



## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

### **New European Parliament Report Calls on China to Review its Policies in Tibet, Asks EU to Raise the Issue of Access**

<https://www.savetibet.org/new-european-parliament-report-calls-on-china-to-review-its-policies-in-tibet-asks-eu-to-raise-the-issue-of-access>

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Brussels - The European Parliament, at its plenary session today in Strasbourg, [adopted a new report](#) on EU-China relations that urges China to review its policies in Tibet and review and amend laws, regulations and measures passed in recent years that severely limit the exercise of civil and political rights of Tibetans. It further urges the EU institutions to take the issue of access to Tibet into serious consideration in the discussions on the EU-China visa facilitation agreement

[The report](#), which was prepared by Member of the European Parliament (MEP) Bastiaan Belder (ECR, Netherlands) and was passed by 530 votes to 53 with 55 abstentions, gives a rather detailed and in-depth overview of the state of EU-China relations. It tackles issues such as trade exchanges, China's Belt and Road initiative, the 16+1 format, digital surveillance, climate change and sustainable development and the human rights situation in the country, and urges the European Union to rebalance its relationship with China, and to press Beijing to improve the overall human rights situation, including in Xinjiang and Tibet.

ICT's EU Policy Director Vincent Metten said: "The European Parliament's report on EU-China relations is very comprehensive, and we share its overall assessment of human rights situation in China and Tibet." Metten added: "We welcome the call of the European Parliament for a review of China's policies in Tibet, as well as the need for Europe to defend its democracies so as to better to face China's systematic efforts to influence its politicians and civil society."

Reflecting increasing concerns amongst EU policy-makers about the impacts of China's systematic influencing efforts in Europe -which were highlighted earlier this year by a [substantial study](#) of the Mercator Institute for China Studies (MERICS) and Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi)- the report indeed also calls on the EU Member states to "step up collaboration and unity on their China policies," in order to better confront these efforts. Last year, the lack of unity of EUMS had indeed led to the EU's failure to make a joint statement critical of China's human rights records at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. Members of the Parliament also urged throughout the report for more reciprocity in the relationship, not only in terms of trade and market access but also in other areas such as press freedom and freedom of movement.

[During the plenary debate](#) prior to the vote on Tuesday, MEP Belder said: "A critical principle for solid relations between the EU and China is reciprocity, but preferably in all areas, for example as regards

to market access but equally as regards to freedom of the press. Reciprocity fosters mutual trust, establishes a solid foundation for a strategic partnership between the EU and China that this very promising partnership honestly deserves. However, and this is clearly indicated in the report, reciprocity is an ideal image and the report makes it clear on certain terms, that from the European perspective there are concerns about the policy of the all-mighty Chinese Communist Party. Take for example Tibet, Xinjiang, the sinicization of all religions, the Social Credit System, the militarization of the South China Sea, the law on international NGOs, the display of tensions in cross-state relations with Taiwan... these are exactly the sensitive salient subject for Chinese censors.”

With regards to Tibet in particular, the European Parliament makes the following assessment (§T): “Whereas the situation in Tibet has deteriorated over the past few years, in spite of economic growth and infrastructure development, with the Chinese Government curtailing a wide range of human rights under the pretext of security and stability, and engaging in relentless attacks against Tibetan identity and culture; whereas the surveillance and control measures have been on the increase over the past few years as well as arbitrary detentions, acts of torture and ill-treatment; whereas the Chinese Government has created in Tibet an environment in which there are no limits to state authority, a climate of fear is pervasive, and every aspect of public and private life is tightly controlled and regulated; whereas in Tibet, any acts of non-violent dissent or criticism of state policies with regard to ethnic or religious minorities can be considered as ‘splittist’ and therefore criminalised; whereas access to the Tibet Autonomous Region today is more restricted than ever for foreigners, including EU citizens, particularly for journalists, diplomats and other independent observers, and even more difficult for EU citizens of a Tibetan background; whereas no progress has been made in the resolution of the Tibetan crisis in the last few years as the last round of peace talks took place in 2010; whereas the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Tibet has led to an increase of self-immolation cases with a total number of 156 since 2009.”

The report goes on to urge China to “review its policies in Tibet”, calling on the Chinese government to amend laws and regulations adopted in recent years that limit the exercise of civil and political rights of Tibetans and to resume the Sino-Tibetan dialogue, amongst other recommendations. As the EU and China celebrate their joint year of tourism, Members of the European Parliament also reiterated their call for unfettered access to Tibet for EU citizens “in reciprocity to the free and open access to the entire territories of the EU Member States that Chinese travellers enjoy.” (the full list of the report’s recommendations on Tibet is available below).

“Chinese authorities repress the Tibetans from exercising their fundamental rights and we don’t know how many persons have been imprisoned for being dissidents over the past years”, MEP Cristian Dan Preda said during the debate. “We must not stand by watching idly the brutal deprivation of the Tibetan people of its rights. Partnership with China is indeed desirable but it must be made conditional on the respect of human dignity as well as individual and collective human rights.” MEP László Tóké added.

*The European Parliament’s Report on EU-China relations [is available here.](#)*

## European Parliament's report on the state of EU-China relations

### Recommendations on Tibet

*"63. Urges China to review its policies in Tibet; calls on China to review and amend the laws, regulations and measures passed in recent years that severely limit the exercise of civil and political rights of Tibetans, including their freedom of expression and their religious freedom; urges the Chinese leadership to pursue development and environmental policies that respect the economic, social and cultural rights of Tibetans and are inclusive of local populations, in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals; calls on the Chinese government to investigate the ongoing cases of enforced disappearances, torture and ill-treatment of Tibetans and to respect their rights to freedom of association, peaceful assembly and freedom of religion and belief, in line with international human rights standards; stresses that the degradation of human rights in Tibet must be systematically raised at each EU-China Summit; calls for the resumption of a constructive and peaceful dialogue between the Chinese authorities and representatives of the Tibetan people; urges China to give EU diplomats, journalists and citizens unfettered access to Tibet in reciprocity to the free and open access to the entire territories of the EU Member States that Chinese travellers enjoy; calls on the Chinese authorities to allow Tibetans in Tibet to travel freely and to respect their right to freedom of movement; urges the Chinese authorities to allow independent observers, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to access Tibet; urges the EU institutions to take the issue of access to Tibet into serious consideration in the discussions on the EU-China visa facilitation agreement."*