



**A Compilation of the Memorandum on
Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan
People, His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Brussels
Statement of 4 December 2008,
and the Chinese State Council's Press Briefing
of 10 November 2008**

DIIR PUBLICATIONS

PREFACE

Since the renewal of direct contacts between Dharamsala and Beijing in 2002, eight rounds of talks and one informal talk under emergency situation were held to date. Apart from clarifying each other's position, extensive discussions were held during these talks.

During the seventh round of talks on 1 and 2 July 2008, the Chinese side had invited us to explain our view on the degree or form of autonomy that we are seeking. Accordingly, during the eighth round of talks we presented a memorandum on genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people based on the provisions of nationality and autonomy rights as enshrined in the constitution of the People's Republic of China.

However, the Chinese side continued to follow extremely rigid attitude and rejected our memorandum in its totality. In addition, a special press conference was held under the sponsorship of the State Council on 10 November 2008. This press conference distorted the issues raised in our memorandum by branding it as 'Tibet independence', 'half independence' or 'convert independence'. This has compelled us to release our memorandum publicly.

Even today, the Chinese government continues to unleash massive propaganda with full force to mislead the international community. Therefore, for the information of the international community we are publishing our **Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People** along with the **Chinese press statement** (Address at the Press Conference by the State Council Information Office) and **The Brussels Address** by His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the European Parliament on 4 December 2008. From these documents anyone can tell who is indulging in propaganda and distorting fact.

We, therefore, urge the impartial international community to make its own judgment.

December 2008

Department of Information and International Relations
Central Tibetan Administration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama
Dharamsala
India

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**COVERING LETTER OF THE
MEMORANDUM ON GENUINE
AUTONOMY FOR THE
TIBETAN PEOPLE**

October 29, 2008

Du Qinglin Zhuxi
Vice Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative
Conference
Minister of the Central United Front Work Department
of the Chinese Communist Party
Beijing
People's Republic of China

Dear Du Qinglin Zhuxi,

During the seventh round of talks you explicitly invited His Holiness the Dalai Lama to provide suggestions for the stability and development of Tibet. Similarly, the Executive Vice Minister of the Central United Front Work Department, Mr. Zhu Weiqun, said your side is willing to hear our views on the degree or form of autonomy we are seeking as well as on all aspects of regional autonomy within the scope of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China. We are hereby providing this Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People outlining their basic needs. In the past, too, we have had the opportunity to present to you the basic points contained in this memorandum.

Since our aim is to find a mutually acceptable approach within the scope of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, we are fully confident that, given goodwill, the issues raised in our memoran-

dum can be implemented within its framework.

We are presenting these suggestions with the sole purpose of making a sincere effort at addressing the real problems in Tibet, and in ensuring the full implementation of the regional national autonomy status, in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution. We strongly believe that this will contribute to the stability and development of Tibet, promote peace, harmony, and unity of all nationalities, and serve the interest of the Tibetan and Chinese peoples. It is not our intention to continue the arguments of both sides on the current exercise of autonomy status for the Tibetan people.

The resumption of our contact in 2002 has resulted in establishing a stable contact enabling both sides to explain and understand each other's position. However, on the fundamental issue there has not been any meaningful outcome. On the contrary, the situation in Tibet has deteriorated during this period, rather than there being any positive changes. Thus, our contact has reached a most critical stage. Therefore, we strongly urge that we discuss and agree on a mutually acceptable mechanism to address the issues raised in this memorandum, and to set up a timetable to do so effectively.

So far, despite growing difficulties, we have been able to maintain the contact and thus demonstrate our sincerity. However, in the absence of any concrete outcome resulting in a forward movement in our contact, the signs of frustration and disappointment among Tibetans, both inside and out of Tibet, have been growing. We are, therefore, afraid that the obvious reality then would be that if the eighth round of talks fails to bring about concrete results, the present process cannot continue.

In conclusion, it is our hope that the Central Government, considering the unity of the country, friendship of nationalities, the establish-

ment of a harmonious society, and the long-term common interest of the Tibetan and Chinese peoples, will act on this memorandum with farsightedness and vision.

Sincerely yours,

Kasur Lodi Gyaltzen Gyari
Special Envoy of
H.H. the Dalai Lama

Kelsang Gyaltzen
Envoy of
H.H. the Dalai Lama

(Translated from the original Tibetan)

MEMORANDUM ON GENUINE AUTONOMY FOR THE TIBETAN PEOPLE

I INTRODUCTION

Since the renewal of direct contact with the Central Government of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 2002, extensive discussions have been held between the envoys of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and representatives of the Central Government. In these discussions we have put forth clearly the aspirations of Tibetans. The essence of the Middle Way Approach is to secure genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people within the scope of the Constitution of the PRC. This is of mutual benefit and based on the long-term interest of both the Tibetan and Chinese peoples. We remain firmly committed not to seek separation or independence. We are seeking a solution to the Tibetan problem through genuine autonomy, which is compatible with the principles on autonomy in the Constitution of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The protection and development of the unique Tibetan identity in all its aspects serves the larger interest of humanity in general and those of the Tibetan and Chinese people in particular.

During the seventh round of talks in Beijing on 1 and 2 July 2008, the Vice Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and the Minister of the Central United Front Work Department, Mr. Du Qinglin, explicitly invited suggestions from His Holiness the Dalai Lama for the stability and development of Tibet. The Executive Vice Minister of the Central United Front Work Department, Mr. Zhu Weiqun, further said they would like to hear our views on the

degree or form of autonomy we are seeking as well as on all aspects of regional autonomy within the scope of the Constitution of the PRC.

Accordingly, this memorandum puts forth our position on genuine autonomy and how the specific needs of the Tibetan nationality for autonomy and self-government can be met through application of the principles on autonomy of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, as we understand them. On this basis, His Holiness the Dalai Lama is confident that the basic needs of the Tibetan nationality can be met through genuine autonomy within the PRC.

The PRC is a multi-national state, and as in many other parts of the world, it seeks to resolve the nationality question through autonomy and the self-government of the minority nationalities. The Constitution of the PRC contains fundamental principles on autonomy and self-government whose objectives are compatible with the needs and aspirations of the Tibetans. Regional national autonomy is aimed at opposing both the oppression and the separation of nationalities by rejecting both Han Chauvinism and local nationalism. It is intended to ensure the protection of the culture and the identity of minority nationalities by powering them to become masters of their own affairs.

To a very considerable extent Tibetan needs can be met within the constitutional principles on autonomy, as we understand them. On several points, the Constitution gives significant discretionary powers to state organs in the decision-making and on the operation of the system of autonomy. These discretionary powers can be exercised to facilitate genuine autonomy for Tibetans in ways that would respond to the uniqueness of the Tibetan situation. In implementing these principles, legislation relevant to autonomy may consequently need to be reviewed or amended to respond to the specific characteristics and needs of the Tibetan nationality. Given good will on both

sides, outstanding problems can be resolved within the constitutional principles on autonomy. In this way national unity and stability and harmonious relations between the Tibetan and other nationalities will be established.

II RESPECT FOR THE INTEGRITY OF THE TIBETAN NATIONALITY

Tibetans belong to one minority nationality regardless of the current administrative division. The integrity of the Tibetan nationality must be respected. That is the spirit, the intent and the principle underlying the constitutional concept of national regional autonomy as well as the principle of equality of nationalities.

There is no dispute about the fact that Tibetans share the same language, culture, spiritual tradition, core values and customs, that they belong to the same ethnic group and that they have a strong sense of common identity. Tibetans share a common history and despite periods of political or administrative divisions, Tibetans continuously remained united by their religion, culture, education, language, way of life and by their unique high plateau environment.

The Tibetan nationality lives in one contiguous area on the Tibetan plateau, which they have inhabited for millennia and to which they are therefore indigenous. For purposes of the constitutional principles of national regional autonomy Tibetans in the PRC in fact live as a single nationality all over the Tibetan plateau.

On account of the above reasons, the PRC has recognised the Tibetan nationality as one of the 55 minority nationalities.

III TIBETAN ASPIRATIONS

Tibetans have a rich and distinct history, culture and spiritual tradition all of which form valuable parts of the heritage of humanity. Not only do Tibetans wish to preserve their own heritage, which they cherish, but equally they wish to further develop their culture and spiritual life and knowledge in ways that are particularly suited to the needs and conditions of humanity in the 21st century.

As a part of the multi-national state of the PRC, Tibetans can benefit greatly from the rapid economic and scientific development the country is experiencing. While wanting to actively participate and contribute to this development, we want to ensure that this happens without the people losing their Tibetan identity, culture and core values and without putting the distinct and fragile environment of the Tibetan plateau, to which Tibetans are indigenous, at risk.

The uniqueness of the Tibetan situation has consistently been recognised within the PRC and has been reflected in the terms of the '17 Point Agreement' and in statements and policies of successive leaders of the PRC since then, and should remain the basis for defining the scope and structure of the specific autonomy to be exercised by the Tibetan nationality within the PRC. The Constitution reflects a fundamental principle of flexibility to accommodate special situations, including the special characteristics and needs of minority nationalities.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's commitment to seek a solution for the Tibetan people within the PRC is clear and unambiguous. This position is in full compliance and agreement with paramount leader Deng Xiaoping's statement in which he emphasised that except for independence all other issues could be resolved through dialogue. Whereas, we are committed, therefore, to fully respect the territorial integrity of the PRC, we expect the Central Government to recognise and fully

respect the integrity of the Tibetan nationality and its right to exercise genuine autonomy within the PRC. We believe that this is the basis for resolving the differences between us and promoting unity, stability and harmony among nationalities.

