



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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# Tibetans will not be intimidated when protesting Chinese Premier Li Qiang

Tibetans will be protesting around Australia in  
Adelaide, Canberra and Perth to say to the  
Australian Government: Do Not Let China Silence  
You! Stand up for Tibet!

When: 17 June, 8am onwards, Parliament House  
Lawns, Canberra  
Prime Minister Albanese and Foreign Minister  
Wong should not allow China to set the agenda for  
discussions during the visit of Chinese Premier Li  
Qiang to Australia this week.

The Prime Minister's media release yesterday  
made no mention that human rights discussions  
would be a part of the conversation with Li Qiang  
- and seemed to indicate that the conversation  
would be limited to trade, pandas, and defence.

“Of course, Chinese Premier Li Qiang does not  
want to talk about China’s human rights violations  
in Tibet,” Says Dr Zoe Bedford, executive officer of  
the Australia Tibet Council “But Prime Minister

Albanese and Foreign Minister Wong should not let China dictate the terms of their discussions. China has removed over 1 million Tibetan Children from their families and placed them into Chinese government-run institutions in Tibet – in a shameful practice similar to Australia's Stolen Generation – with the intent to rob Tibetan children of their language, religion and culture. This needs to be on the agenda.”

“The Foreign Minister should be issuing *Magnitsky* Sanctions to CCP officials responsible for Chinese programs that separate Tibetan children from their families - as the US has done.” Says Tsewang Thupten, Tibetan Community spokesperson, “They should be facing Magnitsky Sanctions for their forced labour programs in Tibet – as is currently being investigated by the UN. Australia should be taking action to try to protect the human rights of Tibetans – not treating Li Qiang to lunches at wineries and in Australia’s Parliament House”.

### **The disingenuous use of multiculturalism in the Prime Minister's statement**

“We understand the Chinese Embassy and pro-China groups are organising people to counter-protest and we are concerned about our security and safety as they have been aggressive and violent towards our peaceful human rights protests in the past,” said Dr Zoe Bedford, Australia Tibet Council. She added, “How they can stand on Australian soil, and enjoy and exploit Australia’s freedom of speech, while the CCP are abusing and denying human rights and freedom of speech to Tibetans is appalling. They say they are “Pro-China” while we are “Pro-Human Rights”.

“This is a part of China's Transnational Repression - where the Chinese Embassy is attempting to intimidate our community, most of whom are former political Prisoners from Tibet. Images and

speeches of Tibetans protesting here in Australia have been used to threaten and intimidate their families who remain in Tibet, often they are made to come to a Chinese police station and ‘answer’ for the actions of their relatives in Australia who are speaking out for Tibet” said Tsewang Thupten, spokesperson for the Tibetan community in Australia “The Chinese Government wants to ensure that there is nowhere that Tibetans can be free from China – not even here in the free country of Australia” she added.

“The Prime Minister mentioned the Chinese community in Australia and multiculturalism – however, many Chinese community members are here because they have also fled authoritarianism in China for the safety of Australia and are joining our protest for freedom and democracy in China.” says Dr Zoe Bedford, from the Australia Tibet Council “Many of them may also be subject to China’s Transnational Repression here in Australia”.

It is the belief of the Australia Tibet Council and the Tibetan Community in Australia that true multiculturalism and harmony can be achieved when free speech, freedom to protest and human rights are protected. The Prime Minister and Foreign Minister should raise with Li Qiang that the Chinese Government arrest any Tibetans critical of the CCP. Prime Minister Albanese and Foreign Minister Wong should remember to speak out for Tibet while lunching with Li Qiang in Adelaide's vineyards and in Parliament house. The Prime Minister says he is “Pro-Panda”, we are asking that he will also be “Pro-human rights” and “Pro-Tibet”.

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Australia Tibet Council campaigns for the freedom and human rights of Tibetans. We are a not-for-profit organisation, funded by members across Australia.

*In the spirit of reconciliation, Australia Tibet Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.*

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