

EUROPE stands with TIBET

“EUROPE STANDS WITH TIBET”

59th Anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising: Rally on March 10th in Geneva

Tibetans and Supporters Appeal to United Nations Human Rights Commissioner for Urgent Action on Concerning Issues of Human Rights Situation in TIBET

Tibetan communities in Europe, Tibet organizations and supporters send an urgent appeal to the UNHRC and rally in Geneva, commemorating the 59th anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising day against illegal occupation of Tibet by the Chinese military on 10th March 1959, which is also known as darkest day in the history of Tibet.

The organizations point out that particularly since the incidence of 2008 protests in Tibet the human rights situation in Tibet has significantly worsened. Due to China's systematic suppression and violations of universal basic rights of its people, the Freedom House report 2017 ranked Tibet as among the least free among countries and territories in the world above Syria.

The right to freedom of religion and belief remained severely restricted through a combination of laws, policies and practices. Measures to control and exploit the system of reincarnation, and to discredit and delegitimize the person and position of the Tibetan spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama were intensified. In 2016 PRC conducted a large-scale demolition of the 20,000-strong religious community of Larung Gar Tibetan Buddhist Institute. Today, monasteries and nunneries are forbidden to give traditional monastic education, which forms an integral part of Tibetan Buddhism. Monks and nuns are instead subjected to campaigns such „patriotic education“ that are fundamentally against the basic tenets of Tibetan Buddhism. Following the 17th February fire at the holiest Jokhang Temple in Lhasa, a UNESCO-world heritage site, the Chinese authorities hide the extend of damages to the world.

Since 2009, 151 Tibetans have self-immolated in Tibet. 129 of them have died on the spot or shortly thereafter. All the self-immolators have called for “freedom in Tibet” and the “return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet”. However, instead of addressing the underlying grievances of Tibetans, the Chinese authorities have responded to these self-immolations with further repressive policies by heightening restrictions in Tibetan areas and dismissing the self-immolations as an „act of terrorism“, while criminalizing partners, spouses, friends and relatives of the self-immolators.

The right to freedom of expression remained extremely restricted due to the introduction and enforcement of new

and existing laws in the name of fighting terrorism and censoring the Internet. The right to freedom of movement was also systematically violated with the imposition of explicit restrictions such as local directives prohibiting overseas travel, passport confiscations, and issuing of threats and intimidations.

Although PRC ratified the Paris climate change agreement, accelerated economic development is threatening the fragile environment, livelihood and food security of millions of Tibetans. Numerous mining sites and hydro-dams threatening water availability and food security of millions living in countries downstream are already becoming operational in Tibet, and more similar projects have been announced in the PRC's 13th Five-Year Plan. Environmental activists are routinely jailed on politicized charges.

The case of Tibet is urgent and dramatic. It needs the immediate attention of the international community. In conclusion, the organizations supporting “Europe Stands with Tibet” call upon the members of the United Nations Human Rights Council to urge China:

- **To resume dialogue with representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama without any pre-condition,**
- **To end all its repressive policies and practices in Tibet that drive Tibetans into self-immolation protests,**
- **To allow Tibetans to use Tibetan language in schools and facilitate Tibetan students to learn the Tibetan language,**
- **To provide verifiable and genuine information on the whereabouts and well-being of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima (the incarnation of the Panchen Lama, recognized by His Holiness the Dalai Lama) and his family who disappeared in April 1995.**
- **To allow UN human rights mandate holders and experts to visit Tibet.**