

WRITTEN QUESTION P-1293/04
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to the Commission

Subject: Human rights in China

How does the Commission view the behaviour of the Chinese authorities, who whilst publicly committing themselves to uphold fundamental human rights, nevertheless still fail to implement measures to guarantee these rights?

How does the Commission view the continued imprisonment of Pastor Gong Shengling, founder of the South China Church, who was arrested on fabricated charges, and the evidence for whose trial came from witnesses who had been subjected to severe torture and sexual abuse by the Chinese authorities in order to compel them to testify? Is the Commission aware of the physical and psychological torture which Pastor Gong Shengling has had to endure, and of the extreme concern of such human rights groups as Christian Solidarity Worldwide, who believe that he is in serious danger of losing his life?

Is the Commission aware that over 8 903 Chinese Christians have been arrested and detained over the last decade? Is it also aware that religious activity which is not state-controlled is illegal, and that China is increasingly branding harmless religious groups as dangerous cults?

How does the Commission propose to act in response to the documentary evidence and testimonies given by persecuted Chinese House Church leaders at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights on 2 April? In light of this evidence, which clearly exposes the increasingly discriminatory nature of Chinese policy-making and China's persistent mistreatment of religious believers, what is the Commission doing to prevent the current persecution of religious groups, especially evangelical Christians, still taking place in China?