



# **SPECIAL INTERNATIONAL TIBET SUPPORT GROUPS MEETING**

**16 – 18 November 2012, Dharamshala, India**

Convened by the Core Group for Tibetan Cause, India  
and facilitated by Department of Information and International  
Relations, Central Tibetan Administration

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## **Programme**

### **Special International Tibet Support Groups Meeting 16 – 18 November 2012, Dharamshala, India**

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facilitated by the Department of Information and International  
Relations, Central Tibetan Administration

**Thursday, 15 November 2012:**

Arrival and Registration (10AM to 5PM at Naddi)

18:00 hrs Welcome Dinner at Tibetan Children's Village School  
(TCV), Upper Dharamshala  
Address from Dr. N. K. Trikha, National Convener,  
Core Group for Tibetan Cause, India,  
Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay and Kalon Dicki  
Chhoyang, DIIR, Central Tibetan Administration

**Day One: Friday, 16 November 2012**

- 09:30-10:20 hrs **INAUGURAL CEREMONY**  
Dekyi Tsering Hall, TCV, Upper Dharamshala Cantt.  
Distt. Kangra (H.P.), 176216
- 09:30-09:40 hrs Master of Ceremony: Mrs. Sonam Sangmo, Liaison  
Officer, Tibet Support Group, DIIR, CTA  
(One minute silence in memory of those Tibetans  
who have sacrificed their lives for Tibet)
- 09:40-09:50 hrs Welcome Address: Dr. N. K. Trikha, National Convener,  
Core Group for Tibetan Cause, India
- 09:50-10:00 hrs Address: Kalon Dicki Chhoyang, DIIR, CTA
- 10:00-10:20 hrs Keynote Address: Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, CTA
- 10:20-11:00 hrs **Tea/Coffee**
- 11:00-12:10 hrs **Plenary Session I**  
Briefing and Discussion  
a) Political Support  
Mr. Kelsang Gyaltzen, Special Representative of  
H. H. the Dalai Lama to Europe

b) Outreach to Chinese  
Mr. Dawa Tsering, Representative of Religious  
Foundation of H.H. the Dalai Lama, Taiwan

c) Environment  
Mr. Tenzin Norbu, Environment and Development  
Desk, DIIR, CTA

d) Overview of activities and progress since last TSG  
Conference  
Mr. Tenzin Jigme, International Coordinator,  
International Tibet Network  
Q&A, Moderator: Mr. Tashi Phuntsok,  
Additional Secretary, DIIR, CTA

12:10-13:10 hrs

**Lunch**

13:10-13:30 hrs

**Special Panel**

a) Tibetan Democracy  
Mr. Penpa Tsering, Speaker, Tibetan Parliament-in-  
Exile, CTA

b) India-Tibet Relation  
Mr. Indresh Kumar, Patron,  
Bharat Tibbat Sahyog Manch  
Moderator: Dr. N. K. Trikha, National Convener,  
Core Group for Tibetan Cause, India

13:30-14:15 hrs

**Plenary Session II**

Lobby Day Presentation by Mr. Todd Stein,  
Director of Government Relations, Mr. Vincent  
Metten, EU Policy Director of International Campaign  
of Tibet and Mr. Paul Bourke, Executive Director,  
Australia Tibet Council  
Q&A, Moderator: Dr. Gunther Cologna,  
Associazione Italia Tibet, Italy

14:15-17:40 hrs

Workshop on planning and implementation of Lobby  
Day and Building Political Support.  
Led by Facilitating Team

14:15-15:00 hrs

Discussion on Successful Campaigns

15:00-15:30 hrs Introduction to Strategic Planning and brainstorm on achievable objectives for Building Political Support

15:30-16:00 hrs **Tea/Coffee**

16:00-17:40 hrs Planning and Feedback in Workshop Groups

17:40 hrs Tibetan Cultural Show presented by TCV students followed by Dinner hosted by Tibetan Medical and Astrological Institute, Dharamshala

### **Day Two: Saturday, 17 November 2012**

07:30-10:00 hrs Address by His Holiness the Dalai Lama

10:00-10:30 hrs **Tea/Coffee**  
(Open forum with Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay)

10:30-10:50 hrs **Plenary Session III**  
China's New Leaders and its impact on Tibet followed by Q&A: Mr. Han Lianchao, Vice President of Initiatives for China,  
Moderator: Mr. Yang Jianli, Initiatives for China, USA

10:50-11:10 hrs **Plenary Session IV**  
Rally Day Presentation by Mr. Migmar Raith, President, Swiss Tibetan Friendship Association (STFA) followed by Q&A  
Moderator: Ms. Nadine Baumann, Tibet Initiative Deutschland, Germany

11:10-12:10 hrs Workshop on planning and implementation of Rally Day and Other Campaigns Led by Facilitating Team

12:10-13:15 hrs **Lunch**

13:15-15:00 hrs Planning and Feedback in Workshop Groups

15:00-16:00 hrs **Tea/Coffee**

- 16:00-17:30 hrs **Plenary Session V**  
 Presentation on priority campaign plans by each workshop groups  
 Moderators: Facilitators and Drafting Committee
- 17:30-18:30 hrs Regional Workshops (Discussion of Regional Priorities & Coordination)  
 Led by Facilitating Team
- 18:30 hrs **Dinner** (Circulation of First draft of Action Plan)

**Day Three: Sunday, 18 November 2012**

- 09:00-10:00 hrs **Plenary Session VI**  
 Presentation and Discussion on the draft Action Plan
- 10:00-11:00 hrs Adoption of Action Plan presented by Drafting Committee
- 11:00-11:30 hrs **Tea/Coffee**
- 11:30-12:30 hrs **CONCLUDING SESSION**
- 11:30-11:40 hrs Master of Ceremony: Mr. Rinchin Khandu Khrikey,  
 North East Regional Convenor,  
 Core Group for Tibetan Cause, India
- 11:40-12:00 hrs Address by Kalon Dicki Chhoyang, DIIR, CTA
- 12:00-12:20 hrs Address by Chief Guest Ambassador Dalip Mehta,  
 Former Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs,  
 Government of India
- 12:20-12:30 hrs Vote of Thanks: Mr. Tashi Phuntsok,  
 Additional Secretary, DIIR, CTA
- 12:30 hrs **Lunch**

--End of Conference--

## **Address by His Holiness the Dalai Lama**

Dear brothers and sisters,

Indeed we as a Tibetan carry some difficult job, the struggle entirely based on principles of nonviolence and compassion. While passing through such a difficult period, you as part of international community came to express your deep concern and support, for which we are so grateful. Thank you.

I am personally speaking now as a citizen of Tibet or a simple Buddhist monk of Tibet. You all know that I am already retired from my political responsibility. And it is not only my own retirement, almost four centuries old tradition of the Dalai Lama Institution, heading both the temporal and spiritual matters, now voluntarily, happily and proudly ended. So, I came here as a simple ordinary Tibetan. Lobsang Sangay is an elected political leader and Harvard educated. I usually introduce him as (politically) my boss but in the meantime since there is no possibility of any resignation from being the Dalai Lama, spiritually I am still his leader.

The main reason why I came here is to pay my respect to you all. I always consider our supporters as pro-justice and pro-nonviolence rather than pro-Tibetan. Our supporters stand firmly on the principles of nonviolence and it is my duty to come here and pay respect to you.

Firstly, on a global level, I think there are a number of people or communities who experience difficulties, sometimes including violence. Unfortunately in many cases although the cause is just but they use violence which brings more negative consequences. The Tibetan struggle adopted nonviolent principles right from its beginning. These Tibetan self-immolators, who have courage and determination to sacrifice their own lives, can easily harm other people. Although they have practiced little bit of violence but in principle they still practice nonviolence. Therefore your support for Tibet cause gives us moral support and encouragement. The struggle carried strictly on the basis of nonviolence should succeed, or else the people will say nonviolence is useless, nothing can be achieved.

People sometimes show more interest in violent movements and consider peaceful and mutually-agreeable approach as a weak effort, which is totally wrong. I always consider violence as a result of anger and anger comes from weak insight. If you have more confidence and inner strength, then there is more chance to talk. On the other hand, if you lack self-confidence you rely on using gun. In fact nonviolent struggle is the sign of inner strength and



such movements based strictly on nonviolence (including Tibetan struggle) should succeed. Since we strictly follow nonviolent path and try to find a mutually-agreeable solution, an increasing number of Chinese brothers and sisters, including many Chinese intellectuals and democratic activists, express their solidarity with us. This is one thing on a global level.

Regarding Tibet issue, I have been saying for many years that people usually consider Tibetan issue as an issue of human rights (or other), but I think there are different aspects to the Tibetan problem and one such aspect is ecology. A lot of ecological damage has been done inside Tibet, be it excessive deforestation or the extreme exploitation of natural resources. According to some of my Indian friends, because of Tibet's high altitude and dry climate, once damaged, it will take longer period for Tibet's ecology to recover. Therefore Tibet's ecology is quite delicate.

Geographically, people usually call it the roof of the world, which is true and can be seen on the map. So naturally there is cold climate and snows, and all the major rivers which run in Pakistan up to China have their ultimate source in Tibet's snow mountains and plateaus. Of course I have not done any detail study on it but generally I think over one billion human population in northern Pakistan, northern India, Bangladesh, Burma, and China itself depend on these rivers. Now there are already clear signs of environmental damages, for instance, according to many observers the famous Lake Koko Nor (Tso Ngonpo) has dried up tremendously. I still remember very clearly when en route from Kumbum to Lhasa, I once walked at the edge of Koko Nor Lake. It was around four o'clock and I remember having seen one big dead fish in the lake. I was four years old then and I remember the lake was quite clean and blue. But now according to some people who visited the area, it has much dried up.

