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*Plenary sitting*

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**B8-0256/2019**

16.4.2019

## **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 China, notably the situation of religious and ethnic minorities  
(2019/2690(RSP))

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

**European Parliament resolution on China, notably the situation of religious and ethnic minorities  
(2019/2690(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on China and in particular to the one of 12 September 2018 on the state of EU-China relations and the one of 4 October 2018 on mass arbitrary detention of Uyghurs and Kazakhs in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region,
  - having regard to the “Joint statement of the 21st EU-China summit” of 9 April 2019,
  - having regard to 37th EU-China Human Rights Dialogue held in Brussels on 1-2 April 2019,
  - having regard to Commission/EEAS Joint Communication “EU China - A Strategic outlook” of 12 March 2019,
  - 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 and to Article 4 that upholds the rights of ‘minority nationalities’,
  - having further regard for the EU’s Item 4 oral statements at the 39<sup>th</sup> session of the UN Human Rights Council on 18 September 2018, and the Item 4 statements of the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Finland and Canada, which expressed concern at the arbitrary detention of Uyghurs in ‘re-education’ camps in Xinjiang,
  - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 16 December 1966,
  - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
  - having regard to the concluding observations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination’s review of China,
  - having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas since President Xi Jinping assumed power in March 2013 the human rights situation in China has continued to deteriorate with the government stepping up its hostility toward peaceful dissent, freedoms of expression and religion, and the rule of law; whereas the Chinese authorities have detained and prosecuted hundreds of human rights defenders lawyers and journalists,
- B. whereas the Chinese government passed a set of new laws that cast public activism and peaceful criticism of the government as state security threats, strengthen censorship, surveillance and control of individuals and social groups and deter

individuals from campaigning for human rights with regard, in particular, to the State Security Law, passed on July 1, 2015, the Counterterrorism Law, the Cybersecurity Law, and the Foreign NGO Management Law,

- C. whereas China set up a sprawling state architecture of digital surveillance, ranging from predictive policing to the arbitrary, nationwide collection of biometric data in an environment devoid of privacy rights,
- D. whereas the situation in Xinjiang, where 10 million Muslim Uighurs and ethnic Kazakhs live, has rapidly deteriorated, as absolute control of Xinjiang has been elevated by the Chinese authorities to a top priority,
- E. whereas an extrajudicial detention programme has been established, holding tens of thousands of people who are forced to undergo political ‘re-education’, as well as the development of a sophisticated network of invasive digital surveillance, including facial recognition technology and data collection, mass deployment of police, and strict restrictions on religious practices and the Uighur language and customs;
- F. whereas numerous credible reports from academics, media outlets and reputable sources have denounced that an estimated one million Uyghurs and ethnic Kazakhs are being arbitrarily detained in a system of internment camps in the framework of this extrajudicial detention programme by the Chinese government in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region detailing the scale and inner workings of the camps;
- G. whereas detainees are not officially charged with any crime, are denied their basic legal rights and are being held against their will for undetermined periods of time, and are therefore being arbitrarily detained; whereas according to first-hand testimony detainees are being held in poor conditions and are being subjected to physical and psychological torture, forced labour and political indoctrination aimed at eroding religious belief,
- H. whereas after repeatedly denying the arbitrary detention of Uyghurs and Kazakhs in internment camps the Chinese government admitted running “vocational education centres”, where individuals receive “professional training”,
- I. whereas, the Chinese government has refused numerous requests from the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (WGEID), the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and other UN Special Procedures mandates to send independent investigators to Xinjiang,
- J. whereas the regulations on religious affairs that entered into force in February 2018 restricted the activities of religious groups and force them to act more closely in line with party policies; whereas the new rules threaten persons associated with religious communities that do not have legal status in the country; whereas religious communities have been facing increasing repression in China,
- K. whereas in its strategic framework on human rights and democracy, the EU pledges that human rights, democracy, and rule of law will be promoted “in all areas of the

- EU's external actions without exception” and that the EU will “place human rights at the centre of its relations with all third countries including strategic partners.”,
- L. whereas in the Joint Communication “EU-China - A Strategic Outlook”, the EEAS and the Commission have labelled China for the first time “a systemic rival promoting alternative models of governance”,
- M. whereas in the weeks leading up to the EU-China summit of 9 April the EU and leaders of member states have had multiple opportunities to raise human rights concerns in meetings with their Chinese counterparts but all failed to publicly reference or call for an end to growing human rights violations in China,
- N. whereas the EU-China Human Rights dialogue has made so far no substantial progress in spite of the efforts of the EEAS to raise general concerns on the human rights situation in China and address some individual cases; whereas some prominent NGOs called in the past on the European Union to cancel the human rights dialogue with China and suspend the exchange until the meetings can bring genuine human rights improvements; whereas the only evaluation of this exercise was never made public,
1. Calls on the Council, the EEAS and the Commission to ensure that EU-China cooperation is grounded in the universality of human rights, the international human rights commitments undertaken by both sides and the commitment to progress towards the achievement of the highest standard of human rights protection;
  2. Underlines China's responsibilities as a global power and calls on the Beijing authorities to ensure in all circumstances respect for international law, democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with the UN Charter and Universal Declaration on Human Rights and other international instruments signed or ratified by China; calls, therefore, on China to deliver on the commitment to respect international law and fundamental norms governing international relations, with the United Nations at its core as agreed at the 21st EU-China Summit;
  3. Urges Chinese authorities to immediately and unconditionally release all human rights defenders, activists, lawyers, journalists and petitioners being detained for their human rights work, and end the ongoing crackdown of detention, judicial harassment, and intimidation against them so that they are able to carry out their work without hindrance;
  4. Welcomes the protests in China’s academic and intellectual circles against the recent suspension of Xinhua law professor Xu Zhangrun;
  5. Calls for the immediate release of the Swedish national book publisher Gui Minhai and the two Canadian citizens Michael Spavor and Michael Kovrig
  6. Expresses its disappointment at the fact that the 37th round of the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue brought no substantial results; regrets, furthermore, that the Chinese delegation did not take part on 2 April in the continuation of the dialogue that foresaw an exchange of views with civil society organisations;

