

Ladies and gentlemen,  
dear friends,

It's an honor to be here today with you to mark 65 years since the Tibetan people's uprising.

65 years of suffering for the Tibetans,  
65 years of violations of international law.

A sad celebration at a time when the world tends to turn a blind eye to the very serious crimes committed by the People's Republic of China.

That's why as co-president of the Swiss Parliamentary Group for Tibet, I'm happy to join Tibetans and their supporters from around the world in commemorating the 65th anniversary of the Uprising.

It is unfortunately more necessary than ever.

Because Since the bloody suppression of the non-violent popular uprising in Lhasa in March 1959, the PRC has pursued its course of controlling the Buddhist religion and culture and eradicating the Tibetan language.

This is not acceptable.

It is therefore with great concern and indignation that we followed the recent arrest of more than 1,000 Tibetans in the Drago region. Tibetans that were simply protesting against a major dam project that would see villages and monasteries flooded.

We strongly condemn their arrests and ill-treatments and call for their immediate release.

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We also call for an end to forcing the Tibetan schoolchildren to enter boarding schools where they are alienated from their parents, their culture and their Tibetan identity.

We call for an end to mass surveillance of the Tibetan population through DNA collection and iris scanning.

We call for the end of the violence against the Tibetans, an end to the Sinicization policy in Tibet and for the PRC to respect Tibet's rich cultural heritage.

Here in Switzerland, we are also calling on our government, the Federal Council, to be less naïve towards the authorities in Beijing.

The "human rights dialogue" that we have been pursuing for over 30 years has produced no tangible results.

Moreover, human rights violations are clearly on the increase and are now reaching a critical point.

Tibetans, Uighurs, political opponents, social leaders, Hong Kongers and environmental activists are all victims of China's autocratic regime, which no longer hesitates to openly challenge international public order.

So much so, in fact, that it has no hesitation in stepping up its surveillance of the Tibetan community here in Switzerland. Illegal actions that we condemn.

In this situation, to believe that our "human rights dialogue" can help the regime's victims is very naive, or worse, very cynical!

This is why we will continue to put pressure on our government, as well as on international organizations, multinational economic groups and consumers, to call on the Beijing authorities to respect international law, of which human rights are an integral part.

Because at the end of the day, developing our economic relations with a country that mistreats millions of people has a name: it's complicity.

In the name of the tens of thousands of Tibetans who have lost their lives as a direct or indirect consequence of the invasion of their land, we must hold our authorities and the CEOs of major companies accountable for their blindness.

This is why it is more necessary than ever to show solidarity with all the brave Tibetans who are demanding fundamental rights, self-determination and the restoration of freedom in Tibet.

Thank you. Free Tibet