

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 1, 2008

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

In light of the violent reaction of the Chinese government to recent protests in Tibet, as well as China's continuing violation of international human rights and its support for the genocidal government of Sudan, we strongly urge you to reconsider your decision to attend the Olympic Games in China this summer.

World leaders representing several countries are now openly discussing the possibility of boycotting the opening ceremonies of the Olympic Games. French President Nicolas Sarkozy has announced that he may not attend the opening ceremonies because of the way that China has handled the situation in Tibet. Political leaders in Germany, Norway, and Australia have also discussed the possibility of boycotting the opening ceremonies, and leaders from Poland, Estonia, and the Czech Republic have already announced they will not attend.

Chinese security forces responded to recent protests in Tibet by firing on protesters and detaining hundreds of people. Several Buddhist monasteries were reportedly surrounded by security forces, and their phone lines have been cut. China has restricted foreign journalists' access to Tibet, and Chinese authorities cannot be relied upon for accurate reports of the violence. Human Rights Watch has warned that the detainees are at serious risk of torture and mistreatment while in detention.

China is also continuing to deny freedom of speech to its people and violate other international standards of human rights. Within the last month, Hu Jia, a human rights activist, was tried in a Beijing court for inciting subversion against the Chinese government by posting dissident opinions on an Internet website. Chinese journalist Shi Tao remains imprisoned for emails he sent to a pro-democracy website in the United States in 2004. Amnesty International reported last year that thousands of members of underground Catholic and Protestant churches have been detained, and many were tortured while in detention. On September 22, 2007, Gao Zhisheng, a human rights lawyer, was secretly taken from his home after he wrote a letter to the United States Congress describing China's elimination of over 3,000 Falun Gong practitioners over the past eight years.

Meanwhile, the Chinese government is continuing its long-standing ties with the genocidal government of Sudan. China reportedly purchases as much as 70 percent of Sudan's oil and has at least \$3 billion invested in the Sudanese energy sector. China has exported at least \$24 million in arms and ammunition to Sudan, as well as nearly \$57 million in parts and aircraft equipment, and \$2 million in helicopter and airplane parts. Sudan's policies have already killed almost a half-million people in Darfur, and yet China refuses to sever its ties with this genocidal regime.

It would be clearly inappropriate for you to attend the Olympic Games in China, given the increasingly repressive nature of that country's government. The Olympic Games are the most honorable, venerated, and prestigious international sporting events in the world. Your attendance at these Games will only serve to enhance China's honor and prestige as the host country of the Olympics.

We, therefore, recommend that you renounce your decision to attend the Olympics in China and urge the Chinese government to change its policies and begin to respect international standards of human rights.

Sincerely,

Alpine Waters

E. F. Fowles

Marcy Kaptur

Lynn Waalsey

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Gerold Kadden

Janis McDonern

Donald M. Payne

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