

Spain set to judge on Chinese leaders.

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(AFP) A decision by Spain's Constitutional Court to allow Spanish jurisdiction on genocide and crimes against humanity committed outside the country, whatever the victims' nationality, could see an appeal against alleged Chinese repression in Tibet succeed, claimed a spokesperson for the Spanish Committee for Support of Tibet (CAT). A lawsuit filed in June 2005 at Madrid's high court against former Chinese president Jiang Zemin and former prime minister Li Peng, along with five other Chinese officials for alleged genocide, crimes against humanity, torture and terrorism against the Tibetan people was rejected. However, the most recent ruling in response to an appeal by Guatemalan Nobel Peace prize winner Rigoberta Menchu to allow the exercise of international penal law by national jurisdictions has encouraged the CAT to appeal and the case will be heard soon. The Supreme Court had rejected a submission saying that Spain's judiciary could only deal with crimes committed against Spanish citizens, but the Constitutional Court overturned the first ruling. Alan Cantos, for CAT, said that the Constitutional Court ruling should encourage governments to see that such laws were *"to be applied as they are written, not on the basis of their compatibility with governments"* and that the victim's nationality was irrelevant.

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