Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire

COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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The situation of human rights in China and Tibet

Motion for a resolution
presented by Mr LOTMAN and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

Democracy and human rights are the Council of Europe's key values. It has a duty to promote them wherever they are flouted. Today, the Council of Europe must confirm its attachment to democracy, human rights and the rule of law in China and Tibet

The parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) deems it important to investigate the current situation with human rights in Tibet and China in general.

With just one year to go before the Olympics take place in Beijing, many in China and abroad are beginning to look ahead to assess the likely legacy of the Games for human rights in China.

While positive steps have been made in some limited areas, the growing crackdown on Chinese human rights activists and journalists as well as the continued use of “Re-education through Labour” and other forms of detention without trial is causing deep concern. Official statements suggest that the Olympics are being used to justify such repression in the name of “harmony” or “social stability” rather than acting as a catalyst for reform.

Many in China and around the world have high expectations for human rights progress in relation to the Olympic Games. However, the image of the Olympics continues to be tarnished by ongoing reports of the “house arrest”, torture or unfair trial of Chinese activists and the extension of systems for detention without trial in Beijing as part of the city's “clean-up” ahead of August 2008.

Freedom of religion, expression and association continue to be severely restricted in Tibet, and as result many are imprisoned for peacefully exercising their basic human rights. As elsewhere in China, arbitrary detentions, unfair trials and torture and ill-treatment remain commonplace. Over 100 Tibetan prisoners of conscience, mainly Buddhist monks and nuns, remain in prison. Thousands of Tibetans flee China every year. About a third of them are children who are sent to Tibetan schools in India, while many others are monks and nuns seeking religious education. Tibetans fleeing China have been shot at by the Chinese military personnel.

The authorities continue to use the “global war on terror” to justify harsh repression against the ethnic Uighur community including closure of mosques, arrests of imams, restrictions on the use of the Uighur language and the banning of certain Uighur books and journals.

The Council of Europe and its Parliamentary Assembly cannot be unmoved by the situation in China and Tibet.

The Assembly has a duty therefore to look into the matter in detail.

Signed (see overleaf)

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EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democratic Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: not registered in a group