



TIBETAN BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CENTRAL TIBETAN ADMINISTRATION

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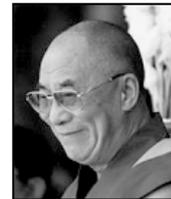
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Rights Group Condemns China's Collection of DNA Samples in Tibet as a "Serious Human Rights Violation"

The Chinese officials across the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) have been collecting DNA samples from Tibetans, including kindergarten children, without their parent's consent as part of a "crime detection" campaign, Human Rights Watch (HRW) said on Monday.

The rights groups reported that DNA collection drives are being conducted across all of the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region's seven prefectures and Tibetans have no choice but to obey the orders, based on publicly accessible reports studied by the group.

The report quoted Chinese officials as stating that the genetic sampling was intended to capture "fleeing persons" and equip "public security agencies with the necessary tools to effectively crack down on criminal elements". The rights group, however, criticized the forced drive, asserting that "it is a serious human rights violation to take DNA samples from entire regions or populations at will for security reasons because it cannot be justified as necessary or proportionate".

The report stated that the current genetic sample collection drive in the "Tibet Autonomous Region" is part of a campaign dubbed "The Three Greats" (Great inspection, investigation, and mediation), which began in 2019. In addition, two government tenders for the construction of local DNA databases were cited in the report. Moreover, the rights group found regional DNA databases were being planned as early as July 2019, citing Nyingtri Police's announcement in November 2019 of creating a DNA database at the prefecture level in the "TAR".

According to the Human Rights Watch, Chinese officials collect genetic samples from everyone, including kindergarten children as young as 5 years old. Chamdo municipality's report from May 2019 specifies that DNA was to be collected from the entire population, and police were instructed: "not to miss



DNA sample collection at a Kindergarten in Tibet.

a [single] village or monastery, and not to miss a [single] household or person." The report also said police in Nyemo county, Lhasa municipality, collected DNA from three kindergarten classes in April 2022, without any indication that parents were consulted.

"The authorities' collection of DNA from children without their informed, meaningful, and freely given consent, or that of their caregivers, and extracted in educational settings where they could not meaningfully opt-out or refuse to provide their personal health data, is a violation of children's privacy", it said adding that "it may have adverse consequences on children".

Right to health mandates the right to respect for the confidentiality of medical information. However, China's collection of DNA samples for routine sharing with the police or other authorities with access to its database constitutes an interference or breach of confidentiality prohibited by international law, the report said.

"The PRC's escalation of the illicit collection of Tibetan's DNA samples for the purpose of 'crime detection' originates from its desperate attempts to establish legitimacy to rule Tibet, and therefore such efforts are meant to secure their stability", said Tenzin Lekshay, the official spokesperson of

the Central Tibetan Administration. "China's collection of genetic samples without consent violates Tibetan rights under international law and strengthens its already ruthless surveillance regime".

The report mentioned a study made by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), detailing the Chinese government's DNA collection campaigns focused on Tibet and Xinjiang. Researchers stated that it is clear that the DNA collection program violates the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights' prohibition against 'arbitrary or unlawful interference with the privacy of individuals. Moreover, it violates Article 16 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (to which China is a signatory), which prohibits arbitrary or unlawful interference with [a child's] privacy.

Furthermore, no evidence was found in the report of ASPI that the Chinese authorities were adhering to the requirement that biometric data must only be collected and stored by the police for those convicted of serious criminal offences.

(The detailed report can be access on official website of HRW)

<https://tibet.net>

Tibet: Two Tibetans Died from Police Torture in Kham Karze



Ngodup Tsering

The Chinese authorities on 28 September 2022 beat a Tibetan man to death after he was arrested for allegedly visiting and providing food and edibles to an old age home in Dartsedo (Ch: Kangding) County in Kham Karze (Ganzi), incorporated into Sichuan Province, an exile media reported. The Chinese police reportedly severely beat the man, resulting in his death the following day.

In the early morning hours of 27 September 2022, Ngodup Tsering was suddenly arrested by a few police officials after returning from an old age home. For hours, he was beaten and interrogated at the local police station, according to the Tibet Times report.

Ngodup’s visit to the old age home and his provision of food and supplies to the elders have been seen by the police as a slight against government officials responsible for looking after the elderly. Moreover, the police derided Ngodup and claimed that since the government officials “regularly provide food and other necessities to the elders”, an “outsider” has no need to help. Accused of having exhibited “improper facial expressions,” the authorities further punished him, rendering him unable to stand. In the police station, he died the following morning.