For Tibetans to advance as a distinct nationality within the PRC, they need to continue to progress and develop economically, socially and politically in ways that correspond to the development of the PRC and the world as a whole while respecting and nurturing the Tibetan characteristics of such development. For this to happen, it is imperative that the right of Tibetans to govern themselves be recognised and implemented throughout the region where they live in compact communities in the PRC, in accordance with the Tibetan nationality's own needs, priorities and characteristics.

The Tibetan people's culture and identity can only be preserved and promoted by the Tibetans themselves and not by any others. Therefore, Tibetans should be capable of self-help, self-development and self-government, and an optimal balance needs to be found between this and the necessary and welcome guidance and assistance for Tibet from the Central Government and other provinces and regions of the PRC.

IV BASIC NEEDS OF TIBETANS

Subject Matters of Self-government

1) Language

Language is the most important attribute of the Tibetan people's identity. Tibetan is the primary means of communication, the language in which their literature, their spiritual texts and historical as well as scientific works are written. The Tibetan language is not only at the same high level as that of Sanskrit in terms of grammar, but is also the only

one that has the capability of translating from Sanskrit without an iota of error. Therefore, Tibetan language has not only the richest and best-translated literatures, many scholars even contend that it has also the richest and largest number of literary compositions. The Constitution of the PRC, in Article 4, guarantees the freedom of all nationalities “to use and develop their own spoken and written languages ...”.

In order for Tibetans to use and develop their own language, Tibetan must be respected as the main spoken and written language. Similarly, the principal language of the Tibetan autonomous areas needs to be Tibetan.

This principle is broadly recognised in the Constitution in Article 121, which states, “the organs of self-government of the national autonomous areas employ the spoken and written language or language in common use in the locality.” Article 10 of the Law on Regional National Autonomy (LRNA) provides that these organs “shall guarantee the freedom of the nationalities in these areas to use and develop their own spoken and written languages....”

Consistent with the principle of recognition of Tibetan as the main language in Tibetan areas, the LRNA (Article 36) also allows the autonomous government authorities to decide on “the language used in instruction and enrolment procedures” with regard to education. This implies recognition of the principle that the principal medium of education be Tibetan.

2) Culture

The concept of national regional autonomy is primarily for the purpose of preservation of the culture of minority nationalities. Consequently, the constitution of PRC contains references to cultural preservation in Articles 22, 47 and 119 as also in Article 38 of the LRNA. To Tibetans, Tibetan culture is closely connected to our religion, tradition,

language and identity, which are facing threats at various levels. Since Tibetans live within the multinational state of the PRC, this distinct Tibetan cultural heritage needs protection through appropriate constitutional provisions.

3) Religion

Religion is fundamental to Tibetans and Buddhism is closely linked to their identity. We recognise the importance of separation of church and state, but this should not affect the freedom and practice of believers. It is impossible for Tibetans to imagine personal or community freedom without the freedom of belief, conscience and religion. The Constitution recognises the importance of religion and protects the right to profess it. Article 36 guarantees all citizens the right to the freedom of religious belief. No one can compel another to believe in or not to believe in any religion. Discrimination on the basis of religion is forbidden.

An interpretation of the constitutional principle in light of international standard would also cover the freedom of the manner of belief or worship. The freedom covers the right of monasteries to be organised and run according to Buddhist monastic tradition, to engage in teachings and studies, and to enroll any number of monks and nuns or age group in accordance with these rules. The normal practice to hold public teachings and the empowerment of large gatherings is covered by this freedom and the state should not interfere in religious practices and traditions, such as the relationship between a teacher and his disciple, management of monastic institutions, and the recognition of reincarnations.

4) Education

The desire of Tibetans to develop and administer their own education system in cooperation and in coordination with the central government's ministry of education is supported by the principles contained

in the Constitution with regard to education. So is the aspiration to engage in and contribute to the development of science and technology. We note the increasing recognition in international scientific development of the contribution which Buddhist psychology, metaphysics, cosmology and the understanding of the mind is making to modern science.

Whereas, under Article 19 of the Constitution the state takes on the overall responsibility to provide education for its citizens, Article 119 recognises the principle that “[T]he organs of self-government of the national autonomous areas independently administer educational ... affairs in their respective areas...” This principle is also reflected in Article 36 of the LRNA.

Since the degree of autonomy in decision-making is unclear, the point to be emphasised is that the Tibetan need to exercise genuine autonomy with regard to its own nationality’s education and this is supported by the principles of the constitution on autonomy.

As for the aspiration to engage in and contribute to the development of scientific knowledge and technology, the Constitution (Article 119) and the LRNA (Article 39) clearly recognise the right of autonomous areas to develop scientific knowledge and technology.

5) Environment Protection

Tibet is the prime source of Asia’s great rivers. It also has the earth’s loftiest mountains as well as the world’s most extensive and highest plateau, rich in mineral resources, ancient forests, and many deep valleys untouched by human disturbances.

This environmental protection practice was enhanced by the Tibetan people’s traditional respect for all forms of life, which prohibits the harming of all sentient beings, whether human or animal. Tibet used

to be an unspoiled wilderness sanctuary in a unique natural environment.

Today, Tibet's traditional environment is suffering irreparable damage. The effects of this are especially notable on the grasslands, the croplands, the forests, the water resources and the wildlife.

In view of this, according to Articles 45 and 66 of the LNRA, the Tibetan people should be given the right over the environment and allow them to follow their traditional conservation practices.

6) Utilisation of Natural Resources

With respect to the protection and management of the natural environment and the utilisation of natural resources the Constitution and the LRNA only acknowledge a limited role for the organs of self-government of the autonomous areas (see LRNA Articles 27, 28, 45, 66, and Article 118 of the Constitution, which pledges that the state "shall give due consideration to the interests of [the national autonomous areas]"). The LRNA recognises the importance for the autonomous areas to protect and develop forests and grasslands (Article 27) and to "give priority to the rational exploitation and utilization of the natural resources that the local authorities are entitled to develop", but only within the limits of state plans and legal stipulations. In fact, the central role of the State in these matters is reflected in the Constitution (Article 9).

The principles of autonomy enunciated in the Constitution cannot, in our view, truly lead to Tibetans becoming masters of their own destiny if they are not sufficiently involved in decision-making on utilisation of natural resources such as mineral resources, waters, forests, mountains, grasslands, etc.

The ownership of land is the foundation on which the development of natural resources, taxes and revenues of an economy are based. Therefore, it is essential that only the nationality of the autonomous region shall have the legal authority to transfer or lease land, except land owned by the state. In the same manner, the autonomous region must have the independent authority to formulate and implement developmental plans concurrent to the state plans.

7) **Economic Development and Trade**

Economic Development in Tibet is welcome and much needed. The Tibetan people remain one of the most economically backward regions within the PRC.

The Constitution recognises the principle that the autonomous authorities have an important role to play in the economic development of their areas in view of local characteristics and needs (Article 118 of the Constitution, also reflected in LRNA Article 25). The Constitution also recognises the principle of autonomy in the administration and management of finances (Article 117, and LRNA Article 32). At the same time, the Constitution also recognises the importance of providing State funding and assistance to the autonomous areas to accelerate development (Article 122, LRNA Article 22).

Similarly, Article 31 of the LRNA recognises the competence of autonomous areas, especially those such as Tibet, adjoining foreign countries, to conduct border trade as well as trade with foreign countries. The recognition of these principles is important to the Tibetan nationality given the region's proximity to foreign countries with which the people have cultural, religious, ethnic and economic affinities.

The assistance rendered by the Central Government and the provinces has temporary benefits, but in the long run if the Tibetan people are not self-reliant and become dependent on others it has greater harm.

Therefore, an important objective of autonomy is to make the Tibetan people economically self-reliant.

8) Public health

The Constitution enunciates the responsibility of the State to provide health and medical services (Article 21). Article 119 recognises that this is an area of responsibility of the autonomous areas. The LRNA (Article 40) also recognises the right of organs of self-government of the autonomous areas to “make independent decisions on plans for developing local medical and health services and for advancing both modern and the traditional medicine of the nationalities.”

The existing health system fails to adequately cover the needs of the rural Tibetan population. According to the principles of the above-mentioned laws, the regional autonomous organs need to have the competencies and resources to cover the health need of the entire Tibetan population. They also need the competencies to promote the traditional Tibetan medical and astro system strictly according to traditional practice.

9) Public Security

In matters of public security it is important that the majority of security personnel consists of members of the local nationality who understand and respect local customs and traditions.

What is lacking in Tibetan areas is absence of decision-making authority in the hands of local Tibetan officials.

An important aspect of autonomy and self-government is the responsibility for the internal public order and security of the autonomous areas. The Constitution (Article 120) and LRNA (Article 24) recognise the importance of local involvement and authorise autonomous areas to organise their security within “the military system of the State

and practical needs and with the approval of the State Council.”

