

China's rights record scrutinized by UN Committee

Date : October 2, 2013

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child reviewed China's record, including in Tibet, as part of its compliance review under the UN Child Rights Convention on September 26 and 27, in Geneva, Switzerland.

The International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) and 17 other non governmental organizations [submitted shadow reports](#) on China's compliance prior to the review. Elena Gaita, Policy and Advocacy Officer at ICT Europe, was present at the review and distributed a list of recommendations and suggested questions to some of the 18 expert members of the Committee. More than 40 representatives from NGOs and other civil society groups were present at the review, although they were not allowed to speak as per the rules of the review.

"The review session was very good. The Committee members were able to effectively challenge the Chinese delegation. They discussed Tibet a lot and many of ICT's questions were used, covering numerous areas such as freedom of religion, the right to education and language rights," said Elena Gaita.

The Rapporteur, Mr. Hatem Kotrane, questioned the Chinese delegation about "the underlying causes of self-immolations as well as the issue of imprisonment of Tibetan children and criminalization measures of family and friends of self-immolators." Also when China denied that there was discrimination against the practice of religion, the Chairperson of the Committee, Ms. Kirsten Sandberg, retorted that "You are not talking about the facts in China. We have so many reports on infringement of freedom of religion in Tibet and Xinjiang."

More details of the review can be found here in [Ms. Gaita's informal transcript of the session](#).

On the second day of the review the Committee questioned the Chinese delegation on the whereabouts of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, who was disappeared by Chinese authorities in 1995 after he was recognized by the Dalai Lama as the 11th Panchen Lama. The Committee asked if China's contention that the Panchen Lama had been given higher education and living a happy life had been confirmed by an independent authority, as had already been asked by the Committee in 2005. The Chinese government refused to answer this question. The Committee is expected to finalize and publish its recommendations on October 4.