In the Tibet Times report, there is no further information as to whether Ngodup’s body has been handed over to the family following his passing.

Ngodup Tsering drove a taxi for a living to support his family, including a 78-year-old mother Lhakyi, his wife Yutso and two children.

One Tibetan killed among five arrested for their religious practice in Serthar

Chukdhar (52) died in the custody of the Chinese police on 26 August 2022 as a result of torture inflicted upon him for conducting religious activities in Serthar (Ch: Seda) county, Karze (Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, reported the Tibet Times and confirmed by the CTA’s Department of Security.

Among the other Tibetans arrested were Gyelo, Tsedo, Bhamo, and Kori, who are being held in Karze County prison. The five Tibetans were allegedly arrested on 24 August for leading a religious ceremony and conducting Sangsol (burning of Juniper), stacking Buddhist Mani stones, and praying in public, according to the report. Known in their town as the “Noble Five” for their generosity, responsibility, and loyalty, the quintet often leads the town’s religious activities and prayer services at the request of the local Tibetans, the report said.

It is also reported that the families of the arrested were denied a meeting and were not allowed to provide food and eatables for the detainees on 25 August. On 26 August, Chukdhar’s family was informed that he had passed away in

prison and they should come to pick up his body. The authorities said they would return Chukdhar’s body only if his family signed an official letter confirming his death was not caused by police abuse. Chukdhar’s family maintains he was perfectly healthy after officials said his “death occurred suddenly”.

“The Serthar county police assured the surviving family of the deceased of a compensation of 100,000 Yuan (\$14,113 approx.) and an additional 10,000 Yuan for every family member each year”, the source told the Tibet Times. “But they have yet to receive the compensation, so it is just a false promise to manipulate the family into removing the body from their custody”, it further explained.

According to the report, the five Tibetans were arrested on 24 August and were held at Serthar County prison for a week. Upon transfer to Karze County prison on 31 August, a possible sentence could be imminent. Up until recently, prisoners would be held in their own County prisons except for those about to be sentenced. But as of late, authorities are detaining prisoners for only a few days in their own County prison and then transferring them elsewhere.

Chukdhar hailed from Abhoe Kyil Rigbo Village, Khakor township (Ch: Keguo) in the Serthar County, Karze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. He was solely responsible for the upkeep of his family, which consisted of his father Thupwoe, 71, his mother, 75, and his wife and children.



First-ever Tibet Talk Held at Conservative Party Conference in United Kingdom

For the first time ever, a talk on Tibet was held at the conference venue of a UK political party in government, organised by the Office of Tibet and the Tibet House Trust, the two sister-partner organisations based in Tibet House, London.

'Why Tibet Matters – An Unresolved Conflict' was discussed during a ninety-minute fringe event of the Conservative Party Conference on Monday, 3 October 2022 in Birmingham. Three eminent speakers, each focusing on a specific topic of Tibet's relevance to the government and people of the UK, engaged with an audience of MPs, legislators, researchers and activists. Secretary Lochoe Samten of the Office of Tibet, London moderated the session.

Representative Sonam Frasi, while highlighting the current repressive situation inside Tibet, explained the Middle Way Approach (MWA) of the Tibetans as the ideal means to peacefully resolve the Sino-Tibet conflict. He appealed to the UK Government to withdraw its 2008 statement acknowledging 'Tibet as part of China.

Second to speak was the former Liberal Party MP Norman Baker, who served as the transport minister during the coalition government. He is a long-time staunch supporter of Tibet and a former president of Tibet Society – the first-ever Tibet Support Group set up in the West by former UK Government officials who lived in independent Tibet. Baker has met with His Holiness the Dalai Lama many times too. Being well-versed in the UK, China and Tibet issues, Baker started by pointing out the UK Government's relation and bilateral treaties with Tibet in the early 20th century, without China anywhere in sight. He spoke about his personal experiences of dealing with the PRC Government in his ministerial role during the coalition government – interestingly being the first to lead a UK delegation to China after Beijing put the UK in the 'cold storage' for

meeting with His Holiness the Dalai Lama – and how indignant he feels that the UK Government caved in to appease the PRC Government without getting anything in return, as is the case with 2008 change in position cited above. He paid tribute to Conservative Party MP Tim Loughton, Co-Chair of All-Party Parliamentary Group for Tibet, for holding the Tibet issue alive in the Parliament and also Conservative MPs like the Right Honourable Iain Duncan Smith and others for calling out China. He ended on a more positive note that the tides are turning recently with the UK Government pushing back on PRC with sanctions, Hinkley nuclear power station and Huawei etc.