10) Regulation on population migration

The fundamental objective of national regional autonomy and self-government is the preservation of the identity, culture, language and so forth of the minority nationality and to ensure that it is the master of its own affairs. When applied to a particular territory in which the minority nationality lives in a concentrated community or communities, the very principle and purpose of national regional autonomy is disregarded if large scale migration and settlement of the majority Han nationality and other nationalities is encouraged and allowed. Major demographic changes that result from such migration will have the effect of assimilating rather than integrating the Tibetan nationality into the Han nationality and gradually extinguishing the distinct culture and identity of the Tibetan nationality. Also, the influx of large numbers of Han and other nationalities into Tibetan areas will fundamentally change the conditions necessary for the exercise of regional autonomy since the constitutional criteria for the exercise of autonomy, namely that the minority nationality “live in compact communities” in a particular territory is changed and undermined by the population movements and transfers. If such migrations and settlements continue uncontrolled, Tibetans will no longer live in a compact community or communities and will consequently no longer be entitled, under the Constitution, to national regional autonomy. This would effectively violate the very principles of the Constitution in its approach to the nationalities issue.

There is precedent in the PRC for restriction on the movement or residence of citizens. There is only a very limited recognition of the right of autonomous areas to work out measures to control “the transient population” in those areas. To us it would be vital that the autonomous organs of self-government have the authority to regulate the residence, settlement and employment or economic activities of per-

sons who wish to move to Tibetan areas from other parts of the PRC in order to ensure respect for and the realisation of the objectives of the principle of autonomy.

It is not our intention to expel the non-Tibetans who have permanently settled in Tibet and have lived there and grown up there for a considerable time. Our concern is the induced massive movement of primarily Han but also some other nationalities into many areas of Tibet, upsetting existing communities, marginalising the Tibetan population there and threatening the fragile natural environment.

11) Cultural, educational and religious exchanges with other countries

Besides the importance of exchanges and cooperation between the Tibetan nationality and other nationalities, provinces, and regions of the PRC in the subject matters of autonomy, such as culture, art, education, science, public health, sports, religion, environment, economy and so forth, the power of autonomous areas to conduct such exchanges with foreign countries in these areas is also recognised in the LRNA (Article 42).

V APPLICATION OF A SINGLE ADMINISTRATION FOR THE TIBETAN NATIONALITY IN THE PRC

In order for the Tibetan nationality to develop and flourish with its distinct identity, culture and spiritual tradition through the exercise of self-government on the above mentioned basic Tibetan needs, the entire community, comprising all the areas currently designated by the PRC as Tibetan autonomous areas, should be under one single administrative entity. The current administrative divisions, by which Tibetan communities are ruled and administered under different provinces and regions of the PRC, foments fragmentation, promotes unequal

development, and weakens the ability of the Tibetan nationality to protect and promote its common cultural, spiritual and ethnic identity. Rather than respecting the integrity of the nationality, this policy promotes its fragmentation and disregards the spirit of autonomy. Whereas the other major minority nationalities such as the Uighurs and Mongols govern themselves almost entirely within their respective single autonomous regions, Tibetans remain as if they were several minority nationalities instead of one.

Bringing all the Tibetans currently living in designated Tibetan autonomous areas within a single autonomous administrative unit is entirely in accordance with the constitutional principle contained in Article 4, also reflected in the LRNA (Article 2), that “regional autonomy is practiced in areas where people of minority nationalities live in concentrated communities.” The LRNA describes regional national autonomy as the “basic policy adopted by the Communist Party of China for the solution of the national question in China” and explains its meaning and intent in its Preface:

the minority nationalities, under unified state leadership, practice regional autonomy in areas where they live in concentrated communities and set up organs of self-government for the exercise of the power of autonomy. Regional national autonomy embodies the state's full respect for and guarantee of the right of the minority nationalities to administer their internal affairs and its adherence to the principle of equality, unity and common prosperity of all nationalities.

It is clear that the Tibetan nationality within the PRC will be able to exercise its right to govern itself and administer its internal affairs effectively only once it can do so through an organ of self-government that has jurisdiction over the Tibetan nationality as a whole.

The LRNA recognises the principle that boundaries of national autonomous areas may need to be modified. The need for the application of the fundamental principles of the Constitution on regional autonomy through respect of the integrity of the Tibetan nationality is not only totally legitimate, but the administrative changes that may be required to achieve this in no way violate constitutional principles. There are several precedents where this has been actually done.

VI THE NATURE AND STRUCTURE OF THE AUTONOMY

The extent to which the right to self-government and self-administration can be exercised on the preceding subject matters largely determines the genuine character of Tibetan autonomy. The task at hand is therefore to look into the manner in which autonomy can be regulated and exercised for it to effectively respond to the unique situation and basic needs of the Tibetan nationality.

The exercise of genuine autonomy would include the right of Tibetans to create their own regional government and government institutions and processes that are best suited to their needs and characteristics. It would require that the People's Congress of the autonomous region have the power to legislate on all matters within the competencies of the region (that is the subject matters referred to above) and that other organs of the autonomous government have the power to execute and administer decisions autonomously. Autonomy also entails representation and meaningful participation in national decision-making in the Central Government. Processes for effective consultation and close cooperation or joint decision-making between the Central Government and the regional government on areas of common interest also need to be in place for the autonomy to be effective.

A crucial element of genuine autonomy is the guarantee the Constitution or other laws provide that powers and responsibilities allocated to the autonomous region cannot be unilaterally abrogated or changed. This means that neither the Central Government nor the autonomous region's government should be able, without the consent of the other, to change the basic features of the autonomy.

The parameters and specifics of such genuine autonomy for Tibet that respond to the unique needs and conditions of the Tibetan people and region should be set out in some detail in regulations on the exercise of autonomy, as provided for in Article 116 of the Constitution (enacted in LRNA Article 19) or, if it is found to be more appropriate, in a separate set of laws or regulations adopted for that purpose. The Constitution, including Article 31, provides the flexibility to adopt special laws to respond to unique situations such as the Tibetan one, while respecting the established social, economic and political system of the country.

The Constitution in Section VI provides for organs of self-government of national autonomous regions and acknowledges their power to legislate. Thus Article 116 (enacted in Article 19 of the LRNA) refers to their power to enact "separate regulations in light of the political, economic and cultural characteristics of the nationality or nationalities in the areas concerned." Similarly, the Constitution recognises the power of autonomous administration in a number of areas (Article 117-120) as well as the power of autonomous governments to apply flexibility in implementing the laws and policies of the Central Government and higher state organs to suit the conditions of the autonomous area concerned (Article 115).

The above-mentioned legal provisions do contain significant limitations to the decision-making authority of the autonomous organs of government. But the Constitution nevertheless recognises the princi-

ple that organs of self-government make laws and policy decisions that address local needs and that these may be different from those adopted elsewhere, including by the Central Government.

Although the needs of the Tibetans are broadly consistent with the principles on autonomy contained in the Constitution, as we have shown, their realisation is impeded because of the existence of a number of problems, which makes the implementation of those principles today difficult or ineffective.

Implementation of genuine autonomy, for example, requires clear divisions of powers and responsibilities between the Central Government and the government of the autonomous region with respect to subject matter competency. Currently there is no such clarity and the scope of legislative powers of autonomous regions is both uncertain and severely restricted. Thus, whereas the Constitution intends to recognise the special need for autonomous regions to legislate on many matters that affect them, the requirements of Article 116 for prior approval at the highest level of the Central Government - by the Standing Committee of National People's Congress (NPC) - inhibit the implementation of this principle of autonomy. In reality, it is only autonomous regional congresses that expressly require such approval, while the congresses of ordinary (not autonomous) provinces of the PRC do not need prior permission and merely report the passage of regulations to the Standing Committee of the NPC "for the record" (Article 100).

The exercise of autonomy is further subject to a considerable number of laws and regulations, according to Article 115 of the Constitution. Certain laws effectively restrict the autonomy of the autonomous region, while others are not always consistent with one another. The result is that the exact scope of the autonomy is unclear and is not fixed, since it is unilaterally changed with the enactment of laws and regulations are higher levels of the state, and even by changes in policy.

There is also no adequate process for consultation or for settling differences that arise between the organs of the Central Government and of the regional government with respect to the scope and exercise of autonomy. In practice, the resulting uncertainty limits the initiative of regional authorities and impedes the exercise of genuine autonomy by Tibetans today.

We do not at this stage wish to enter into details regarding these and other impediments to the exercise of genuine autonomy today by Tibetans, but mention them by way of example so that these may be addressed in the appropriate manner in our dialogue in the future. We will continue to study the Constitution and other relevant legal provisions and, when appropriate, will be pleased to provide further analysis of these issues, as we understand them.

VII THE WAY FORWARD

As stated at the beginning of this memorandum, our intention is to explore how the needs of the Tibetan nationality can be met within the framework of PRC since we believe these needs are consistent with the principles of the Constitution on autonomy. As His Holiness the Dalai Lama stated on a number of occasions, we have no hidden agenda. We have no intention at all of using any agreement on genuine autonomy as stepping stone for separation from the PRC.

