

DPP lawmakers and human rights activists yesterday urged prosecution of Chinese officials who have been charged for crimes against humanity in other countries if they visit Taiwan.

Democratic Progressive Party Legislator Tien Chiu-chin (田秋堃) and the activists made the call at a press conference as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) — both ratified by the Legislative Yuan in March — were written into law yesterday.

“It’s easy to sign the covenants, but what’s more important is to implement the contents,” Tien said, adding that one way for Taiwan to join the international hunt for violators of human rights was to bring Chinese officials who have been charged with crimes against humanity in other countries to justice if they visit Taiwan.

“The Chinese Communist Party’s [CCP] Chongqing committee chief Bo Xilai (薄熙来), for example, may visit Taiwan next year on the invitation of Taiwan External Trade Development Council chairman Wang Chih-kang (王智强),” Tien said. “He has been accused of torturing thousands of Falun Gong practitioners and engaging in live organ harvesting when he served as China’s Liaoning Province chief [from 2000 to 2003].”

Tien said lawsuits had been filed against Bo in a dozen countries, including the US, the UK, Poland, Russia, Chile, Peru, Spain, South Korea, Australia, Finland and Canada.

While visiting the US on an official trip in 2004, Bo received a notice at his hotel to appear in court. In the same year, Bo and 44 Chinese officials suspected of engaging in repression of Falun Gong practitioners were put on a watchlist in Canada. In November 2007, an Australian court convicted Bo of torturing Falun Gong practitioners, Tien said.

US-based human rights lawyer Theresa Chu (朱瑟莎) told the press conference that apart from codifying the two covenants, Taiwan should pass laws against hate crime, torture and other human rights violations, as many other countries that have ratified the ICCPR and the ICESCR have done.

Deng Liberty Foundation chairman Kenneth Chiu (邱慶義) agreed.

“President Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九) declared that Taiwan should become an exporter of human rights and fulfill its duty of protecting human rights worldwide,” Chiu said. “We cannot just pretend that we don’t see it when Chinese officials accused of human rights violations come to this country and treat them like VIPs.”

Meanwhile, at a separate setting yesterday, Taiwan Friends of Tibet chairwoman Chow Mei-li (周美利) called on the government to promote human rights in Tibet during cross-strait negotiations, “such as the talks between [China’s] Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait chairman Chen Yunlin (陳雲林) and [Taiwan’s] Strait Exchange Foundation chairman Chiang Pin-kung (蔣經國), which will take place later this month in Taichung.”

China rights violators should be tried: DPP

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Regional Tibetan Youth -Congress-Taiwan chairman Tashi Tsering said he was disappointed in Ma.

“[During the presidential campaign] last year, Ma voiced strong support for human rights issues in Tibet, but what has he done since he was elected?” Tashi asked. “With more and more cross-strait exchanges, the government should not forget about the suffering of both the Tibetans and the Chinese under the CCP’s rule.”

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