One Irish ecologist once showed me an article by a Chinese ecologist in which he describes Tibetan plateau as a third pole. Reason: the effect of global warming on the Tibetan plateau is as high as South Pole and North Pole. I think it also mentioned the rate of the global warming as 0.1 for the rest of the world, whereas for the Tibetan plateau it is 0.3. So these are the word of an expert, a scientist and a Chinese. Tibet's ecology is something really important. The former Soviet Union concentrated on building big and heavy industries and was not much concerned about ecology. Due to the negligence of that period, there are still some sorts of problem in the Russian federation. Earlier, many Chinese had not much idea about the importance or preservation of ecology, but later I heard Prime Minister Zhu Rongji giving instructions that deforestation must be stopped in those delicate environmental areas. However, these instructions were not fully

implemented because of the corruption among the local officials and businessmen. Today many Chinese companies are hungry and full of greed to exploit natural resources, including water resources.

I think this is one of the important aspects of Tibetan issue. The political issue, once mutual understanding is reached, can be easily solved within a short period of time, perhaps within few weeks. But once ecology is damaged, even if political situation changes, damage is already there. I think this is a more serious matter and hence request everyone of you to please think more of this aspect.

The second issue is Tibetan culture. Tibetan Buddhist tradition is mainly based on the Nalanda tradition of great Indian thinkers, philosophers and logicians such as Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Buddhapalita and Arya Asanga. It was mainly Sanskrit tradition, although Pali tradition was also there. Before Buddhism reached Tibet, Bonism was already existing and so do different sorts of knowledge including medicine. Historical experts should do more research on it. However with the arrival of Buddhism in Tibet, even Bonism itself underwent much development. Buddhism which we follow is not simply prayer and simple meditation but it is more like an academic subject. The unique Nalanda tradition uses human intelligence (not prayers or faith) in maximum way to transform our emotions. Buddha himself made very clear that my followers should not accept my teachings out of faith but rather out of thorough investigation, experiment and research. So this sort of approach is quite similar to the scientific approach. I consider myself a student of the Nalanda tradition. For the last 53 years I had many opportunities of meeting and exchange with Buddhist brothers and sisters of different countries. And it becomes quite clear that the Tibetan Buddhist tradition is quite sophisticated and involves lots of study as an academic subject, it's not just prayer. Some Tibetan monks definitely spend whole day doing rituals without knowing the meaning, which I think is a waste of time. Even some monasteries have followed that way for the last several centuries. I am quite critical about this kind of practice. We should think more seriously and realistically. Superstition may involve sometimes but the pure Nalanda tradition knows no superstition or blind faith, it's about investigating everything. Therefore we are having very serious dialogues with modern scientists nowadays; they are not Buddhist or religious people but when we talk we have some common attitude to carry investigation about the reality. For modern scientists their investigation is mainly on matters which can be calculated or measured, but since last decade, an increasing number of top scientists are showing interest about mind and emotions. And once they develop this interest, the only available information is in Buddhist tradition

and of course ancient Hindu tradition. The explanation of mind can be naturally found in traditions which involve practices of Samatha and Vipassana. I think only ancient Indian traditions, and particularly Buddhism, have more materials about mind and emotions. Therefore, it shows that Tibetan Buddhism is quite sophisticated and Buddhism is unquestionably one of the important spiritual traditions of the world.

Then Buddhist culture. I usually make distinction between Buddhism and Buddhist culture. Buddhism is related to individual case or individual practice whereas Buddhist culture is different, like Christianity and Christian culture or Islam and Islam culture. There are always two things: faith for individuals and culture related with society. One good example is Tibetan Muslims who came mainly from Ladakh and settled in Tibet for at least three or four centuries. They consider themselves Tibetan Muslim. In fact I visited their place in Srinagar this summer and noticed that although they are Muslim as they practice Islam, they have kept the Tibetan language very intact. When I met Tibetan Muslim students, they speak Tibetan very well. So they are Muslim by religion but as far as their culture is concerned, they are very much in the atmosphere of Tibetan Buddhist culture and so they love Tibetan language. Some Tibetan parents in America or other countries—as I was told—speak with their children mostly in English because they feel it helps children practice English language. Those Tibetan Buddhist families don't care about Tibetan language; on the other hand, Muslim Tibetans carry serious and effective preservation of the Tibetan language. Anyway, I always make distinction between Buddhist culture and Buddhist religion or faith. Buddhist faith is only for Buddhists but Buddhist culture is related with community like Tibetan Muslims. Therefore, I usually describe Tibetan Buddhist culture as a culture of peace, nonviolence and compassion, and really worthwhile to preserve. Particularly for the Chinese brothers and sisters, I think the morality, peaceful culture, truthful culture and compassionate culture are very much damaged in China proper. Therefore, I think preserving Tibetan Buddhist culture can also benefit millions of young Chinese in the future. And of course there are at least thirteen to fourteen million people in the whole Himalayan region, Bhutan, northern Nepal, Mongolia and at least three Russian federations of Kalmykia, Buryatia and Tuva who are directly linked with the Tibetan Buddhism or Tibetan Buddhist culture. All of them study Buddhism in Tibetan language and their prayers and chanting are also in Tibetan. Therefore, the preservation of Tibetan Buddhism is directly linked with the interest of these people. And then on a global level, I think Buddhist culture may have potential to make some contributions for a better, happier and peaceful world.

I always talk about the importance of inner peace, and inner peace is entirely based on warm heartedness, irrespective of whether believer or non-believer. It gets quite an attention of the people, including scientists who are showing real interest. But this is nothing special that came from my mind but it is Tibetan culture. Therefore, I think the preservation of Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhist culture is not only a concern of six million Tibetan people but rather a larger community. It is really worthwhile to preserve and I think we need to make some special effort. Some narrow-minded communist officials like Chen Kuiyuan mentioned in a party meeting sometime back that the ultimate source of danger for the separation of Tibet from mainland China is Tibetan Buddhist faith. This is silly. I heard there are over three to four hundred million Buddhists in China proper, so are they also source of threat? I don't think there is any threat. Therefore we need to make some special effort because some narrow-minded officials are deliberately trying to minimize Tibetan culture and Tibetan Buddhist faith. Once seriously damaged, it will take long period to recover which I think millions of Chinese Buddhists will really regret. Therefore, this is another aspect of the Tibetan cause.

Then politically also, the People's Republic of China and India—the two most populated nations—must have genuine good relations. One big difference between these two nations is that one is the most populated democratic nation and the other the most populated totalitarian. The world's trend is towards more openness, democracy, freedom and rule of law. No matter how powerful is the People's Republic of China, they have to go along the world trend as they cannot go other way. Perhaps the new leadership may have realized this reality as Deng Xiaoping stated 'seeking truth from fact' and fact is like that. So they have to adopt policies on the basis of reality, otherwise, unrealistic policies always fail to bring satisfactory result. Therefore, a genuine good relationship and friendship between China and India based on mutual trust is very important. I think both the countries will have immense benefit and a lot of money can be saved. As long as the current situation remains between these two nations, the Chinese government is compelled to station large number of soldiers which will automatically create suspicion in India. Therefore, politically, I feel the Tibet issue is quite an important factor for these two Asian giants to develop a genuine friendship based on mutual trust.

Regarding the current situation inside Tibet and our position on resolving Tibetan problem, our elected political leader has already mentioned about it and I have nothing to add. In political matters, whatever he says I think in most cases I will say 'absolutely right', 99.5 percent I fully agree with

him but maybe sometimes I don't but that is okay, I also enjoy freedom of speech. During the time of Professor Samdhong Rinpoche also, although my position was semi-retired then, sometimes there were little disagreements between us during discussions, but that is a healthy sign.

Now please, as Sikyong already mentioned about the situation inside Tibet, things are quite serious. Whether the Chinese government admits or not, there is a problem and this problem is neither good for Tibetans nor good for the PRC as a whole. Therefore, this has to be solved. Using force as a solution will never get satisfactory result. I quite often say that I love the former president of the United States Mr. Bush; very nice person as a human being. But his policies on Iraq, even though the motivation was very good—to bring democracy, rule of law and change of authoritarian dictatorship, but the method was unrealistic because using force is unrealistic. So in spite of good motivation and good goal the method became wrong, therefore few years later there were unexpected consequences and unnecessary sufferings. Using force did not solve the problem even for a powerful nation like the United States. The Chinese government is also very powerful militarily but they cannot solve the problems using force. It will only create more problems and resentments.

Chinese brothers and sisters have great pride in themselves which is good. You have a very sophisticated cultural heritage and few thousand year old civilization and history. But some Chinese officials consider Tibet as an extremely backward which is not true as we also have quite a sophisticated civilization. Let me share with you one thing: I think it was perhaps in 1979 or early 1980 when I was in Harvard University for some talk. One Chinese archeologist sent me a message that he wants to see me secretly and we subsequently arranged the meeting. He had some pictures of certain things he found in Tibetan areas, perhaps in Chamdo and nearby areas. He later told me that according to his findings the Tibetan civilization comes from its own root. The Chinese government's version of the Tibetan civilization is that it comes from China. But unlike that, on the basis of his findings the Tibetan civilization is developed from its own root. I think it is true and we have our own Tibetan language and Tibetan script. Therefore Tibetans are also quite proud and not easy beating. I think the determination of younger generation in Tibet nowadays is much stronger than that of my generation, of their parents and grandparents; and although sixty years have passed the Tibetan spirit has never died. Now I think the Chinese leaders should know the reality. The best thing is our approach of mutually agreeable solution. Chairman Mao really emphasized on the equality between Han brothers and sisters and other minority brothers and sisters. During

his time, Ulanhu, a Mongolian, was the Vice-President. It was quite good that time. One thing Chairman Mao opposed was different narrow-minded nationalists and for the moment he also opposed Han chauvinism (da han zu zhu yi) and local nationalism (di fang min zu zhu yi). In recent decades, they have rejected Han chauvinism which is not there now. I think it is very important to keep the original spirits of the People's Republic of China when it was first established. Of course you have to carry on material developments and education but the principle is very important. Whenever I visit America, I always tell my American friends that they should keep alive their ancestors' principle of democracy, liberty, freedom and justice. These are very important and forgetting or neglecting these principles for economic interest is a disaster. In order to stay in power, the officials of the PRC are not thinking about the principles of their founding fathers. When I was in Beijing in 1954-1955, I was very much attracted to Marxism and socialism and actually told the concerned Chinese officials that I would like to join the Chinese Communist Party. Still as far as socio-economic theory is concerned, I still consider myself as a Marxist. Don't be surprised. It's not only me; I have also met some Marxist Sri Lankan and Indian Buddhist monks in 1960s and 1970s. There are Buddhist Marxists and I am one of them. Therefore please think about these things holistically.

