



Auswärtiges Amt
Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs
Ms. Annalena Baerbock, MP
Werderscher Markt 1
10117 Berlin
Germany

Cc: Dr. Martin Thümmel, Foreign Office

27 February 2023

Dear Hon. Annalena Baerbock, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany; and Honorable G20 Foreign Ministers,

Re: China's Colonial Boarding Schools in Tibet

We, a coalition of over 125 Tibet-related rights groups, are writing to you ahead of the G20 Foreign Ministers Meeting in New Delhi urging you to take firm joint action concerning the Chinese government's relentless colonisation of Tibet and attempts to eradicate Tibetans' distinct identity.

Occupied for over seven decades, China's rule in Tibet is one of the last remnants of 20th-century colonialism. This is epitomised by a vast and alarming system of colonial boarding schools and preschools housing close to 1-million Tibetan children. This equates to three out of every four Tibetan students ages 6-18 being separated from their parents and communities and living under state control.¹ On top of this, it is estimated at least 100-150K four-and five-year-olds in rural areas are being forced to attend boarding preschools - where they must sleep - at least 5 nights a week - away from the care and protection of their parents.

¹ "Separated From Their Families, Hidden From the World: China's Vast System of Colonial Boarding Schools Inside Tibet", Tibet Action Institute, 2021: https://tibetaction.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/2021_TAI_ColonialBoardingSchoolReport_Digital.pdf

On 6 February 2023 a group of UN human rights experts released a statement expressing alarm concerning “the residential school system for Tibetan children [that] appears to act as a mandatory large-scale programme intended to assimilate Tibetans into majority Han culture, contrary to international human rights standards.”²

Further concern was raised by The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) in Geneva expert committee members reiterated strong concern about the erosion of Tibetan language “in the push for a unified curriculum and the national common language policy”. This policy has resulted in Tibetan being replaced by Chinese as the medium of instruction in schools throughout Tibet, including in kindergartens where “Tibetan children as young as four to six are being sent to boarding schools where they are completely deprived of access to their language and their culture.”³

By intentionally uprooting Tibetan children from their families and culture, making them live in state-run boarding schools, the Chinese authorities are using one of the most heinous tools of colonisation to attack Tibetan identity. While China claims to be educating Tibetan children, the world knows what it looks like when children are pushed into residential schools run by a state that wants to wipe out their culture, including high levels of alienation, loss of identity, and intergenerational trauma.

Given the gravity and urgency of this situation, we call on G20 leaders to address this attack on Tibetan identity with Chinese leaders in both multi-lateral and bi-lateral meetings. We further call on you to release a robust joint statement of concern that:

- 1) Urges the Chinese government to halt the residential boarding school and preschool system in Tibet and to uphold the current constitutional and statutory protections for Tibetan language promotion and preservation.
- 2) Denounces China’s attempts to eradicate Tibetans’ distinct identity, including their language, culture, history, and way of life.

Together your governments are uniquely positioned to exercise strong and direct influence on China's leadership. By acting in unison, you will not only increase your

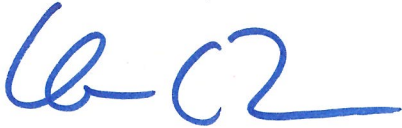
² UN experts alarmed by separation of 1 million Tibetan children from families and forced assimilation at residential schools, 6 February 2023, [https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/02/china-un-experts-alarmed-separation-1-million-tibetan-children-families-and#:~:text=GENEVA%20\(6%20February%202023\)%20%E2%80%93%2C%20UN%20experts%20warned%20today](https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/02/china-un-experts-alarmed-separation-1-million-tibetan-children-families-and#:~:text=GENEVA%20(6%20February%202023)%20%E2%80%93%2C%20UN%20experts%20warned%20today)

³ The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) is the body of 18 independent experts that monitors implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights by its State parties. The Covenant enshrines economic, social and cultural rights such as the rights to adequate food, adequate housing, education, health, social security, water and sanitation, and work. The Committee seeks to develop a constructive dialogue with State parties, determine whether the Covenant's norms are being applied, and assess how the implementation and enforcement of the Covenant could be improved so all people can enjoy these rights in full. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/news/2023/02/committee-economic-social-and-cultural-rights-commends-china-efforts-reduce-poverty>

influence over Beijing, but this common approach will provide participating governments with a greater measure of protection from China's efforts to impose its authoritarian influence on our own democracies.

We look forward to your urgent response on this request.

