



**Doc. 12125**

22 January 2010

## Detention of Mr Dhondup Wangchen in Tibet by the Chinese authorities

**Reply to Written question<sup>1</sup>:** Written question No. 576 (Doc. 12083)  
Committee of Ministers

*Written Question No. 576 by Mrs Acketoft (Doc. 12083)*

The Swedish Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly, concerned by the fate Mr Dhondup Wangchen, detained in Tibet by the Chinese authorities since March 2008, wishes to draw the Committee of Minister's attention to this his case. Mr Wangchen's crime consists of making filmed interviews with ordinary Tibetans on their views on the Olympic Games, the Dalai Lama and Chinese government policies in Tibet. The interviews were made into a documentary film "Leaving Fear Behind". While interrogated in detention he has been tortured and ill-treated and has not received any treatment for hepatitis B he suffers from.

The trial of Mr Dhondup Wangchen has been delayed. There are clear indications that he will be convicted with a heavy sentence, but he has committed no crime. The Chinese authorities have forced the lawyers chosen by his family to stop representing him; instead he will be defended by a government-appointed lawyer, making the fairness of his trial rather dubious. His family was not told anything officially about his arrest or his whereabouts until April this year.

In [Resolution 1621 \(2008\)](#) adopted in June 2008, the Parliamentary Assembly notes that, like the 47 member states of the Council of Europe, the People's Republic of China has ratified the United Nations Charter. The Assembly considers that the promotion of human rights should not stop at the borders of the 47 member states of the Council of Europe and therefore believes that it has a duty to look into the political situation in China and to voice its concern over the situation in respect of human rights and democracy in the country. In addition, the Assembly urges the Council of Europe's member states to exert individual influence on China to persuade it to engage in a substantive dialogue regarding Tibet and neighbouring regions.

Consequently, the Swedish Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly asks whether the Committee of Ministers agrees with the Assembly's initiative to open a dialogue with the Chinese authorities in particular on human rights, democracy and the rule of law, in order to encourage China to pursue reforms in these fields to alleviate the suffering of hundreds of innocent individuals, like Mr Wangchen.

*Reply by the Committee of Ministers*

The Committee of Ministers, although concerned with information contained in the question put forward by the Honourable Parliamentarian, recalls that China is neither a member of the Council of Europe nor an observer with the Organisation. In addition, it does not wish to comment on the Assembly's initiative to open a dialogue with the Chinese authorities given the fact that this initiative is a matter arising exclusively from the prerogatives of the Assembly.

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1. adopted at the 1074th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (12-13 January 2010)