The objective of the Tibetan Government in Exile is to represent the interests of the Tibetan people and to speak on their behalf. Therefore, it will no longer be needed and will be dissolved once an agreement is reached between us. In fact, His Holiness has reiterated his decision not to accept any political office in Tibet at any time in the future. His Holiness the Dalai Lama, nevertheless, plans to use all his personal influence to ensure such an agreement would have the legitimacy nec-

essary to obtain the support of the Tibetan people.

Given these strong commitments, we propose that the next step in this process be the agreement to start serious discussions on the points raised in this memorandum. For this purpose we propose that we discuss and agree on a mutually agreeable mechanism or mechanisms and a timetable to do so effectively.

ADDRESS TO THE PLENARY SESSION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

By His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama

Your Excellency, Mr. President, Honorable Members of the Parliament, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honour to speak before you today and I thank you for your invitation. Wherever I go, my main interest or commitment is in the promotion of human values such as warm heartedness this is what I consider the key factor for a happy life at the individual level, family level and community level. In our modern times, it seems that insufficient attention is paid to these inner values. Promoting them is therefore my number one commitment.

My second interest or commitment is the promotion of inter-religious harmony. We accept the need for pluralism in politics and democracy, yet we often seem more hesitant about the plurality of faiths and religions. Despite their different concepts and philosophies, all major religious traditions bear the same messages of love, compassion, tolerance, contentment and self-discipline. They are also similar in having the potential to help human beings lead happier lives. So these two are my main interests and commitments.

Of course the issue of Tibet is also of particular concern to me and I have a special responsibility to the people of Tibet, who continue to place their hope and trust in me during this most difficult period in the history of Tibet. The welfare of the Tibetan people is my constant motivation and I consider myself to be their free spokesperson in exile.

The last time I had the privilege to address the European Parliament (EP), on October 24, 2001, I stated, “despite some development and economic progress, Tibet continues to face fundamental problems of survival. Serious violations of human rights are widespread throughout Tibet and are often the result of policies of racial and cultural discrimination. Yet, they are only the symptoms and consequences of a deeper problem. The Chinese authorities view Tibet’s distinct culture and religion as the source of threat of separation. Hence as a result of deliberate policies an entire people with its unique culture and identity are facing the threat of extinction”.

Since March this year, Tibetans from all walks of life and across the entire Tibetan plateau demonstrated against the oppressive and discriminatory policies of the Chinese authorities in Tibet. With full awareness of the imminent danger to their lives, Tibetans from all across Tibet known as Cholka-Sum (U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo), young and old, men and women, monastic and lay people, believer and non-believers, including students, came together to spontaneously and courageously express their anguish, dissatisfaction and genuine grievances at the policies of the Chinese government. I have been deeply saddened by the loss of life, both Tibetan and Chinese, and immediately appealed to the Chinese authorities for restraint. Since the Chinese authorities have blamed me for orchestrating the recent events in Tibet, I have made repeated appeals for an independent and respected international body to conduct a thorough investigation into the matter, including inviting them to Dharamsala, India. If the Chinese government has any evidence to support such serious allegations, they must disclose it to the world.

Sadly, the Chinese authorities have resorted to brutal methods to deal with the situation in Tibet, despite appeals by many world leaders, NGOs and personalities of international standing to avoid violence and show restraint. In the process, a large number of Tibetans have

been killed, thousands injured and detained. There are many whose fate remains completely unknown. Even as I stand here before you, in many parts of Tibet there is a huge presence of armed police and military. In many areas Tibetans continue to suffer under a state of de-facto martial law. There is an atmosphere of angst and intimidation. Tibetans in Tibet live in a constant state of fear of being the next to be arrested. With no international observers, journalists or even tourists allowed into many parts of Tibet, I am deeply worried about the fate of the Tibetans. Presently, the Chinese authorities have a completely free hand in Tibet. It is as though Tibetans face a death sentence, a sentence aimed at wiping out the spirit of the Tibetan people.

Many honorable members of the EP are well aware of my consistent efforts to find a mutually acceptable solution to the Tibet problem through dialogue and negotiations. In this spirit, in 1988 at the European Parliament in Strasbourg I presented a formal proposal for negotiations that does not call for separation and independence of Tibet. Since then, our relations with the Chinese government have taken many twists and turns. After an interruption of nearly 10 years, in 2002 we re-established direct contact with the Chinese leadership. Extensive discussions have been held between my envoys and representatives of the Chinese leadership. In these discussions we have put forth clearly the aspirations of the Tibetan people. The essence of my Middle Way Approach is to secure genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people within the scope of the Constitution of the PRC.

During the seventh round of talks in Beijing on 1st and 2nd July this year, the Chinese side invited us to present our views on the form of genuine autonomy. Accordingly, on 31st October 2008 we presented to the Chinese leadership the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People. Our memorandum puts forth our position on genuine autonomy and how the basic needs of the Tibetan nationality for autonomy and self-government can be met. We have presented

these suggestions with the sole purpose of making a sincere effort to address the real problems in Tibet. We were confident that given goodwill, the issues raised in our memorandum could be implemented.

Unfortunately, the Chinese side has rejected our memorandum in its totality, branding our suggestions as an attempt at “semi-independence” and “independence in disguise” and, for that reason, unacceptable. Moreover, the Chinese side is accusing us of “ethnic cleansing” because our memorandum calls for the recognition of the right of autonomous areas “to regulate the residence, settlement and employment or economic activities of persons who wish to move to Tibetan areas from other parts of the PRC.”

We have made it clear in our memorandum that our intention is not to expel non-Tibetans. Our concern is the induced mass movement of primarily Han, but also some other nationalities, into many Tibetan areas, which in turn marginalizes the native Tibetan population and threatens Tibet’s fragile natural environment. Major demographic changes that result from massive migration will lead to the assimilation rather than integration of the Tibetan nationality into the PRC and gradually lead to the extinction of the distinct culture and identity of the Tibetan people.

The cases of the peoples of Manchuria, Inner Mongolia and East Turkestan in the PRC are clear examples of the devastating consequences of a massive population transfer of the dominant Han nationality upon the minority nationalities. Today, the language, script and culture of the Manchu people have become extinct. In Inner Mongolia today, only 20% are native Mongolians out of a total population of 24 millions.

Despite the assertions by some hard-line Chinese officials to the contrary, from the copies of our memorandum made available to you it

is clear that we have sincerely addressed the concerns of the Chinese government about the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the PRC. The memorandum is self-explanatory. I would welcome your comments and suggestions.

I take this opportunity to appeal to the European Union and the Parliament to use your good offices, sparing no efforts, to persuade the Chinese leadership to resolve the issue of Tibet through earnest negotiations for the common good of the Tibetan and Chinese peoples.

While I firmly reject the use of violence as a means in our struggle, we certainly have the right to explore all other political options available to us. In the spirit of democracy, I called for a Special Meeting of Tibetans in exile to discuss the state of Tibetan people and the state of the issue of Tibet and the future course of our movement. The meeting took place from November 17-22, 2008 in Dharamsala, India. The failure of the Chinese leadership to respond positively to our initiatives has reaffirmed the suspicion held by many Tibetans that the Chinese government has no interest whatsoever in any kind of mutually acceptable solution. Many Tibetans continue to believe that the Chinese leadership is bent on the forceful and complete assimilation and absorption of Tibet into China. They therefore call for the complete independence of Tibet. Others advocate the right to self-determination and a referendum in Tibet. Despite these different views, the delegates to the Special Meeting unanimously resolved to empower me to decide the best approach, in accordance with the prevailing situation and the changes taking place in Tibet, China and the wider world. I will study the suggestions made by about 600 leaders and delegates from Tibetan communities around the world, including views we are able to gather from a cross section of Tibetans in Tibet.

I am a staunch believer in democracy. Consequently, I have consistently encouraged Tibetans in exile to follow the democratic process.

Today, the Tibetan refugee community may be among the few refugee communities that have established all three pillars of democracy: legislature, judiciary and executive. In 2001, we took another great stride in the process of democratization by having the chairman of the Kashag (cabinet) of the Tibetan Administration in exile elected by popular vote.

I have always maintained that ultimately the Tibetan people must be able to decide the future of Tibet. As Pandit Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, stated in the Indian Parliament on December 7, 1950: “The last voice in regard to Tibet should be the voice of the people of Tibet and nobody else.”

The issue of Tibet has dimensions and implications that go well beyond the fate of six million Tibetans. Tibet is situated between India and China. For centuries Tibet acted as a peaceful buffer zone separating the two most populated countries on earth. However, in 1962, only a few years after the so-called “peaceful liberation of Tibet” the world witnessed the first ever war between the two Asian giants. This clearly shows the importance of a just and peaceful resolution of the Tibet question in ensuring lasting and genuine trust and friendship between the two most powerful nations of Asia. The Tibetan issue is also related to Tibet’s fragile environment, which scientists have concluded, has an impact on much of Asia involving billions of people. The Tibetan plateau is the source of many of Asia’s greatest rivers. Tibet’s glaciers are the earth’s largest ice mass outside the Poles. Some environmentalists today refer to Tibet as the Third Pole. And, if the present warming trend continues the Indus River might dry up within the next 15-20 years. Furthermore, Tibet’s cultural heritage is based on Buddhism’s principle of compassion and non-violence. Thus, it concerns not just the six million Tibetans, but also the over 13 million people across the Himalayas, Mongolia and in the Republics of Kalmykia and Buryat in Russia, including a growing number of Chinese brothers and sis-

ters who share this culture, which has the potential to contribute to a peaceful and harmonious world.

