

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Human Rights Council

Forty-eighth Regular Session

September 24, 2021

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

Statement delivered by Mélanie Blondelle on behalf of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights

Madam President,

Last month, the People's Republic of China (PRC) organised festivities in Lhasa in celebration of the 70th anniversary of its so-called "peaceful liberation of Tibet". The tightly scripted ceremonies stood in stark contrast to the reality on the ground.

The Chinese government continues to implement policies of "sinicization" in Tibet, which have a tremendously negative impact on Tibetan culture and on the rights of Tibetans. Dissent, independent thought, and local community activism is persecuted relentlessly, and Tibetan culture is subjected to ideological transformation. We urge all stakeholders to take, more seriously, what represents a sustained attack on the integrity of human rights conventions, and an onslaught on a culture that is world heritage.

We continue to call for unfettered access and an opening up of Tibet. The lack of access to Tibet should have consequences, especially as the Chinese government strengthens its efforts to manipulate public opinion. Unfettered access facilitates transparency and accountability, and the protection of human rights.

The Human Rights Council needs to take concerted efforts to address the policies implemented by the PRC, and it must pay attention to the worsening situation in Tibet. We remain concerned about the apparent lack of support for the unprecedented June 2020 call by UN Special Procedures for the creation of a special independent mechanism to monitor and investigate human rights violations by the Chinese government. All stakeholders should voice their support and actively work to implement the recommendations.

Thank you.