

United States Senate

December 6, 2021

Adam Silver
Commissioner
National Basketball Association
Olympic Tower
645 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear Commissioner Silver:

I write to request a meeting at the soonest possible date for us to discuss the NBA's involvement in Communist China. As I am sure you know, I have been vocal about the league's use of Communist Chinese-made apparel, its decision to crack down on Daryl Morey after his comments about protests in Hong Kong, the abuse of young players at NBA academies, and your organization's silence about Communist China's horrific human rights abuses and the ongoing genocide against Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang. I have also urged the NBA to support my call to move the 2022 Olympic Games out of Communist China and to a country that actually respects human rights. Sadly, you have chosen to be silent on this as well.

Mr. Commissioner, I want to be very clear - the issues I have outlined are neither speculative nor subject to debate. These are facts. The NBA has done nothing to stand up to Communist China, and in some ways has taken actions that seem to have no purpose other than to please General Secretary Xi's murderous and tyrannical Communist Chinese government.

What I find most unsettling about the NBA's inaction and silence on issues involving Communist China is that the league has a history of strong support for activism when it comes to social challenges. Both now and in the past, the NBA has stood by and unquestionably supported players who advocate for equality and justice, yet you have utterly failed to carry this practice forward when it comes to the gross injustice we are seeing in Communist China. How can the NBA, in good conscience, claim to support equality and justice when you're picking and choosing to do so based on political convenience?

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Organizations with operations in Communist China, like the NBA, have a responsibility to speak out about these abuses and leverage their positions to influence change. We all have a responsibility to put human rights above profits, and in the face of General Secretary Xi's genocide, horrific crimes against women, media censorship, the destruction of democracy and religious persecution, the NBA could be a powerful voice for human rights. But if the NBA continues to forsake its responsibility, it gives tacit approval to the Chinese Communist Party's abuses.

I recently had a conversation with Boston Celtics player Enes Kanter Freedom to discuss these matters. I admire his bravery and commitment to freedom and democracy across the world. Players like Enes, who recently became an American citizen, should be celebrated by the NBA and held up as an example of courageous advocacy for the common good. It's been incredibly disappointing to see the NBA fail to provide the same level of support to Enes and the causes for which he stands and fights. I hope this will soon change.

The NBA can be an immensely powerful force for good, both in the United States and across the world, and I hope to discuss these important matters with you. Thank you for your attention, and I look forward to scheduling a time for us to meet.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott". The signature is stylized with a large initial "R" and a prominent "S".

Rick Scott
United States Senator