My maxim has always been to hope for the best and to prepare for the worst. With this in mind, I have counseled the Tibetans in exile to make more rigorous efforts in educating the younger generation of Tibetans, in strengthening our cultural and religious institutions in exile with the aim of preserving our rich cultural heritage, and in expanding and strengthening the democratic institutions and civil society among the Tibetan refugee community. One of the main objectives of our exile community is to preserve our cultural heritage where there is the freedom to do so and to be the free voice of our captive people inside Tibet. The tasks and challenges we face are daunting. As a refugee community, our resources are naturally limited. We Tibetans also need to face the reality that our exile may last for a longer time. I would therefore be grateful to the European Union for assistance in our educational and cultural endeavors.

I have no doubt that the principled and consistent engagement of the EP with China will impact the process of change that is already taking place in China. The global trend is towards more openness, freedom, democracy and respect for human rights. Sooner or later, China will have to follow the world trend. In this context, I wish to commend the EP for awarding the prestigious Sakharov Prize to the Chinese human rights defender Hu Jia. It is an important signal as we watch China rapidly moving forward. With its newfound status, China is poised to play an important leading role on the world stage. In order to fulfill this role, I believe it is vital for China to have openness, transparency, rule of law and freedom of information and thought. There is no doubt that the attitudes and policies of members of the international community towards China will impact the course of the change taking place in China as much as domestic events and developments.

In contrast to the continued extremely rigid attitude of the Chinese government towards Tibet, fortunately among the Chinese people – especially among the informed and educated Chinese circles – there is a growing understanding and sympathy for the plight of the Tibetan people. Although my faith in the Chinese leadership with regard to Tibet is becoming thinner and thinner, my faith in the Chinese people remains unshaken. I have therefore been advising the Tibetan people to make concerted efforts to reach out to the Chinese people. Chinese intellectuals openly criticized the harsh crackdown of Tibetan demonstrations by the Chinese government in March this year and called for restraint and dialogue in addressing the problems in Tibet. Chinese lawyers offered publicly to represent arrested Tibetan demonstrators at trials. Today, there is growing understanding, sympathy, support and solidarity among our Chinese brothers and sisters for the difficult situation of the Tibetans and their legitimate aspirations. This is most encouraging. I take this opportunity to thank the brave Chinese brothers and sisters for their solidarity.

I also thank the European Parliament for the consistent display of concern and support for the just and non-violent Tibetan struggle. Your sympathy, support and solidarity have always been a great source of inspiration and encouragement to the Tibetan people, both in and outside of Tibet. I would like to express special thanks to the members of the Tibet Inter-Group of the EP, who have made the tragedy of the Tibetan people not only a focus of their political work but also a cause of their hearts. The many resolutions of the EP on the issue of Tibet have helped greatly to highlight the plight of the Tibetan people and to raise the awareness of the issue of Tibet amongst the public and in governments here in Europe, and all around the world

The consistency of the European Parliament's support for Tibet has not gone unnoticed in China. I regret where this has caused some tensions in EU-China relations. However, I wish to share with you

my sincere hope and belief that the future of Tibet and China will move beyond mistrust to a relationship based on mutual respect, trust and recognition of common interest – irrespective of the current very grim situation inside Tibet and the deadlock in the dialogue process between my envoys and the Chinese leadership. I have no doubt that your continued expressions of concern and support for Tibet will, in the long run, have a positive impact and help create the necessary political environment for a peaceful resolution of the issue of Tibet. Your continued support is, therefore, critical.

I thank you for the honor to share my thoughts with you.

Brussels, 4 December 2008

ADDRESS AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE BY THE STATE COUNCIL INFORMATION OFFICE

Mr. Zhu Weiqun, Executive vice-minister of the United Front Work Department of the CPC Central Committee

November 10, 2008

Ladies and gentlemen:

I am very glad to see you here. Now I would like to introduce the major situation concerning the recent contacts and talks with the Dalai Lama's private representatives.

As Dalai Lama's private representatives, Mr. Lodi Gyari, Mr. Kelsang Gyaltzen and three other persons came back to China and stayed from October 31 to November 5. This is the ninth contact and talk since 2002, and the third of this year. Mr. Du Qinglin, vice-chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and minister of the United Front Work Department of the CPC Central Committee, had an interview with them. Mr. Sita, vice-minister of the United Front Work Department of the CPC Central Committee, Mr. Pelma Trilek, Executive vice-chairman of Tibet Autonomous Region and I, held a whole day's talk with them. In addition, we also invited relevant domestic experts and scholars to brief them on the laws, policies and practices concerning China's regional autonomy system for ethnic minorities and arranged them to tour in Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. Though there existed serious divergences of views in this contact and talk, the atmosphere generally remained frank and sincere.

In his interview, Vice-chairman Du Qinglin gave an all-round introduction to the present situation in China, mainly stressing the

following opinions:

1. Safeguarding the dignity of the Constitution and the laws.

In China, all organizations and individuals must act in accordance with the Constitution. Adherences to the CPC's leadership, the socialist path with Chinese characteristics and the regional autonomy system for ethnic minorities were stipulated in China's Constitution. No activities that defy the Constitution and deny the "three adherences" would be tolerated.

2. Having a correct understanding of the regional autonomy system for ethnic minorities.

All national autonomous areas are inseparable part of the People's Republic of China. The regional autonomy system for ethnic minorities is exercised under China's unitary system and is different from the federal system or confederation implemented in some countries. It is a combination of ethnic autonomy and regional autonomy and different from the "one country, two systems" system implemented in Hong Kong and Macao, which will never allow ethnic splitting in the name of "genuine autonomy" to undermine ethnic solidarity.

3. The Central Government's policy towards the Dalai Lama was consistent and clear. The Central authorities showed a sincere attitude towards the contacts and talks with the Dalai Lama.

The Central Government has declared clearly many times: No "Tibet independence", "half independence" and "convert independence" would be tolerated. The key is that the Dalai Lama should fundamentally change his political propositions and live up to his words, creating conditions to improve his relations with the Central authorities.

In the talks with Mr. Lodi Gyari and his party, we pointed out that they once told us in the talk held in July that they had no difficulties

in following the principle of “four not-to-supports” put forward by the Central authorities, but later on, they completely broke their promise. They absolutely forgot to carry out their promise and they did not stop boycotting and destroying Beijing Olympics. Instead, they became aggravated and continued to attack the Central Government. They supported the “Tibetan Youth Congress” and other organizations to publicly advocate “Tibet Independence” and fanned or organized violent criminal activities. They continued to set up a claim to the internationalization of “Tibet issue”, trying to make use of some foreigners to bring pressure on the Central Government. They continued to collude with such dregs as overseas “democracy activists”, “Falunkun elements” and “Eastern Turkistan terrorists”, trying to form a so-called “united front work” to oppose the Chinese Government and split the motherland. All of these have caused the Chinese people’s strong aversion to their actions.

After his arrival in Beijing, Mr. Lodi Gyari presented us a “Memorandum for All Tibetans to Enjoy Genuine Autonomy”, declaring that the “Tibet government-in-exile is the representative of broad Tibetans and their interests”. For this, we pointed out seriously: the Central Government of the People’s Republic of China and the People’s Government of Tibet Autonomous Region under its leadership are the representatives of all ethnic minorities in Tibet. The so-called “Tibet government-in-exile” is the product created by a small group of separatists who launched an armed rebellion in 1959, but failed, and then they fled to some foreign countries. It has been engaged in splitting and destroying activities for several decades. Its existence is illegal and no state in the whole world recognizes it. We talked with Mr. Lodi Gyari and his party only because they were the Dalai Lama’s private representatives. And we merely talked about how the Dalai Lama should completely give up his splitting opinions and actions and strive for the understanding of the Central authorities and all Chinese people so as to solve the issue concerning his own prospect. We never

discussed the so-called “Tibet issue”. In order to help the Dalai Lama understand the Central authorities’ attitude and realize his own mistakes, we listened to his explanations, so that we could verify whether he already gave up his splitting opinions and got closer to the requests by the Central authorities.

We pointed out, though large numbers of obscure words were intentionally used in the Memorandum, we could still see clearly that they did not give up their consistent splitting opinions. The so-called “genuine autonomy” and other requests mentioned in the Memorandum intended to set the Central united leadership against the regional ethnic autonomy system so as to deny, restrict and weaken the powers of the Central authorities as well as the authority of the National People’s Congress in legislation. What’s more, the splitting clique tried to revise the Constitution so that it could actually possess the rights as an independent state does.

The Memorandums title and contents refer to “Greater Tibetan-inhabited Area” and “high degree of autonomy”. They are exactly the same as “half independence” and “convert independence”, which are not tolerated in the Constitution.

