



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on May 1, 2013

Israeli Leaders Blast Chinese Regime's Organ Harvesting, Persecution

JERUSALEM — Lawmakers in Israel led by Deputy Speaker of Knesset Moshe Feiglin (shown) and his freedom-oriented “Liberal Lobby” spoke out against barbaric human-rights abuses being perpetrated by the Communist Party regime ruling mainland China — especially the harvesting of body organs from executed dissidents and prisoners of conscience. The two-hour symposium at the Israeli Parliament featured an award-winning documentary on the brutal crimes, a speech by a survivor of the Chinese dictatorship’s prison camps, and an array of prominent human rights advocates speaking out on behalf of the victims.



Conference organizers and speakers explained early on that there was heavy pressure from Chinese and Israeli authorities to cancel the summit. Attendees were also urged not to attend, and many Knesset members who were sympathetic to the Chinese dissidents’ plight did not make it to the conference. However, turnout was still impressive, with at least 10 lawmakers and multiple heavy-hitting speakers defying the pressure to speak out for what they said was a just cause. While English-language media coverage has been fairly limited so far, waves from the historic event are spreading worldwide — especially among the massive community of Chinese exiles.

In an interview with *The New American* at his Knesset office before the summit, MK Feiglin, a member of the ruling Likud party, explained that what has been going on in China is a tragedy. Chinese authorities, he said, are literally cutting body organs out of dissidents — especially practitioners of Falun Gong, a spiritual discipline once promoted by the regime — and selling them to wealthy customers. As the state of the Jews, Israel has a special moral responsibility for upholding the cause of human rights around the world, including exposing ongoing atrocities in Communist China, MK Feiglin said. No amount of pressure will stop him.

“That’s the real reason for our existence,” Feiglin explained. “We should focus on our own on developing a real Jewish state that radiates the moral message of freedom to the entire world. I think this potential — the old people of the Book that came back to the Promised Land have that potential in them — and I think the whole world, deep in their mind, in their soul, are waiting for that message to come out of Zion. I think this is the reason for the existence of the Jewish state.”

Other attendees at the summit agreed, saying that Israel, while small, had a big role to play on the world stage in terms of highlighting and even stopping human rights abuses. Indeed, the day before, lawmakers were debating official recognition of the genocide against Armenian Christians, and supporters came from all across the political spectrum. From lawmakers to a prominent former prisoner in a Soviet Gulag, numerous participants said the Knesset and the state of Israel should be actively



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involved in supporting persecuted people around the world. Ghastly crimes by the Chinese regime, one of the worst perpetrators of persecution and brutality in the world, deserve special attention.

At the start of the summit, attendees watched a short but powerful documentary film telling the tale of two Chinese dissidents who survived the regime's brutality. Both victims interviewed in the video, dubbed *Free China: The Courage to Believe*, described unspeakable torture at the hands of their captors. In addition to being forced into slave labor, the two dissidents, targeted by the dictatorship because of their beliefs, endured brutal "re-education" schemes aimed at forcing them to renounce Falun Gong.

One of the main speakers at the event, Lizhi He, spent 1,280 days in a Chinese prison camp. In his remarks at the Knesset, Lizhi described brutal torture in vivid detail — months of being forced to sit motionless, severe beatings, being soaked in cold water in the winter, electroshock torture, humiliation, dehumanization, and more. Charged and prosecuted in a "sham" court for allegedly "sabotaging the implementation of the law," Lizhi, like countless other innocent Chinese, was imprisoned for his unwavering beliefs that defied the official orthodoxy espoused by China's totalitarian rulers.

"In addition to the physical torture ... we were forced to read literature defaming Falun Gong," he explained after describing the barbaric torture methods employed against him and his fellow inmates — especially other prisoners of conscience and Falun Gong practitioners. "I was shocked by high-voltage electric batons ... all of these atrocities targeted my beliefs and conscience. Falun Gong prisoners were never treated like humans unless we gave up our beliefs."

Even today, countless victims remain in China's notorious prison camps because of their beliefs. "It is sad to say that my experience of incarceration was just one of the hundreds of thousands of experiences of innocent Chinese people who practice Falun Gong," Lizhi explained, urging the world to speak out. "Such tragedies are still happening in China in the name of law." While the Canadian government helped rescue Lizhi and his wife, many others have not been so fortunate. More than a few have been murdered so the regime could sell their organs, as numerous prominent researchers and officials have documented.

