

# Hundreds Participate in Human Rights Torch in Israel Despite Rain

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Human Rights Torch Relay in Tel Aviv (Ben Kaminsky/The Epoch Times)

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Although weathermen predicted storms and occasional rain, hundreds of people came out to support the [Human Rights Torch Relay](#) in Tel Aviv Monday evening, Feb. 18, and called for an immediate end to all crimes against humanity taking place in China before the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

Darfurian refugees, Falun Gong practitioners, Rabbis, religious leaders, physicians, artists and all kinds of supporters participated in the rally.

Prior to the rally, religious leaders and community leaders from different religions and sects signed a joint statement calling for the stop of the crimes against humanity in [China](#) such as the persecution against Falun Gong, and the forced organ harvesting.

Over 20 religious representatives, including Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Burmese, Cherkes Muslims, Uzbek Muslims and other religious and community Leaders publicly signed the joint statement.

"I hope the entire humanity will work together on preventing those things," said the Sufi Imam in Israel, Abed Al-Salam Mansara. The Cherkes Sheikh Zinaldin Faruk said that humanity must join hands and fight against the brutal practice. "We do not want any more disasters like the Nazis did in the forties to happen," he said.



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The Darfurian refugees who attended the rally protested against the Chinese regime's supporting the genocide in Darfur, [Sudan](#).

Burmese refugees who also came to participate in the rally are also being directly influenced by China's support of the oppressing ruling junta in their own country.

The Human Rights Torch was lit in the Tel Aviv Museum Plaza and carried by runners in the streets of Tel Aviv.

Among the runners was labor camp survivor, Jennifer Zeng, who carried the torch while many Darfurians were dancing around the torch and beating their African drums.

After the march, many distinguished public figures gave their support speeches.

After the ceremony, Israeli rock star, Barry Sakharov, sang a few of his famous songs in support of the rally.



Israeli actress Vaino-Elad tells the audience. "I came here to cry out: a Holocaust is happening!" (Tikva Mahabad/The Epoch Times)

**'I came to cry out: a Holocaust is happening!'**

"When I was a child, I was taught in School about the Holocaust," said Sarit Vino-Elad, an Israeli actress, in the rally. She shared how shocked she was by the apathy in which the murdering during that period was received in the public. "When I was asked to attend this rally," she said, "a mirror was held in front of me saying: 'you are just like those people who said they did not know [about the holocaust when it happened].'"

"I came here to cry out: a Holocaust is happening!" said Vino-Elad. "We must stop everything we are doing and act against it. We should not be concerned about the economical consequences of the war against this holocaust. There is a holocaust, and it is taking place in China because we are allowing it to happen. Not only are we allowing it to happen, we are also funding it, and strengthening the power of those responsible."

The host of the rally, Billy Wasserglick, added that if a big group as this one would have stood up against the Nazi regime, stood up openly for free speech, and condemned the Nazi regime, maybe her grandparents would be still alive today.



Hundreds of people endure the rain to say that China can not host the Olympic Games if its crimes against humanity don't stop. (Tikva Mahabad/The Epoch Times)

## Crimes Against Humanity in China

Dr. Yoram Rubin, a legal expert for human rights said the human rights violations in China are essentially different from those in other countries because of their intensity and also because of the degree of silencing and the lack of public debate due to fear and terror from the regime. He said that this kind of terror generates "the trampling of the basic rights to live and the right for health, the right to freedom, dignity and privacy, the right to practice one's faith, and all of this is hidden from the eyes of the free world."

Ms. Hadas Shachnai, member of the Tel Aviv city council and secretary general of the Israeli Green Party, called upon the government of Israel to demand that Beijing will immediately stop persecuting innocent people. She expressed her hopes that following the Human Rights Torch Relay, public figures, academics, and politicians will join her call.



David Kilgour (L), and Chinese labor camp survivor Jennifer Zeng (R) carry the Human Rights Torch. (Tikva Mahabad/The Epoch Times)

Mr. David Kilgour, former Canadian secretary of state for Asia Pacific attended the rally. He questioned how a regime that is responsible for atrocities in China, Darfur, Zimbabwe, Tibet or Burma be allowed to host the 2008 Olympics.

David Kilgour is a co-author of the "[Bloody Harvest](#)" report that verified the allegations of forced organ harvesting from live Falun Gong practitioners in China. He spent a few days in Israel in which he met members of Parliament, law experts, and other public figures in Israel to tell them about his report and about his knowledge of the human right abuses in China.

"Every one should be here," said Gabriel Vinograd, 25, from Tel Aviv, who participated in the rally. "It is not a question of which country or which people, these things should not happen," he added.



Israeli rock star, Barry Sakharov performed for the audience; he praised them for persevering to stay through the rain to express their message. (Tikva Mahabad/The Epoch Times)

Yair Weiss from Tel Aviv said he knew about the persecution of Falun Gong and that he came to the rally in order to hear more. "It is important that the world will know that not only Spielberg or big countries oppose China," he said, "Also a small country like Israel and other small countries care about what is happening there."

The Human Rights Torch Relay is an international campaign that seeks to bring an end to all human rights abuses against the people of China, while highlighting the persecution of Falun Gong—the most severely persecuted group in China today.

During the run up to the 2008 Olympics, the HRTR will host events in 37 countries across six continents to present its message: "The Olympics and crimes against humanity cannot coexist in China." Israel is the 26th stop of the Human Rights Torch Relay and will then go on to North America, South America, Africa, and Asia.