As for the request that “All Tibetan autonomous regions are integrated into one autonomous region” mentioned in the Memorandum, we pointed out that Tibetan autonomous areas were established and divided according to the principles stipulated in the Constitution and on the basis of fully respecting history and facts and comprehensively considering political, economic conditions and reality. The so-called “Greater Tibet” did not exist in history, nor does it have an actual ground. It is stipulated in the Law on the Regional Autonomy for Ethnic Minorities that “The establishment of a national autonomous area, the delineation of its boundaries and the elements of its name shall be proposed by the state organ at the next higher level jointly with the state organ in the relevant locality, after full consultation with

representatives of the relevant nationalities, before they are submitted for approval according to the procedures prescribed by law. Once defined, the boundaries of a national autonomous area may not be altered without authorization. When an alteration is found necessary, it shall be proposed by the relevant department of the state organ at the next higher level after full consultation with the organ of self-government of the national autonomous area before it is submitted to the State Council for approval.” They are neither “the relevant department of the state organ at the next higher level”, nor are they “the organ of self-government of the national autonomous area”. Without a legal status, they are inappropriate to mention this issue.

We pointed out that in 1980’s, Mr. Xi Zhongxun (who had met Mr. Lodi Gyari before) and other leading figures from the Central authorities seriously told the delegation sent by the Dalai Lama that it was impossible to change Tibet into a country, to carry out “high degree of autonomy” or to create a larger Tibet autonomous region. It was not a reality, and absolutely impossible. More than two decades have passed, but they still use this trick to talk in a roundabout with the Central authorities, which shows that they are at least lack of sincerity. Our contacts and talks failed to make progress, and they should assume full responsibility for it.

We pointed out: the unification of the motherland, territorial integrity and the national dignity are the greatest interests of the Chinese people. We will never make a concession. The Central authorities said that the door for the Dalai Lama’s return to patriotic stand had always been open and would remain open in the future. However, the door for “Tibet independence”, “half independence” and “convert independence” had never been open, nor would it be open in the future.

Now, my colleagues and I would like to answer your questions.

Questions and Answers

CHINA RADIO INTERNATIONAL REPORTER: *My question is for Executive Vice-Minister Mr. Zhu Weiqun. The Dalai side has recently said that if the contacts and talks fail to produce results, then it is impossible for the “middle way approach” to be continued any further. What [actually] constitutes the so-called middle way approach and why do the Central Government not accept it?*

Mr. ZHU WEIQUN, executive vice-minister of the Central United Front Work Department: In the 1980s, the Dalai Lama raised his political theory of the “middle way approach”. Literally, it means that the Dalai Lama and his clique have dropped their demand for “Tibetan independence”; in the meantime they disagreed with the principles that the Central Government had proposed, but rather choose to seek a tradeoff scheme between the two positions. Once this tradeoff scheme became public, some overseas interests gave considerable support in favour of this claim. They encouraged the Dalai Lama on one hand, and argued that the Central Government must work with the Dalai Lama to reach a consensus on solutions to any problems on the other hand.

Speaking of the “middle way approach”, the Dalai Lama has come up with various kinds of rhetoric. For example, in 1987, he spoke of a “five-point peace scheme” in the congress of the United States. In 1988, he raised the “seven-point new proposal” in Strasbourg, France. All of these are the “authoritative explanation” by the Dalai Lama on his “middle way approach”. Again, in this most recent round of talks, Lodi Gyari presents us with the “memo”: from which the Dalai Lama’s “middle way approach” can be precisely and clearly figured out.

I cite herewith the implications of the Dalai Lama’s current rhetoric as follows: all of the following five implications can be found in full

from his words as appearing in his aforementioned speeches, as well as in the “memo”.

Firstly, he disagrees that Tibet is one part of the territory of China since ancient times. Repeatedly, the Dalai Lama claims that Tibet was a totally independent country before the People’s Liberation Army marched into Tibet, and argues that Tibet is still an independent country that is currently illegally occupied. Anyone who has a basic knowledge of history understands perfectly that Tibet has historically been one part of the territory of China. Since the Yuan Dynasty, central governments have executed indisputable and effective administrative jurisdiction in Tibet. The sovereignty is the fundamental problem. The Dalai Lama’s denial of the sovereignty of China over Tibet is virtually seeking for a rational and legal warrant implementing his vision of “Tibetan independence”, or “semi-independence” or “covert independence”.

Secondly, the Dalai Lama and his clique schemes to “re-establish” the never existing “greater Tibetan-inhabited area”. Many people assume that the Dalai Lama wants the area of the current TAR of China. On examining requests like this, we can easily observe that our assessment underestimates the ambition of the Dalai Lama. The truth is that his “greater Tibetan-inhabited area” refers not only to the TAR, but also to the bulk of Qinghai Province, Gannan Autonomous Prefecture in Gansu Province, Ganzi Autonomous [Prefecture] and Ngaba Autonomous Prefecture of Sichuan Province, Dechen Autonomous Prefecture of Yunnan Province, and other places, accounting for a total of one fourth of the total territory of the People’s Republic of China! Does this “Greater Tibetan-inhabited area” have any historical basis? No, absolutely not! Since the Yuan Dynasty, the rulers have already divided the Qinghai-Tibet plateau into three plots — U-Tsang, Amdo and Kham — to execute administrative jurisdiction. Besides, having gone through the Ming Dynasty, Qing Dynasty and the Republic of Chi-

na, these areas (though the original administrative zones have slightly changed) have in general survived until today. Throughout history, the Tibetan inhabited areas, other than the Tibet Autonomous Region, were never administered by local Tibet regimes. Prior to the peaceful liberation, the area that was administered by local Tibetan regimes never exceeded that of today's administrative jurisdiction of the TAR.

The Dalai Lama's request really contains a disguised ambition. That is, to set up an autonomous location based on one single ethnic race. China is a country made up of multi-ethnic minorities. In fact, this is one of the great virtues of our nation. Assuming if we allowed each single ethnic group to establish its own autonomous region, China would be thrown into total disarray, as you would appreciate even if you have only a very basic understanding of the history and national situation of China.

Thirdly, by adopting the term "high degree autonomy", the Dalai and his clique deny and are even attempting to overthrow the current social and political system in the TAR. What does this so-called high degree autonomy refer to? The Dalai Lama and several of his prominent followers repeatedly state that "high degree autonomy" means, other than foreign affairs and national defense, all matters related to political, economic, cultural, education and religion must be administered by "Tibetans". This is what their "high degree autonomy" means. In his speech in France regarding his "seven-point new proposal", the Dalai Lama observed "Tibetans were authorized in the final wording to determine every matter". This is his "high-degree autonomy". If we follow his design, it means the leadership of the Chinese Communist Part[y], the socialist system, the system of the people's congress and the system of ethnic regional autonomy, all of which we have built and refined for almost 60 years in this one fourth of our territory, are all going to be pulled down and replaced by their government under their new political system. What is their new political system? Obviously,

that is their obsolete system of feudal serfdom that is a combination of religious and autocratic rule.

Fourthly, the Dalai Lama and his clique ask us to disband and withdraw the People's Liberation Army (PLA) from the "greater-Tibetan inhabited area", meaning we have to evacuate our forces from our own territory (which accounts for one-fourth of the territory of modern China!). In the Dalai Lama's "five-point peace scheme" mentioned in the United States: "The Chinese Communist Party must withdraw its army force and demolish its military facilities. Only by doing so completely, will the genuine reconsolidation process be complete." From then on, the Dalai Lama will hold an "international peaceful conference" and then declare this one-fourth territory to be an "international peace zone". Prior to this round of talks the major political figure, Samdhong in Dalai's "government-in-exile", addressed the media: "A military force must not reside in TAR, and to us this is the key issue." I guess everybody knows that a military force is an issue of a national sovereignty and is the fundamental guarantee of the unity of a territory, the safety of the nation, and social stability. The fact is no country concerned about its sovereignty agrees to disband and withdraw its own armed forces from its own territory. China will definitely not allow the establishment of the so-called international peaceful zone on our own territory.

Can you believe that the Dalai Lama did not thoroughly think this over before he presented us with such an irrational request? He is not a simple man. He knows perfectly well that if the PLA pulled back, he could surely and easily practice his "Tibetan independence". In his talk of "high-degree autonomy", he observed, "the future national defense and foreign affairs could be handed over to the Central Government." If we withdraw our armed forces, how could it be possible for the Central Government to provide national defense? Obviously, this is a deliberate lie!

Fifthly, the Dalai Lama and his clique request, in his so-called greater Tibetan-inhabited area, to purge all other ethnic groups other than ethnic Tibetans. The Dalai Lama frequently claims in public “I never said to deport Han Chinese from of our land”. Notwithstanding, I would like to tell everybody here that the first item in his “five-point peace scheme” clearly demands that China “Must stop migration into Tibet and all Han Chinese must return to China”. Living Buddha Samdhong, one of the leaders of Dalai’s “government-in-exile”, spoke to the media and said: “Those non-Tibetan people residing in TAR will not enjoy any autonomy rights, and all posts such as officials and governmental employees in the ethnic autonomous region must be undertaken by ethnic Tibetan people”.

