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## **China: Government's report to UN Human Rights Council whitewashes abuses**

serious human rights abuses being committed across the country, according to Amnesty International. The organization's parallel report draws attention to a number of issues the Human Rights Council should raise during China's UPR review on 9 February.

Six months after the closing of the Beijing Olympic Games, the UPR presents a rare opportunity for the international community to systematically engage with China on the full spectrum of human rights concerns.

"It's always good to see China engaging with the world on human rights," said Roseann Rife, Asia-Pacific Deputy Director at Amnesty International "The question now is how that engagement will impact the lives of China's citizens and particularly those who are suffering persecution for peacefully exercising their rights."

Amnesty International recognizes China's positive engagement with the UN's Universal Periodic Review – including the timely submission of its report. The organization also acknowledges the progress made by China in certain human rights areas, including the advances related to its legal system, the human rights education programmes and the passage of the Labour Contract Law, among others.

However, China's government report omits reference to the on-going crisis in Tibet, the severe crackdown on Uighurs in China's Western Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, and the on-going persecution of various religious practitioners, including Falun Gong members.

According to the official Lhasa Evening News, a Strike Hard Unified Checking Campaign, launched on 18 January in the region's capital, includes "investigative raids" to residential areas, rented rooms, hotels, guesthouses, internet cafes and bars. By 24 January, police had detained 81 suspects, including two for having "reactionary opinions and reactionary songs on their mobile phones".

"China's national report fails to list some of the country's most pressing issues," said Roseann Rife. "Ignoring severe violations of human rights in the country undermines the goals and spirit of the UN UPR process."

According to Amnesty International, the official report also fails to mention China's systems of administrative detention, in which up to several hundred thousand individuals may be incarcerated without trial or access to a lawyer, and the need to reform the household registration system, which institutionalizes second-class citizenship for the hundreds of millions of rural labourers in the cities.

Amnesty International also expressed disappointment in China's failure to engage more broadly with its civil society in preparation of its report.

“One of the positive aspects of this process is to push governments to engage seriously with domestic non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and activists in preparation of their UN submissions,” said Roseann Rife. “By not doing so, China has lost an important opportunity to tackle the country’s serious human challenges.”

Amnesty International urges the Chinese authorities to actively promote the dissemination of its report within Chinese civil society, as well as the dissemination of the parallel reports submitted by NGOs and to inform its citizenry of the broadcast of the proceedings on 9 February.

“For the UPR to be a truly effective mechanism, the real test will be in the concrete actions the Chinese authorities take to improve human rights on the ground. We will be closely monitoring the proceedings, including what China says about itself during the discussions as well as what other countries ask, and decide not to ask,” said Roseann Rife.

**During China’s UPR session its representatives will present the national report and answer questions from the Council. China’s session will take place on 9 February at 8:00am GMT. It will be broadcast live through a UN webcast available at <http://www.un.org/webcast/unhrc/index.asp>.**

**For a full copy of Amnesty International’s submission to the UN Human Rights Council regarding human rights in China, please see:**  
**<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA17/097/2008/en>**

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