



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Tibet must feature on EU-China Summit agenda

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In advance of the upcoming EU-China Summit, due to take place virtually on April 1, the International Campaign for Tibet urges the European Union to ensure that the Tibetans' right for self-determination and human rights feature on the agenda of the discussions. ICT supports the Central Tibetan Administration's call for the resumption of the Sino-Tibetan dialogue.

President of the European Council Charles Michel, President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen and High Representative Josep Borrell will meet online with Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang, followed by exchanges with Chinese President Xi Jinping. The last EU-China Summit took place in June 2020, also via videoconference.

Vincent Metten, ICT's EU Policy Director, said: "Russia's attack on Ukraine marks a turning point in EU and its Member States' foreign policies vis-à-vis human rights issues in relation to authoritarian states like Russia or China. Human rights violations by authoritarian states are a question of national and European security. Repressive domestic policy and aggressive foreign policy are two sides of the same coin. At the Summit, EU leaders must therefore resolutely oppose human rights violations taking place in China, Xinjiang, Tibet, Inner Mongolia and Honk Kong and urge China to resume the Sino-Tibetan dialogue process and guarantee an unfettered and reciprocal access to Tibet, and across China, for foreign diplomats, parliamentarians, UN experts, journalists and non-governmental organizations."

In advance of the Summit, the International Campaign for Tibet has joined other human rights groups in a letter urging EU leaders to dedicate adequate time at the meeting to discuss China's human rights abuses. The NGOs further urge EU leaders to publicly announce a suspension of the human rights dialogue with Chinese authorities until it can be a meaningful exchange capable of producing positive impact on the human rights situation in the country. "The EU and its member states should establish clear human rights benchmarks for progress in their relations with China, and focus their efforts and energy towards considering more effective tools to secure positive change in the country," the letter reads.

ICT remains deeply concerned by the systematic human rights violations taking place against Tibetans. The Chinese government is erasing Tibetan identity by accelerating assimilation and consolidating political control. One by one, Chinese authorities have been targeting the foundations of Tibetan society: Tibetan religion, education and its leading intellectuals. On Feb. 25, a young Tibetan singer, Tsewang Norbu, self-immolated in Tibet's capital Lhasa, bringing the total number of self-immolations since 2009 to 158.

The appointment of Wang Junzheng, who has been on the EU's global human rights sanctions list since March 2021, as the new Party Secretary in the Tibet Autonomous Region suggests this repressive strategy will continue. ICT calls on the EU to adopt additional targeted sanctions against Chinese government officials and entities responsible for devising and implementing abusive policies in Tibet.

ICT welcomes the statement delivered by the EU during the interactive Item 4 General debate at the 49th Session of the UN Human Rights Council, including its call for the immediate and unconditional release of human rights activists Dorjee Tashi, Go Sherab Gyatso and Rinchen Tsultrim. ICT calls on EU leaders to reiterate their concerns about these three Tibetan prisoners during the EU-China Summit.



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