And please carry on your work, you should not become like you came here today in Dharamshala and enjoyed fresh air and disappeared like nothing happened. Please take action in your respective areas. There are already many parliamentary support groups in different countries. The Tibet support groups and parliamentary support groups should work closely with the people and mobilize more voices, including the voices of Chinese brothers and sisters, it is very important. Eventually, this problem has to be solved through mutual understanding and mutual respect between the Han brothers and sisters and the Tibetan brothers and sisters. Here also we have some Chinese brothers and sisters. Thank you. And we also have many Indians; our relation is a unique one: that of guru and chela; and in this case you are our guru and we are your chela. Therefore, the support from Indian brothers and sisters is also very important as the Tibet issue as a matter of fact is also an issue of India's defence. Thank you very much

## **Welcome address by Dr. N.K. Trikha, National Convener, Core Group for Tibetan Cause, India**

A Very Good Morning, *Tashi Delek* and *Namaskar*

Honorable Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, Kalon Dicki Chhoyang, Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile, the Deputy Speaker, the Chief Justice, the other high dignitaries of the Tibetan Administration and all the friends present here for this Special Meeting of the International Tibet Support Groups, I heartily welcome you all to the second such special meeting which has been convened by the Core Group for Tibetan Cause-India, and is facilitated by the Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration.

You have come to this cool heights and rugged terrain of Dharamsala from as many as three dozen countries from all over the world and all the continents, braving many hardships and inconvenience in solidarity with the cause of Tibet in a most uncompromising manner in which your commitment has shown by this large presence of the Tibetan groups. We all stand for a just cause of Tibet and that is why we are prepared to suffer. I consider the Tibetan cause to be the cause of the entire humanity and so one that concerns all of us.

Friends, we also have amongst us today, someone who led a group of determined Indians to the Indo-Tibetan border of Tawang. They were able to sneak into the land of Tibet and managed to scoop the holy soil of Tibet and have brought it here, and they will be presenting it tomorrow to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. This is Mr. Indresh Kumarji, who will also be speaking to us in the course of the day today.

While welcoming you here, let me confess that we may not be able to make your stay as comfortable as we wish it to be. But there is no dearth of warmth in our hearts and the concern for it. So the organisers have tried to do whatever they can to make your stay comfortable but still you may find many things missing, and we all pray and request your forgiveness.

Friends, we meet here under the shadow of one of the grimmest situations in the history of Tibet and of the mankind. There are as many as more than 70 Tibetans, mostly youth who have had to make the supreme sacrifice with self-immolation, an extremely horrifying method of laying down one's life which cannot happen unless one is forced by the most desperate situation. Tibetans are going through horrible and boisterous times to gain liberty,

but as Thomas Jefferson said "Liberty is a boisterous sea. Timid men prefer the calm of despotism", but the Tibetans would not. And as we can see Tibetans are not timid who would accept subjugation forever. Mahatma Gandhi said that "Nations are born out of travail and suffering" therefore with all the sufferings that Tibetans are enduring, they are going to emerge sooner than later as a free nation once again. With the continuing repression, the spirit and determination of the Tibetans to be free will ever get stronger and refuse to die. To quote Gandhiji again "Freedom battles are not fought without paying heavy prices" and Tibetans are paying it.

Friends, we still hope that the international community will move and move soon enough. The horrible scenario that we see in the happenings of Tibet should have roused the collective conscience of the governments and the people of the world, but unfortunately it seems it was not to be. While a little start exemplified by the Arab Spring has led to the overthrow of some deeply entrenched despotic and undemocratic regimes, the continued acts of the most brutal and tyrannical repression on the Tibetan plateau do not seem to be enough to prick the hearts and the minds of the governments around the world who swear by upholding human rights, the rights of self-determination and protection of cultures of all communities, and has not moved them into some visible action. But we still hope that they will but that will be possible if we make it happen. For that perhaps, we the Tibetan supporters need to do more and much more effectively and with telling results. To put our heads together and come out with a renewed setup, vigorous campaigning and actions is to my mind the purpose of this three-day special meeting.

It must all be acknowledged that a lot has been done by the Support Groups. A great upsurge of awareness about the Tibetan question and the sympathy for their cause has been generated due to their sustained efforts. In India the organisation constituting the core group today has more than 400 chapters spread all over the country. They have been carrying out scores of programmes throughout the year. The support among intellectuals, politicians across the political spectrum, retired diplomats, teachers, lawyers, and college and university professors, besides general public has grown tremendously. We have a large number of supporters among parliamentarians, belonging to all parties, barring the hardcore pro-Chinese fringe of communists. The All Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet now has a former Foreign Minister Mr. Yashwant Sinha as its convener from the main opposition party, and Mrs. Chandresh Kumari from the ruling party as one of the co-conveners. Happily for us she has now been promoted to the rank of the cabinet minister in the government of India. We have number of



other sympathisers and very active sympathisers of them in the union cabinet. I need not name them but we Indian supporters know it. So whenever the question of Tibet would come before the cabinet, we are assured of the support of a large number of the ministers there. And that is the result of the sustained efforts that have been made by the Tibetan administration under the leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and whatever little the Tibet Support Groups in India could do.

There are six other co-conveners who belong to different political parties and we are assured of the support in the parliament itself whenever the question comes, and from time to time there has been display of greater confidence amongst Indian parliamentarians to raise the question of Tibet. Of late there have been debates on this question and our members have been active and played their part more effectively.

As I said Mr. Sinha who has now become the convener of the All Party Indian Parliamentary Forum has written a letter to all members of parliament in which he says that "the forum has decided that India must now take a leading role in the international arena on the question of survival of Tibetan identity". He has also said that "it is our moral responsibility to rectify our past mistakes in the handling of Tibetan issue. The government of India and the parliamentarians of India must join the world leaders and the world community to voice their concern over human rights violation and religious repression in Tibet".

Friends, I would also like to share a secret with you here. As a journalist I tell you on good authority that the devolution of political authority on the younger leadership by His Holiness the Dalai Lama has sent a sense of deep concern down the spine of the Chinese leaders. They are probing in the dark as to what course the Tibetan movement might take under the new leadership. So firmness on the part of the younger leadership and continued campaigning by supporters and the Tibetan themselves is what is needed for the success of the Tibetan movement.

In the end, I must tell the new Chinese leadership that they must know that truth is simple and easy, false truth is dubious, it could be the cause of (and I repeat) it could be the cause of China's own destruction as we have seen and as we have in the words. With these words, I welcome you all once again. Thank you.

**Inaugural address by Kalon Dicki Chhoyang,  
Department of Information and International Relations,  
Central Tibetan Administration**

I want to start by thanking all of you for traveling so far on such short notice. We sent out the invitation about four months ago, which is relatively short notice for a meeting of this magnitude.

As I mentioned last night, the CTA is very pleased to facilitate this gathering of Tibet Support Groups in Dharamsala. The last meeting that took place of this nature dates back to over twenty years ago. The last international Tibet Support Group meeting took place in 2011 and there have been some very important developments since then—notably of course the wave of self-immolations inside Tibet, the transfer of political power from His Holiness to the elected leader of our community, Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay and the name change from Kalon Tripa to Sikyong.

Regarding the latter, I would like to say few words about this important name change. Those of you who follow the parliamentary session will know that during the last parliamentary session in September, there was a unanimous vote in favor of the amendment of our charter to replace the term ‘Kalon Tripa’ with ‘Sikyong’.

‘Sikyong’ is not a newly coined title, but a term along with the term of ‘Kashag’ that was introduced during the leadership of the seventh Dalai Lama. The title-holder carries final authority on all political matters. This name change was very important to ensure both historical continuity and the legitimacy of the traditional leadership from the Fifth Dalai Lama. When Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay was sworn-in in August 2011, His Holiness mentioned that when he was young he was handed over Sikyong (political leadership) from his elderly regent Takdrag Rinpoche and on that day he was handing over Sikyong in turn to young Lobsang Sangay. So this change of title completes the process of the transfer of political authority to an elected leader. Sikyong is now answerable to the people and he is fully empowered as the political head of the Tibetan community. This is a very important terminology change and I thought today I would take a few minutes to explain that to those of you who may have questions as to why it took place.

I would also like to say that in this very important leadership transition period in our community, it is very important to give maximum visibility to Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay who is not only the democratically elected

political head of the Tibetan people, but also the political successor of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

I would like to elaborate and also say a few words about the 14th Kashag. The 14th Kashag is composed of individuals who have served our community for several years in one capacity or another. We are as committed to open and frank discussion and heated debate as we are to team-work. So, I want to take this opportunity to say that while we share this commitment, we also share a very deep conviction that at this hour it is essential for the Tibetan community and the members of the Kashag to stand firmly behind our elected leader. He is the right person at the right time and we must send an unquestionable message to the international community and to Tibetans inside Tibet that the leadership transfer from His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the elected leadership is going smoothly.

On a personal note, I would also like to extend a personal thank you for very patiently answering my endless stream of questions as somebody new to the inner-workings of the Central Tibetan Administration.

As several of you may have noticed, this new administration is very directly engaged in international outreach. We realize however that the issue of Tibet has survived and continued to remain in the heart and mind of international community thanks to international grassroots support and individuals like you who work through Tibet Support Groups to keep the issue alive in your respective countries and communities. As we reach out internationally, we are also very committed to lending whatever support we can to the Tibet Support Groups within the parameters of the CTA's policies. Through our Offices of Tibet (there are eleven of them) who come under the aegis of the department that I head, we keep a pulse on how the Tibet Support Groups are doing throughout the world and how we can lend support and cooperate to facilitate their work.

