

30 June 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: Tibetan Peace Marcher's appeal- Make China Accountable for gross human rights violations in Tibet

Your Excellency,

We, the undersigned, four Tibetans living in Switzerland started a peace march on 25th June 2020 from Bern to Geneva to raise awareness about the grim human rights situation in Tibet and to urge the UN and the member state to hold China accountable for the gross human rights violations with impunity. As the UN member states gather for its 44th UN HRC session today, we are submitting this appeal letter to you for your attention and consideration to undertake urgent decisive measures against China's unabated human rights violations in Tibet.

Today, the world is undergoing unprecedented challenging times due to the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic which originated from Wuhan in China. As your excellency would agree, scientists and medical experts still don't know enough about the coronavirus to combat it successfully. Had China taken action in stopping 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, and conveniently shirked its responsibilities through bullying and deceiving tactics.

While expressing our solidarity for all families who have lost their loved ones due to the COVID-19 and those who continue to suffer from this pandemic, the world can no longer afford to let China go away with growing domination and bullying tactics. A collective UN measures in holding China accountable for its repressions and human rights violations is more urgent than ever.

Tibetans have suffered enormously under the authoritarian Chinese government. More than 1.2 million Tibetans were killed and at least 6,000 monasteries were demolished. The most basic and fundamental human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are denied to Tibetans in Tibet. In fact, any who complains or asks for rights are met with severe consequences and punishment by the Chinese government. The destruction of Tibetan culture and China's

continued suppression against Tibetans have led to widespread protests and unrest situation in Tibet. Instead of understanding underlying grievances of Tibetans, China often responded the peaceful exercise of freedom of expression and opinion and assembly in Tibet with stringent punishments including-but not limited to- unjust long-term imprisonment and torture. Because of absence of space for taking any conventional forms of protest, Tibetans are resorting to a drastic act of self-immolation protest against repression in Tibet. Since 2009, 154 Tibetans are known to have self-immolated in protest against the denial of fundamental human rights in Tibet.

In contrary to ground grim situation in Tibet, China propaganda machinery chimes about the supposed “development” brought into Tibet by China and often exhibits rosy pictures of colorfully dressed Tibetans “leading a happy life”. In fact, China has brought more destruction than development in Tibet. If Tibetans are happy as China claims, why Tibet continues to be a forbidden place for independent journalists, foreign travelers and diplomats? Why do foreign visitors need a special permission to visit Tibetan areas? Why are Tibetans self-immolating?

In the past 60 years, China has systematically suppressed and silenced the voices of Tibetans with heavy-handed political repression, cultural assimilation, social discrimination, environmental destructions and economic marginalization. In Tibet, today, the survival of Tibetan culture and identity is under severe threat. China has been destroying Tibetan culture and language by denying all facets of social and cultural rights of Tibetans. It is crime to even talk about the value of mother-tongue education. For instance, Tibetan language right advocate Tashi Wangchuk is currently serving a five-year unjust imprisonment for merely expressing his concern over dearth of Tibetan medium education opportunity in his home town, Kyekundo county in Kham (Chinese: Yushu Prefecture).

The continued enforced disappearance of Tibet’s 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima is a serious concern for all Tibetan people and Buddhist community. For 25 years, China refused to divulge any verifiable information about the well-being and whereabouts of Panchen Lama and also that of his family.

For more than 60 years, Tibetans have been calling UN and its human rights agencies to pay heed to the voices and experiences of Tibetans, first victims of People’s Republic of China’s aggression. The UN paid no or little attention and action in defending the voices of Tibetans call for protection of human rights in Tibet. What is happening against Uyghur Muslim community is replication of China’s heavy-handed polices tested and implemented in Tibet. China’s persecution of Christian community and suppression of democratic values and voices in Hong Kong can only be addressed

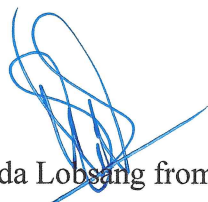
by understanding China meaningfully and holistically. For this, understanding Tibet is the key corner stone to move forward.

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 to press China to allow independent fact-finding missions into Tibet and also to include Tibet in your itinerary plans for visit to China;
2. We strongly support and join the call of the UN experts to hold special session and establish special rapporteur with country mandate on China's human rights violations in Tibet, Hong Kong, Xinjiang and other regions under China.
3. 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.

Yours Sincerely,



Tsangmada Lobsang from Bern

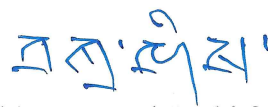
(Team leader)



Dorjee Ngodrup from Bern



Rangpoyamatsang Tenam from Zurich



Drolldoernangmi Tashi from Aarau