

RELOCATE OR BOYCOTT 2022 BEIJING WINTER AND PARALYMPIC OLYMPICS

Statement by Hon. David Kilgour, J.D. of International Support for Uyghurs (ISU)

Parliament Hill, Ottawa

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June 23 this year is "International Olympic Day"; many organizations across the world are today calling for a relocation or boycott of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics and Paralympics.

What Beijing is doing to Uyghurs, Tibetans, Southern Mongolians, Hong Kongers, Falun Gong, Christians, and others, including genocide, does not meet the governance/ethical standards required to host the Olympics. To hold them again in Beijing in 2022 would be to acquiesce again after the many broken promises of the 2008 Beijing Games to totalitarian practices by the party-state in Beijing.

On October 21, 2020, Canada's House of Commons Subcommittee on International Human Rights released the following statement:

"The Subcommittee unequivocally condemns the persecution of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang... Based on the evidence put forward during the Subcommittee hearings, both in 2018 and 2020, the subcommittee is persuaded that the actions of the Chinese Communist Party constitute genocide as laid out in the Genocide Convention."

This week at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, Canada and 40 other countries urged Beijing to allow "immediate and unfettered access" so independent observers can visit Xinjiang/East Turkistan. The party-state in China does not even acknowledge a problem.

Let me close with a quote from a recent statement signed by a number of human rights groups and MPs from all political parties represented in our House of Commons:

“We all know that when the world is facing the worst public health and economic crisis in over a century, human rights are not front of mind. However, this is a case of genocide, the most appalling example of what some human beings are capable of inflicting on fellow humans. We cannot stay silent.

“Close to two million Uyghurs and Turkic Muslims are now being held in concentration camps... Mass rapes and numerous acts of torture are being committed in these camps. Women are being forcibly sterilized, adults and children are being kidnapped, and surveillance camera systems are being combined with artificial intelligence software to track Uyghurs around the globe.”

“A full-fledged campaign of cultural erasure is also being waged, including the indoctrination of prisoners and the suppression of all Uyghur cultural expression...”

“We have a unique opportunity to come together with all the world’s humanitarians and democrats and take action by refusing to participate in this global sports festival, on the grounds that doing so would amount to taking part in a sinister, self-aggrandizing spectacle staged for the benefit of a regime that is perpetrating the worst possible crimes against humanity against its own people.”

“We are not asking our athletes to give up their Olympic dream, because we know full well how much effort will have gone into pursuing it.

“However, we believe that there is still time to demand that the International Olympic Committee move the Games to another country if the Chinese government continues its genocidal campaign.”

“Some may argue that sports and politics should not mix. We would respond that when genocide is happening, it is no longer a matter of politics, but of human rights and crimes against humanity. We cannot accept the current status quo.

“We are not seeking to take our elite athletes hostage. Rather, we want to ensure that the medals they win in 2022 are not tainted by what will no doubt go down in history, like the 1936 Berlin Games, as: “*The Games of Shame*.”

The signatories to this statement included

Jean-Luc Brassard, gold medalist of the 1994 Winter Olympics,

The Honorable professor Irwin Cotler,

Assembly of First Nations Quebec-Labrador,

Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights,

Ukrainian Canadian Congress,

Central and Eastern European Council in Canada, and

Justice for All Canada.

Merci mille fois.

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