Today I take this opportunity to draw your attention to a few observations. Like any political movement, we face challenges dealing with sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness. Today the comments that I will share with you speak to these issues.

Today's event, the inauguration ceremony is also being webcast through Tibet online and I know that we have a very large viewership within the Tibetan community, both in Europe and North America. I hope that this message will be heard by members of the Tibetan community viewing this ceremony.

Any political movement is like a marathon, at moments we have to do a sprint, but overall it is like a marathon. We don't know if we have to keep running for five years, ten years, fifty years or hundred years. Some of you who are here today have been engaged with the Tibetan movement for decades, whilst some of you are new. The issue of sustainability is a very important question that we need to address. It is not only an important question for Tibet Support Groups, but even as a community. The decision of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to transfer political authority now speaks to that issue. While he is in good health and there are several members of the older generation who are still around, I firmly believe that sustainability of our governing structure was an important factor that was taken into consideration when he made this historical decision. So as Tibet Support Groups, we need to ask ourselves the same question: how do we ensure the sustainability of the work that we are doing for Tibet? Even though you are deeply committed, how do you ensure that you draw from different segments of the population, draw from a younger generation and carry on membership drives to ensure that the work that you are doing now goes beyond the direct involvement of a few individuals – for as long as it is needed?

In terms of efficiency, this type of gathering is about just that, namely pulling or sharing resources and knowledge. It is also taking into account regional realities. The composition and environment of the different Tibet Support Groups vary from country to country and we are fully aware of that. Where certain countries have limited membership, others have very broad-based grassroots support. We particularly invite countries where there are several Tibet Support Groups with limited membership to strongly make an effort to work together and to collaborate together for key initiatives.

In terms of effectiveness, we have obviously been quite effective because over the past few decades (half century) the issue of Tibet has been kept alive. I think it speaks to the effectiveness of what we have done so far. Yet at the same time, we must be very careful not to become complacent. We must constantly try to renew our approach and adapt to changing environments. In that sense, I urge you during the next few days to speak about how you can carry your work through —of course through political channels, but also try to explore other channels— whether they are cultural, educational, academic, religious or environmental. Also, as the environment changes, do not hesitate to convene roundtable discussions with representatives of different stakeholder groups and different target groups, to brainstorm some new initiatives and new ideas with the same goal, but new ways of doing things that reflect new technology and approaches to reach out to a younger generation.

The effectiveness of lobbying is very important especially in places such as Europe and North America, where governments and parliamentarians respond to grassroots appeals. We are hoping that as we meet over the next few days, two key items on the agenda are lobbying and rallying. Lobbying speaks to how we can be effective as individuals by coordinating our efforts. Of course, we are also aware that lobbying is not necessarily the most feasible avenue in all the different countries that are represented here. This is particularly so in countries like South Africa and countries neighboring China. We realize that certain things that we can do in North America and Europe may be more difficult in those environments. There again I invite people who are from those places to adapt initiatives to their local environment.

One other issue also that we feel very strongly about is the Tibetan involvement in the work of the Tibet Support Groups. Any representative of the new administration, whenever traveling abroad, encourages the local Tibetan community to work in partnership with local Tibet Support Groups. This commitment is also reflected by the fact that in the participants for this conference we have our eleven representatives of Offices of Tibet as participants. This is an effort on our part to facilitate the bridge building between the Tibet Support Groups' work and the Tibetan communities. The members of the administration will continue to visit Tibetan communities over the next few years and send out this message without any interruption about how important it is for Tibetans to engage in lobby and rally work in partnerships with local Tibet Support Groups. So today since we are focusing on the local Tibet Support Groups, I thought it was very important to share that with you very clearly.

Another topic that I wish to address is Chinese outreach. I know that you can all appreciate the importance of Chinese outreach; we have amongst the participants in this conference over twenty members of the Chinese community. We are very pleased that they could join us. The reality with Chinese outreach and Chinese outlook on the issue of Tibet is that the Chinese government with its extensive propaganda machine has been quite successful in playing on the national sentiments of the Chinese community when it comes to the issue of Tibet. They are also depicting, through misinformation, the issue of Tibet as being an inter-ethnic conflict. There is, as a reporter stated in a newspaper, a deafening silence from the Chinese community with regards to the current events inside Tibet. However, I refuse to believe that it is because they are unmoved by the plight of Tibetans. I think that there is a malice that has been fed by the Chinese propaganda machine that speaking up for Tibet equals disloyalty to China— to one's country. So

our challenge over the next few years is to gradually tear down this notion and replace it with the truth, which is that the interest of Tibet and China are not mutually exclusive and that it is not a zero sum game in that friends of China do not need to choose between China and Tibet, nor do members of the Chinese community when speaking up for the aspirations of the Tibetan people inside Tibet.

Over the next few days we will be talking about rally and lobby work. I encourage you to as much as possible develop a concrete plan, whether it is regional or national. We are fully aware that within the limited time, it is impossible to come up with a detailed plan, but perhaps a concrete outline and tentative calendar with the details to be developed is possible over the next few days. Some of our work is also not so much coming up with new initiatives, but just improving our coordination, like the UN lobby work for the different human rights council sessions that take place several times a year.

I think that in a movement like ours that has spanned several decades and is ongoing, it is very important that we also celebrate our victories. While what we see unfolding in Tibet is very unfortunate, I think that is also important to recognize that it is a reflection of an unwavering determination by Tibetans to ensure that their aspirations are heard by the international community, not only heard, but realized. So on that note I wish you a good two days of discussion and I thank you again for being here.

## **Keynote address by Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, Central Tibetan Administration**

With due respect to our most revered leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Honorable Chief Justice Commissioner, the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament, colleagues of the Kashag, chairman of different commissions, members of parliament, friends from media, the public and specially the participants from all over the world, on behalf of the Central Tibetan Administration, I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for coming all the way to be with us today here in Dharamshala because this Tibet Support Group meeting is extremely important during this tragic phase of Tibet's history.

Given the unfolding crisis inside Tibet, they all are looking at us as to what we might do for Tibet and the Tibetan people. In that sense, this Tibet Support Group meeting is historic and extremely significant as we are sending a clear message to Beijing that the friends of Tibet are here to show their support, solidarity and also plan events to make sure that the issue of Tibet remains alive. Not just alive, but get stronger and stronger till the day comes when Tibetans regain their freedom and His Holiness the Dalai Lama returns to Tibet.

We also send a message through this meeting to Tibetans inside Tibet. They are the one suffering and on a daily basis enduring imprisonment, torture and denial of basic human rights. But they are doing all they can and more by giving up their lives, with a hope and a belief that exile Tibetans and their friends will stand up with them. With a hope that even if they get tortured or die, their lives will not go in vain because their friends outside will stand up for them and make their aspirations known all over the world and the international community will rally around the cause. Even though they leave this world, their children and grandchildren will see the day of freedom in Tibet and His Holiness the Dalai Lama to his rightful place. In that sense, this special meeting gives them hope, and hope is one thing that keeps human beings and movements alive. Because if you look at the history or the current situation inside Tibet, it might look dark and gloomy but it is the hope they all are clinging on. And with this conference we are sending a clear message to them and also to the international community (because you have come from different countries) that we want the international community to focus on the issue of Tibet.

Democracy has swept the eastern European countries, freedom is sweeping in Arab countries and Aung San Suu Kyi is released and walking around freely. Now it is time for Tibet, it is time for His Holiness the Dalai Lama also to return to Tibet. So your message to the international community is not just that

they have to speak out and show sympathy and to some extent support but that we need the international community now. Even though the political leadership and the responsibility is handed over to the new generation but you all are saying: even though the leadership and responsibilities might have changed, we are the friends of Tibet and we will continue with this movement, we will march with the new leadership and give same support and more to make sure that Tibetans inside Tibet get their basic freedom and rights that you all enjoy in your own independent countries.

I am sad to inform you that two more Tibetans have self-immolated, including a woman; now it is 74 Tibetans. We had one self-immolation in 2009, no self-immolation in 2010 and less than two dozen in 2011 from March 16 on. Majority of the self-immolations have taken place this year. In October alone, there were 10 self-immolations and seven in seven days; in November, we are just midway through and 12 self-immolations, including five self-immolations in five days. That speaks of the gravity of the situation inside Tibet and the urgency of the crisis of Tibet.

I know self-immolation has been a difficult issue for all of us, not just for friends but also for Tibetans. And at Kashag, we had a lot of debate and finally came up with our stand. Because when I first went to the US and the European countries, I was asked a lot of probing questions by many influential people “We know self-immolation is happening inside Tibet, what is your stand? You have to make it clear, morally, philosophically, politically.”

And this is our stand: as a human being you don't want to see anyone die like that and it is a natural reaction for human being to say ‘Please, don't die like that’. That is why the Central Tibetan Administration has made repeated appeals to the Tibetans inside Tibet not to resort to drastic actions, including the self-immolation, but it persists. Now the next question is ‘what do you do?’

When someone dies, what you do as a Buddhist or a people of any faith? You pray for the dead. That is why the Tibetan administration has organized many prayers for those who have died. That is what you do as a person of faith or no faith. When someone passes away, you show respect and we have done that.

Now what do you do as a Tibetan? You show solidarity because they are dying for Tibet and Tibetan people. You support their aspirations; their aspirations being the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet and freedom for Tibetan people. To support Tibetans inside Tibet is our sacred duty. They are the one suffering and they are the one who tell us what to do. Once they tell us, we have no option but to support them and their aspirations. This I appeal to our friends as well. We have complicated issues and debates but we should not focus



simply on action, we have to focus on causes too. Why it is happening? We should blame where the blame should be — Beijing's hard-line policies. Why Tibetans in Tibet are giving up their lives? The causes are occupation of Tibet, political repression, economic marginalization, environmental destruction, cultural assimilation, denial of religious freedom and so on. And Tibetans and our friends are expected to rise and say why Tibetans are dying and why Tibetans are self-immolating. It is a complex issue but we know the causes, so point up to the causes and say these are the causes that force Tibetans to self-immolate. And we have no choice but to support the aspirations of the Tibetan people.

