

Austrian Falun Dafa Association urges all governments to support the most significant appeal for human rights in the 21st century

A beneficial spiritual practice widely accepted around the world

Falun Dafa, also known as Falun Gong, is a peaceful spiritual practice for self-improvement based on the principles of “Truthfulness, Compassion and Tolerance.” It was introduced to the public by its founder Mr. Li Hongzhi, in May, 1992 in north east China. Due to its beneficial effects in uplifting human morality and improving health the practice has spread from Mainland China to all corners of the planet in little more than a decade. To date, Falun Gong is widely practised by people in 114 countries or regions, regardless of race, and social strata. According to a survey conducted by the Chinese communist regime itself: by January 1999 there were between seventy and one hundred million people practising Falun Dafa in Mainland China alone. Falun Dafa books have been translated into more than 30 languages. Falun Dafa has received over 1,500 awards for its positive impact on individuals and communities in many locations around the world.

Ten Years of Brutal Persecution by the Chinese Communist Regime

Falun Dafa was initially welcomed by the Chinese authorities because of its health benefits which were saving the over-stretched health system billions of *yuan* a year. Many high ranking individuals in the government and the armed forces embraced the practice as well as those millions of ordinary citizens. When the newly published main text of Falun Dafa, *Zhuan Falun*, topped the bestseller lists in 1996 several communist hardliners became concerned that the Party’s pseudo Marxist ideology could never successfully compete with a profound spirituality that was firmly grounded in traditional Chinese culture and rapidly capturing the hearts and minds of the populace.

The survey referred to above revealed that there were tens of millions more Chinese citizens practising Falun Dafa than were members of the communist party. Moreover, party leader Jiang Zemin took the burgeoning popularity of Falun Dafa as a personal insult. Regardless of the opposition from most members of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Central Committee, Jiang insisted on launching the nationwide persecution on 20th July 1999. However, with Jiang’s clique controlling the reins of power, particularly the armed forces, opponents were either coerced into acquiescence or forced to quietly retire from office. Jiang Zemin openly declared that his policy was “to eradicate Falun Gong” – a goal he boasted would be achieved in three months.

Over the past ten years, the Chinese communist regime has utilized its entire party machine to persecute peaceful and apolitical Falun Dafa practitioners, a large proportion of which are women, with maybe half of those women being over fifty years of age. It is impossible to obtain accurate figures for the number of innocent

people that have been incarcerated and tortured for their beliefs during this persecution, but most serious commentators would admit that the number is in the hundreds of thousands at the very least and quite probably in the millions. The United Nations *Rapporteur* on torture Dr. Manfred Nowak estimated, following his visit to China in November 2005, that well over half of all inmates in Chinese forced labour camps are Falun Gong practitioners. Dr. Nowak called for those camps to be abolished. According to statistics compiled by the Falun Dafa Information Center, 3,287 Falun Gong practitioners have been documented as having died as a result of torture in custody over the last ten years. This figure is widely believed to be merely the tip of the iceberg.

Support from international human rights organizations

The annual human right reports published by the governments of the United Kingdom, the United States and renowned international human rights watchdogs such as the Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the United Nations Committee Against Torture indicated that the persecution is still very severe and in violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention Against Torture and, the Convention Against Genocide.

The persecution spreads overseas

In recent years, the Chinese communist regime has further extended its persecution of Falun Dafa overseas through its embassies and consulates around the world. Each one of those supposedly diplomatic institutions employs members of staff specifically to monitor Falun Dafa practitioners and attempt to disrupt their activities by lobbying local politicians and events organizers. Such interference in the domestic affairs of the country in which they are a guest is a blatant violation of the terms of the Vienna Convention. Yet, in many cases thugs employed by the consulates and embassies have gone much further, perpetrating violent physical assaults, damage to property and highly disturbing telephone harassment.

Organ harvesting

It is generally agreed by those who have closely examined the available evidence, that the most despicable aspect of the campaign to eradicate Falun Dafa has been the use of innocent men and women as a living organ bank to supply the lucrative trade in organ transplants. According to the reports of United Nations Special *Rapporteur* on Torture, Dr. Manfred Nowak, and United Nations Special *Rapporteur* on Freedom of Religion or Belief, Ms. Asma Jahangir, China has conspicuously failed to conduct a thorough investigation into the allegations that a large number of perfectly-matched organs were quickly available in China for those with the money to pay, and that many more organ transplants were performed after the year 2000 than there were identifiable sources of organs. Particularly incriminating was the sudden rise in organ transplants following the start of the persecution of Falun Dafa.

