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Situation in Tibet

Greens/EFA motion for a resolution

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on behalf of the Green/EFA Group

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Tibet with regard, in particular, to the one on the"Dialogue between the Chinese Government and Envoys of the Dalai Lama" of 15 February 2007,

- having regard to its resolution of 13 December 2007 on the "EU-China Summit - EU/China human rights dialogue",

- having regard to its resolution on EU-China relations of 7 September 2006,

- having regard to its resolution of 6 September 2007 on Human rights dialogues and consultations on human rights with third countries,

A. whereas in Tibet, beginning on March 10, the 49th anniversary of the failed Tibetan national uprising against the Chinese administration, protest broke out at three monasteries with Tibetan monks demonstrating against the Chinese occupation, the forced assimilation and the brutal political, social and cultural repression; whereas His Holiness the Dalai Lama has called the present Chinese policy a "cultural genocide"; whereas more than 60 monks were arrested and the rest confined inside their monasteries,

B. whereas on March 14 protests in the streets erupted into riots in Lhasa's old quarter with clashes between Tibetans and Han Chinese and aggression of shopkeepers and burning and looting of small shops,

C. whereas His Holiness the Dalai Lama urged the demonstrators to protest peacefully and non-violently and reiterated his call for a resumption of negotiations with Beijing with a view to reaching a full and genuine political, cultural and spiritual autonomy of Tibet within China,

D. whereas within 24 hours police officers and security forces cracked down on the demonstrators, gradually taking control of the riot areas and in the following days started searching Tibetan neighborhoods, dragging away and arresting suspects,

E. whereas according to the Chinese authorities 20 people died including a police officer; whereas according to independent sources more than 140 people died in the clashes which extended to the bordering Tibetan-populated regions and thousands have been arrested,

F. whereas a state of emergency has been declared by the Chinese government and shops as well as temples have been closed in Lhasa as well as in other cities with hundreds of paramilitary police officers and army troops moved to Tibet from the rest of China,

G. whereas foreign journalists have been denied access to Tibet and blocked from reaching neighbouring regions with large Tibetan population; whereas foreign reporters who managed to get into Tibet after the riots were forced to leave contradicting the Chinese government's pledge to grant foreign journalists freedom of movement all over China and greater press freedom in the run-up to the Olympic games,

H. whereas the Chinese government appears to be blocking foreign websites inside China and censoring foreign television broadcasts about the situation in Tibet; whereas Chinese authorities accused foreign media of misrepresenting the events showing only footages of alleged aggressions of ethnic Hans by Tibetans and started a nationalist anti-Tibetan campaign,

I. whereas Tibetan Buddhism as well as the other religions are subjected to restrictions and closely controlled by the state; whereas Chinese authorities keep on interfering in the internal affairs of the Tibetan religious hierarchy with regard, in particular, to the replacement of the Panchem Lama,

J. whereas the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has expected that awarding the 2008 Olympic Games to China would open up the country and improve the human rights situation; whereas China has started investigating the political views of Olympic athletes;

K. whereas every effort should be made in order to take advantage of the Olympic games in Beijing and use them as an extraordinary opportunity to bring about democratic reforms in China and make significant progress as regards the question of Tibet,

L. whereas the IOC is supposed to be a worldwide active civil society organization with sporting as well as social responsibilities; whereas the IOC had a praiseworthy initiative at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, where the Olympic cauldron at the opening ceremony was lit by an Aborigine, the athlete Cathy Freeman;

M. whereas the human rights situation in China has shown no sign of improvement as proved by the five-year prison sentence on 24 March of human rights activist Yang Chunlin who was charged with subverting the power of the state for circulating an open letter titled "We want Human Rights, not the Olympics",

N. whereas the EU-China human rights dialogue established in 2000 has achieved so far no tangible results; whereas the lack of results is also the consequence of an uncoordinated and ineffective EU common foreign policy towards China,

O. whereas the 27 ministers of Foreign Affairs of the EU who met on 29 March in Brdo at the informal meeting (Gymnich) discussed the situation in Tibet without adopting any significant and substantial measure vis-a-vis the ongoing Chinese repression against the Tibetan population,

1. Strongly condemns all acts of violence that took place in the streets of Lhasa and in Tibet and expresses its sincere condolences to the families of the victims;
2. Firmly condemns the brutal repression by the Chinese security forces against Tibetan demonstrators and expresses its deep concern about the policy of assimilation of the People's Republic of China's for Tibet as well as for other minorities like the Uyghurs;
3. Calls for an independent international inquiry of the tragic events and urges the Chinese authorities to grant foreign reporters full access to Tibet and the bordering regions, allowing them to do their job freely;
4. Expresses its deep concern at the wave of arrests that took place after the demonstrations with over

400 people jailed in Lhasa and calls for the immediate release of all those who protested peacefully exercising their legitimate right to freedom of expression;

5. Regrets that the six rounds of talks between the Beijing authorities and the representatives of the Dalai Lama were inconclusive and supports the Dalai Lama's call for a resumption of negotiations between the two sides; expects the negotiations to be brought back on tracks before the Olympic games and calls on the Chinese authorities to invite the Dalai Lama to the opening ceremony of the games as a sign of good will; calls on the EU leaders not to attend this ceremony in the case that no progress is made in regards to the Tibetan question;
6. Reiterates, in this regard, its call on the Council to appoint a special envoy for Tibetan issues in order to facilitate the dialogue between the parties and closely follow the negotiations once they are resumed;
7. Calls on China to respect its commitments to human and minority rights and the rule of law; urges China not to abuse the 2008 Olympic Games by arresting dissidents, journalists and human rights activists to prevent embarrassing demonstrations and reports;
8. Calls on the People's Republic of China to allow injured Tibetans to receive adequate medical attention and arrested Tibetans to receive legal assistance;
9. Calls upon China to allow an independent body to have access to Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the Panchen Lama of Tibet, and his parents, as requested by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, and to stop interfering with religious affairs;
10. Deplores that despite the IOC's and the world community's expectations, the People's Republic of China, nevertheless, continues to commit serious human and minority rights violations;
11. Calls on the Chinese authorities to issue a standing invitation to the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights and the UN mechanisms to visit Tibet; urges the United Nations Human Rights' Council in Geneva (March 3rd-28th 2008) to condemn human rights violations in the People's Republic of China;
12. Calls on the People's Republic of China in the framework of its human rights dialogue with the European Union to secure EU-monitors to enter Tibet in order to get an objective picture; urges the European Commission, in this regard, to take the initiative;
13. Urges the People's Republic of China to stop scrutinizing and judging Olympic athletes by their political views and considering to ban them from the Olympic Games if they dissent from the Chinese government's official position;
14. Regrets the lack of a coordinated and coherent European policy towards China that has been marked so far by a wild competition among EU leaders whose only interest was to sign lucrative contracts with the Chinese authorities at the expense of human rights; regrets that the respect for human rights is no criteria for the eligibility of the venue of the Olympic games;
15. Calls, therefore, upon the European Union and the Member States to seriously consider common actions vis-à-vis the People's Republic of China in case the situation does not improve, including the full boycott of the games, and to reassess the strategic partnership with China;
16. Urges China to ratify without any further delay and in any case before the Olympic games the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
17. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the parliaments of the Member States, the President and Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China and the International Olympic Committee.

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