7. Deplores that at the EU-China summit of 9 April once again urgent human rights concerns played a marginal role; takes the view that if and when EU-China summit language is weak on human rights, the Council, the EEAS and the Commission should decline to include that at all and issue a separate communication on that topic with a meaningful assessment both of the situation and why stronger language couldn't be agreed;
8. Welcomes the declaration of the European Council President on the occasion of the latest EU-China Summit that human rights are – from the EU perspective – as important as economic interests and calls on the Commission, the EEAS and the Council to consistently step up action to address human right issues in the overall bilateral relation with China;
9. Expresses its deepest concern at the sending of thousands of Uyghurs and ethnic Kazakhs to political ‘re-education camps’ based on analysis of the data harvested through a system of ‘predictive policing’, including for having travelled abroad or being adjudged to be too religiously devout and urges the Chinese authorities to free those reportedly detained for their beliefs or cultural practices and identities;
10. Stresses that imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty in violation of fundamental rules of international law, persecution against any identifiable group on ethnic, cultural or religious grounds, and other inhumane acts causing great suffering or serious injury, when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, amount to crimes against humanity; urges the PRC government to immediately close those camps and to put an end to all abuses against the civilian population in Xinjiang, and to allow independent, international investigators full access to the region as called for by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights;
11. Calls on the EU and the Member States to take the lead during the next session of the UN Human Rights Council on a resolution establishing a fact-finding mission to Xinjiang;
12. Reiterates its call on the Chinese government to immediately and unconditionally release Uyghur scholar Ilham Tohti and all others detained solely for the peaceful exercise of their freedom of expression and, pending the release, calls on China to ensure that they have regular, unrestricted access to their families and lawyers of their choice; calls, furthermore, for the release of, Eli Mamut, Hailaite Niyazi, Memetjan Abdulla, Abduhelil Zunun and Abdukerim Abduweli as asked by the EU during the 36th and 37th rounds of the EU-China Human Rights dialogue;
13. Calls on the Chinese government to reveal the names, whereabouts and current status of all those who have effectively disappeared in Xinjiang;
14. Expresses its deep concern at the state’s implementation of measures to ensure the ‘comprehensive supervision’ of the region via installation of China’s ‘Skynet’ electronic surveillance in major urban areas, installations of GPS trackers in all motor vehicles, use of facial recognition scanners at checkpoints and at train and petrol stations, and a blood-collecting effort by Xinjiang’s police to further expand China’s DNA database;

15. Notes that China has already become a world leader in developing and deploying surveillance and predictive profiling technology and that controlling the Uyghurs has been serving the purpose of consolidating Chinese technological progress and “terror capitalism”;
16. Calls, on the EU, its Member States and the international community to halt all exports and technology transfers of goods and services that are being used by China to extend and improve its cyber surveillance and predictive profiling apparatus; is deeply concerned that China is already exporting such technologies to authoritarian states around the world;
17. In this regard, calls on the Council to conclude a common position of the reform of the Dual Use Regulation on grounds of urgent national security and human rights considerations; stresses that the Parliament’s position has upheld the Commission’s proposal on the inclusion of strict export controls of cyber-surveillance technology;
18. Welcomes the entry into force of a Regulation on the screening of foreign direct investment into the EU and is of the view that acquisitions of companies producing technology that could be used for mass surveillance do pose a risk for security and public order from a EU perspective;
19. Calls on all academic and research institutions cooperating with China to uphold fully the freedom of science and research;
20. Urges the Chinese government to publicly acknowledge the scale and the real nature of detentions of Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other ethnic minorities in the internment camps;
21. Calls on the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, and the institutions of the European Union to publicly raise this issue with the Chinese government in their bilateral meetings and in international fora;
22. Urges the Chinese government to amend current its legislation that has an overly broad definition of what constitutes acts of terrorism in the Counterterrorism Law (2015) and the Regulation on De-Extremification and to clearly differentiate between peaceful dissent and violent extremism;
23. Welcomes the decision taken by Germany and Sweden to suspend the return of all ethnic Uighurs, Kazakhs or other Turkic Muslims to China in consideration of the risks of arbitrary detention, torture or other ill-treatment they would face in the country, and calls on all other member states to follow suit and to expedite asylum claims by Turkic Muslims at risk of being forcibly returned to China; further calls on all EU member states to investigate the Chinese government’s intimidation of Turkic Muslim diaspora communities in Europe, and invoke domestic law as appropriate;
24. Calls on the Council to adopt targeted sanctions against Chen Quanguo, secretary of the Communist Party of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and other officials responsible for the crackdown;

25. Calls on China to review and amend 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 respects the economic, social and cultural rights of Tibetans and are inclusive of local populations, in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals; 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; 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;
26. Calls on the Chinese Government to respect its own constitution, in particular with regard to Article 4, which protects national minorities; Article 35, which protects the freedoms of speech, the press, assembly, association, procession and demonstration; Article 36, which recognises the right to freedom of religious belief; and Article 41, which guarantees the right to criticise and make suggestions regarding any state organ or functionary;
27. Urges China to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and to ensure its full implementation, including by ending all abusive practices and adapting its legislation as necessary;
28. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and the Government and the Parliament of the People's Republic of China.