

China and Switzerland conduct human rights dialogue

Bern, 12.06.2018 - The 16th round of human rights dialogue between Switzerland and China took place from 11 to 12 June in Beijing. The discussions, held in confidential session, allowed an open and mutually critical debate to take place on national and international human rights issues. The focus was on the judicial and penal system and minority rights.

The priority topics discussed in this year's round of dialogue were the judicial and penal system and the rights of minorities. Switzerland expressed its deep concern over the criminal prosecution of lawyers and human rights defenders and the physical and psychological harassment and mistreatment of their family members. A number of individual cases illustrating these concerns were raised during the discussions. An extensive discussion was held on the death penalty. Women's and disabled people's rights were also discussed.

The protection of minority rights in Tibet and Xinjiang were also raised critically. Switzerland specifically stressed the issue of the worsening human rights situation in Xinjiang and the serious human rights violations in 're-education camps' where hundreds of thousands of Uyghurs are detained. The dialogue also covered both countries' engagement at the multilateral level. Switzerland also recalled the mandates of the UN human rights mechanisms, in particular the UN Human Rights Council, and the importance of civil society participation in this and other international bodies.

The bilateral human rights dialogue between Switzerland and China was begun in 1991.

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