Should China fall into the chaos of a major shift in government, MP Baker expressed confidence in the competence of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) to ensure stability in such a situation via its strong network and organisational capacity he witnessed during his visit to CTA in India.

Researcher Tenzin Choekyi from Paris spoke eloquently on the relevance of Tibet's environment to the whole world and the potential dangers posed to the global community from the receding glaciers and melting of permafrost on the Tibetan Plateau.

The event ended with a heart-felt 'thank you' speech from Tenzin Zeydhan, Secretary of Tibet House Trust, UK. Earlier in the day, the delegation had taken the opportunity to lobby for Tibet by distributing leaflets, visiting information stalls and attending other events at the conference venues. They met and thanked MBE MP Tom Tugendhat, Secretary of State for Security for his support.

<https://www.bod.asia>

OoT South Africa's Representative Visits Durban Region, Holds High Level Engagement

Representative Ngodup Dorjee of South Africa's Office of Tibet visited the Durban region between 1-3 September to meet His Excellency Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, President Emeritus and founder of Inkatha Freedom Party, IFP at the latter's office on 1 September and in that afternoon, attended the launch of the Prince Buthelezi foundation at Durban International Convention Center, which was attended by hundreds of guests including many from diplomatic corps, representatives from various political parties, civil societies and media.

Representative Ngodup read the message of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for the success of the foundation which is hoped – "A vehicle to bring hope and succour to many of the poor and underprivileged".

Representative met many of the members of Parliament belonging to Inkatha Freedom Party including its President Velenkosini Hlabsisa; Mayor of Durban, Ms Shameen Thakur-Rajbansi, Leader of Minority Front Political Party.

He also had meeting with Mr Ishwar Ramlutchman M Zulu, President of Sivananda World Peace and Community Development Foundation, SA and met the Directors of Durban Holocaust and Genocide Center.



Representative Ngodup Dorjee meets His Excellency Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, President Emeritus and founder of Inkatha Freedom Party, IFP.

Sikyong Attends Seminar on Tibet, Uyghur and Southern Mongolia in Tokyo



Sikyong Penpa Tsering addressing the seminar on Tibet, Uyghur and Southern Mongolia.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration attended a seminar on building common ground to seek international support to end the extermination of the identity of Tibetans, Uyghurs and Southern Mongolia under China's repressive rule on 23 September 2022.

The representatives of Uyghurs and Southern Mongolia are among the main panelists at the seminar titled "Building Common Ground: Occupied Nations under CCP Regime", which was jointly organized by Tibet House Japan and Free Tibet Network.

Sikyong said the biggest threat facing Tibet today is the Chinese government's policy to exterminate the Tibetan language. "Tibetan children from the age of 3 have been put up in colonial boarding schools away from their parents and culture, as a result they can't speak Tibetan," he said.

Sikyong said it is vital to protect the Tibetan plateau for the survival of 1.8 billion people in Asia who depend freshwater from the world's ten major rivers originating from Tibet. Drawing attention to the drying up of Yangtse river in China, he said the climate change in Tibet will have serious repercussion in the neighbouring regions.

Reinforcing repression and surveillance of Tibetans, the Chinese government has taken DNA from more than 1 million Tibetans without their permission from 2016 to 2022, Sikyong said.

Speaking on the mismanagement of the

Chinese government on Covid measures, Sikyong said Tibetans are suffering immensely, as in the capital Lhasa alone, more than 20 to 30 percent of Tibetans have been forcibly moved out of the city in very bad condition and put them up including sick ones together in one room with no proper food and medicine.

Sikyong reiterated that Tibet was an independent country before it was invaded by the Chinese government in 1949. Sikyong further said books by eminent Dutch scholar Michael van Walt van Praag and Chinese professor Lau substantiated the historical fact that Tibet has never been a part of China since antiquity. The world governments saying that "Tibet is part of China" at the behest of the Chinese government is going against the international law.

Sikyong called on the Japanese government to appoint special coordinator on China to address the grievances of Tibetans, Uyghurs and southern Mongolians.

Sikyong said the international community, including Japan, must stand up to the Chinese government to protect freedom, democracy and rule of law. China outwardly looks powerful economically and militarily, but it is bereft of moral power and hence very insecure, he added.