We should debate and we can debate on actions but we must point out and say these are the causes and wholeheartedly stand up and say we support the aspirations of the Tibetan people. If we as Tibetans and friends don't stand up for the aspirations of the Tibetan people, then I think we are not fulfilling our responsibilities.

Now the Chinese government blames us; they say it is a terrorist act instigated by someone from outside China. It is absolutely baseless. Of the 74 self-immolators, not a single one of them has harmed even a single Chinese person or a Chinese restaurant, a hotel or a Chinese house. How can it be a terrorist act? Tibetans are harming themselves. But even at that painful phase when one is burning, they are not looking or running towards the Chinese. They are dying a painful death but themselves. We have already issued a statement that the Chinese government and the international community can come to Dharamshala and check our files and see for themselves if there is any connection. There is no connection and instigation, the blame and the solution lies solely with the Chinese government because these people who are dying are of what we call a 'socialist paradise' generation. When the red army first moved to Tibet, they promised a socialist paradise for Tibetans but there is no socialism or paradise, rather there is occupation and repression.

It is 74 Tibetans now. How many more have to die before the world speaks out and the Chinese government realizes that they ought to address this issue? That is why it is all the more important that wherever we go after this meeting, we come out without any hesitation to support the aspirations of the Tibetan people.

Questions were asked when I first went to Washington DC and the European countries. And we later made our stand very clear and also wrote an op-ed in The Washington Post, making it very clear where we stand and explaining the causes of the self-immolation and their aspirations. The leaders around the world have started speaking out more forcefully. In that sense we welcome the UN Human Rights High Commissioner Navi Pillay's statement on the issue of

Tibet, the US Ambassador Gary Locke's visit to Tibet and his statement, and statements from around the world making it clear that repression is the reason why there are self-immolations and there is a problem in Tibet which ought to be addressed. So when the world leaders including the United Nations is speaking out on Tibet, it is all the more important that we the Tibetans and our friends speak out more loudly, rally more forcefully, so that these Tibetans realize their aspirations.

We know the 18th Party Congress has just concluded and it will have a direct ramification on the issue of Tibet, but it is too soon to conclude as to which direction the new leadership will go. But presently the top seven leaders are Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang, Wang Qishan, Zhang Dejiang, Zhang Gaoli, Liu Yunshan and Yu Zhengsheng. And then the person relevant to us is Yu Zhengsheng who is reportedly going to head the National People Political Consultative Conference. Because so far the Tibet issue has been handled by the United Front, which is accountable to the NPPCC and thereby to the Standing Committee Politburo of which Xi Jinping is the Chairman. We know Yu Zhengsheng will have a major say on the issue of Tibet. As far as what we know, he has been the Party Secretary of Shanghai and his family was reportedly close to Deng Xiaoping, and his friends with Deng Xiaoping's son. We all know Xi Jinping; his father Xi Zhongxun was responsible for receiving and travelling around with His Holiness the Dalai Lama when His Holiness visited China in 1954. And particularly the late Panchen Lama had a very close relationship with Xi Zhongxun. We all know about Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang given their liberal background but one aspect of Xi Zhongxun is interesting in the sense he was with Hu Yaobang till the end. So Xi Jinping's father supported Hu Yaobang (the most liberal Chinese leader in recent years) till the end. That is the father's legacy but we don't know how Xi Jinping, the son, will be.

It is too early but we do have people now: Xi Jinping, Yu Zhengsheng and Ling Jihua who is the head of the United Front. Ling Jihua's background is interesting as he was equivalent to cabinet secretary and was essentially the right hand man of Hu Jintao. But now reportedly for some issues he has been appointed the head of the United Front. So we have one person who is from Hu Jintao's side; Xi Jinping and Yu Zhengsheng (given his connection with Deng Xiaoping) could be considered as connected to the prince ling faction. Generally, of the seven leaders, reportedly five are from the prince ling faction, Xi Jinping, Jiang Zemin and two are from Hu Jintao's side. But then if you look at the age, most of them are in mid 60s, so they are more conservative leaning group. So how much to expect from them is to be seen.

It is pretty clear that among these top seven we don't have a single Tibetan. There never has been, not even a single "minority". Looking at the top 25 Polit-

buero of the Chinese leadership, there is also not a single “minority”. There used to be a Hui minority among the top 25 in the 17th Party Congress but not this time. And then going further down in the Central Committee of 225 or so members, there are 39 minority members, but only 10 of them are permanent members and remaining 29 members are alternate members, which mean only 10 have a say in the Central Committee. Compared to the 17th Party Congress, the minority’s representation in the Central Committee has decreased. There were 16 permanent members which is now reduced to 10. From 7.6 percent representation, it has been reduced to 4.87 percent. Going by the population of China; of 1.3 billion, 100 or so million are minorities, which means there should be around 8 percent representation at the Central Committee level but now it has been reduced to less than 5. In that sense, the representation at the top and the central committee level has been reduced, marginalizing the say of minorities.

But then whether this new leadership will have new perspective on the issue of Tibet or will they review the policies of Tibet, it is too soon to say. We might get some hints in months to come and then we might know what will happen and accordingly we will have to formulate our own thinking.

Generally on the issue of Tibet, wherever we go we make this argument: Tibet is not a constitutional challenge or an institutional challenge or an issue of political will for China. Because when you talk to Chinese, they often say it is so complicated and they give you so many reasons.

Why we say Tibet is not a constitutional challenge or an institutional challenge or an issue of political will for China. Firstly, when the Chinese government wants to solve an issue, they always find a way. Constitutionally, Article 31 of the constitution of China was included to address the special administrative regions like Hong Kong and Macau. In the Chinese Constitution, there is no concept called ‘one country two systems’ but it is the Article 31 which says the special administrative region can be established. Based on that article ‘one country two systems’ for Hong Kong and Macau was given. Now when you make this argument they say Hong Kong and Tibet are two different things. Hong Kong already had a legal and a commercial system and the Chinese government was simply consolidating or recognizing the status quo. If that was the case, what about Macau? According to many reports Macau was a crime infested island; even criminals from China fled to Macau. Why was ‘one country two systems’ given to Macau? It is not a constitutional problem because Article 31 is there for one country two systems. Now if you go by the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan people, we have clearly laid out based on Article 4 of the Chinese Constitution and Article 12 of the Minority Nationality Act of 1984 and many of the provisions of the Minority Nationality Act;

there is a hint of Article 31 but generally it is Article 4 and Article 12. So it is not a constitutional problem for China because there is a process, provision and place to address the issue.

It is also not an institutional problem because when the Chinese government wants to solve an issue, they create separate institutional mechanism like 'one country two systems' for Hong Kong and Macau and Special Economic Zones for others. So they have created different institutions to address different situations. And it is also not an issue of political will because the Chinese government is on record of saying that we are willing to address the issue of Taiwan and has already created a cabinet level committee to address the issue of Taiwan. They are willing to engage, they are engaging in and they are willing to address. Of course there are different views in Taiwan.

So when it is not a constitutional challenge, an institutional challenge or a lack of political will, why is the issue of Tibet not addressed even today? This raises a disturbing question — is it because Tibetans are not Chinese?

The Chinese government can address Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, or the Special Economic Zones. From the Chinese government point of view, all these are Chinese and hence they are willing to address, which means there is an underlying trust so to speak. But when it comes to Tibetans, even though there is constitutional provision and institutional mechanism, why are they not addressing it? I think the message is that you are Tibetan and not Chinese, that is why we are not addressing it. That is why the article Kalong Dicki Chhoyang referred to in The New York Times raises a disturbing question. There are many liberal minded Chinese scholars, inside and outside China. They are discussing all aspects of the 18th Party Congress and issues inside China but somehow even on internet and social networking sites, the issue of Tibet is not much discussed even by the liberal minded Chinese. Is there a systemic bias against Tibetans? Is there a psychological bias against Tibetans? It raises a disturbing question. In that sense we appreciate our Chinese friends in this room and around the world who speak out about Tibet.

On this basis we say Tibet is a litmus test for China and the world. I wrote a piece in The Wall Street Journal where I made an argument that if you really want to see a moderation of China; if the Chinese government really wants to practice the 'peaceful rise' as its foreign policy and 'harmony' as its domestic policy, then they must address the issue of Tibet and bring peace and harmony in Tibet. Then only we will believe that China is really rising peacefully and there is harmony inside China.

Tibet is also a test for the international community because we have invested in

democracy and nonviolence for so many decades. For the last fifty years, every election of the parliament and the Kalon Tripa (now Sikyong) has been democratic. Even though we are refugee community, we have practiced democracy and we have consolidated democracy. We can compare with any democratic country in the world as far as democratic practices and process is concerned. We have invested in democracy and nonviolence — two uncompromising principles. We will not compromise further. If the international community does not support us, we will continue to march on with democracy and nonviolence but it will reflect their stand and their principle. On one hand, we all agree that democracy and universality of freedom has to be applauded and supported. Everybody says nonviolence has to be supported. On the other hand if the international community does not support someone like Tibetans who actually practice it, it is a statement of their stand as to what they say and what they actually do.

We see violence around the world, international community rush to put out the fire and they send tanks and helicopters, but then it is little too late. Had they supported nonviolence and democracy to begin with, the potential for future violence around the world will be diluted or lessen. In that sense Tibet is a test for the whole world. If the international community does not support Tibet, it will be a statement that democracy and nonviolence are not worth supporting. Then the other marginalized groups, refugee groups and ethnic groups around the world who are watching will say ‘we should not invest in democracy and nonviolence because look at Tibetans, they have been practicing this for five decades and they are not getting the support. Why should we?’ And there will be ethnic conflicts and violence around the world. In that sense, Tibet is a test both for China and rest of the world.

