

A Joint Declaration

Tibet Conference, Riga – 3 June 2026

The members of the national parliaments of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania came together with the understanding that a strong commitment to democracy and freedom, and a firm stance against Moscow and its supporters – including Beijing - are essential to confronting threats like Russia's war against Ukraine.

Meeting in the presence of Richard Gere, Chair of the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT); Tencho Gyatso, President of ICT; and Wangpo Tethong, Director of ICT Europe, the participants came together to consider concrete steps that our countries and the European Union can take to uphold the rights of the Tibetan people and contribute to a resolution of the Tibet conflict and peace in Asia.

We, the participants of the Tibet Conference in Riga, note:

1. That the people of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania share a profound respect for His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who has dedicated his life to the pursuit of peace – In Asia and across the world.
2. That Tibet, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania share a common historical experience: occupation by a communist foreign power, and the struggle to preserve identity, culture and the right to self-determination in the face of it.
3. That the European Union and its member states are more effective in addressing the troubling trajectory of China's policies when they act in a coordinated and unified manner.
4. That in the case of Tibet, the appointment of an EU Special Representative for Tibet – or for Asia / human rights in China more broadly – would provide crucial protection. It would ensure that individual member states cannot be singled out and

pressured by Beijing for their engagement on Tibetan rights, including on the question of the Dalai Lama's succession.

5. That with stronger coordination, the EU and its member states are better placed to make a meaningful contribution to the protection of human rights, and to peace and security across Asia.

6. That China's Law on Promoting Ethnic Unity and Progress, adopted on 12 March 2026 and entering into force on 1 July 2026, represents a profound rupture in China's legal order and a clear departure among the peoples of China. The law – which the European Parliament condemned by 439 votes on 30 April 2026 – codifies forced assimilation and threatens to erase the cultural, religious and linguistic heritage of Tibetans, Uyghurs, Mongolians and the Hongkong people.

In particular, Articles 15 and 16 subordinate minority languages to the national common language and impose unified, State-compiled curricula, while Article 20 obliges parents not to transmit to their children any concept deemed unfavourable to ethnic unity – provisions incompatible with binding obligations China has freely accepted: the prohibition of racial discrimination, in purpose or effect, in the enjoyment of educational and cultural rights (Articles 2 and 5 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, acceded to by China in 1981); the right to take part in cultural life and to education respectful of one's identity (Articles 13 and 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, ratified in 2001); and the right of every minority child to use their own language, practise their own religion and preserve their identity (Articles 8, 29 and 30 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified in 1992). Under Article 27 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, China may not invoke this statute to escape those obligations, which the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had already found to be infringed by such assimilationist practices in its 2018 Concluding Observations on China. Its extraterritorial reach extends even to Tibetans living abroad. Moreover, Article 63 purports to impose legal liability on organisations and individuals outside China – including Tibetans, and those who support them, resident in the European Union – for conduct that is lawful where it takes place. This assertion of extraterritorial jurisdiction over foreign nationals corresponds to no recognised basis of jurisdiction under international

law, offends the sovereign equality of States and the principle of non-intervention (Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations; UN General Assembly Resolution 2625 (XXV)), and furnishes a legal foundation for transnational repression on the territory of EU member states.

We, the participants of the Tibet Conference in Riga, resolve:

1. To convey the warm greetings and solidarity of this conference to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.
2. That the parliamentarians present are committed to supporting parliamentary activities in their respective countries that strengthen friendship with the Tibetan people and advance the protection of their rights.
3. To explore pathways for our national parliaments to adopt resolutions supporting the Dutch-led initiative for an EU Special Representative for Tibet, and to encourage other EU member states to back this proposal at the EU level.
4. To call on our respective governments to step up coordination with EU partners on Tibet and human rights in China, and to report regularly to their national parliaments on progress made.
5. To follow the lead of the European Parliament and table resolutions in our national parliaments condemning China's Law on Promoting Ethnic Unity and Progress, recognising it as a threat to the survival of Tibetan people and their culture.

Riga, 3 June 2026

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