

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Human Rights Council

Forty-third Regular Session

March 11, 2020

Item 4: General Debate - Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

Statement delivered by Christa Meindersma on behalf of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights

Madam Vice-President,

We are deeply concerned by the widespread human rights violations suffered by Tibetans in the People's Republic of China.

In recent years, the Chinese government has expanded its surveillance and control of the Tibetan people by using new technology and deploying Party cadres to monasteries, schools and homes. The Chinese government is now accelerating its sinicisation agenda. Tibetans, therefore, face threats on all fronts to their civil, political, socio-economic and cultural rights.

An example of this is the new regulation to establish "model areas for national unity and progress" in the Tibet Autonomous Region. Passed on January 11, 2020, the regulation gives government powers to enforce a top-down Han-centric way of life using citizens to supervise compliance. This is deeply concerning, because the regulation explicitly rejects the principle of preferential treatment protected by the Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law.

Tibetans who have lawfully called for fair treatment have been harshly repressed. Tashi Wangchuk, the Tibetan language advocate, continues to serve his five-year prison sentence for invoking national laws that protect Tibetan language education and use.

We urge the Council to call on China to respect international human rights standards, which are protected by national laws and international conventions.

Thank you, Madam Vice-President.