With that I want to conclude by saying that 2013 will be very important because internationally if you look at the political scenario, the US Presidential election, the 18th Party Congress of China, the European financial crisis and Syria dominated the news in 2012. With all these major issues being addressed one way or the other; I think we have to make efforts to make Tibet one of the major issues in the international forum. So in that sense, 2013 is a rare opportunity for Tibetans and our friends, and we can make this a historic year by mobilizing and galvanizing all our friends around the world through rallies, not simply a rally of couple of hundred people but major rallies, by lobbying the parliaments, not just lobbying few of them but intensifying lobbying not just once but two three times a year, thereby we can have debates generated in different parliaments and if possible resolutions passed in different parliaments. So that it gives message to China and to Tibetans inside Tibet that although the leadership in Dharamshala has changed but friends of Tibet are with Tibetans,

although Tibetans in Tibet are sacrificing their lives but their lives will not go in vain because in 2013 we will intensify our efforts and make realize the aspirations of the Tibetan people that His Holiness the Dalai Lama returns to Tibet and the Tibetan people regain their freedom.

This I believe will happen, mainly because the spirit of the Tibetan people has never been stronger, have never been as strong as we have today. The solidarity of Tibetans inside and outside has never been this strong in recent history. Making the Tibetan spirit, solidarity and unity as our foundation, I think it is the moment when Tibetans and friends around the world should build on the momentum and make realize the aspirations of the Tibetan people and make Tibet one of the best and most beautiful stories of the 21st century. I do believe this will happen with your help. With your support we all will make it happen. When that day comes we will make another history and that history will be because of your support and the sacrifices of Tibetans inside Tibet. Thank You.

## **Address by Mr. Rinchen Khandu Khrimey, North East Regional Convenor, Core Group for Tibetan Cause, India**

Ms. Dicki Chhoyang, the Honorable Kalon of the Central Tibetan Administration, Mr. Dalip Mehta, former Ambassador, distinguished delegates from all over the world, distinguished personalities of the Tibetan administration, chiefs and office bearers of different frontal organizations and my dear friends. After two days of hectic deliberations on a very important international issue, we have now come to the conclusion today.

I am from Arunachal Pradesh, the Northeast corner of India which is still claimed by China as its part. China has not given a regular visa to the people of Arunachal Pradesh; they have given a stapled visa which we have vehemently opposed. When a group of bureaucratic trainees (IAS, IFS, and IPS) had to go to China as a part of their refresher course, China gave visa to everyone except one officer who originates from Arunachal Pradesh. The Indian government took a very strong stand on that and cancelled the entire programme of the Indian bureaucrats' visit to China. I congratulate and thank the Indian government for taking a very strong stand on that issue. As far as Arunachal Pradesh is concerned, no matter what China may say, it is absolutely an integral part of India and China cannot address the wild dream if they are having one.

The Tibet issue is absolutely connected with us. Before 1959, many of our people, including my ancestors, had higher education from Tibet as the western part of Arunachal is all Buddhist. I feel lucky that I am connected with the Tibetan movement which I have never expected would happen, but again it is a part of the world phenomena.

Friends, as far as Tibetan movement is concerned, I would like to take you back a little in the 1970's. Today I am very happy to see the evolution of the Tibetan movement in India because in 1977 when I was just 27 years old, I was elected to the Parliament of India. Then, as a Buddhist, I along with my Buddhist friend and a member of parliament from Sikkim came for an audience and to pay our respect to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. As you all know there was a big political upheaval in 1977 when for the first time in 30-40 years, Congress was thrown out and the non-congress government came to power in India. It was a new thing, a new approach, and a new acquaintance as far as the Central Tibetan Administration was concerned. So it was during that visit, we had a discussion with the Kashag and we planned His Holiness' meeting with the new leaders in New Delhi.

We suggested monsoon session and everything was planned by the Tibetan Bureau office in Delhi accordingly. Mr. Tashi Wangdi was there that time. And then during the 10th March Tibetan uprising day in 1977 or 1978, I was invited to address the uprising day rally in Delhi. Mr. Shashi Bhusan from Delhi was also there. We stood in front of the Chinese embassy and then I made a statement that if Khomeini of Iran could come back after 14 years of exile, I have no doubt in my mind that His Holiness will one day go back to Tibet. Now my only feeling and commitment is to see His Holiness go back to Tibet and to Tibet to get its freedom, at least in my lifetime, and I feel very strongly on that.

Friends, we are meeting at a very critical situation. Tibetans are pushed to the wall that they have no alternative but to resort to self-immolation, because if they do any other activity they will be harassed. This is important because the international friends, sympathizers, well-wishers, and Tibet supporters have gathered here, and the honorable Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay has called for a Tibet year of 2013. He has called for it and it is our responsibility, those who are gathered here today, to make it happen. If we have to make 2013 a year of Tibet, then each one of us must act from day one after this meeting. International pressure is absolutely required and you never know when situations change. The USSR, one of the eastern bloc and one of the most powerful countries disintegrated. History can be repeated, history can be renewed and history can be remade, this is all part of the natural cycle. If tomorrow there is an uprising of people, China has no option but to go back, a new history will be written. So we have to look at the new history and not to repeat the old one. Let's not lament what had happened; we will have to look forward.

I don't understand why the world leaders are not coming up, for that matter our country's leaders also. When His Holiness came, all the opposition leaders were speaking for Tibet and god willing in 1977, they were given power to rule the country and then they had not changed it. This is not correct. This double standard of our leaders is not correct. I can say because I am an Indian, I am a citizen of India so I can blame them also.

Whenever we lobby we must ensure one thing: when they come to power tomorrow, they should not change their stand. They would say this is a historical standing, standing foreign policy of the government, but policies can be changed. They are elected to change policies if it's not favorable, international policies can also be changed. Our leaders today have come up openly because of His Holiness, for that matter the CTA has now accepted the middle path.



Be it any country; even in case of India, our leaders have invited extremist people to discuss within the framework of the Indian constitution. The Tibetan leaders are saying that they would like to discuss within the framework of the Peoples Republic of China's constitution, so where is the constitution crisis. His Holiness said yesterday in his address to us that it can be done if they want to, it is a question of willingness. There are two ways: either the master has to have a will or the master has to be pressurized to accept the will. That pressurization is our work and we have deliberated on it for the last two-three days. China is not going to accept it and so we have to pressurize them through our respective governments, parliamentarians, and we should very actively do this.

Friends, I always feel that this path of nonviolence which has been adopted by His Holiness, which we are all following and which we have all been advised, is very good because when we see history, anything you achieve through nonviolence is everlasting. Anything you achieve through violence has reactions all the time. This nonviolent path was started by Buddha, which His Holiness being the first disciple of the religion is carrying on. Our country has also adopted the same line, which I think is followed in the United States, South Africa, Nelson Mandela and everywhere. So I am very sure and confident that days are not very far. One day the prayers, perseverance and compassion which His Holiness is practicing, that itself will compel China to leave Tibet's holy land and go back to their own country. This is my strong feeling.

I am very happy that I am given this opportunity to say a few words. As you can see the timing and the importance of this conference, I am sure that all the friends who have come from all over the world will take it as a challenge in their heart and get active. Since we have already decided for an Asian rally in New Delhi, one thing I would like to say is that when we approach parliamentarians to pass resolution in the house, there we should not always insist upon the passing of resolution, anything that gets introduced in the parliament itself is an achievement. Let it not get discussed, let it not get accepted also, but at least ten, five or one member of parliament should write a letter to the Speaker to raise the issue of Tibet, which has not been done till date. When we talk about raising and passing a resolution on Tibet issue in the parliament, we should not always think that there will be a discussion on the issue. We should go step by step, let the members of parliament who are sympathizers and supporters first write to the Speaker to include this agenda of raising Tibet issue.

Thank you very much. In conclusion, I wish you will reach home safely with the blessings of God and His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and commence at once the activities to achieve the Tibet year of 2013.

Thank you, Jai hind.

**Concluding Address by Kalon Dicki Chhoyang,  
Department of Information and International Relations,  
Central Tibetan Administration**

Good afternoon,

You have all been working very hard these past two days. Some of you are used to this kind of gathering and some of you are new and I hear that some of you are quite overwhelmed by the range of ideas. I want to reiterate that the purpose of gatherings such as this one is not only to create an action plan like the one you discussed this morning, but also to feel part of an international community of people who care deeply about justice, truth, and the future of the Tibetan people and Tibet. I commend your efforts and also the efforts of the participants and the drafting committee, which within a very short period of time had to come up with a very pithy and accurate document, which I think they have done successfully. So I thank all the members of the drafting committee.

I want to draw your attention to the action plan, namely that there needs to be some planning as to how you will follow up on each of the actions that are drawn up at the end of 2013.

The action plan does not preclude national undertakings that reflect the environment that each one of you comes from. In order to follow up well and be part of the follow up and the assessment, the process of evaluating the campaigns, I would like to encourage all of you to join the International Tibet Network as you saw all the workshops that took place over the last two days have been planned and facilitated by the Network. The Network provides resources, advice, and small grants for campaigns and capacity building as well as regional meetings that take place every year or year and a half. It is an important mechanism for follow-up in between regional and global meetings. It is not a top-down network that will give you orders, it is your choice which campaign you wish to adopt locally. Joining the network is a symbolic gesture of solidarity. It is a demonstration of your commitment to the international movement of Tibet. That being said, I also want to reiterate as a representative of the Tibetan administration— that in the spirit of cooperation with Tibet Support Groups, repeatedly stated by both Sikyong and myself, we will also continue to encourage Tibetan associations worldwide to join the Network as a step toward closer, integrated working and coordinated relationship with the global Tibetan movement.

