



President Macron urged to put human rights and Tibet at heart of China visit

PARIS—On the occasion of President Macron's upcoming visit to China, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and its member organizations the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) and the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme (LDH) called on him to place the issue of human rights—particularly in Tibet—at the heart of his discussions with his Chinese interlocutors.

President Macron will make an official visit to Beijing and Guangzhou from April 4 to 8. He will be accompanied by a large delegation of economic players and personalities from various backgrounds, as well as by the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen—a decision taken in Brussels at the European Summit on March 24. The Elysée clarified that the war in Ukraine would be at the center of the discussions.

"We understand that Ukraine has an important place in the discussions between Presidents Macron and Xi Jinping, but this should not come at the expense of the human rights exchanges, which are in a deplorable situation throughout the country as well as in Hong Kong, Xinjiang [Uyghur region] and Tibet, where the Chinese government's aggressive assimilation policy threatens to ultimately eradicate Tibetan culture and identity," says Vincent Metten, EU Policy Director for the International Campaign for Tibet.

According to the Freedom House ranking, for the third consecutive year Tibet is the [least free territory on earth](#), tied with South Sudan and Syria. In proof that the Tibetan people continue to suffer under Chinese repression, at least two more Tibetans set themselves on fire last year, bringing to nearly 160 the number of self-immolations in Tibet since February 2009.

"It is important to re-parameterize relations between France and China in order to put human rights at the heart of French foreign policy. President Macron must strongly denounce, in private but also publicly, the repression affecting Chinese human rights activists and defenders, Hong Kongers, Uighurs or Tibetans," insists Patrick Baudouin, President of the Ligue des droits de l'Homme.

Prior to his visit, the Ligue des droits de l'Homme, FIDH and the International Campaign for Tibet sent a letter and a briefing note to the President of the Republic asking him to raise the resumption of a dialogue between the Chinese government and representatives of the Dalai Lama to find a lasting and mutual solution to the Sino-Tibetan conflict. They

recall that the Dalai Lama is not asking for independence for his people but for real autonomy as provided for in the Chinese Constitution. The associations also draw the President's attention to the plight of 1 million Tibetan schoolchildren who are forcibly placed in boarding schools where they are cut off from their families and their culture, a policy recently [denounced by United Nations experts](#).

For Andrea Giorgetta, Director of the FIDH Asia Office: “China opposes the universality of human rights in the name of cultural relativism. This hierarchy of rights is not acceptable and France and its European partners, in view of the alarming human rights situation in China, must remind the Chinese authorities that human rights are indivisible and universal and that they apply to all without distinction.”

President Macron's last official visit to China dates to November 2019. Since then, no meeting between the French President and his Chinese counterpart has taken place.

Contact

International Campaign for Tibet
Vincent METTEN, EU Policy Director
vincent.metten@savetibet.eu
Tel: + 32 (0)473 990 440