

*Initiatives for China* has launched a large-scale signature appeal against the People's Republic of China's ("China") bid to once again become a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

The UN General Assembly shall convene in November 2013 to select new members of the UN Human Rights Council. China, which had two consecutive terms of membership with a one-year leave, has submitted its candidacy.

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In its founding resolution 60/251 passed in 2006, the UN General Assembly states that the election of new members "shall take into account the contribution of candidates to the promotion and protection of human rights and their voluntary pledges and commitments thereto." Members shall "uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights."

As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China is expected to defend the human rights principals set forth by the UN Charter and The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). But in reality, the Chinese government has brutally violated these principles with its horrific human rights records.

## Continuing human rights abuses

Almost a quarter century passed since the Tiananmen Massacre (1989), yet the Chinese government has never admitted its wrongdoing, and has turned a deaf ear to the justifiable requests for "truth, compensation and accountability" made by the victims group Tiananmen Mothers. Even worse, the Chinese government has continually repressed any individuals and groups including the Tiananmen Mothers who have been working to expose the truth and commemorate the victims.

The Tiananmen massacre was not an isolated incident. In the ensuing years, the Chinese government has continued to violated its citizens' human rights, with all kinds of Tiananmen-like incidents.

Freedom of speech, press, assembly, association, protest, rally, strike and belief have been deprived. Citizens have been taken into custody without due process, with death and disappearances sometimes following. Quite a number of prisoners of conscience have been jailed. Forced demolition, land grabs, forced abortions, illegal prison cells and arrests, torture and brutal beatings happen without restraint. Citizens and their relatives are deprived of their basic rights of exiting and entering the country. Religious groups such as Christian, Falun Gong, Tibetan and Chinese Buddhism, Islamic and Xinjiang Uyghur Muslim, have faced severe

repression. Non-Han Chinese minority groups have been exploited economically, culturally, with horrific records that have stunned the world, and hardened the hearts of all ethnic groups in China.

The Chinese government has repeated its violations of human rights, despite having signed the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as the UN Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Meanwhile, the government has hypocritically inserted "The State respects and preserves human rights" into its Constitution.

From 2006 to 2012, while China was a member of the UN Human Rights Council, the government had established an oppressive stability-maintenance system, with funding surpassing its national defense budget. These funds were used by China to monitor and repress its own people. Thousands of instances of illegal repression happened during this period, including the cases of Liu Xiaobo/Liu Xia, Gao Zhisheng, Ai Weiwei, Chen Guangcheng, Hada, Gheyret Niyaz, Dhondup Wangchen, among others.

China has become the only country that has put a Nobel laureate behind bars. Its problematic ethnic policy has led to a series of deplorable incidents. There was the Lhasa incident on March 14, 2008 in Tibet, the Urumqi 5 July Incident, Mongolian herdsman Zorigt death incident in 2011, and more than 100 Tibetan self-immolations. In the most recent months, while China has submitted its bid to become a UN Human Rights Council member, the government has intensified its suppression of online freedom of speech and of the citizen movement. It has arrested and jailed dozens of activists who voiced their opinions on disclosing personal wealth of officialdom and those active online public opinion leaders.

### **Violations beyond the mainland**

The Chinese governmental human rights violation has spread beyond the border of Mainland Chinese, and spilled into Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan.

In Hong Kong, the Chinese government has tried to control elections of the Chief Executive and local legislature with its "Pay-to-Play" tickets. A number of Pro-Democracy legislators are denied visitation passes, and cannot return to the mainland. Media professionals cannot come to the mainland for interviews, and Hong Kong journalists on the mainland suffer intimidation and even beatings. Some businessmen have become victims of fraud, with no access to appeal for justice.

All of these barriers have failed the commitment of "One Country, Two Systems," thus causing Hong Kong residents to launch "Occupy Central" movement, which has been blamed and demonized by Beijing regime.

Macau has faced even stricter control from the Beijing regime. With Legislature 23, and overall control of the media, democracy and social movements are experiencing great difficulty. Beijing has made it impossible even for a number of Hong Kong pro-democracy members to visit

Macau.

Taiwanese democracy has also severely suffered at the hands of Beijing. News media has been interfered with and freedom of speech at risk. Taiwan businessmen's interests cannot be guaranteed on the mainland with increasing number of violations against them. A number of democratic individuals have been barred from entrance into Hong Kong and the Mainland, while members of religious groups, like Falun gong, have been detained illegally.

Even worse, the Chinese government has continually repressed Taiwan on the international stage, leaving the people in Taiwan without representation at the UN. All of these unfortunate and tragic events happening in China under the authoritarian rule have made China become a place plagued with human rights tragedies. Such a tragic situation in China has spread into its neighboring regions. If such a horrific condition cannot be improved, how can China be qualified for admission into the UN Human Rights Council?

We ourselves are all victims of such a Communist authoritarian rule in China, being enslaved, repressed, deprived, politically misrepresented and brainwashed, fooled, manipulated, intimidated, divided and demonized, every day and everywhere in China, and beyond. We must engage with the international community to have a grand debate and conversation regarding China's questionable qualifications to become a member of the UN Human Rights Council. We want to make sure that the Chinese government's human rights violation records must be made available in full before the Human Rights Council, pushing the international community to have a realistic understanding of the Communist authoritarian regime in China and the current conditions regarding political, economic, societal, cultural, religious, ethnic and environmental issues in today's China. With joint efforts of international justice, every one of us has a role to play in promoting human rights progress in China.