"The Israeli people have a fresh memory of suffering the Holocaust, and I believe are aware of the consequences to victims when the truth and facts of genocide meet with blind eyes and deaf ears," Lizhi concluded. "'Never Again' is our promise to all of human kind, and also that is an oath heard by God. The persecution of Falun Gong must end. The organ-harvesting crimes must be ended. We must say 'no,' now, to the perpetrators. Your speaking out will help save lives. Your actions are blessed by God. Thank you."

Despite one former lawmaker who questioned the vast amounts of evidence exposing the Chinese regime's brutality and the organ harvesting in particular, virtually everyone in attendance was deeply touched by the film and Lizhi's talk. Some attendees were even moved to tears as the translator explained what Lizhi had endured in Hebrew. Members of Knesset and other participants, however, pledged to do everything they could to expose and halt the barbaric persecution.

In a declaration issued for the summit, organizers vowed not to give up the fight. "We, the participants of this symposium, demand that the government of China stop the practice of organ harvesting; respect the 'image of God' [in humanity], which is mutual to all of us; and stop the persecution and the abuse of people for their faith," the declaration states. "The Liberal Lobby of the Knesset will follow-up on the issue of the severe abuse of human rights in China, and will persevere with this moral demand."



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Individual participants echoed the sentiment in their remarks. Knesset Member Rabbi Dov Lipman with the Yesh Atid Party, for example, took to the microphone and said it was tough to even comprehend the horror of the human-rights abuses described during the session in Jerusalem. “I had a hard time listening to your story because even just picturing what you went through was impossible for the mind,” he said. “I grew up without these challenges, without that kind of suffering, and trying to even imagine that a human being has to experience that was so difficult for me.”

Lipman thanked survivor Lizhi for sharing his experiences and also promised to keep fighting for all of the victims. “First of all, I bless you and your courage in enduring all of that, and then in finding the mental strength and capacity to be able to speak about it and be a voice for people who are still suffering today. I really bless you for that and I hope God gives you the strength to continue to do so,” he said addressing Lizhi. “You have our promise that we will do everything in our power to help people who are suffering in that category, and anywhere in the world. That’s our role in the Jewish state and the Jewish Parliament, to rise up and be that voice in the world.”

Another victim of communist tyranny, famous Soviet Gulag survivor Natan Anatoli Sharansky, who now leads the Jewish Agency for Israel, described his own experiences and pledged to keep fighting against injustice everywhere as well. “Even though we’re a tiny country compared to China and America, because we’re the Jewish country, we have the moral right, as a country, as an official policy, as a foreign policy through the Foreign Ministry, to speak out against what is going on in China with the harvesting of organs,” he said, calling on Knesset members to do everything in their power for the cause of human rights around the world.

MK Feiglin, the main organizer of the symposium, also emphasized that it was Israel’s duty to stand up for human rights and freedom around the world. “This struggle is not your private struggle; it’s not even the struggle of the Falun Gong or the people of China. The struggle is for every human being who lives on this earth,” Feiglin explained, also addressing Lizhi. “It is not for nothing that you’re sitting here in the Knesset — in the Parliament of the state of Israel, the state of the Jews. The message that comes from our little country has a significant meaning.”

While the evidence of barbaric human rights abuses perpetrated by the Chinese regime continues to build — *The New American* and other publications have been covering the issue for decades — experts say most governments are too afraid of the dictatorship in Beijing’s growing economic clout to officially recognize what is going on. However, despite the relative silence, opposition to the atrocities is gaining steam in China, Israel, the United States, and around the world.

Chinese dissidents living in exile abroad were thrilled that lawmakers in the Knesset and in other countries such as Canada have been willing to confront the issues. Apparently the increasing exposure of the regime’s crimes has the autocrats in Beijing very worried — hence the pressure on lawmakers to stop the symposium. Despite the Orwellian censorship in China, with the advent of the Internet and other technology, however, human rights advocates hope it is only a matter of time before the barbarity perpetrated by the ruthless Communist Party state comes to an end.

Photo of MK Moshe Feiglin: AP Images

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