



The Right Honourable Mark Carney  
Prime Minister of Canada  
80 Wellington Street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A2

January 9, 2026

Dear Prime Minister,

We write this Open Letter to you as members of the Canadian Coalition on Human Rights in China<sup>1</sup>, a coalition of 10 Canadian organizations dedicated to ensuring there is strong attention to human rights in Canada's relationship with China. Our members work to ensure that Canada takes strong and effective action to address widespread human rights violations perpetrated by the Chinese government, including through transnational repression in Canada.

We are writing in advance of your upcoming trip to China. This trip will give you an opportunity for engagement, as Prime Minister, with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Qiang, and other senior Chinese officials. Our Coalition urges you to use this occasion to signal a clear intention to put human rights at the centre of Canada's relationship with China.

Canada's relationship with China is certainly one of the most crucial foreign policy priorities you face as Prime Minister. That relationship is very important for many reasons, including economic, security, and geopolitical considerations. So too, the many challenges and concerns about China's human rights record require very serious and deliberate attention. It is our hope therefore that a comprehensive strategy will be developed to ensure that advancing stronger

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<sup>1</sup> This letter has been endorsed by the following members of the Canadian Coalition on Human Rights in China: Amnistie Internationale Canada (Francophone), Canada Tibet Committee, Canada-Hong Kong Link, Falun Dafa Association of Canada, Federation for a Democratic China Canada, Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights, Toronto Association for Democracy in China, Uyghur Rights Advocacy Project, Vancouver Society in Support of Democratic Movement

human rights protection will be central to that relationship and will extend across the entire range of dealings between Canada and China.

We believe that this is a critical time for a renewed approach to human rights in the Canada-China relationship. Our organizations have documented increased human rights violations by the Chinese government, including a campaign of intensified repression of democracy and human rights activists both within and outside China in recent years.

- We expect you to assert Canada's firm opposition to the arbitrary detention of British citizen and Hong Kong publisher **Jimmy Lai**, whose family is in Canada, as well as the large number of other Hong Kong democracy activists unjustly incarcerated, including **Chow Hang-tung**. We expect you also to raise the Hong Kong government bounties on Canadian **Joe Tay** and others in Canada.
- We urge that you make clear that the continued detention of Uyghur-Canadian **Huseyin Celil** on false charges continues to be unacceptable to Canada and that this **Canadian citizen** must be unconditionally released. Canadian officials should be granted immediate and unhindered consular access to Mr. Celil, whose fate and whereabouts have been unknown for eight years.
- We urge you to reiterate the determination of Parliament that the **extrajudicial incarceration of millions of Uyghurs** in China is tantamount to genocide as defined by the UN Convention ratified by both Canada and China.
- We ask you to raise the case of pro-democracy activist **Dr. Wang Bingzhang**, who has many immediate family members who are Canadian citizens.
- At least ten Canadians have close family members who are **Falun Gong practitioners** currently imprisoned in China following show trials and reports of torture. We urge you to demand release of all unjustly incarcerated Falun Gong practitioners.
- The detention and disappearance of religious leaders in China on no valid charge is another serious matter about which we look to you to raise concerns. In particular, you should urge the release of **Tibetan Buddhist leader Panchen Lama** and the large number of **Christian pastors** across China who have recently been taken from their families and congregations.
- **Torture** continues to be widespread and systematic in the country, and we urge that you signal Canada's insistence that China act on extensive recommendations made by United Nations human rights experts and bodies and international human rights organizations to curtail and prevent it.
- China continues to devote considerable resources to **influence and harassment operations in Canada**, including against members of the Canadian Coalition on Human

Rights in China. We implore you to make clear that this must cease and that **Chinese diplomats in Canada overseeing these illegal activities will be expelled.**

Canada has pursued a variety of approaches to raising human rights with China over the years, including at times actively criticizing China and at other times refraining from criticizing China at the United Nations, confining human rights discussions to closed door meetings, occasionally raising some human rights concerns publicly, and far too often, prioritizing trade and investment over human rights in our bilateral and multilateral relationship.

The approaches have generally appeared *ad hoc* and uncoordinated and despite the various approaches pursued very serious concerns have persisted. In fact the human rights situation in China has, in the assessment of many experts, markedly worsened.

What has been missing is a comprehensive strategy that ensures human rights figure prominently in the full expanse of Canada's relationship with China, beyond exchanges left to the few officials who are specifically tasked with monitoring human rights.

It is our sincere hope that you will use your upcoming exchanges with President Xi Jinping to put in place this long overdue comprehensive human rights strategy.

There is much to be learned from how inattentive to human rights concerns Canada has been in its relationship with China over the past decades. It is vital that those mistakes not be repeated. Under your leadership, Canada must put human rights first. To do so is the only truly pragmatic path forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Cheuk Kwan', with a stylized, flowing script.

Cheuk Kwan

Co-Chair, Toronto Association for Democracy in China

On behalf of the Canadian Coalition for Human Rights in China

cc. Hon Anita Anand, Minister of Foreign Affairs