To those ends, we call on each and every one of the fellow Chinese, and our sisters and brothers in Tibetan, Uyghur and Mongolian ethnic communities to join us hand in hand and raise your voices on the stage of the UN Human Rights Council to foil the Communist authoritarian regime in China, in the name of human rights. We the people dare to launch our first assault against the dictatorship in the history of the United Nations.

We request your signature to oppose China's eligibility and qualification to join the UN Human Rights Council. Step up your efforts to present the current Chinese human rights record to the United Nations, and engage all possible activities with all available resources to prevent China becoming a member of the UN Human Rights Council.

In 1945, when one of the worst periods of violence in human history had ended, 26 countries signed the Charter of the United Nations, to shed the light of hope for the world amid its darkest moment of horror.

The best wishes of human beings have been laid out in the Charter of the United Nations, "to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small."

In 1948 the UN adopted and promulgated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as a milestone of global progress of human beings. However, we must question the following: How come the UN Charter, with its elegant statement on human wishes and endeavors about the pursuit peace and security, can be so easily ignored by its members? How come the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with principles to preserve human dignity, can be treated with such contempt?

### Helping other brutal regimes

While the Chinese government has continually violated human rights within the country, its foreign policy has assisted dictatorships in North Korea, Iran and Syria, among other rogue regimes. These regimes have repressed their own people. With its brash arrogance, greed and lack of confidence, the Chinese government has landed its brutal rule beyond its borders. The Chinese regime has showed an open contempt that challenges the foundations of human civilization.

Yet, some of those regimes with horrible human rights records, like China, have also taken seats on the UN Human Rights Council. Why so? Back in February 2011, Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi twice praised the Chinese government's massacre on Tiananmen Square in 1989. This demonstrates that a crime being ignored will only spread and be imitated. On an encouraging note, the United Nations ceased Libyan membership at the UN Human Rights Council in March 2011 for its government's role in massacre. We hope the same human rights standards will be applied to all member countries of the United Nations, including China.

The United Nations was founded with hard truths from World War II, from which we must at least draw two basic lessons: One is that any regime that deprives its citizens fundamental human rights will face instability; and, the world will suffer harm from those unstable regimes if the international community continues to ignore such violations of human rights by the government.

With these two lessons in mind, we firmly believe that human dignity must be preserved, with shared justice and human rights standards. Any violation of human rights must not go unnoticed behind the curtains of cultural relativism and cultural exceptionalism.

We solemnly declare that it is wrong for the United Nations to apply different standards to different member countries. It is wrong to allow those regimes without legitimate representation of its people or which even harm its people, to join the United Nations. It is wrong to allow a dictatorship at the UN Security Council to veto a resolution in order to foil the international community's efforts to punish human rights violators. It is wrong to allow such human rights violators like China to sit at the UN Human Rights Council.

For any organizations, regardless of its size, its eventual interest will have to depend and come to its individual members. For the United Nations, its ultimate aim is to serve the well-being and interests of all the people of its member countries. And these have been clearly declared in the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as the most important document for the UN to date.

Therefore, power and influence of the UN members should be proportionate by the degree of democracy and legitimate representation of its people. Any dictatorship does not actually represent its own people and therefore cannot represent its own people at the UN. The United Nations must pay more attention to the unheard voices of citizens of non-democracies.

Under current rules, any country needs 97 votes at the UN General Assembly to become a member of the UN Human Rights Council. If each and every democracy says "No," the chances for China are zero. Such a vote on China will test any democratic country's commitment to democracy and human rights.

Therefore, we call on all democracies not to humiliate your great country and voters, and choose to cast a "No" vote on China, in the name of humanitarian principles.

China is a member nation that cannot be taken lightly, with vast land and a huge population, combined with rising economy and military. But the United Nations should and must not submit to national power by applying different human rights standards to different members. We believe the United Nations represents the fundamental values and principles of human beings, and therefore, should not and must not sit idly by in face of the horrible human rights violations in China.

***We therefore appeal to the United Nations to do the following:***

*(1) Press the Chinese government to release Liu Xiaobo, Wang Bingzhang, and other political prisoners, to start with its improvements of human rights records.*

*(2) Push the Chinese government to allow the Tiananmen Mothers to openly and freely commemorate their victims on the 25th anniversary of Tiananmen Massacre. The United Nations should conduct an independent investigation of the Tiananmen Massacre, to seek comprehensive truth for the public, and urge the Chinese government to answer their justifiable requests of "Truth, Compensation and Accountability" from the Tiananmen Mothers.*

*(3) To conduct a comprehensive and independent investigation of Tibetan self-immolation and publish its finding report, and press the Chinese government to allow the return of Tibetan spiritual leader to Tibet.*

*(4) To conduct a comprehensive and independent investigation of the July 5 Urumuqi Incident and publish its findings.*

*(5) To conduct a comprehensive and independent 5.25 Zorigt death incident and publish its*

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*findings.*

*(6) To conduct a comprehensive and independent investigation of the 14-year long repression against Falun gong, and urges the Chinese government to stop persecuting all religious groups.*

*(7) Urges the Chinese government to respect the democratic rights of the residents in Hong Kong and Macau, and to preserve the "One Country Two System" promise, and to realize the direct and popular election of Chief Executives and local legislature.*

*(8) Take steps to allow the people in Taiwan to have their representation at UN-led institutions, and to stop any further repression on Taiwan at international community.*

[Link to petition](#)