

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Human Rights Council
Fifty-third Regular Session
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Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children

Statement delivered by Kai Mueller on behalf of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights

Mr. President,

I would like to thank the Special Rapporteur for her report A/HRC/53/28.

In February and April this year UN experts expressed¹ deep concern about the serious human rights violations committed against Tibetans in the Tibet Autonomous Region and other Tibetan populated regions, particularly allegations of labour exploitation which may amount to forced labour, trafficking for purposes of forced labour, marginalization of the Tibetan language, religion, way of life and forced political indoctrination of prisoners violating the freedoms of thought, conscience, opinion and expression.

Likewise, in its Concluding Observations on China, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women called for to “immediately halt non-voluntary “labour transfer” and “vocational training” programmes in the Tibet Autonomous Region.”²

The Committee stated that it remains concerned, about the “absence of comprehensive anti-trafficking legislation and the lack of clarity as to whether the legislation of the State party criminalizes all forms of trafficking, including trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, forced labour, forced marriage, organ removals and illegal adoption, especially among Uyghur and Tibetan communities.

We urge States to support the UN experts concerns and recommendations, and to call on the authorities to clarify the measures in place for Tibetans to opt out of vocational training and labour transfer programmes and to bring any such programs in conformity with international law.

Thank you.

¹ OHCHR, AL CHN 14/2022, 6 February 2023,
<https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gId=27776>.

² CEDAW, Concluding Observations on China, CEDAW/C/CHN/CO/9, 30 May 2023,
https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CEDAW%2FC%2FCHN%2FCO%2F9&Lang=en.