

Open Letter to Olaf Scholz, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany

1 November 2022

Re: Your Visit to Beijing

Dear Chancellor Scholz,

We, the undersigned human rights non-governmental organisations, are writing to urge you to reconsider your visit to Beijing in November 2022.

The timing of this visit would coincide with the start of Xi Jinping's third term as Secretary General of the Communist Party of China (CPC). His previous two terms have been marred by an exponential growth in gross and widespread human rights abuses within the People's Republic of China, combined with active efforts to undermine the international rules-based order and restrict fundamental freedoms around the globe.

His current legacy includes ongoing atrocity crimes in the Uyghur Region (Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region by the Chinese government) - which the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has said could amount to crimes against humanity and termed as tantamount to violations under international criminal law - the crackdown in and overturning of Hong Kong's constitutional order, the ongoing crackdown in Tibet, continuous and mounting threats of a military invasion of Taiwan, and his unrenounced partnership "without limits" with Russia.

In this ambit, the CPC would most certainly use your first visit to the PRC for propaganda purposes, promoting a narrative of endorsement following its 20th National Congress. The invitation of a German trade delegation to join your visit will be viewed as an indication that Germany is ready to deepen trade and economic links, at the cost of human rights and international law.

Only last month, the German Government stood with its democratic allies at the UN Human Rights Council in support of a resolution to discuss the UN OHCHR's findings in its Uyghur report. A request that was defeated in a show of the PRC's growing global authoritarian influence. The above propaganda narrative will further contribute and legitimise that influence in signalling that no real cost will be imposed.

It is our firm conviction that this runs counter not only to the universal rights of those suffering at the hand of the CPC inside - and increasingly outside - China, but also to the fundamental long-term interests of Germany and the European Union as a whole.

The European Union's foundational values are built on human rights and fundamental freedoms. A rapidly growing consensus among democratic nations - and allied partners - recognizes the severe threat the PRC poses to these values and the need to rapidly reduce economic

dependence to bolster democratic resilience. This cannot be achieved by loosening economic dependence on one authoritarian power only to deepen economic dependence on another.

Your visit at this time would send a most distressing signal of democratic disunity in the face of the PRC's growing authoritarian behaviour around the world and further embolden its aggressive commitment to substitute the international rules-based order with its repressive governance model.

We therefore call upon you to urgently reconsider your visit. This would send the clearest signal that Germany, as one of the leading members of the European Union, will not offer its tacit endorsement to the ongoing oppression of Uyghurs, Hong Kongers, Tibetans, and other groups within and outside the PRC's borders.

Yours sincerely,

Hong Kong Watch Safeguard Defenders World Uyghur Congress

CSW

Human Rights in China

Italian Federation for Human Rights

CIVICUS

International Campaign for Tibet

Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project

HKDC

Hong Kong Professional Network

HK4DC (Washingtonians Supporting Hong Kong)

Hongkongers in Britain

Fight for Freedom, Stand with Hong Kong

Hong Kong Assistance & Resettlement Community

Hong Kong Liberty

Victoria Harbour Group

Hackney Chinese Community Centre

Hong Kong Aid

Britons in Hong Kong

EXE. HKers Action

Guildford UK Stands with Hong Kong

Banyan Tree Aid CIC

Regional Tibetan Youth Congress of Toronto, Canada. (RTYC Toronto)

Netherlands for Hong Kong (NL4HK)

Hongkonger in Deutschland e.V.

Freiheit für Hongkong e.V.

Tibetan Youth

Hong Kong Link Up

Good Neighbour Church England

HearthTalk

和你傾 Wo4 Nei5 King1

Salford HongKongers CIC

Hongkonger in Brighton CIC

Bristol Hongkongers

Sutton 藝文社

Nottingham Stands With Hong Kong

Jewish Movement for Uyghur Freedom

The Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies

China Aid Association

Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation

No Business With Genocide

Uyghur Center for Human Rights and Democracy

Canadian Asian Community Think Tank

ACTION Free Hong Kong Montreal

Canadians In Support of Refugees In Dire Need

Canada Tibet Committee

Canadian Friends of Hong Kong

Tibetan Youth

Campaign for Uyghurs

Uyghur Human Rights Project

Victoria Hong Kongers

Torontonian HongKongers Action Group

Befria Hongkong Sweden

NGO Ngo Dei 我地

Le Comité pour la Liberté à Hong-Kong

AfricaHongKongFrance (AHKF)

Stand with Hong Kong Vienna

Hong Kong Committee in Norway

Germany Stands with Hong Kong

Penn State Students For Hong Kong

US Hongkongers Club

Hongkongers in San Francisco Bay Area

Bay Area Friends of Tibet

Anti China Expansion Movement

Toronto Association for Democracy in China

Canada-Hong Kong Link

910 Club, Canada

Hello Taiwan