Yours sincerely



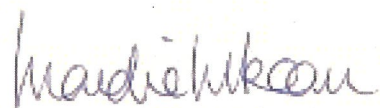
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Attachment: Supporting organisations

<p>Argentina CADAL</p> <p>Australia Australia Tibet Council Tibetan Community of Victoria Tibetan Community, Queensland Sakya Trinley Ling Tibet Action Group of Western Tibet Support Group Adelaide</p> <p>Brazil RangZen:Movimento Tibete Livre Centro De Cultura Tibetana</p> <p>Canada Canada Tibet Committee Students for a Free Tibet – Canada Tibetan Cultural Association – Quebec</p> <p>European Union Casa del Tibet – Spain Czechs Support Tibet Phagma Drolma - Arya Tara Les Amis du Tibet Luxembourg Save Tibet Austria Tibet Support Group - Ireland Tibet Support Group – Netherlands Tibetan Community Austria Tibetan Community in Ireland EcoTibet Ireland Lungta Association Belgium Friends of Tibet in Finland Norwegian Tibet Committee Tibet Support Committee Denmark Tibetan Community in Denmark Tibetan Community Sweden Students for a Free Tibet Denmark Save Tibet Foundation Swedish Tibet Committee Tibet cesky Tibetan Programme of The Other Space Foundation TSG – Slovenia</p>	<p>India [Cont.] Tibet Friendship Society - Bihar Tibet Friendship Society - Dashthrathpuni Tibet Friendship Society - Delhi Tibet Friendship Society - Muzaffarpur National Campaign for Tibetan Support National Democratic Party of Tibet Students for a Free Tibet India Tibet Lives Tibetan Women's Association The Youth Liberation Front of Tibet, East-Turkestan, Manchuria & Inner-Mongolia Tibetan Youth Congress Tibet Friendship Society, Bharrat Tibbat Sahyog Manch</p> <p>Indonesia Roof of the World Foundation</p> <p>Italy Associazione Italia-Tibet Tibetan Community of Italy</p> <p>Japan Students for a Free Tibet Japan Free Tibet Fukuoka Dream for Children Tibet Support Group Kiku Japan Association of Monks for Tibet (Super Sangha)</p> <p>Mexico Casa Tibet México Voces de Tibet</p> <p>United Kingdom Free Tibet Tibet Solidarity Tibetan Community in Britain</p> <p>United States Association Cognizance Tibet, North Carolina</p>
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<p>Tibetan Youth Association in Europe Grupo de Apoio ao Tibete, Portugal Les Amis du Tibet – Belgium</p> <p>France Aide aux Refugies Tibetains Association Drôme Ardèche-Tibet Briançon05 Urgence Tibet France-Tibet Lions Des Neiges Mont Blanc Maison des Himalayas Maison du Tibet – Tibet Info Objectif Tibet Passeport Tibetain Students for a Free Tibet – France Tashi Delek Bordeaux Tibetan Community France</p> <p>Germany International Society of Human Rights, Munich Tibetan Association of Germany</p> <p>India Anterrashtriya Bharat - Tibbet Sahyog Samiti Balijara Foundation - Maharashtra Bharat Tibet Sangh - India Bharat Tibet Sangh - Jammu Bharat Tibbat Sahyog Manch Bharat Tibbat Samanvay Sangh Core Group for Tibetan Cause, India Foundation for Universal Responsibility of H. H. the Dalai Lama Ganasamannay Kolkata Himalayan Committee for Action on Tibet - Kinnaur Tibet Friendship and Cooperation Society India Tibet Friendship Society - India</p>	<p>Bay Area Friends of Tibet Boston Tibet Network Committee of 100 for Tibet International Tibet Independence Movement Santa Barbara Friends of Tibet Sierra Friends of Tibet Students for a Free Tibet Tibet Committee of Fairbanks Tibet Action Institute Tibet Justice Center Tibetan Association of Ithaca Tibetan Association of Northern California Tibetan Association of Philadelphia Tibetans of Mixed Heritage TIBETmichigan United Nations for a Free Tibet (UNFFT) U.S. Tibet Committee</p> <p>Rest of the World Swiss Tibetan Friendship Association Comite de Apoyo al Tibet Amigos de Tibet, Colombia Amigos del Tíbet - Chile Amigos del Tibet - El Salvador Asociación Cultural Peruano Tibetana Asociación Cultural Tibetano Costarricense Friends of Tibet - Costa Rica Le Club Français - Paraguay Tibet Group - Panama Tíbet Patria Libre - Uruguay World League for Freedom and Democracy Circle of Friends - Philippines Israeli Friends of the Tibetan People Tibet Support Group Kenya Tibet Rescue Initiative in Africa Friends of Tibet New Zealand Taiwan Friends of Tibet Human Rights Network for Tibet and Taiwan Students for a Free Tibet Taiwan</p>
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