



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

UN human rights commissioner urged to speak up on Tibet—Chinese delegation intervenes

<https://savetibet.org/un-human-rights-commissioner-urged-to-speak-up-on-tibet-chinese-delegation-intervenes>

March 11, 2022

The Chinese government's attempts to interfere this week at the UN Human Rights Council when an activist called for access to Tibet are concerning, the International Campaign for Tibet said today.

On Tuesday, March 8, at the 49th session of the UN Human Rights Council, the High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet announced plans for a visit to China in May 2022. In her regular [oral update](#) on the work of her office and human rights developments, the High Commissioner indicated that her office had "reached an agreement with the Government of China for a visit."

ICT is calling on the UN High Commissioner to clarify the terms of her visit to China and to include Tibetan areas in the visit, which can only be meaningful if unfettered access is fully guaranteed. The Chinese government consistently [denies foreign diplomats, journalists and tourists meaningful access to Tibet](#), prompting the US government to pass the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act in 2018.

Following the High Commissioner's announcement, Vincent Metten, on behalf of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, expressed "disappointment about the High Commissioner's silence on the [worsening human rights situation inside Tibet](#)" and called for "prompt, unfettered and independent access to all parts of the People's Republic of China, in particular Tibetan areas, by independent international human rights experts." The High Commissioner's office should also adopt "remote reporting" measures on Tibet, Metten said.

Metten warned, "silence by the Council only rewards and normalizes such repressive methods [used by China]. It signals to China that it is on track to decimate Tibetan culture with little international resistance."

The statement was interrupted by a point of order by the Chinese delegation, complaining that it was "attacking the Communist Party" and "violating relevant rules and regulations." The intervention was unsuccessful, as the chairing vice-president of the Human Rights Council asked for the statement to continue.

However, ICT is concerned about renewed attempts by the Chinese government to curtail freedom of speech and space for civil society at the Human Rights Council.

Read Metten's full statement below.

Metten's statement

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Human Rights Council
Forty-Ninth Regular Session

March 8, 2022

Item 2: General Debate – High Commissioner's Oral Update

Statement delivered by Vincent Metten on behalf of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights

Mr. President,

We are deeply concerned by the impact of the High Commissioner for human rights failure to release a report on grave violations in the Uyghur region on the credibility of her Office. We call on the High Commissioner to release the report.

We would also like to express our disappointment about the High Commissioner's silence on the worsening human rights situation inside Tibet.

We remind the council that in 2021, for the second year in a row, Freedom House ranked Tibet the least-free region in the world.

Under Chinese rule, Tibetan peoples' right to freely express their opinion, associate and assemble, and practice their religion continues to be severely limited. For voicing basic concerns about social and environmental issues, they are regularly arbitrarily detained, subjected to torture, denied due process, and face risk of death due to mistreatment in custody. The recent cases of Go Sherab Gyatso and Rinchen Tsultrim exemplify this experience.

Given this deteriorating situation and efforts by the Communist Party to render Tibetan grievances invisible, silence by the Council only rewards and normalizes such repressive methods. It signals to China that it is on track to decimate Tibetan culture with little international resistance.

We therefore call for prompt, unfettered and independent access to all parts of the People's Republic of China, in particular Tibetan areas, by independent international human rights experts. In the absence of access, we urge the High Commissioner's Office to adopt "remote reporting" measures on Tibet.

Thank you.



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