

7 July 2020

To,

Ms. Michelle Bachelet,

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations,
CH-1201, Geneva 10

Sub: Tibetans Cycle Rally Petition – Make China accountable and hold a Special Session on Human Rights Situation in China

Your Excellency,

We, the undersigned, five Tibetans living in Switzerland started a cycle rally on 4th July 2020 from canton of Zug to Geneva to raise awareness about the grim human rights situation in Tibet and to urge the UN and the member states to hold a special session on human rights situation Tibet and other regions under China.

Coinciding with the ongoing 44th UN HRC, we are submitting this appeal letter to you in support of statement issued by 50 UN experts on 26 June 2020 urging the UN Human Rights Council for urgent decisive measures on human rights situation in China including Tibet, Hong Kong and Xinjiang, and urge your Excellency's attention and necessary follow-up actions in holding a special UN Human Rights Council session on China.

Today, the world is undergoing unprecedented challenging times since the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. Had China taken action in combating the COVID-19 from spreading in the initial stage, may be this current global pandemic could have been avoided and controlled. Instead, China punished the doctors and physicians who alerted the people about the coronavirus. From disinformation to refusal of independent team from visiting China's region of Wuhan, where virus is known to have spread, the credibility of the World Health Organisation has been contested. Lapses from WHO in stopping COVID-19 from spreading at the initial stage and placing the interest of China before global health concern has put minority and people in oppressive region more vulnerable. As lamented by Beijing based Tibetan blogger, COVID-19 pandemic has created a double-lock down situation in Tibet.

The world can no longer afford to let China go away with growing domination and bullying tactics. A collective measure from the UN Office of Human Rights, inter alia, in holding China accountable by convening a special UNHRC session and establishment of mandate holder to monitor China is more urgent than ever.

Tibet is a litmus test for the UN and the world. Understanding Tibet by heeding the voices and experiences of Tibetans, rather than state's narrative, is a gateway to ensure China fulfils its human rights obligation. China's growing threat in reshaping the UN Human Rights Council and its aggressive efforts in an attempt to create a new world order with "Chinese Characteristic of human rights" is dismantling the fundamental values and principles which necessitated the creation of UN Human Rights Council.

For sixty years, Tibetans have suffered enormously under the authoritarian Chinese government. The most basic and fundamental human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are denied to Tibetans in Tibet. Instead of understanding underlying grievances of Tibetans, China is systematically suppressing and silencing the voices with forces. The heightening repression in Tibet has compelled Tibetans to resort to drastic act of self-immolation protest. Since 2009, 154 Tibetans are known to have self-immolated in protest against in Tibet.

In this context, we would like to remind your Excellency that what has happened in Tibet, and continue to happen in Tibet is today happening in Xinjiang and Hong Kong. In fact, the blue print of repressive situation against Uyghur Muslim community was developed, tested and perfected in Tibet.


China's destruction of Tibetan culture and identity in an attempt to wipe out Tibetan civilization as we know it is a serious concern. Tibetan cultural identity deeply rooted in Tibetan Buddhism is being forcefully sinicized, and any efforts being made by Tibetans in protection of Tibetan culture and practices are labelled "separatist" and subject to severe consequences including imprisonment under alleged charge of "inciting hatred" and "picking quarrel". For instance, Tibetan language rights advocate Tashi Wangchuk is currently serving a five-year imprisonment for merely expressing his concerns over dearth of Tibetan medium education opportunity in his home town, Kyekundo county in Kham (Chinese: Yushu Prefecture). Sonam Palden, a 22-year-old Tibetan monk, was arrested in September 2019 for expressing his concern over deplorable state of Tibetan language in his home town, Ngaba County in Tibetan province of Amdo, incorporated in Sichuan Province. Sonam Palden continues to remain incommunicado. No information is available about the current status of Sonam Palden. It is crime to even talk about the value of mother-tongue education. China's interference of centuries old Tibetan Buddhist practice of reincarnation is a serious concern. The enforced disappearance of reincarnation 11th Panchen Lama of Tibet, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, continues to remain an unresolved case of enforced disappearance of the UN working group.

In view of the afore mentioned issues, we appeal your Excellency to take all necessary measures to hold China accountable for its human rights violations in Tibet.

Through this petition:

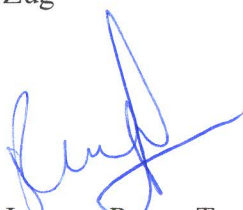
1. We urge Your Excellency, UNHRC and all the Member-States to heed to the urgent call of the UN experts and hold a special session and establish special rapporteur with country mandate on China;
2. We urge Your Excellency to press China to reveal verifiable information about the whereabouts and well-being of Panchen Lama of Tibet, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, his family and Chadrel Rinpoche;
3. We urge Your Excellency to press China to respect the rights of Tibetan people and Tibetan human rights defenders;
4. We urge Your Excellency to immediately call China to stop meddling in Tibetan religious affairs and interferences in centuries-old Tibetan Buddhist practice of reincarnation.

Yours Sincerely,



1. Migmar Tsering Dengo

Zug



2. Jangsur Penpa Tsering

Wabern



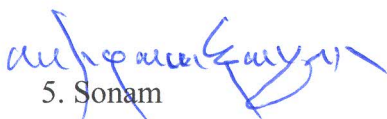
3. Tsangmada Lobsang

Belp



4. Lobsang Norbu

Basel



5. Sonam

Basel