Mr. Uda Kerimu, Chairman of Japan Uyghur Association, expressed grave concern over the serious human abuses in Uyghur perpetrated by the Chinese government, which the UNHCR said in its recent report as crime against humanity He called on the international community press China to end the cultural genocide in Uyghur.

Mr. Olhunud Daichin of South Mongolia Congress said the massive transfer of Chinese into Southern Mongolia has overwhelmed the Mongolians and turned them an insignificant minority in their own land.

Mr. Shimomura Hakubun, the chairman

of the chairman of the All Party Japanese Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet, Mitsubayashi Hirumi, Secretary of the Japanese Parliamentary Support Group for Uyghur, Sakurai Yoshiko, President of National Institute of Fundamentals and Mr. Makino Seishu, Chairman of the Free Tibet Network and Dr. Arya Tsewang Gyalpo, Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for Japan and East Asia, attended the seminar.

Addressing a press conference after the seminar, Sikyong said the Central Tibetan Administration is firmly committed to Middle Way Approach to resolve the issue of Tibet through dialogue with the Chinese government.

Tsepri Lopan Tulku Assumes Charge of Office of Tibet in Nepal

Following the appointment notice issued by the Kashag dated 19 August 2022, Tsepri Lopan Tulku Ngawang Chokdup assumed the charge of Representative of the Office of Tibet in Nepal.

A handing-over ceremony was held from 18-20 September between the outgoing Representative Tsultrim Gyatso and the newly appointed Representative in the presence of DIIR Secretary Karma Choeying as the official witness. In attendance were also representatives of Kathmandu-based Tibetan NGOs.



Secretary Karma Choeying of DIIR with the outgoing Representative Tsultrim Gyatso and new Representative Tsepri Lopan Tulku Ngawang Chokdup.

CTA Convenes First-ever Digital Strategy Development Meeting

The first-ever Digital Strategy Development Meeting of the Central Tibetan Administration jointly organised by the Tibetan Computer Resource Center (TCRC) and Social and Resources Development Fund (SARD) was convened in the presence of Sikyong Penpa Tsering at Kashag Secretariat on 21 October 2022.

The inaugural of the two-day meeting was also attended by Kalon Norzin Dolma and Secretary Karma Choeying from the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) along with the participants, consisting of CEOs, institution directors, and IT experts who work closely with CTA, and observers from CTA's various offices and departments.

Namgyal Lekshey, the Director of TCRC, urged participating experts for their recommendations regarding the implementation of the proposed project that will enable TCRC to develop a road map or strategy document for future application.

Sikyong expressed in his key remarks the assurance of acquiring guidance from experts in the attendance for discovering the most efficient and cost-effective ways for developing applications requisite in future. He lauded the participation of every department and office of CTA in the meeting. Acknowledging the challenges of bulging staff at CTA, Sikyong apprised the gathering about seeking cooperation from the younger Tibetan generations proficient in IT to create a suitable position for them to contribute to the common cause. Having said that, he presented the idea of gathering a list of Tibetan youths educated in IT-related occupations and then assembling them in the month of December to figure out their inclinations regarding whether to work independently or collaboratively with CTA. The aim behind this as he explained was to create groups among these youths in developing necessary applications and other software for the use of CTA. Sikyong also acknowledged



The first-ever Digital Strategy Development Meeting of CTA

in commend the persistent assistance from Volexity and others in the IT field for CTA.

Rafal Rohozinski, the CEO of Zeropoint Security Corporation, apprised the pros and cons of the digital world through virtual address and underscored the provision of opportunities in the digital world for communities like exiled Tibetans in maintaining a sense of nationhood and identity regardless of geographical location, adding, “digital identity means being able to organise for your rights and to preserve a sense of one’s culture across a time, space and generations”.

In addition, he believes that digital transformation for CTA is an important strategic choice given China’s employment of advanced digital equipments in scrutinising and repressing Tibetans.

“Building a digital future, Tibetans require partnership”, therefore, “I reconfirm our commitment to supporting the CTA’s digital transformation and Tibet’s digital future through a comprehensive program of assistance in developing strategies, action plans and building a solid and secure foundation for CTA’s digital capabilities,” said CEO Rafal Rohozinski.

The staff of TCRC presented their

respective topics covering IT Infrastructure and Security, Citizen Oriented Application (Cloud), CTA Application (Cloud), CTA Department Centric Application (Local), IT Policy and Guidelines, and E-Governance.

