

Joint Statement on Transnational Repression in Europe

Brussels, July 18, 2025

This statement is a collective call to action against transnational repression (TNR), addressed to the institutions of the European Union, including the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the governments of its Member States, as well as relevant national and regional authorities across Europe.

It was jointly initiated by Uyghur and Tibetan youth organisations, civil society organisations, political parties and a Member of the European Parliament in the context of the July 2025 youth conference “*Uyghur, Tibetan and Allied Youth for Justice and Freedom*” in Brussels.

While the European Union presents itself as a safe haven for exiled activists, it has yet to develop a coherent strategy to address the increasing reach of authoritarian regimes into its territory. TNR remains under-recognized across EU institutions. There is no unified political language, no legal protection framework, and no coordinated response.

Youth in the diaspora, who are not only activists, but also European citizens, are targets of TNR. This inaction is more than a policy gap: it is a security risk within Europe itself.

This joint statement is a call for action, for recognition, and for the protection of fundamental rights of Uyghur, Tibetan, Hong Kong and Chinese democracy activists within the European Union.

Between 2014 and 2021 alone, over 6,800 cases of TNR targeting Uyghurs were recorded in 44 countries (Freedom House, [*Out of Sight, Not Out of Reach*](#), 2021). This number illustrates the global scale of the problem, one that also affects Europe directly.

Members of the Uyghur and Tibetan diaspora within Europe report experiencing coordinated intimidation, blackmail, spyware attacks and cyber campaigns. Chinese consular officials and state-linked actors have directly approached individuals in Europe, attempting to intimidate them or extract information about their activism and communities.

Joint Statement on Transnational Repression in Europe

In both communities, young people in particular are being targeted, often because they are the most outspoken. This includes those born and raised in Europe, shaped by the values of freedom, democracy and civic participation. Yet when they choose to speak out, they find that these freedoms, while promised, offer them no real protection. Despite being European citizens, they are surveilled, threatened, and silenced, as if the reach of authoritarianism overrides the rights they were promised.

If Uyghur, Tibetan, Hong Kong, or mainland Chinese youth, even as EU citizens, are not safe to organize, speak, or live freely, then the European Union is failing its core obligations to protect human rights, democratic participation, and internal security.

In light of the urgent threats posed by TNR, particularly to the youth within the aforementioned communities in Europe, we call on the European Union and its Member States to:

1. **Acknowledge TNR as both a security threat to the EU's internal stability and democratic values, and a violation of fundamental rights.** Ensure TNR is addressed within relevant security, law enforcement, and foreign interference frameworks, and take steps to criminalize such acts through national legislation by integrating TNR into Member States' criminal codes and holding both state and non-state perpetrators legally accountable.
2. **Establish a coordinated EU-wide protection mechanism for individuals targeted by TNR,** including legal support, emergency protection, and rapid response coordination among Member States. Create an independent ombudsman office to receive reports, collect data, and maintain statistics related to TNR. Ensure that law enforcement, universities, and public institutions are trained to identify and respond to TNR through awareness-raising and dedicated support structures for at-risk students and activists.
3. **Support secure residency and visa options for individuals at risk,** especially students, journalists, and human rights defenders from Uyghur, Tibetan, Hong Kong and mainland Chinese communities.

Joint Statement on Transnational Repression in Europe

4. **Invest in digital security training and safe platforms for youth activists from targeted communities**, including funding support for civil society and diaspora-led initiatives.
5. **Condemn and publicly respond to acts of TNR by the Chinese government**, including by raising individual cases in bilateral and multilateral settings, with the consent of those affected.

Signatories:

Member of the European Parliament

1. Lukas Sieper

Political Parties

1. Partei des Fortschritts
2. Ecolo - Samuel Cogolati, co-chair

Advocacy and Community Organizations

1. Uyghur Youth Initiative e.V.
2. Unga Uigurer
3. World Uyghur Congress Youth
4. Swiss Uyghur Association
5. European Uyghur Institute
6. United Uyghur Youth
7. Students for a Free Tibet
8. Studenten für ein Freies Tibet - Österreich