As is well known, within the area of the Dalai Lama’s so-called greater Tibetan-inhabited area, for thousands of years, various ethnic groups (such as ethnic Tibetan, Han Chinese, ethnic Hui and ethnic Mongolian) have lived, flourished, inter-married and finally formed an integrated and harmonious culture. To date, these different ethnic groups have been living on the same land while enjoying their freedom and all basic human rights. Nevertheless, the Dalai Lama will intentionally expel and purge these civilians affecting thousands who have been living there from generation to generation. Such a vicious initiative indicates to us that if one day the Dalai Lama held power and authority in “Greater Tibet”, he would immediately, without any hesitation or mercy, exercise racial discrimination, isolation and ethnic cleansing.

Of the aforementioned five points, every one is about “Tibetan independence”. To review these five points as a whole exposes his claim of “Tibetan independence” more completely. At the same time he tries to dress up this claim in more fancy language, such as “greater Tibetan-inhabited area” and “high-degree autonomy”.

I do not know any Chinese citizen sitting here that would like to accept the above-mentioned points or any of these five. I also do not

know any foreign people here who, if somebody put such immoral requests to your governments, would agree with it. If our foreign friends would not agree to such requests asked by others, why should the Chinese people accept such a “middle way approach” that in fact exposes a ruthless ambition and a vicious intention to divide our nation and our people?

JAPAN’S KYODO NEWS AGENCY: *The Dalai Lama repeatedly said that in the 1970s he met with Mr. Deng Xiaoping.*

Then Mr. Deng Xiaoping said that as long as the Dalai Lama does not seek independence, then all issues can be discussed. Is it true that he really said that and whether the current policy is different from the prior policy of Mr. Deng Xiaoping? This is my question. Thank you.

Mr. ZHU WEIQUN: Actually, this is the question that Mr. Lodi Gyari repeatedly raised to me. Actually, Mr. Deng Xiaoping never said this, and this is a distortion of Mr. Deng Xiaoping’s remark. [What] Mr. Deng Xiaoping said is that the key is whether Tibet is a part of China and whether you are talking with us as an independent state or in a position that Tibet is a part of China. Talking about Mr. Deng Xiaoping, I would like you to read more of an article in the volume 3 of his collection of works, which he talked with US President Mr. Carter. Mr. Deng Xiaoping said to Mr. Carter that Tibet has a large area and small population. The Han people and the people of other ethnic groups would like to go to Tibet to help with the local building undertakings, and this is good for Tibet. And he said which is to our mind is to help Tibet develop itself as fast as possible and to help the Tibetan people get rich as soon as possible. This is what we are thinking, and we believe that this is the right way. I think it would be foolish for anyone to try to find something that they can use from the remarks of the great patriotic Mr. Deng Xiaoping. Everything we do today is based on the guiding principle set forth by Mr. Deng Xiaoping.

WALL STREET JOURNAL: *The March anti-government riots in Tibet showed that there's definitely a lot of anger in Lhasa and other ethnic Tibetan regions, and whether or not it is directly supported by the Dalai Lama you can argue, but in any case there is definitely tension there in that region. And now, you're presenting us with what looks like a situation where there is a really giant distance between the Dalai Lama's representatives and your position. So if talks fail and there's this anger, how can you move forward in maintaining peace and stability in that region if it looks like the negotiations are at a complete impasse?*

Mr. ZHU WEIQUN: I must just say that there is stability in Tibet and it will have durable stability in that area. There is no such tension at all. Talking about tension, I think it is the people who are engaged in the criminal activities in Tibet and the people who stand behind them who are nervous at this moment. And it's not bad for them to get nervous. The government officials and people in Lhasa and in Tibet as a whole, all believe that thanks to the reform and opening up program and the support given by people around the country and the Central Government, they have benefited a lot. And they are opposed to separation, they are for unification, they are against turmoil, and they are for stability. So they are the force that we can count on and we have no doubt that they are very reliable.

After the March 14 incident, the situation was calmed down immediately. It can be calmed down so soon because the people in Lhasa and the people in Tibet are opposed to separation, they are opposed to violent activities, and this is why we can calm down the situation so rapidly. And I can tell you here that in the process of fighting against separation and fighting against those bad people who were engaged in criminal activities, the Tibetan cadres and Tibetan police and people were actually on the front. They were the force that we count on in the struggle against separation. They are actually stabilizing forces rather than those ones who are creating trouble. So, don't think that more

troubles and more chaos will be created on this piece of land.

Now the people in Tibet are trying their best to grow their economy, maintain social stability, and improve their livelihood, so the future of Tibet is clear and foreseeable. So, anyone who is concerned about the future of Tibet, please just rest assured.

HONG KONG'S WEN WEI PO JOURNALIST: *My questions are for Mr. Sithar. My first question is, before this round of talks, the Dalai Lama spoke to media organisations that he was not optimistic about this round of talks at all. He did not place much hope on this round of talks. What is your comment on this? My second question is, after this round of talks, are you planning to have another round of talks, and did you discuss the time for the next round?*

Mr. SITHAR, vice-minister of the Central United Front Work Department: We have noted remarks made by Dalai Lama to some media organisations. The key is how we approach or how we view the contacts and talks. If the contacts and talks are regarded as a way to seek Tibet independence, then they would never be successful and they will always be disappointed by the contacts and talks. If the contacts and talks are regarded as an opportunity to reflect on one's own mistakes and face up to the reality, and return to the correct and patriotic stance, then the door is always open.

In talking about future contacts and talks, we have made clear repeatedly [that the Central Government's policy has been consistent and clear and] that the door for contacts and talks is always widely open and the door for the Dalai Lama to return [to the correct and patriotic stance] was open, is open, and [will always be opened], but the door for Tibet's independence, [semi-independence, or covert-independence] will never be opened in future.

SWITZERLAND'S "NEW ZURICH NEWSPAPER" REPORTER: *Just now you have explained to us what actions of the Dalai Lama can not be accomplished. Have you considered making any suggestions as to what could be done [by the Dalai Lama] to improve [the system of] autonomy in the region, or to realise a higher degree of autonomy [than what is already in place]?*

Mr. ZHU WEIQUN: The system of regional ethnic autonomy is stipulated very clearly in China's constitution, and our law on regional ethnic autonomy has stipulated details concerning the conduct and practice of this system. The system of regional ethnic autonomy in China is perfected, it is well established, and it is very successful in practice. So in China, this is the very way that we practice this regional ethnic autonomy, and there will never be the so-called genuine autonomy.

In our work, we will continue to implement the provisions of the Chinese constitution and the law on regional ethnic autonomy. And with the support and help of people around the country and the Central Government, we will try to speed up the development of the autonomous localities and improve the livelihood of the local people, but this is totally different from the so-called genuine autonomy proposed by the Dalai Lama.

Indeed, there is something that the Dalai Lama can do which has already been made very clear by the Central Government. What he can do includes giving up the separatist position, stop separatist activities, openly recognise Tibet as part of China, openly recognise that Taiwan is part of China, and recognise that the government of the People's Republic of China is the only legal government representing China. And on such basis, we will continue to conduct contacts and talks with him concerning the future of them.

So these are the things that should be carefully thought about by the Dalai Lama. Is that he should not think about how to invent better packages for the high degree of autonomy in the so-called greater Tibetan region, and he should not continue to think about having a better package for “Tibet independence” and “half-independence”, etc, or to talk in a roundabout way with the Central Government.

CCTV JOURNALIST: *I am with CCTV. My question is for Vice Minister Sithar. In recent years, the Central Government has carried out several rounds of contacts and talks with the private representatives of the Dalai Lama. And in the talks they made some commitments. Do you think they have fulfilled such commitments and what evidence do you have?*

Mr. SITHAR: On the 2nd July, when the private representatives of the Dalai Lama came to Beijing for the second time this year, the Vice Chairman of the CPPCC and Minister of the Department of the United Front Work of CPC Central Committee Mr. Du Qinglin, pointed out to them that the Dalai Lama side should openly and explicitly undertake to take credible measures not to support activities disrupting and undermining the Beijing Olympic Games, not to support violent criminal activities, not to support and take credible measures to reign in the violent activities of the Tibetan Youth Congress and not to support any propositions and activities aimed at seeking independence and separation of the country.

On the 2nd day afternoon of that round of contacts, Mr. Zhu Wei-qun and some colleagues, including me, had a conversation with the representatives of the Dalai Lama. They said to us with instruction from the higher level, the Dalai side considered it acceptable concerning the four not to support commitments. We paid a lot of attention to their commitments. However, their actions and their words later on further disappointed us. They did not honour their commitment of not disrupting the Beijing Olympic Games. I can give you several examples.

Somewhere around the 8th August of the opening of the Olympic Games, the Dalai side organised altogether 16,000 people to attack the Chinese diplomatic and consular missions abroad, and disrupting the normal work of those agencies, and undermining the security and safety of the personnel and their property.

And another example, around the opening of the Olympics, some foreigners were organised by the Dalai group to create troubles outside the Olympic venues and on the Tiananmen Square. So they never fulfilled their commitment as not to support the activities disrupting the Olympic Games, And on the other hand they did not stop supporting violent activities. On the 28th July, the Tibetan Youth Congress organised several rounds of food-strike in New Delhi, India, trying to hijack the Central Government. And on 7th August they declared to launch the second phase of the so called People's Uprising. And on the 13th August, when testifying in the French [Parliament], the Dalai Lama himself admitted that some people, Tibetan people, may have engaged in violent activities, but he never condemned such activities. And in September this year, premier Wen Jiabao attended the UN sessions in New York when he encountered disruptive activities from the Tibet independence people and his safety was seriously undermined.

