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*Plenary sitting*

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**B8-0259/2019**

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))

**Cristian Dan Preda, Michaela Šojdrová, José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Esther de Lange, Jarosław Wałęsa, Romana Tomc, Csaba Sógor, Pavel Svoboda, Milan Zver, Tunne Kelam, Tomáš Zdechovský, David McAllister, Adam Szejnfeld, Seán Kelly, Andrey Kovatchev, Anna Maria Corazza Bildt, Marijana Petir, Sandra Kalniete, Laima Liucija Andrikiienė, Inese Vaidere**  
on behalf of the PPE 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 the situation in China, in particular those of 26 November 2009 on China, minority rights and application of the death penalty, of 10 March 2011 on the situation and cultural heritage in Kashgar (Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region), of 15 December 2016 on the cases of the Larung Gar Tibetan Buddhist Academy and Ilham Tohti, the Report of 12 September 2018 on the State of EU-China relations and of 4 October 2018 on Mass arbitrary detention of Uyghurs and Kazakhs in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region,
  - 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 to the Joint Communication of the European Commission and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy “EU-China - A strategic outlook” of 12 March 2019,
  - having regard to the “Joint statement of the 21st EU-China summit” of 9 April 2019,
  - having regard to the EU-China dialogue on human rights, launched in 1995 and the 37th round held in Brussels on 1-2 April 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 thereof, which upholds the rights of ‘minority nationalities’,
  - 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 the Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the promotion of and respect for universal human rights, democracy and the rule of law should remain at the centre of the long-standing relationship between the EU and China, in accordance with the EU’s commitment to uphold these very same values in its external action and China’s expressed interest in adhering to them in its own development and international cooperation;

- B. whereas the new regulations on religious affairs that took effect on 1 February 2018 are more restrictive towards religious groups and activities and force them to fall more closely into line with party policies; whereas freedom of religion and conscience has reached a new low since the start of the economic reforms and the opening up of China in the late 1970s;
- C. whereas although an accord was reached between the Holy See and the Chinese government in September 2018, the Christian religious communities have been facing increasing repression in China, with Christians, both in underground and state-sanctioned churches, being targeted through the harassment and detention of believers, the demolition of churches, confiscation of religious symbols and the crackdown on Christian gatherings; whereas Chinese authorities in some provinces do not allow persons under 18 years of age to attend Christian masses; whereas in September 2018 China banned the Zion Church, the biggest house congregation in China with more than 1,500 followers;
- D. whereas the situation in Xinjiang, where 10 million Muslim Uighurs and ethnic Kazakhs live, has rapidly deteriorated, in particular since President Xi's ascension to power, as absolute control of Xinjiang has been elevated to a top priority, driven by both periodic terrorist attacks in or allegedly connected to Xinjiang by Uighurs and the strategic location of the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region for the BRI;
- E. whereas an extrajudicial detention programme has been established, holding "from tens of thousands to upwards of a million Uighurs" who are forced to undergo political 're-education' according to estimates cited by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, without being charged or tried, under the pretext of countering terrorism and religious extremism; whereas policy of strict restrictions on religious practices and the Uighur language and customs have been developed in the Xinjiang province;
- F. whereas the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances expressed their deep concern about the trend of Uyghurs being subjected to enforced disappearances in a letter of General Allegation sent to the Chinese government in May 2018;
- G. whereas the US Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) stated in June 2018 that "Uyghurs and other primarily Muslim ethnic minorities in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) have been subjected to arbitrary detention, torture, egregious restrictions on religious practice and culture, and a digitized surveillance system so pervasive that every aspect of daily life is monitored";
- H. 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;
- I. whereas the surveillance and control measures in Tibet 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 before;

- J. 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; whereas envoys of His Holiness 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;
1. Is deeply concerned about the increasingly suppressive regime that many religious and ethnic minorities, in particular Uyghurs and Kazakhs, Tibetans and Christians face, putting additional restraints on the constitutional guarantees of their right to freedom of cultural expression and religious belief, to freedom of speech and expression, peaceful assembly and association; demands that the authorities respect these fundamental freedoms;
  2. Calls on the Chinese government to immediately end the practice of arbitrary detentions of members of the Uyghur and Kazakh minority and Tibetans, without any charge trial or conviction for criminal offence, to close all camps and detention centers and to release detained persons immediately and unconditionally;
  3. Calls on the Chinese authorities to end their campaigns against Christian congregations and organizations, stop harassment and detention of Christian pastors and priests and forced demolitions of churches;
  4. Urges the Chinese authorities to reinstate the constitutionally guaranteed right to freedom of religious belief for all Chinese citizens;
  5. Recalls the importance for the EU and its Member States to raise the issue of human rights violations at every political level 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 Dialogue, the upcoming Euro-Asia Summit as well as during China’s periodic review at the UN Human Rights Council;
  6. Calls on EU Member States to prevent any activities of Chinese authorities on EU territory to harass members of Turks communities, Tibetans and other religious or ethnic groups in order to compel them to act as informants, to force their return to China or silence them;
  7. Calls on the Chinese authorities to allow free, unhindered access for journalists and international observers to Xinjiang province and Tibet Autonomous Region;

8. Calls on the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to consider a proposal of a European version of the US reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018;
9. 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 Peoples' Republic of China.