattacks. The Belgian Parliament and other national entities have recently been the target of a cyberattack coinciding with a hearing of Foreign Affairs Committee on the situation in Xinjiang, which had to be postponed to May 18 and 19.

Members of the European Parliament denounce once again the ongoing repression taking place against the Uyghur community and the largest mass incarceration system in the world, which threatened to eradicate Uyghurs' unique identity and right to existence.

Human rights situation

They are concerned also by the extradition treaty that exist between several EU Member States and China (namely Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal, Romania and Spain) and the risks that they represent against Uyghurs, citizens of Hong Kong, Tibetans or Chinese dissidents in Europe who could be extradited to stand political trial in the People's Republic of China.

The European Parliament reiterates its most serious concern about the various abuses of basic and human rights in China and in particular the systemic persecution of the Uyghur people, Tibetans, Mongols and other ethnic minorities, human rights defenders, social activists, religious groups, journalists and petitioners and protesters against injustices, as well as the ever-increasing repression of all dissenting and opposition voices, especially in Hong Kong.

It urges the Commission, the European Council and the Member States to take all the necessary measures and use all its means of leverage, notably its economic ones, to persuade the Chinese government to close the camps where China has interred more than 1 million Uyghurs and to end all human rights violations in Xinjiang and in places such as Tibet. MEPs believe that the human rights situation in China is as its worst since the Tiananmen Square Massacre.

Members of the European Parliament also urge the Commission to develop and implement a holistic EU strategy with a view to pursuing genuine progress on human rights in China.

Last but not least, the European Parliament calls on the EU to increase its coordination and cooperation with the US in the framework of a Transatlantic Dialogue on China, including in regard to a coordinated approach on measures to address human rights violations and requests that this dialogue provide a strong parliamentary dimension.

ICT quote

Vincent Metten, EU policy director of the International Campaign for Tibet, said: "ICT applauds the robust position of the European Parliament to freeze the EU-China Investment Agreement until Chinese sanctions are lifted and its call to use the negotiation process as a leverage instrument to improve the protection of human rights and support for civil society in China. ICT has denounced, with other NGOs, the absence of any substantial reference to human rights in the agreement and has conveyed its concerns directly to the European Commission. The stand taken by the European Parliament is a step in the right direction, which aims at putting the promotion and respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law at the center of the relationship between the EU and China."

[Read the European Parliament resolution.](#)



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@savetibet.eu