



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

New US Senate bill would require State Department to examine China's atrocities in Tibet

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Senators Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and Rick Scott (R-FL) introduced [legislation](#) on April 29 that directly confronts the Chinese Communist Party's severe human rights violations and abuses in Tibet.

The Tibet Atrocities Determination Act would require the Secretary of State to investigate China's repressive actions in Tibet and publicly report on whether those atrocities meet the criteria for genocide or crimes against humanity.

In a [statement](#), Senator Scott said the Chinese government "has engaged in systematic killings, torture, forced sterilization, forced displacement, government sanctioned kidnapping, and a myriad of other crimes against humanity in its oppression of the Tibetan people." Senator Merkley added, "As the Chinese government continues to ignore the rights of the Tibetan people under international law, we must be clear that these crimes will not be ignored."

"China is accustomed to hiding its abuses in Tibet and discrediting its victims. Today the US Congress takes another step towards ending China's impunity," said ICT President Tencho Gyatso. "I appreciate Senator Scott and Senator Merkley's determination to shine a light on these atrocities, and I encourage Secretary Rubio to thoroughly investigate China's acts in Tibet when the bill becomes law."

The bill includes a requirement to consult with "experts in Tibetan culture, religion, language, and internationally recognized human rights; nongovernmental organizations, including Tibetan advocacy groups; and members of the Tibetan diaspora" and to issue recommendations for United States policy responses, "including potential sanctions, including, but not limited to, visa restrictions and diplomatic actions."

History of atrocities in Tibet

Chinese rule in Tibet has been marked by serious human rights violations and abuses against the Tibetan people from the very beginning.

The International Commission of Jurists [found](#) "prima facie evidence that the Chinese Communists have by acts of genocide attempted to destroy the Tibetan nation" in a 1959 report, while the Central Tibetan Administration [states](#) that China's occupation of Tibet is "marked by systematic destruction of monasteries, the suppression of religion, denial of political freedom, widespread arrest and imprisonment and massacre of innocent men, women and children."

Human rights reports [issued by the State Department](#) have consistently identified "significant human rights issues," including credible reports of "disappearances; torture or cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment or punishment; arbitrary arrest or detention; transnational repression against individuals located in another country; serious restrictions on freedom of expression and media freedom, including censorship; and restrictions of religious freedom."

Should the Tibet Atrocities Determination Act pass, the Secretary of State will be able to draw on these organizations, reports, and experts, among a plethora of others.



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