

Wednesday, 26 March 2008 - Brussels

Situation in Tibet (debate)

Ana Maria Gomes (PSE). - Mr President, we cannot be silent before the killings in Tibet and the Chinese attempts to hide their extent. Nor can we, of course, condone the anti-Han and anti-Hui racist violence which erupted in Tibet and neighbouring Chinese provinces, as much as we do not condone the racist slurs against Tibetans echoed in China.

But we all, including the Chinese people, should understand why Tibetans reacted violently, despite the Dalai Lama's peaceful stance. That outburst is due to the long-standing humiliations, pain and gross human rights violations endured by the Tibetans in Tibet, where they are becoming a minority as a result of the aggressive policies of Beijing.

We call for human rights and freedoms in Tibet as much as in China, where so many are jailed just for daring to express their views - like Hu Jia, just after he spoke to us here in Parliament last November. Because I care, I do not support calls for a boycott of the Olympic Games in Beijing. It would just be too convenient for those who continue to count on world indifference to go on oppressing the Chinese and the Tibetans. Instead, it is a task for us all, as citizens of this world, to make these Games in Beijing become a true Olympiad for human rights, for freedom in Tibet, and for freedom in China.