The Dalai Lama side has consistently refused to acknowledge that Tibet has been an inalienable part of China since ancient times. From 2002 to this day, we have met with the Dalai Lama's private representatives nine times. In each of these meetings, they have said that they do not accept Tibet having been a part of Chinese sovereignty since ancient times. On August 13, while "testifying" before the French Parliament, the Dalai Lama said that Tibet historically remained as a "buffer state" between India and China. Again on 26th August in a meeting with reporters, the Dalai Lama said, "With regard to independence, the younger generation has been hoping for complete independence right from the beginning. We have, moreover, agreed to the full implemen-

tation of a democratic system. Therefore, different voices and point of views are to be most welcomed.” He, in fact, said that independence viewpoint is to be most “welcomed”.

Here, I would like to reiterate that the Central Government has consistently emphasised the need for the Dalai Lama side to properly identify the nature of contacts and talks. It also emphasised that the Dalai Lama side should see to it that the contacts and talks are to be held only with the Dalai Lama’s private representatives; the content of the contacts and talks should be to discuss only the issues relating to how the Dalai Lama and the people around him would give up their separatist stance and ponder over their own future political prospects; and that the political foundation of the contacts and talks is to acknowledge that Tibet has been an inalienable part of Chinese sovereignty since ancient times. The Dalai Lama side has, all the while, not made a serious and proper self-examination of the mistakes they made on these fundamental issues. After the July contact, the Dalai Lama side has not only acted against their words, but also shown that they have the least amount of sincerity [in continuing the dialogue process]. They have, thus, seriously undermined the atmosphere of contacts and talks once again.

CNN REPORTER: *You have, just now, totally refused the Dalai Lama’s “middle way approach”. The Dalai Lama is over 70 years old now, and he is, according to news reports, not keeping well. Have you thought about “the post-Dalai Lama era” and about whether the Dalai Lama’s successor would or would not change his “middle way approach”? Some people of the Dalai Lama clique, and particularly those people living in foreign countries, think that they should adopt a more violent approach, which is equivalent to striving for independence. Have you thought over this as well?*

Mr. ZHU WEIQUN: We are perfectly aware that the Dalai Lama is aging, together with declining health. Nevertheless, it seems he still

appears very active. Recently, he went to Japan. No matter what his health situation is, we sincerely wish he could correct his mistakes and move closer to the Central Government to achieve something before his death to benefit the nation, as well as the people (including the Tibetan people), rather than leaving a legacy of a debased and infamous title forever. In fact, the honorific title of the Dalai Lama throughout history was granted by the Central Governments and every individual Dalai Lama had their confirmation approved by Central Governments. If the current Dalai Lama refuses to take our advice and insists upon his course of the past 60 years, he will not only leave a notorious name to last for generations... but he will also bring shame on the Dalai Lama lineage which in the past people have always respected.

In addition, I notice that some persons in the Dalai Lama's clique, together with some foreigners, suggest that when the Dalai Lama passes away, Tibetans might react in violent way, in an attempt to intimidate us. Some of them may really believe this. I believe that most of the Tibetan Diaspora will not support violent behaviour. Even today, most Tibetans in foreign countries disapprove of violent criminal activities. I believe that most of the Tibetan Diasporas will not agree to anyone carrying out violent and terrorist activities in China or TAR.

Of course, violent and terrorist activity will not intimate us at all. We are experienced in hand to hand fighting with people like this. But what would be the result of such conflict? I believe everybody knows that very well. In recent years, there have been those who were continually threatening us with violence. What have been the results? I also believe these persons know that better than any other. If violence is used in the future, not only will it fail, but also that the perpetrators will bear that infamy forever. Moreover, such behaviour will only accelerate their political destruction.

CHINA DAILY REPORTER: *My first question is directed to Vice-Chairman Mr. Pema Trinley. After the March 14 incident in Lhasa, what is the current situation inside Tibet? How do you view the developments, or changing times, there in the current situation? My second question is for the Executive Vice-Minister Mr. Zhu Weiqun. The current dialogue process has reached an impasse. How do you believe the both parties should work so that the talks could make [real] progress?*

Mr. PEMA TRINLEY, executive vice-chairman of “Tibet Autonomous Region”: After the March 14 incident, the Tibet Autonomous Region defused the incident quickly and decisively for the purpose of safeguarding social stability, socialist legal system and the fundamental interests of the Tibetan people. On 24th April this year, we welcomed the first group of tourists, and on 25th April, we re-opened Tibet to the outside world. Those households who suffered losses had returned to their normal way of life before 30th June.

As just said by the Executive Vice-Minister Mr. Zhu Weiqun, the current situation in Tibet is generally peaceful and improving. After the March 14 incident, Tibet’s economy faced some difficulties. But, with the care and support from the Central Government, the Tibet Autonomous Region has implemented a number of comprehensive policies and measures that resulted in a sustained, stable and rapid economic growth during the later part of the year. After the savage acts or crime of beating, smashing, looting and burning that took place during the March 14 incident, the people of all nationalities in Tibet had a deep realisation that the environment for stability and development should never be destroyed, nor should the happy life of the Tibetan people be never tampered with.

Mr. ZHU WEIQUN: I do not agree to your saying that the contacts and talks have reached an impasse. Since the beginning of the contacts and talks until now, the issues raised by Gyari [and his team]

have been same as they say every time. Our response to these has also been same as I am answering to all of you today. There are no fundamental changes in this. The only change this time around is that they presented us a “Memorandum”. Whether this is something different from the past that happened or has this led the contacts and talks to an impasse, I can not say it with certainty. The Central Government has stated very clearly that the door for contacts and talks has always remained opened, but the door for “Tibet independence” will not at all be opened.

However, there is another reason for my not favouring the description that the talks have reached an impasse. In fact, there has been a progress this time. Firstly, it was the ninth round of talks. Since [the beginning of] this year, the Dalai clique has not only masterminded the savage acts or crime of beating, smashing, looting, and burning that accompanied March 14 incident but also disrupted and sabotaged the staging of the Olympic Games. However, we have not ceased contacts and talks [with them]. We have, moreover, conducted three rounds of talks in this very year. Are these not progress? Secondly, in these nine rounds of contacts and talks, the highest officials who met several times with Mr. Lodi Gyari and his party were Vice-Minister Sithar and I. Moreover, Minister Du Qinglin met with them for the second time during this round of talks. He is our national-level leader or cadre. Is this not progress too? Thirdly, we have this time not only explained in detail each other’s viewpoints, but Mr. Gyari and his party have also submitted their most-treasured “Memorandum” to the Central Government. Is this not progress as well?

Therefore, there is no need to worry about the prospects for future contacts and talks. However, if there are people who desires to strive for “independence”, “semi independence”, and “covert independence” by employing the medium of the contacts and talks, they will have no option but to worry about themselves. I can do about nothing [to save

them].

AMERICAN MAI QI REPORTER: *You have just mentioned about stability being restored in Tibet now. Why then foreign journalists are not free to travel to Tibet? We saw a huge disaster taking place in Sichuan Province after a powerful earthquake struck there. At that time, foreign journalists were allowed to go to Sichuan for interviewing [people]. A month before this, a similar earthquake occurred in Tibet that took 30 lives. It has been over one month since this incident took place. Can foreign journalists now go to Tibet to interview [the people]? When can you let foreign reporters to see what you call stable Tibet?*

Mr. SITHAR: The destructive actions of the separatist forces in Tibet had disrupted social order, thus creating obstacles on the way of many reporters coming to Tibet for interviewing people. This [situation] is created by a few separatists. However, when stability was restored later, the department concerned permitted and arranged several visits of foreign journalists to Tibet for interviewing people. I believe that as the situation in Tibet becomes more stable, more foreign friends will be able to visit Tibet in the future.

Mr. PEMA TRINLEY: Just now, he [reporter] has referred to an earthquake in Tibet which took 30 lives. From where did you see or learn this? The earthquake that hit Tibet on October claimed 10 lives — nine people in Dangxiong and a student in one county — rather than 30 lives. With regard to foreign reporters visiting Tibet, Vice-Minister Sithar has mentioned very clearly. Recently, Tibet was hit by a snowstorm and so we are thinking about the safety of the reporters. Under the circumstances, let alone foreign reporters, the reporters from our own autonomous region also faced restrictions. This is because we had to ensure the easy undertaking of relief operations on the one hand, and the security of all the people on the other.

(Footnotes)

1 These questions and answers appeared in Tibetan at (<http://tibet.people.com.cn/140831/8513518.html>), which is, in fact, a translation of the Chinese original available at the website of China Daily, the official newspaper of the Chinese government. A major portion of the English version given here is extracted from China's Tibet, 2009.1 VOL. 20, Pages 7-10 (available at http://tibetmagazine-en.fjnet.com/magazine/2009/01/default_8.htm) and transcribed from the press conference footages available at www.youtube.com. Rest is translated directly from the Tibetan version.