Apart from attendees from the CTA, other key attendees in the meeting include Geshe Lobsang Monlam (CEO of Monlam IT), Lobsang Sither (Director of Technology at Tibet Action Institute), Steven Adair (President of Volexity), Sean Koessel (Vice President of Volexity), K Venkatachalam (Technical Director at Fortune Computers Technology Pvt Ltd), Bob Ankerson (Vice President of The Tibet Fund), Jamal Siddique (Deputy Chief of Party at NDI), Evan Summers (Senior Cybersecurity Program Manager at NDI), Tenzing Donyo (Program Advisor at IFES), Shraddha Khrel Pandey (Asian Program Director at ICMA), Anil Prakash (Institutional Strengthening Advisor at ICMA), Arvo Ott (Director of e-Government Technologies, member of the Management Board, EGA), Tiina Viiderfeld (Client Relations Manager at EGA), Heiko Vainsalu (Programme Director of Technology at EGA), Karin Rits (Product Owner and IT Project Manager at EGA), Namgyal Lekshey (Director of TCRC), Tenzin Tsultrim (Deputy Director of TCRC), and Lobsang Tenzin (Senior MEL Officer at SARD).

CTA Marks 62nd Anniversary of Tibetan Democracy Day



Officiating Sikyong Kalon Tharlam Dolma

On the occasion of the 62nd Tibetan Democracy Day, CTA organised a brief ceremony at the Tsuglakhang.

Presided by the chief guest MLA Shri Vishal Nehria the ceremony was led by Officiating Sikyong Kalon Tharlam Dolma Changra, Kalon Gyari Dolma, Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering, Acting Chief Justice Commissioner Karma Dadul and Secretaries of the departments and other dignitaries.

The opening of the programme was marked by the hoisting of the Tibetan flag by the officiating Sikyong accompanied by the singing of the Tibetan national anthem and the Indian national anthem by the gathering.

Following the ceremonial tradition, TIPA-led the gathering in the singing of the Democracy song.

The Officiating Sikyong delivered Kashag's statement on the Democracy Day speaking on the evolution of the Kashag and the Judiciary during the democratic process.

She noted, "The Kashag was established by the Seventh Dalai Lama when he assumed spiritual and political leadership of Tibet in 1751. The Kashag at that time constituted of three lay and one monk ministers, the composition

of which has since undergone gradual changes. However, the uninterrupted continuation of Tibetan government's legitimacy from the first king Nyatri Tsenpo to Gaden Phodrang has been symbolized by the handover of official seal, Katham Sishi Diky, by the Seventh Dalai Lama to then Kashag. The tradition of handing over of the seal during the change of Kashag has continued until now."

Furthermore, she highlighted the important milestones of the Tibetan Democracy from the establishment of the exile government in India to the devolution of powers by His Holiness to the popularly elected leadership.

She celebrated the recent US Congressional hearing on 23rd June 2022 which was the first of its kind hearing of experts on the historical status of Tibet and applauded Representatives McGovern and McCaul for introducing "the Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Conflict Act on 13 July 2022". "It not only conforms to the Central Tibetan Administration's Middle-Way policy, but also helps to give leverage to our efforts to resolve the Sino-Tibet conflict through dialogue. We will continue to make efforts to encourage like-minded countries in Europe to do the same."

Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel underscored the significance of the day, "The democratic system of governance is based on the postulation that there be no discriminatory distinctions made on the basis of a person's social status defined by the question of whether he or she is powerful or weak, or rich or poor; whether that person is male or female; or on the basis of his or her ancestry. Rather, it is a system which views society in totality or in a general way, envisaging everyone as equal, with the primary consideration being given to acting on the basis of the will of the general public."

"For the purpose of realizing the institutionalization of such a great system, countries across the world have undergone immense tribulations

that have included wars, uprisings, and struggles. The outcomes have been determined by victory or defeat in such turbulences. The realization of a governance system by the assertion of the power of popular will through such various means is a continuing trend even today."

"But that was not the case with the development of our democracy. Rather, it took place without the occurrence of any such turbulence, for it was gifted to us by His Holiness with delight and on account of His great affection for the Tibetan people. This is all too evident from the courses of the development of the democratic system of the Tibetan people in exile."

The chief guest MLA Vishal Nehria similarly expressed his appreciation for the flourishing Tibetan community in exile and the role it has played in making Dharamshala an international tourist destination through its rich cultural heritage.

