

Brussels Conference Hears That China is “Perceived as a Threat to the Global Stability of the World in the Near Future.”

Leading human rights activists debate China's human rights record, and say Beijing's political agenda “remains a critical issue.”

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, March 4, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The “delicate balance” between preserving Hong Kong’s “unique identity” and aligning with mainland China’s political agenda “remains a critical issue”, a [high-level Brussels conference](#) heard.

Willy Fautré a highly respected rights campaigner, opened the conference Unveiling Authoritarianism: Assessing China’s Governance and Human Rights Landscape, at the Press Club in Brussels on 29th February.



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He issued a stark warning that “the path forward is uncertain,” noting that China is increasingly present in the news and in the minds of Western politicians “as it is perceived as a threat to the global stability of the world in the near future.”

Mr. Fautré, co-founder and director of [Human Rights Without Frontiers](#), a Brussels-based rights NGO, said the region’s status has raised global concerns about its “political fragility and the degradation of the human rights situation.”

He told the audience, “Freedom of expression and freedom of assembly as well as the independence of the judiciary are under constant threat and attacks.

“China’s policy of destabilisation in the Indo-Pacific region also threatens Taiwan and the cross-straits relations.

“The intrusion attempts of Beijing in democratic elections is not to be underestimated.”

He said alleged espionage of China through global communication systems “is also taken very seriously in Europe and in America.

“The intrusion of China in economic and commercial workings of European countries and its expansion in African countries is also extremely dangerous for our sovereignty.”

The Brussels-based expert alleged, “The human rights situation in China is appalling. One of the prominent concerns is the restriction on freedom of expression.

“The Chinese government tightly controls media outlets, censors online content, and monitors social media platforms.

“Dissent and criticism of the government are met with harsh consequences, leading to a chilling effect on free speech. Activists, journalists, and even ordinary citizens face repercussions for expressing views contrary to the official narrative.”

He continued, “Since its invasion, Tibet has lost control of its territory, its present and its future. Its culture and its language have been erased.



Willy Fautré



Benedict Rogers

“The same process has been put in place in Xinjiang with the Muslim Uyghurs. There is no political pluralism in China which is ruled by the sole Chinese Communist Party (CCP) with an iron fist.”

He added, “The treatment of the Uyghur minority has attracted global attention.

“The Chinese government has been accused of committing human rights abuses on a massive scale, including arbitrary detentions, forced labour, and cultural suppression.

Benedict Rogers, Co-Founder and Chief Executive of Hong Kong Watch, and author of the highly acclaimed book [‘The China Nexus’](#) said, “What makes today’s conference so timely is that just yesterday, a public consultation period regarding a new domestic security law in Hong Kong, known as Article 23 legislation, launched by the Hong Kong government a month ago, ended.

“Within the past 24 hours the British Foreign Secretary and Parliamentarians in the UK, USA, Canada and the EU, have condemned all.

Sir Geoffrey Nice K.C., a British barrister who participated in the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, and who was lead prosecutor at Slobodan Milošević’s trial also spoke at the conference.

Dr. Roy Chun Lee, Taipei Representative in the EU and Belgium, spoke about the threat to Taiwan’s independence and freedom posed by Beijing.

“There are issues that we know are unfolding,” he said, “but unfortunately the international community doesn’t actually have much to correct the situation.

“I would like to share with you one of the fundamental rationales behind these Chinese actions, in Hong Kong, in Xinjiang.

“Under the CCP they have only one long term strategic objective, however defined.

“And they have no disciplines, they have no values, in the means and the measures they take to achieve that objective.

“This is exactly what happens in Hong Kong, exactly what happens in Xinjiang, and exactly what are trying to do to Taiwan.

Italian sociologist Dr. Massimo Introvigne spoke about “The Hidden Side of Religious Persecution in China: The Catholic Church and the Groups Labeled as ‘Xie Jiao.’”

Having been invited, with others, by the Chinese authorities to discuss issues concerning new

religious movements, he stated that his criticisms of CCP policy were distorted for public consumption and presented as support.

He came to the conclusion that there was “no possibility of persuading the Chinese to adopt any policy that was more respectful of religious liberty.

“All our efforts were in vain.

“Our Chinese counterparts were extremely kind, but basically our presence in China was interpreted as interpreted, manipulated, as if we were supporting their policies while clearly we were criticising them.”

Christine Mirre, Director of CAP Liberté de Conscience an NGO dedicated to protecting the Right of Freedom of Religion and Belief said that China has ratified the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the ICCPR and the Chinese Constitution “theoretically guarantees freedom of religion but the reality on the ground tells a different story.”

She also voiced concern over “China’s disturbing influence on the UN,” saying, “China’s growing influence within the UN poses a significant risk of reshaping the organization to suit its own interests, potentially undermining its core functions.

Gary Cartwright

EU Today

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