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*Plenary sitting*

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**B8-1361/2016**

13.12.2016

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 135 of the Rules of Procedure

on the cases of the Larung Gar Tibetan Buddhist Academy and Ilham Tohti (2016/3026(RSP))

**Pier Antonio Panzeri, Jo Leinen, Victor Boștinăru, Knut Fleckenstein, Josef Weidenholzer, Elena Valenciano, Clara Eugenia Aguilera García, Eric Andrieu, Zigmantas Balčytis, Hugues Bayet, Brando Benifei, José Blanco López, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Biljana Borzan, Soledad Cabezón Ruiz, Nicola Caputo, Andrea Cozzolino, Jonás Fernández, Monika Flašíková Beňová, Doru-Claudian Frunzuliță, Eider Gardiazabal Rubial, Enrico Gasbarra, Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg, Neena Gill, Ana Gomes, Theresa Griffin, Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto, Cătălin Sorin Ivan, Liisa Jaakonsaari, Afzal Khan, Arne Lietz, Krystyna Lybacka, Costas Mavrides, Marlene Mizzi, Sorin Moisă, Victor Negrescu, Norbert Neuser, Demetris Papadakis, Pina Picierno, Kati Piri, Soraya Post, Inmaculada Rodríguez-Piñero Fernández, Daciana Octavia Sârbu, Siôn Simon, Tibor Szanyi, Claudia Țapardel, Marc Tarabella, Julie Ward, Damiano Zoffoli, Carlos Zorrinho**

on behalf of the S&D Group

**B8-1361/2016**

**European Parliament resolution on the cases of the Larung Gar Tibetan Buddhist Academy and Ilham Tohti (2016/3026(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Tibet, in particular those of 25 November 2010 on Tibet: plans to make Chinese the main language of instruction, of 27 October 2011 on Tibet, in particular self-immolation by nuns and monks and of 14 June 2012 on the human rights situation in Tibet,
- having regard to its report of 16 December 2015 on EU-China relations;
- having regard to the nine rounds of talks from 2002 to 2010 between high-ranking representatives of the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama; having regard to China's White Paper on Tibet, entitled 'Tibet's Path of Development Is Driven by an Irresistible Historical Tide' and published by China's State Council Information Office on 15 April 2015; having regard to the 2008 Memorandum and the 2009 Note on Genuine Autonomy, both presented by the Representatives of the 14th Dalai Lama,
- having regard to Article 36 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, which guarantees all citizens the right to freedom of religious belief,
- having regard to the "Sixth Tibet Work Forum" organized by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and held on August 2015,
- having regard to the EEAS' Spokesperson statement of 23 September 2014 condemning the life sentence handed to Uighur economics professor Ilham Tohti and calling for his immediate and unconditional release;
- having regard to the report of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations of 10 July 2015,
- having regard to the EU–China dialogue on human rights launched in 1995 and the 34th round held in Beijing on 30 November and 1 December 2015,
- having regard to the statement made on 10 March 2016 by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to the Human Rights Council's 31st session;
- having regard to the EU-China Strategic Partnership launched in 2003 and to the European Commission and EEAS joint communication to the European Parliament and the Council entitled 'Elements for a new EU strategy on China', of 22 June 2016,
- having regard that on 11 October 2016, Ilham Tohti was awarded the Martin Ennals Award for his Human Rights defence, and in September 2016 he was nominated for the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought;