Thereafter, the students of Mewoen Tsuglag Petoen, Upper TCV, and Yongling school gave cultural performances for the gathered audience. TIPA also performed for the cheering audience.

In accordance with the annual tradition of awarding of certificates to the Sikyong scholarship winners, the Officiating Sikyong presented the certificates to the toppers of class XII All-India exam, doctoral researchers, and Ganden Phodrang scholarship winners.

Similarly, the Speaker presented the award of excellence to civil service staff who has completed twenty-five years of service at the CTA and winners of the YES programme, an initiative of the Home Department.

The programme ended with the launch of the Tibetan translation of Representative T.G.Arya's "Harnessing the Dragon's Fume" by Acting Chief Justice Commissioner.

Tibet's Culture Dying Slow Death Under China's Repression: Sikyong to Japanese Parliamentarians

Sikyong Penpa Tsering commenced his official visit to Japan by addressing the All Party Japanese Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet in the Japanese parliament building in Tokyo.

Highlighting the grave situation in Tibet, Sikyong expressed concerns over the state of Tibetan culture, adding it was dying a slow death under the repressive policies of the Chinese government.

He said the biggest threat facing Tibet is the boarding schools run by the Chinese government in Tibet, where it has forcibly separated 80% percent of children from the age of 3 from their families and cultural roots.

“Tibetan children are forced to learn Chinese language instead of Tibetan and its propaganda with the aim to change their mind so that there won't be any Tibetan in another 15 to 20 years”, contended Sikyong .

He further apprised the lawmakers of Japan about the cultural genocide taking place in Tibet and the vehement implementation of policies to wipe the Tibetan people's cultural and linguistic identity.

He appealed to the Japanese parliamentarians and government to use their influence to encourage the UNHCR to come out with Tibet report like the Xinjiang report.

Another stark concern highlighted by Sikyong was the speeding climate change in Tibet while reminding that the environment concerns of Tibet was not limited to Tibetans alone but a grave concerns for the whole of Asian subcontinent considering the 1.8 billion people in Asia dependent for freshwater on the ten major rivers originating from Tibet.

He appealed to the Japanese government to specify the importance of Tibet's environment and the detrimental impact

of climate change in Tibet on Asia and the whole world at the international platforms like COP and in their bilateral and multilateral meetings.

Extending courteous invitation to the Japanese parliamentarians to visit Dharamshala and meet His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Sikyong propounded about His Holiness the Dalai Lama's extraordinary leadership to introduce democracy within a year after coming into exile under extremely difficult circumstances.

“Today we have a fully functional democratic system in the Tibetan community”, Sikyong remarked in pride and praised Japan's growing engagement with democratic countries like the US and India through groupings like QUAD and AUKUS to promote their shared values like democracy, freedom and rule of law.

In addition, he expressed a genuine hope for the Japanese government's continuous support to help the welfare of Tibetans in exile through ODA.

Sikyong also extended a special gratitude to Indian government for supporting the Tibetan cause for the last many decades.

Concluding his first official address in Japan, Sikyong Penpa Tsering urged the international community to defend the historical fact about Tibet as detailed scrupulously in Michale van Walt van Praag's Tibet Brief 20/20.

“Based on the findings recorded in the Michale's book, the US Congress held hearing on experts' testimony on the historical status of Tibet and moved a legislation saying that Tibet is an unresolved conflict. Despite such historical findings, we are still committed to the Middle Way policy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, which is based on pragmatic approach considering the reality of the situation inside Tibet,” informed Sikyong.

On a special note, Sikyong offered his prayers and condolences over the passing away of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, informing them about the resolution passed by Tibetan Parliament recently to remember his long time support for the Tibetan cause.

Sikyong also delivered a statue of Tara sent by His Holiness the Dalai Lama for late Mr Abe's family.

In her address, Ms. Sakurai Yoshiko, president of Japan's leading think tank expressed inadmissible over China's policy to deliberately eradicate the culture, language and religion of Tibetans, Uyghur and Mongolia as well. She assured Japan's continuous support for Tibet.

Mr. Shimomura Hakubun, Chairman of the All Parliamentary support Group for Tibet said Tibet's issue was equal concerns of the while offering to do the needful by his country in strengthening preservation of Tibet struggle cultural, linguistic and religious identity.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering was accompanied during his visit to the Parliament building by Dr. Tsewang Gyalpo Arya, Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for Japan and East Asia.