I also want to take this opportunity to say that in order to implement these

campaigns, you will have to deal with some key individuals; and amongst these key individuals are our Representatives of the administration throughout the world. As I stated in my opening speech, these Representatives are all present today and it is a deliberate effort on our part. They play a pivotal role in a Tibetan people's interface with the international community. Over the last few days, we have done away with normal protocol and all the Representatives have mingled very informally with the participants. For those of you who are new to our movement, I want to say a few words about these Representatives. While the title that is conferred upon them is 'Representative', the nature of their work is really that of an ambassador; ambassador for His Holiness the Dalai Lama and ambassador for the Tibetan administration. They are all, without exception, accomplished individuals with outstanding track records of community service, unwavering commitment to the Tibetan cause and thorough understanding of the challenges faced by the Tibetan people. They are a critical link between you and the Tibetan people and its governance structure i.e. the Tibetan administration. They shoulder tremendous responsibilities with limited resources. We salute them and acknowledge their past and ongoing contribution to our community.

If you allow me, I would like to introduce each one of them to you in the order of the seating arrangement: Mr. Lobsang Nyandak in New York, Mr. Tempa Tsering in Delhi, Mr. Ngodup Dorjee in Brussels, Belgium, Mr. Migyur Dorjee in Pretoria, South Africa, Mr. Ngawang Rabgyal in Moscow, Russia, Mr. Lhakpa Tshoko in Tokyo, Japan, Mr. Thubten Samdup in London, UK, Mr. Tseten Samdup in Geneva, Switzerland, Special Representative to Europe for His Holiness Mr. Kelsang Gyaltzen, Mr. Sonam Dagpo in Australia, Mr. Tsewang Phuntso in New York, Mr. Tsering Dhondup in Paris, and unfortunately we are missing our Representative in Taiwan Mr. Dawa Tsering, who has to be excused.

As you return to your respective countries, I want to reiterate some of the points that I made in my opening statement. I hope that when you return you will think about sustainability; how you ensure the continuity of your work for example if something happens to you tomorrow, who will carry on? A difficult question, but very important. Effectiveness: are you reaching out to the key target groups, are you using the best channels to reach out to these groups? Efficiency: are you making the best use of available resources and can we build coalitions with natural partners like Tibetan communities and other NGOs.

There have been a few questions posed to me during this conference by several participants and I feel I must address them as it is difficult to speak to a

gathering of this nature and I certainly don't want to send these individuals home with their questions unanswered.

One question was about the fact that Tibetans inside Tibet, with a few exceptions, have called for 'rangwang'. So the question was what does 'rangwang' mean? Rangwang means personal or collective freedom. The meaning of independence is 'rangzen' which means independence, sovereignty. To opt to give one's life is a critical decision that reflects a profound process of introspection and strength of conviction. Each word written and every oral testimony left was carefully weighed by the self-immolators, who were fully cognizant of their meaning and implication. Tibetans inside Tibet know the difference in meaning between the words 'rangwang' and 'rangzen'. Their command of the Tibetan language is equal if not greater than the Tibetan community in exile. With a few exceptions, all self-immolators have clearly called for 'rangwang'.

The other question that was posed to me is about the call for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's return to Tibet. Tibetans inside Tibet have been very closely following all the developments over the past year, including the separation of political and religious leadership that took place last year. When they call for His Holiness's return to Tibet, they do so being fully aware of his role as our spiritual, most revered leader. His Holiness, since this important development, has incessantly been stating wherever he travels, like he did yesterday, that since the devolution of political authority took place, he is the religious leader of the Tibetan people and Sikyong Lobsang Sangay is the political leader. So we have to be very cautious and refrain from dissecting and extrapolating from their call for freedom and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. They are calling for freedom and the return of His Holiness—that is the message. Extrapolating leads to confusion and unnecessary divisions. The Tibetan movement is led by Tibetans inside Tibet. Whatever aspirations they express we must honor and echo them faithfully in our global efforts for their realization.

As the current administration moves forward, I want to reiterate our determination to realize the aspirations of Tibetans inside Tibet and this we pledge with passion, vision, and the courage to take bold actions and explore new ideas. The Tibetan people have placed great hope in us at this critical time. It is both a privilege and a great responsibility. To shoulder this responsibility well, we need first and foremost your support and unity.

**Address by Chief Guest Ambassador Dalip Mehta,  
Former Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs  
Government of India**

I thank Kalon Dicki Chhoyang for inviting me to speak here today.

It is very difficult to say anything more appropriate than what the gentleman who represented the Chinese community said. I feel humbled by all that he said and he rightly deserved the standing ovation he got. I feel privileged to be speaking here to all of you who have done so much individually and collectively to keep the hopes and aspirations of the Tibetan people alive. That you have done so voluntarily is a tribute that is deeply appreciated by all Tibetans and those of us who are concerned at developments in Tibet. Here today our representatives from more than 40 countries around the world, which is a reflection of the fact that Tibet is no longer a local affair of China but a global concern. I am not an expert on Tibet, merely a well-wisher and I try to keep myself abreast of developments as they take place. In a sense I am also an interloper today because Mr. Arun Shourie, Parliamentarian and author of several books was to have addressed you but could not be here because of his wife's illness.

During the last few days, workshops have been held, which I am sure discussed and debated various issues effecting Tibet— human rights, environment, rivers etc, and perhaps also strategy for resolving the complex Tibetan problem that has now existed for several decades. It will be interesting to know of your conclusions. What I will be saying will be nothing new or original, as all of you are far more knowledgeable about Tibet. Nor shall I go into too many details but will try and convey my personal impressions.

Over the last six decades, successive Chinese governments have tried to systematically obliterate Tibet's identity and culture, largely because their efforts to assimilate Tibetans into the mainstream of China have failed. Chinese methods have been brutal and ruthless, but have not succeeded in breaking the spirit of Tibetan people, nor their determination to preserve their unique culture, religion and civilization. The tragic and horrific self-immolation, more than 60 I understand, is a reflection of this determination.

China today is an immensely powerful country, both in military and economic terms, which perhaps explains why no country is willing to openly support Tibetan cause. However, China itself is undergoing fundamental changes, there is a new generation of outward looking people, who are aware of the world events and opinions. I am sure they do not wish their country to be regarded as a pariah

nation as it achieves super power status. Rather they would wish their country to be admired, perhaps envied for its undoubted achievements. Thousands of Chinese students are now studying abroad in the United States, Europe, Australia and many other countries. Chinese commerce and industry spreads throughout the world. Chinese, be the tourists or professionals, travel the world. Surely they can all not be immune to global public opinions on the tragic happenings in Tibet. The internet has opened the whole new world of information about the Chinese themselves and the rest of the world. As the Economist magazine said (in one of its recent issues) "The Communist Party can no longer bottle-up dissents. Ordinary people are protesting in public and writing about previously taboo subjects. Events that once remain local are now being debated nationwide". Social and civil unrest in China is on the rise. The gap between the rich and the poor is widening, discontent among China's many minorities is on the increase and getting more explosive. None of these developments can be ignored or suppressed. China's new leadership under Xi Jinping will have to address these issues and willy-nilly make concessions lest matters get out of control and perhaps even threaten the integrity of the country.

While the Tibetan administration under the guidance of Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay will no doubt resume the suspended dialogue with the Chinese authority, it is hoped that Xi Jinping will see the reality of changing world and not mindlessly carry the baggage of the past. There must be the new beginning, the opportunity must be seized. From the Tibetan point of view, I see no alternative to His Holiness's Middle Way approach, it is transparent, pragmatic and realistic as it does not in any form threaten or dilute China's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Further I see no alternative to His Holiness's nonviolent approach as militancy and confrontation will only invite greater Chinese brutality and repression. It is here that the Tibet Support Groups can play a meaningful role to influence public opinion at every level and in all walks of life. On the reasonableness on His Holiness's approach, to resolving the seemingly intractable Tibetan problem, it is through the pressure that public opinion exerts, that government will take cognizance of the ongoing tragedy in Tibet, not merely in words but also in actions.

Let me now say a few words on India's Tibet policy in the context of the sensitive relation between India and China. While there have been improvements in certain areas, such as trade and commerce, joint ventures, culture and education, I understand even limited joint military exercises, several underlying problems continue to bedevil bilateral relations, these include the unresolved boundary disputes, the status of Arunachal Pradesh, China's ambivalent position on Jammu and Kashmir, the progressive Chinese encirclement on India, both on land and sea, among several other issues. Without doubt, the most disturbing and

dangerous has been the ongoing and extensive militarization and nuclearisation of the Tibetan plateau which directly threatens India's geostrategic interests. The Indo-Tibet border has therefore become a source of great concern. The time has come for a rethink of India's Tibet policy, subtly nuanced without being provocative. I think the government of India should be less diffident on pronouncing on matters concerning Tibet, especially where it impacts adversely on India. Also the government of India should work with other countries where there are shared interests. I would strongly urge my government to endorse His Holiness's Middle Way approach. This would stabilize the situation in Tibet and would at the same time be in India's own interest.

Just a word about a very amazing lecture, the historic lecture I heard few days ago in Delhi. It was the Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial lecture given by the outstanding Burmese leader Aung San Suu Kyi. And in that lecture she said, apart from great many other remarkable things, that often during her trip in India she is often asked what are her expectations and disappointments from India, and the forthrightness of only what great person can say in India to an Indian audience was that her expectations were wherein the successive Indian governments would support the democratic movement in Burma. She said that India being the largest democracy in the world she had hoped that India would support Burma's struggling democratic movement, and her disappointment was that India for whatever reasons decided to side military regime that was repressive and cruel. Only a woman of her stature and greatness could speak in such a manner and at the end of her speech, it was one of the most remarkable speech I have honor of hearing, she received a standing ovation, and present in the audience was the Vice President of India Hamid Ansari, Sonia Gandhi and various other people. My wife of course, I must add on a personal note, had been in school in Delhi with her and that added a personal dimension to that remarkable afternoon when she heard her speak. And therefore I feel the subsequent government of India, as Mr. Khriemey had very rightly pointed out, must absolutely rethink their policy towards Tibet. What is happening in Tibet and for this again I agree with Mr. Khriemey, parliamentarians and all other opinion makers, journalists, academics, bureaucrats, teachers, college going students, all of them must be interacted with because everybody knows somebody and that is how public opinion finally forces government to take appropriate actions.



