

UK Foreign Office to answer human rights questions on Twitter

[27 April 2016] UK Foreign Office Minister Baroness Anelay will be answering questions live on Twitter at 12 noon on Thursday 28 April. The minister will be responding to questions specifically on human rights and the Foreign Office's recently released Human Rights & Democracy Annual Report. Take action: Ask the Minister what action the UK government plans to take on Tibet.

Read the Foreign Office announcement for the Twitter event via www.gov.uk

Take Action

1. Send your questions now, via Twitter, to @JoyceAnelay using the hashtag #askFCO.
2. Follow Tibet Society on Twitter - @tibetsociety

(For those not on Twitter, Tibet Society is planning an email and letter-writing action regarding the Foreign Office's annual human rights report and the upcoming UK-China Human Rights Dialogue, provisionally due to be held at the end of May.)

Tibet Society has already tweeted a number of questions to Baroness Anelay, including the following:

@JoyceAnelay #askFCO Why has #Tibet been dropped from the annual human rights report? Is Tibet no longer a priority for the UK government?

@JoyceAnelay #askFCO Where does #China's crackdown on freedom of religion & expression in #Tibet fit in FCO's new "mainstreaming" approach?

@JoyceAnelay #askFCO How does UK plan to make difference for human rights in Tibet, assessed as 2nd worst for freedom in world after Syria?

Suggested Questions

Please feel free to ask your own questions relating to Tibet and human rights. Copy the ones above or use the suggestions below. Note: Some questions will need to be edited to fit Twitter's 140 character limit.

Why has Tibet been dropped from the Foreign Office's annual human rights report?

Last year, Tibet had its own section under China, (consisting of six paragraphs and 338 words) referring to a range of issues and cases, including the shooting of protestors in Kardze in August 2014, the imprisonment of singers and songwriters and self-immolation protests. The report also referred to some of the UK government's actions including raising political prisoner cases, calling for dialogue between Chinese and Tibetan representatives and requesting access to the TAR.

This year, the only mention of Tibet comes in a 10-word sentence, "Requests for human rights monitoring visits to Tibet were refused."

Where does China's crackdown on freedoms in Tibet, including the freedoms of religion and expression, fit in the Foreign Office's "mainstreaming" strategy of human rights?

Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond, in his foreword to the report says that the Foreign has now "mainstreamed" human rights. He adds that the Foreign Office 's strategy is "to support and strengthen human rights, under three broad themes: democratic values and the rule of law; human rights for a stable world; and strengthening the rules-based international system."

Will the Minister condemn China for its ongoing crackdown on human rights in Tibet, which has led to Tibet being assessed as the second worst region in the world for lack of freedom and human rights (second only to Syria)?

Tibet was ranked as the second worst place for freedom and human rights in 2015 by US-based NGO Freedom House. Only Syria had a worse ranking on overall freedom than Tibet in the past year. Countries with notoriously poor human rights records, such as North Korea, Somalia and Saudi Arabia, fared better than Tibet.

[Click here to read more about the Freedom House report.](#)

Will the UK government call on China to release Tibetan blogger Shokjang, jailed for three years for peacefully expressing his views?

[Click here to read more about Shokjang's case.](#)

Will the UK government call for the release of Tashi Wangchuk, detained for advocating Tibetan language education in Tibet?

[Click here to read more about Tashi Wangchuk's case.](#)

Will the UK government call on China to release Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the true Panchen Lama, who was abducted in 1995 and not been seen since?

[Click here to read more about the Panchen Lama's case.](#)

How does the UK government plan to make a difference for the human rights of Tibetans in Tibet?

Will the UK government back its own volition, of calling on China to negotiate with Tibetan representatives, and meet the Dalai Lama and Sikyong itself?

Will the UK government stop undermining Tibetans' right to self-determination by using the phrase "the UK does not support Tibetan independence"?

Will the UK government make a robust public statement calling on China to end its repression in Tibet?

Will the UK government call on China to open Tibet to all, including international observers and foreign media?

Will the UK government consider promoting a "golden era" for human rights in Tibet and China, and not just for trade relations?

Further reading:

Annual Report on Human Rights & Democracy: 2015 (Foreign Office, 21 April 2016)

Read the China section from the Foreign Office's annual report

Tibet Society, the world's first Tibet support group, was founded in 1959. Funded by its members, it has been working for over 50 years to seek justice for Tibet through parliamentary lobbying, campaigns and actions. Help keep Tibet alive by joining Tibet Society today. Annual membership £24; Family £36; Life £500.

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