Sikyong with the All Party Japanese Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet in the Japanese parliament building in Tokyo.

Tibetan Falsely Sentenced to 12 Years in Prison Released Two Years Early



Pema Dhondup

The Chinese authorities have released Pema Dhondup, who was serving a 12-year sentence for being falsely accused of “murder” after a self-immolation protest in 2012, in Sangchu (Ch: Xiahe), in the Kanlho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Gansu Province on 31 August 2022, reported RFA earlier today.

According to the report, Pema Dhondup has been under the “constant scrutiny and monitoring of Chinese officials” since his release on 31 August 2022, two years before his sentence ended.

Upon his release, Pema Dhondup was received by his family. However, they are prohibited from taking photos or speaking on the phone about the release with any outside contacts, according to RFA. The source believes that Pema “appears healthy based on his appearance”, despite the uncertainty surrounding his health.

False allegation of “murder”

On 23 October 2012, Dorjee Rinchen, 58, set himself alight near the Chinese army camp in Sangchu County near the Labrang monastery around 3:30 pm. Monks and Tibetans rushed to the burning body of Dorjee to extinguish the flames shortly thereafter, but police troops blocked their path. Dorjee eventually succumbed to his burns and his charred body was taken to his village, Upper Zayu, for burial. Before this, a minor scuffle broke out at the protest site between Chinese authorities and local Tibetans, who successfully resisted the troops’ attempts to remove the victim’s body to block out the news of the tragedy.

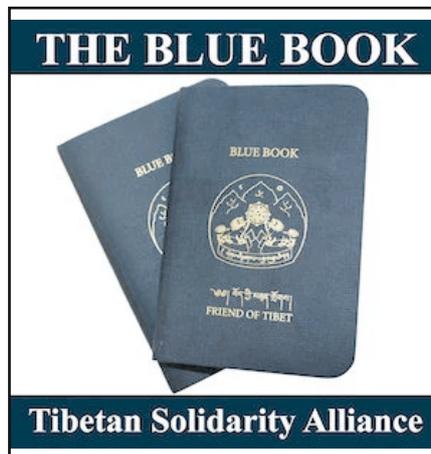
In the aftermath, Pema Dhondup was arrested with six other Tibetans in connection with the self-immolation of Dorjee Rinchen. Pema Dhondup was sentenced to 12 years in prison by the Sangchu County People’s Court for the alleged charge of “murder”.

“Pema Dhondup was convicted of murdering Dorjee Rinchen, who burned himself to protest Chinese rule and died, although he only handled Rinchen’s body after the self-immolation”, RFA’s source said.

For blocking police efforts to “rescue” the self-immolator, Padma Tamdru, Kelsang Gyamukto, Padma Co, and Lhamo Tamdru were convicted of “intentional homicide” and sentenced to 12, 11, eight, and seven years in prison, according to RFA citing the state media. The report also said two other defendants, Do Gekyap and Yang Monje, were given four and three-year terms respectively for “causing a chaotic scene” and disrupting local traffic after the burning.

Despite their release, the seven Tibetans sentenced in connection with Dorjee’s self-immolation are still under local authorities’ scrutiny and restrictions, the report said.

Since 2009, at least 157 Tibetans have set themselves on fire in protest against the Chinese repression inside Tibet.



UN Member States Raise Concern Over Repression by China in Tibet

UN Member States raised concern over China’s systematic repression in Tibet during the 51st session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. States have highlighted “draconian controls” over freedom of expression and other human rights violations by China, including in Tibet.

States including the United States, Denmark, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, Lithuania and the European Union, on behalf of 27 member states, expressed concern over the situation in Tibet, while bringing the spotlight on human rights violations by China.

The delegate of the United States expressed concern about “serious human rights abuses” committed by China. With regard to Tibet, the United States remains concerned over “severe repression against Tibetans and their distinct religious, linguistic and cultural identity” in Tibet.

Delivering the statement of the European Union, on behalf of the 27 member states, the Czech Republic said the “latest documentations confirm the seriousness of the human rights situation in China”, including in Tibet. The EU urged China to “abide by its obligations under national and international law to respect, protect and fulfil human rights and fundamental freedoms for all”, including in Tibet.

Aligning with the EU statement, Denmark is “deeply concerned” by human rights violations by China, including in Tibet. Germany and Lithuania echoed the same concern over the “disturbing” situation in China, including in Tibet.