**Vote of Thanks by Mr. Tashi Phuntsok,  
Additional Secretary, Department of Information and  
International Relations, CTA**

Honorable Ambassador Dalip Mehta, former Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, government of India, DIIR Kalon Diki Chhoyang, guests, ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of the Department of Information and International Relations, and the organizing committee of this special meeting, may I have the pleasure of extending a vote of thanks.

First of all, I would like to thank His Holiness the Dalai Lama for his kind visit to our meeting and blessing us with his profound guidance. I would like to thank delegates for coming to this meeting in Dharamsala and for your active participation and continued commitment to support the just cause of Tibet, and especially I would like to thank the representatives of Offices of Tibet who have been specially requested to be present in this meeting.

Our deepest appreciation goes to International Core Group for Tibetan Cause, led by Dr N K Trikha for hosting this meeting. Our gratitude also goes to Mr. Rinchin Khandu Khriemey for his contribution to the meeting and indeed for hosting this concluding ceremony.

Let me thank Ambassador Dalip Mehta, our chief guest for the closing ceremony. It is utterly true and I can vouchsafe that he has indeed taken time out from his busy schedule to accommodate our request to be with us and for his inspirational speech.

I wish to extend our gratitude to Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay for the keynote address and for his guidance and valued support throughout the process of organizing this meeting.

I would like to thank Mr. Penpa Tsering, the Speaker of Tibetan Parliament in Exile for his presentation on Tibetan Democracy.

I would like to also thank DIIR Kalon Diki Chhoyang for her active guidance and support for the meeting and her welcome address and of course the concluding address just now.

Thank you Mr. Indresh Kumar for his address and I would also like to thank

Special Representative Kelsang Gyaltzen, Representative Dawa Tsering, Mr. Lobsang Chodak, Mr. Tenzin Norbu, and Mr. Jigme for their presentations. Thank you also to Mr. Todd Stein, Mr. Vincent Metten, Mr. Paul Bourke, Dr. Gunther Cologna, Mr. Yang Jianli, Mr. Han Lianchao, Mr. Migmar Raith and Ms. Nadine Baumann for their presentations and workshops.

Please thank the facilitators and rapporteurs— they are Ms. Alison Reynolds, Ms. Maudie Mckeown, Mr. Tenzin Jigme, Mr. Jigme Norbu, Ms. Kalden Tsomo, Mr. Kalsang Dorjee, Ms. Rebecca Novick, Ms. Kate Woznow, Ms. Iona Liddell, Mr. Ugyen Wangchuk, Mr. Hanna Scott and Mr. Tenzin Jigdral.

I would like to thank my colleagues in the Drafting Committee— Mr. Thupten Samphel, Ms. Carole Samdupp, Ms. Alison Reynolds, Mr. Paul Bourke — who have worked very hard.

I would also like to thank the management and the staff of hotels at Naddi village for their hospitality and cooperation. I would also like to thank the Tibetan Medical and Astrological Institute Dharamsala for hosting the dinner on the first day of the meeting.

Please extend our huge thank you to TCV Dharamsala. Mr. Phuntsok Namgyal, the Village Director and his staff have not only redone the venue of the meeting for us but have also made us feel genuinely at home. They have left the entire TCV facilities at our disposal to make this meeting a success. The catering team from VTC Selakui deserves a round of applause for the delicious food that we have enjoyed during the meeting.

I would like to thank all the staff members of Department of Information and International Relations and other departments who have worked round the clock; without their hard work this meeting would not have run so smoothly and successfully.

Finally, I must make a personal mention of Ms. Sonam Sangmo, Liaison Officer of the Tibet Support Group and chief organizer of the meeting. We have to withhold her imminent transfer because of this meeting and needless to say she has done a marvelous job.

Before I conclude, I have a small presentation ceremony. I would like to request Madam Dicki Chhoyang to kindly do the honour of giving Ambassador Dalip Mehta a memento on behalf of all of us. I would like to request Ambassador Dalip Mehta to kindly do the honour of handing over the next souvenir to Dr Trikha, Convener of the meeting.

Last but not the least, I would like to request our Secretary Mr. Tashi, who has been behind the scene quietly and silently working throughout the entire conference, to do the honour of handing over the next souvenir to Alison Reynolds, Executive Director, International Tibet Network, who has put a major work in this special meeting.

In keeping with the tradition of Tibet Support Group conferences and special meetings, as a token of appreciation to all the delegates, I would like to request our Representatives of Offices of Tibet to present traditional Tibetan white scarves to all the delegates and say Thank you and *Thukjeche*.

## CONCLUDING STATEMENT AND ACTION PLAN

### **Special International Meeting of Tibet Support Groups**

In response to the escalating crisis in Tibet, the Special International Meeting of Tibet Support Groups was held in Dharamsala, India from 16-18 November 2012. The meeting, which was attended by almost 200 participants from 43 countries, was convened by the Core Group for Tibetan Cause - India, and facilitated by the Department of Information & International Relations of the Central Tibetan Administration. The purpose of the meeting was to develop strategic campaigns to address the deteriorating situation in Tibet where to date at least 75 Tibetans have self-immolated.

This is a highly significant moment in the Tibetan struggle for freedom. Despite unprecedented repression, there has been a dramatic upsurge in resistance against China's occupation. There have been important changes within the Central Tibetan Administration with the historic devolution of political power from His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the democratically elected leadership. Meanwhile the Communist Party of China has appointed its new leaders. These changes demand renewed effort from Tibet Support Groups who pledge to increase their efforts on behalf of the Tibetan people and their human right to self-determination as recognized by the United Nations.

We, the conference participants, express our deep admiration and strong support for the unwavering determination and commitment to nonviolence by Tibetans in Tibet and for the many diverse ways in which they are resisting, including Tibetan cultural renaissance and Lhakar. Such resistance has continued despite mass detentions, violent military responses to peaceful protests, and the increased use of "patriotic re-education" campaigns.

We express deep anguish that Tibetans feel compelled to self-immolate as an act of political resistance. We resolutely stand in solidarity with their aspirations for freedom and for the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to his homeland. Responsibility for this crisis lies with China's leaders and their failed Tibet policies over the last sixty years. We call on China's new leaders to urgently address the root causes of these self-immolations.

We are deeply concerned about the forced removal of nomadic communities which is eroding cultural traditions, destroying livelihoods, and resulting in social exclusion. We believe that social and economic exclusion are contributing factors in the escalation of self-immolation and therefore must be urgently addressed.

We call specifically on General Secretary Xi Jinping and the new Politburo Standing Committee to take immediate steps to resolve these and all legitimate grievances of the Tibetan people recognising that a peaceful resolution is in the best interests of both the Tibetan and the Chinese people.

We demand that our home governments initiate urgent and coordinated action, including at the United Nations and in other international and regional fora, to bring pressure upon the Government of China to change its policies in Tibet.

The conference participants welcome the creation of a coalition of Asian Tibet Support Groups and congratulate it on the adoption a common action program.

We, the conference participants, renew our commitment to work together and in cooperation with Tibetan organizations, Chinese human rights defenders, and other concerned organizations around the world, in pursuit of a political solution to the Tibet issue consistent with international human rights standards.

To that end, we have today agreed to the following Action Plan:

## 1. RESPOND TO TIBETAN SELF-IMMOLATIONS

**Objective:** To press key governments to establish an intergovernmental forum to develop coordinated action in response to the escalating self-immolation crisis in Tibet by the end of 2013.

This campaign aims to build broad public awareness and domestic pressure on key governments with the support of parliamentarians and opinion leaders. Tactics for government pressure include lobby days and advocacy in national ministries and international fora. These activities will be supported by awareness-raising about the crisis of self-immolation. We will engage greater media outreach by organizing rallies and other events that will appeal to local and popular media including via a social media strategy.

## 1. AMPLIFY TIBETAN RESISTANCE

**Objective:** Expand Lhakar to 25 additional countries by the end of 2013, and strengthen Lhakar where it already exists.

We will urge Tibet Support Groups, Tibetan associations, and Buddhist centres to join the Lhakar movement by reaching out and providing them with resources and support. Activities will include presentations and edu-

cational workshops to key organizations, as well as seeking endorsements from celebrities, parliamentarians and other opinion makers. Recommended Lhakar actions would include social media engagement, online videos, vigils, flash-mobs, and cultural events and lobbying.

## 2. BUILD POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR TIBET

a. **Objective:** To stop China's re-election to the United Nations Human Rights Council by November 2013.

Targeting UN Ambassadors and their home governments, this campaign will build parliamentary, civil society and constituent support for a principled "no-vote" on China's re-election to the Human Rights Council. Key tactics will include Tibet lobby days and constituency pressure on parliamentarians, creation of a report card, letter-writing and online actions. This campaign will be considered a success despite China's likely re-election because it will create significant public awareness and media coverage of China's appalling human rights record and it will enable the movement to build coalitions with other human rights organizations.

b. **Objective:** To create a network of nine downstream national governments receiving Tibet's water by December 2013

This campaign will target environment ministers of the downstream nations which are India, Pakistan, Burma, Bangladesh, Laos, Nepal, Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam. Working in partnership with International Network of Parliamentarians on Tibet (INPaT), the Department of Information & International Relations environment and development desk, and Tibetan NGOs, this campaign will reach out to parliamentarians, environmental NGOs, and affected local communities in an effort to create this forum. Key activities include raising awareness in international fora including Conference of Parties (Climate Change Negotiations), pressuring national parliaments and potentially holding a conference on Asia's water and food security. We will build new contacts with civil society organizations in target countries in the hopes of winning support for a mass action day and water rally.

Adopted by consensus  
November 18, 2012  
Dharamsala, India



His Holiness the Dalai Lama addressing the Meeting



Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay addressing the Meeting





Kalon Dicki Chhoyang, DIIR, CTA addressing the concluding session



His Holiness the Dalai Lama with a group of participants



Participants voting for the Action Plan



The Drafting Committee: (From left) Carole Samdup, Paul Bourke, Thupten Samphel, Alison Reynolds, Tashi Phuntsok



Group photo of the participants and organisers of the Special International Tibet Support Groups Meeting