

Special Session on Tibet NOW!

Monday, 17 March 2008

To respond to the present situation of human rights violations against Tibetans, FORUM-ASIA on behalf of its 40 member organisations and other NGOs submitted a letter to the President of the UN Human Rights Council Doru-Romulus Costea. The letter calls for the Council to hold a Special Session on the current human rights situation in China.

H. E. Ambassador Doru-Romulus Costea

President of the United Nations Human Rights Council

cc. Members of the Human Rights Council

Sub: Appeal for a Special Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council

on the Human Rights Situation in the People's Republic of China

Your Excellency,

The undersigned Non-Governmental Organisations in the Asian region call upon the UN Human Rights Council to hold a Special Session on the current human rights situation in the People's Republic of China.

We welcome that the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on Friday expressed her concern on the Tibetan people's situation and urged "the Government of China to allow demonstrators to exercise their right to freedom of expression and assembly, to refrain from any excessive use of force while maintaining order, and to ensure those arrested are not ill-treated and are accorded due process in line with international standards."

Following her recommendations, we would like to appeal to Council members to address the ongoing gross human rights violations against Tibetans with regards to their right to life, freedom of expression and assembly, among others. We also urge the members to seriously look into the cases of violent crackdown on a series of peaceful demonstrations in the "Tibet Autonomous Region" and Tibetan areas of Qinghai, Gansu and Sichuan provinces in China.

In this respect, we urge the High Commissioner to send a fact-finding mission equipped with full access to all the Tibetan areas where there had been extrajudicial or summary killings, arbitrary detention, and enforced disappearances since 10 March, when the current wave of demonstrations began.

Judging from the information available to us regarding the scale of the ongoing human rights violations against the Tibetan people, including the reported deaths of 80 Tibetans, it is imperative that the Human Rights Council as the principal human rights organ of the United Nations take urgent measures by convening a special session to address the current situation in China. We are of the opinion that the current situation in Tibetan areas is very similar to Burma, where peaceful demonstrators were also attacked by the authorities, and on which this Council took action in September 2007.

We urge the Council to swiftly call upon the Chinese authorities to receive a joint mission of Special Procedures mandate-holders on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary execution and other relevant mandates such as the Special Rapporteur on Torture, the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion and Expression and the Special Representative of Secretary-General on Human Rights Defenders.

We remain at your disposal for any further information or consultation on this urgent matter.

Thank you very much for your attention to this appeal.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of

- Ain O Salish Kendra
- Alliance of Independent Journalist (AJI)
- Alternative ASEAN Network on Burma (ALTSEAN-Burma)
- ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Myanmar Caucus (AIPMC)
- Association of Taiwan Indigenous Peoples' Policies (ATIPP)
- Association of Taiwan Indigenous Peoples' College (ATIPC)
- Asian Centre for Human Rights (ACHR)
- Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
- Asian Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Network (AITPN)
- Banglar Manabadhikar Suraksha Mancha (MASUM)
- Cambodian Human Rights and Development (ADHOC)
- Cambodian League for the Promotion and Defense of Human Rights (LICHADO)
- Centre for Organization Research and Education (CORE)
- Center for Human Rights and Development (CHRD), Mongolia
- Center for Social Action, Research, Training and Documentation (ADHIKAR)
- Citizens' Council for Human Rights, Japan
- Committee for Asian Women (CAW)

- Community Trust Fund (CTF)

- Earth Peoples
- Era Consumer
- Forum for Democracy in Burma (FDB)
- Foundation for Media Alternatives, Philippines
- Friends' Association for Rural Reconstruction (FARR)
- Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW)
- Globe International
- Human Rights and Justice (HAK Association)
- Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP)
- Human Rights Education Institute of Burma (HREIB)
- Human Rights Watch (HRW)

- Indonesian Human Rights Monitor (IMPARSIAL)
- Indonesian Human Rights Working Group (HRWG)
- Indonesian Legal Aid Foundation (YLBHI)
- Indonesian Legal Aid and Human Rights Foundation (PBHI)
- Information Monitor (INFORM)
- Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC)
- International Center for Law in Development
- International NGO Forum for Indonesian Development (INFID)
- Justice System Monitoring Program (JSMP)
- Korean House for International Solidarity (KHIS)
- Lao Human Rights Council
- Law and Society Trust (LST)
- Legal Resources for Social Action (LRSA)
- Madaripur Legal Aid Association (MLAA)
- National Commission for Justice and Peace (NCJP), Pakistan
- Non-Violence International Southeast Asia
- Odhikar - Bangladesh
- Paralegal Training and Service Center (PTSC)
- Panglilingkod Batas Pangkapapatiran Foundation (PBPF)
- Pax Romana ICMICA/MIIC - Asia Pacific

- People's Empowerment for Strong Civil Society
- People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD)
- People's Watch- India
- Philippines Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA)
- PILIPINA Legal Resources Center
- Reporters Without Borders (RSF)

- Resource Integration Center
- Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN)
- Society for Threatened Peoples International
- Suara Rakyat Malaysia (SUARAM)
- Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP)
- Taiwan Association for Human Rights (TAHR)
- Taiwan Indigenous Peoples (NGOs) Alliance
- Tanggol-Kalikasan
- The Federation of the Commission for Disappearances and Victims of Violence (KontraS)
- Think Center
- Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO)
- Women's Welfare Society (WWS)
- Yayasan Anak Merdeka Indonesia

Executive Director

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