Exhaustive research into this issue has been conducted by Canadian human rights

lawyer David Matas and former Canadian Cabinet minister and Crown prosecutor David Kilgour. They concluded that there were approximately 41,500 organ transplants conducted in China during the time period in question for which no perceivable donors can be found. Their conclusion was that those organs were obtained from living Falun Dafa practitioners in custody.

Over four hundred politicians, lawyers, medical doctors, journalists from all over the world established the Coalition to Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong in China (CIPFG) to investigate the Chinese regime's atrocity of harvesting organs from living Falun Gong practitioners to fuel the highly lucrative transplant industry. In 2008, the CIPFG launched the "Anti-Persecution Millions of Signature Global Campaign." It has been supported by over 1.35 million people in 133 countries, including thousands of renowned politicians and representatives from academia, the legal profession, business and medicine. The signatures collected were submitted to the UN Secretary-General and the president of the UN Human Rights Council on the eve of International Human Rights Day 2008.

Millions renounce the communist party and its affiliated organizations

The publication of the *Nine Commentaries on the Chinese Communist Party* by the Epoch Times newspaper in November 2004 has resulted in almost 57 million Chinese people renouncing their membership of the CCP and its affiliated organizations to date. Violent demonstrations have become a regular occurrence across China in recent years, and although at the moment the causes of these altercations tend to be local in nature, it is likely to be only a matter of time before the *ad hoc* dissatisfaction with the corrupt rule of the communist party becomes coordinated and universal throughout China.

The gap between the fabulously rich 1percent and the rest is increasing in China faster than anywhere else in the world. As unemployment among the working classes mushrooms and spreads to the middle classes, unrest is likely to increase exponentially and the demise of the CCP may come quicker than anyone expects. Very few people anticipated the total collapse of the Soviet bloc in Eastern Europe even a few months before it occurred.

Lawsuits filed charging Chinese officials with torture and crimes against humanity. Time for governments to support human rights

More than fifty lawsuits have been filed against Jiang Zemin and his accomplices in at least thirty different countries. What is regrettable is that most of the governments of those countries have chosen to block such lawsuits in order to gain favour with the CCP in the hope of gaining lucrative financial and economic rewards.

Yet, ironically, at the same time, the national parliaments of many of those countries, not to mention hundreds of city councils all around the world, have passed resolutions supporting the rights of Falun Dafa practitioners to freedom of belief and calling for an end to the persecution. However, resolutions are easy to pass, while taking a firm

stand against a formidable and ruthless power requires real courage and conviction. If western nations are serious about human rights then they need to stand together and insist that the Chinese communist regime must radically change if it wishes to be considered a civilized and respected member of the global community. If the CCP refuses to change then it has no right to exist in this world.

Over the last ten years Falun Gong practitioners around the world have used many means – all peaceful - to expose the Chinese regime’s bloody persecution. It should be noted that even in the face of the horrendous violence employed by the authorities against Falun Dafa practitioners in China there has not been a single documented case of any of those practitioners retaliating.

As stated in our opening paragraph, Falun Dafa practitioners try to live their lives in accordance with those guiding principles of “Truthfulness, Compassion and Tolerance”. If governments that purport to be defenders of human rights and have signed and ratified the relevant international treaties that guarantee those rights, cannot find the courage to defend innocent, good and often elderly, people against the violent onslaught of a totalitarian regime, then we submit that history will not judge those governments well. Indeed, they are likely to be roundly condemned by future historians as having allowed genocide to proceed unchecked. By contrast, if those governments can see beyond the almighty dollar, put aside those farcical bilateral human rights agreements with the Chinese Communist Party which allows the latter’s divide and rule policy to prosper, and present a united front to the CCP demanding that they adhere to universally agreed standards; then succeeding generations will praise those governments for having the courage of conscience and changing the course of history for the better. It is your choice.

Chair of Austrian Falun Dafa Association

Endorsed by other Falun Dafa Associations around the world