having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure

- A. Whereas the promotion and the respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law should remain at the centre the long standing relationship in between EU and China, in line with the EU's commitment to uphold these values in its external action and China's expressed interest in adhering to these very values in its own development and international cooperation;
- B. whereas the 17th EU-China Summit, of 29 June 2015, lifted bilateral relations to a new level, and whereas in its strategic framework on human rights and democracy the EU pledges that it will place human rights at the centre of its relations with all third countries, including its strategic partners; whereas the 18th EU-China Summit, of 12 - 13 July 2016 concluded to hold another round of the human rights dialogue between EU and China still in 2016;
- C. Whereas China has progressed in the last decades in realisation of economic and social rights, reflecting its priorities for the people's rights to subsistence and development, while the achievements in the area of political and civil rights together with the promotion of human rights is limited;
- D. whereas during his visit to China from 9 to 14 November 2015, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, Stavros Lambrinidis, urged China to amend provisions within the package of security laws, including the anti-terrorism law, cyber-security law and the law on the management of international NGOs, that could curtail freedom of expression and association and freedom of religion and belief;
- E. whereas the Larung Gar Institute, the largest Tibetan Buddhist centre in the world, is currently facing wide-scale demolition by the Chinese government; whereas according to the Chinese authorities this demolition is necessary in order to carry out "correction and rectification";
- F. whereas three nuns are reported to have committed suicide at the Larung Gar Institute since the beginning of the demolition of the Buddhist Institute; whereas it is estimated that more than 1.000 monks and nuns have so far been evicted;
- G. whereas an extremely high number of Tibetans, mostly monks and nuns, have reportedly set themselves on fire since 2009 in protest against restrictive Chinese policies in Tibet and in support of the return of the Dalai Lama and the right to religious freedom in the Aba/Ngaba county prefecture in Sichuan Province and other parts of the Tibetan plateau,
- H. whereas the envoys of the Dalai Lama have approached the Government of the People's Republic of China to find a mutually beneficial solution to the issue of Tibet; whereas no progress has been made in the resolution of the Tibetan crisis in the last few years, as the last round of talks took place in 2010 and the negotiations are currently frozen,
- I. whereas several of those people evicted from Larung Gar are suspected to be forced to participate in so called "patriotic re-education" campaign;
- J. whereas the Uighur economics professor Ilham Tohti was sentenced to life imprisonment on 23 September 2014 on the charge of alleged separatism after being arrested in January

of the same year; whereas seven of his former students were also detained and condemn to prison from between three to eight years for alleged collaboration with Mr Tohti's;

- K. whereas there are allegations that the due process of law was not respected, in particular with regard to the right to a proper defence;
  - L. whereas the Xinjiang region, where the Muslim Uighur ethnic minority is mainly located, has experienced repeated outbreaks of ethnic unrest and violence; whereas Ilham Tohti has always rejected separatism and violence and sought reconciliation based on a respect for Uighur culture;
1. Urges the Chinese authorities to stop the demolition of Larum Gar and the eviction of the residents, respecting in this way the freedom of religion in accordance with its constitution and international human rights standards;
  2. Calls further on the Chinese authorities to initiate a dialogue on restructuring Larum Gar with the community and its religious leaders, considering adequate compensations for those evicted;
  3. Insists that the authorities of the People's Republic of China respect and fully implement the legal provisions from the national legislations and international treaties signed regarding the freedom of expression, freedom of association and freedom of belief;
  4. Is deeply concerned by the deterioration of the human rights situation in Tibet province which has led to an increase of self-immolations cases ; criticises the increase of militarized displays on the Tibetan Plateau that will only lead to an escalation of tensions in the region; condemns the increase in the use of surveillance systems in Tibetan private households;
  5. Is worried about the adoption of the package of security laws and its impact on minorities in China and particularly the law on counter-terrorism that could lead to the penalisation of peaceful expression of the Tibetan culture and religion and the law on the management of international NGOs which will come into effect on 1 January 2017 and that will place human rights groups under the strict control of the government constituting a strictly top-down approach, instead of encouraging partnership between the local and central government and civil society;
  6. Calls on the Chinese authorities to uphold the linguistic, cultural, religious and other fundamental freedoms of Tibetans and to refrain from settlement policies in favour of the Han people and to the disadvantage of the Tibetans in historical territories of Tibet, as well as from forcing Tibetan nomads to abandon their traditional lifestyle;
  7. Calls for the Chinese government to resume the dialogue with Tibetan representatives, which was ended by China in 2010, in order to find an inclusive political solution to the crisis in Tibet;
  8. Strongly condemns the detention for life of Ilham Tohti and urges the Chinese authorities to his immediately release together with the other persons detained in relation with his case; deplores that the due process of law was not respected and that he did not benefit of the right to a proper defence;

09. Urges the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative and the EEAS to bring the case of Ilham Tohti to the agenda of the next EU-China Dialogue on Human Rights;
10. Recalls the importance for the EU to raise the issue of human rights violation in China, in particular the case of minorities in Tibet and Xinjiang, at every political and human rights dialogue with the Chinese authorities, in line with the EU's commitment to project a strong, clear and unified voice in its approach to the country, including the yearly Human Rights Dialogues; it further reminds that in its ongoing reform process and increasing global engagement China has opted into the international human rights framework by signing up to a wide range of international human rights treaties, therefore it calls on pursuing dialogue with China to live up to these commitments;
- 11 Deplores the fact that the 35th Round of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue will probably not take place before the end of 2016, as agreed; urges the Chinese Government to agree to a high-level dialogue in the first weeks of 2017;
12. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Government and Parliament of the People's Republic of China.