

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0289/04

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to the Commission

Subject: Cultural genocide in China

In her intervention during the discussion on the Prets report on cultural diversity on 13 January in Strasbourg, Commissioner Viviane Reding expressed her satisfaction that the EU had 'won the battle' at the UNESCO General Assembly concerning the creation of an international instrument for the preservation of cultural diversity, in which the EU initiative relied on support from China.

'...Moreover, the Chinese are supporting us in UNESCO. We spoke about education as well, and all with an immense country like China which relies on Europe to help it preserve its cultural diversity...'. Commissioner Reding also invited Parliament to reflect on the aspects '... which might be developed in this future Convention to listen to the concerns of our partners...'.

The Communist regime in China has been systematically implementing a policy of cultural genocide against minority peoples like the Tibetans and the Uyghurs for the last half-century, with measures such as forcibly sinicising Uyghur names, abolishing Uyghur language teaching in higher education, destroying the Uyghur cultural heritage in Kashghar and other cities, burning tens of thousands of Uyghur language books, forcibly changing the Uyghur alphabet three times in four decades and discriminating against Uyghur language schools in favour of Chinese schools, to give but a few examples.

How does the Commission intend to ensure that the future UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity will be an effective tool against such heinous crimes of cultural and political genocide?

Within the framework of enhanced cultural cooperation with China and on the basis of the publicly available information on the matter, does the Commission not consider that a preliminary study should be carried out on the extent and forms of the current cultural genocide in China, in order to ensure that EU cultural cooperation with China will never directly or indirectly give momentum to the cultural alienation and criminal sinicisation of the peoples of China?