



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

European Parliament urges China to abolish coercive boarding schools in Tibet

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In a resolution adopted at its plenary session in Strasbourg today, the European Parliament has urged China to immediately abolish the coercive boarding school system that has isolated over 1 million Tibetan children from their families, language and culture.

The resolution, adopted with 477 voices in favor and 14 against, strongly condemns “the repressive assimilation policies throughout China, especially the boarding school system in Tibet” and calls on China to immediately abolish this system. It also urges EU Member States to adopt visa restrictions for Chinese officials tied to the boarding school system, [similar to what the US has done](#). Members of the European Parliament also reiterate their call for the resumption of the [Sino-Tibetan dialogue](#), stalled since 2010.

"The International Campaign for Tibet welcomes the strong stance taken by the European Parliament regarding the coercive boarding schools system in Tibet, which not only represents grave violations of the rights of Tibetan children and their families, but also threatens the very survival of the Tibetan cultural identity," ICT's EU Policy Director Vincent Metten said. *"The European Union must now follow up with firm and concrete action to press China to reverse course on this issue, including for example by adopting sanctions against the Chinese officials responsible for the design and implementation of these harmful policies."*

In his speech during the debate on the resolution, European Commissioner Janez Lenarčič recognized that there were “well-substantiated reports,” including by UN independent experts, about “Tibetan pupils being forced to attend state-run boarding schools, far from their families and with rare opportunities to visit their homes” and recalled that the EU had reiterated its “deep concern” about the situation in Tibet during the [EU-China Summit](#) that took place on Dec. 7 in Beijing.

Report on EU-China relations

In a new report on EU-China relations initiated by Member of the European Parliament Hilde Vautmans (Belgium, Renew Europe Group) and adopted a day earlier, the European Parliament had already strongly condemned the Chinese government's assimilationist policies in Tibet and called on China to “immediately terminate” the boarding schools system.

Members of the European Parliament also expressed their concerns regarding the continuous restrictions on religious freedom in China, including via new legislation on Administrative Measures for Religious Activity Venues [that will strengthen the Chinese Communist Party's control over religions, including Tibetan Buddhism](#). They also advocated for a United Nations investigation mission to Tibet and urged Chinese authorities to provide information about the arrest of nine Tibetan environmental defenders who protested against illegal mining activities. In addition, they called on the EU and its

Member States to shut down avenues that facilitate [transnational repression](#) by China in the European Union.

The resolution's and report's adoptions follow the [visit to Europe last June of Tibetan education expert Gyal Lo](#)—who had warned EU officials and Members of the European Parliament about the harmful impact of China's colonial boarding school system—and similar concerns raised by UN independent experts and officials and parliamentarians in the [Czech Republic](#), [Germany](#), the [United States](#) and [Canada](#).

[Read the European Parliament's resolution on boarding schools in Tibet.](#)

[Read the European Parliament's report on EU-China relations.](#)



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