Furthermore, Sweden remained “deeply” concerned over the human rights situation in China, including in Tibet. Sweden urged China to “respect international law including human

rights, especially the right to freedom of expression and the rights of persons belonging to minorities.”

Recalling the report by the UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Form of Slavery Mr Tomoya Obokata, Switzerland expressed concern over arrangements of forced labour by China, including in Tibet. Switzerland said the findings from the report of the Special Rapporteur and that of the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights report on Xinjiang indicated that “some of the human rights violations” by China “could constitute crimes against humanity”.

Delegates from Japan, Iceland, Finland, Netherlands, Luxembourg, and the United Kingdom, along with others continued to remain concerned over human rights violations by China.

World Premiere of Play 'Pah-lak' Performed at TIPA

The world premiere of the Tibetan theatre production 'Pah-lak' in Tibetan language, casting Tibetan artists, was performed at the auditorium of Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA) in the evening of 1 October 2022.

Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang of the 17th TPiE and Shri Ajit Nehria, the president of Indo-Tibetan Friendship Association attended the theatrical play as the chief guest and special guest respectively.

Before the display of theatrical play written by Abhishek Majumdar and jointly directed by Lhakpa Tsering and Harry Fuhrmann, TIPA's director Dhondup Tsering gave an introductory remarks on the play while apprising the gathering about theatrical performance being an important facet of the institute besides traditional Tibetan dance and music.

Lauding the dedicated efforts of every

involved contributors of the project, the chief guest said, “I have come to terms with the fact that despite the inhuman brutality and atrocity perpetrated by the authoritarian Chinese communist regime, Tibetans inside Tibet have retained compassion, tolerance, and non-violence”.

She commended Abhishek Majumdar for having clearly depicted the essence of Tibetan way of living and Tibetan culture.

The writer and director of the play were also conferred with mementoes as a mark of appreciation for presenting the reverberated incidents happening inside Tibet to the world audience followed by a vote of thanks from the Lhakpa Tsering.

The play depicting a story of Tibetan nun opting self-immolation as a non-violent mean to fight for her freedom under the Chinese Communist Party's repressive policy of re-educating Tibetan dissidents was performed multiple times at Royal Court Theatre in London by non-Tibetan artists in its original english version. At the behest of writer Abhishek Majumdar, the play was later translated into Tibetan for casting Tibetan artists by the director of Tibetan theatre Lhakpa Tsering's tireless effort and German theatre artist Harry Fuhrmann's voluntary support.

The team consisting directors, artists, and crew members will present the play at various Tibetan settlements in India with its 50 percent expenditure contributions from the Central Tibetan Administration. The production was also funded by Tibet Initiative Deutschland, Schwetzingen Tibethilfe E. V, International Campaign for Tibet, Deutsche Tibethilfe e. V. German Aid to Tibetans, and Save Tibet for materialisation of this project.

17th Tibetan Parliament in Exile Held its 4th Session

The 17th Tibetan Parliament in Exile commenced its 4th Session on 7 September 2022.

The 10-day session is presided over by Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel and Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering are attended by Sikyong Penpa Tsering, Kalons, members of the 17th parliament, and the Secretaries of the respective departments.

In his opening remarks, Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel reiterated with joyous inclination the empowering affirmations made by His Holiness the Dalai Lama pertaining to his reassurance to live for another 10-20 years during the Tenshug ceremony held this morning at Tsuglagkhang. In addition, His Holiness had recently gone through a routine medical examination in Delhi and he was declared to be in great health.

Remarking on the recent celebration of the 62nd Tibetan Democracy Day, Speaker confirmed the firm stance of the Tibetan Parliament to strengthen and protect the democratic values of Tibetan democracy bestowed by His Holiness to his people.

“The present members here are formally nominated by the people, therefore, are entrusted with a moral responsibility to defend public's confidence and trust”, suggested the Speaker. He further recommended the written legacies of His Holiness as political guidance for the parliamentarians as they begin to open a new chapter of Tibetan democracy.



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Sikyong Highlights Tibet at Forum 2000



Sikyong Penpa Tsering called for a concerted action at the EU level in countering egregious violations of human rights by China.

Democratically elected President of the Central Tibetan Administration, Sikyong Penpa Tsering, highlighted Tibet and the strategic role the European Union should play in protecting the basic human rights of Tibetans at his first engagement with Forum 2000 from 31 August to 2 September in Prague, