

Should Australia Enact Legislation Comparable To The United States' Magnitsky Act?

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I urge the Australian Parliament to enact legislation comparable to the United States' Magnitsky Act 2012 so as to punish and deter human rights abuses carried out by international officials. We must make a stand, recognising the fundamental unity of all humanity and upholding human dignity. As Australians, we could just as easily have been born as Uyghur Muslims persecuted for their Islamic religious beliefs by the Chinese state, as Tibetans exiled from their homeland by decades of Chinese state genocidal practices, as Hong Kongers fighting for the future of their democratic city state, or as young Shenzhen idealists disappeared by the Chinese government for trying to organize workers into independent unions. But for an accident of birth and history, their suffering would be our own pain and suffering. This is why human rights violations can never be considered some far away, distant matter irrelevant to the concerns of ordinary Australians – these violations constitute crimes against humanity writ large, for the suffering of one is the suffering of all mankind. When one person is tortured, it is the whole world that is tortured. Pain and suffering recognises no nation-states and knows no borders. And so we should recognise no nation-states or borders when exercising concern and care for the afflicted and downtrodden of the Earth.