

Hello All!

I am writing to inform you of a very important campaigning event for us to show our support for human rights advocacy in China. On December 2nd, Prime Minister Harper will be travelling to China to meet with the Chinese government, likely to discuss trade and other related issues in the interests of the Canadian economy. This presents an excellent opportunity to raise Canadians' awareness about the devastating human rights abuses that are currently being practised in China. Personally, I was astonished at how little I knew of the true reality of their situation.

Many of these violations include: The One Child Policy; the Death Penalty for 65 separate crimes; Pervasive Internet Censorship of foreign media and internal dissent (known by rights organizations as 'the Great Firewall of China' created by Cisco, and former Nortel, and supported by Google and Yahoo among many others); Arbitrary Detention and Widespread Torture; Suppression of Religious Freedom (including the occupation and cultural extinction of Tibet); Persecution of Journalists, Academics, Human Rights Lawyers and Activists, and anyone who speaks out in any way against the CCP, human rights abuses or unfair treatment; Judicial Corruption and lack of due process; Treatment of rural residents as second class citizens (including illegal forced land seizure and relocation of tens of millions of farmers and persecution of any who try to take legal action); Persecution of minority groups; and if that's not enough, the existence of more than 300 forced labour camps where Organ Harvesting, Torture and Starvation are pervasive (see David Matas' and David Kilgour's Investigation on Falun Gong at <http://www.organharvestinvestigation.net/>).

Canadians should also be aware that these forced labour camps are producing goods that are shipped to and sold in Canada, among many other countries.

***To electronically sign the petition, simply click the following link and then scroll to the bottom of that page and click on "sign the petition" highlighted in blue:

http://www.my-cause.com/harpers_trip_to_china

The following letter has been sent to Mr. Harper, asking that he use his diplomatic status to address the essential rights of humanity being severely disregarded in China today:

Prime Minister Stephen Harper
80 Wellington St

Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister Harper,

We are Chinese nationals living in China and abroad. Our homeland today contains about twenty percent of the world's population. This fact alone suggests that China must be the prime focus of Canada's leadership on human rights internationally.

For the past 60 years, China has been governed by a one-party state whose disregard for fundamental human values and the political rights of religious and cultural groups has been documented by numerous legislative hearings, international commissions and human rights organizations. This month, for example, the American Congressional Executive Commission on China issued its annual report, which reiterated the Beijing party-state's ongoing systematic disregard for the rights of its citizens, including Christians and people peacefully practising their freedom of expression.

Neither economic growth in China nor promises of trade should blind us to this reality.

Canadian advocacy for human rights has been important to the advancement of freedom around the world, including China. Abandonment of this cornerstone of Canadian engagement will not only damage Canada's reputation, but, more importantly, demoralize the millions of Chinese who are fighting daily for their basic dignity and freedom. It can also jeopardize the chances for China's peaceful transition to democracy, resulting in long-term strategic problems for Canada and increasing domestic instability within China. We stand wholeheartedly behind engagement with China, but it must be a principled and coherent engagement, firmly rooted in universal values.

We therefore ask you to re-state Canada's human rights policy to the Chinese leaders, as well as to the Chinese people, during your December visit, and to emphasize that continued improvement of Canada-China relations depends on China's progress on human dignity. Specifically, we ask you to use your power of persuasion and your skill in international diplomacy to:

1. Request the release of political prisoners and rights-defending journalists, particularly ask release of those people who were seriously ill and may die in prison, and those who experience grave torture: Wang Rongqing, Yang Tianshui, Xu Wanping, Yang Maodong, Huang Qi, Wang Bingzhang, Chen Guangcheng, Hu Jia, Jin Haike. Please also inquire the whereabouts of Gao Zhisheng.

2. Attend a church service while you are in Beijing, and urge the Government to cease the persecution of family churches and other spiritual communities such as the Falun Gong;
3. Host a meeting in the Canadian Embassy in Beijing with Liu Xia, wife of the distinguished Chinese intellectual and author of Charter 08, Liu Xiaobo, who is currently in prison and charged with state subversion.
4. Urge the Chinese government publicly to address the real history of the June 4, 1989 massacre at Tiananmen Square and redress the injustices suffered by those who died or were injured.
5. Encourage a genuine dialogue between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama and between the government and the Uyghurs, and call for an independent, open, fair, judicial process for cases related to the events of 3/14/2008 and 7/5/2009.

At Tiananmen Square in 1989, many among us based our efforts on Canadian, European and American democracy norms. We urge you to recognize that totalitarians still rule much of humanity. Please reflect on the fact that the victims of 60 years of Chinese party policies have surpassed those of Hitler and Stalin combined. We urge you to recommit your government to the cause of dignity for all by taking the above steps.

Sincerely yours,

-----Letter Ends-----

With all that said, on DECEMBER 1ST, 2009, from 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. On the LAWN OF PARLIAMENT HILL, there will be a peaceful demonstration to further reveal these atrocities. Amnesty International will be holding a press conference in the House of Commons at 10:30 a.m., and a walk from the Hill to the Chinese Embassy will follow.

***You can truly make all the difference by taking 30 seconds to add your voice to the petition to Prime Minister Harper. To do so, click the following link, scroll to the bottom and click on "sign the petition" highlighted in blue:

http://www.my-cause.com/harpers_trip_to_china

For any questions or more information, please do not hesitate to send me an email at jmcki074@uottawa.ca OR visit

<http://www.hrichina.org/public/index>

Thank you kindly for taking the time to read this message, and I hope to see some of you soon!

Sincerely,

James McKinnon-Burrows
Conflict Studies & Human Rights
University of Ottawa

p.s. Should you have a minute to forward this message go someone who may be interested, that would be of great help!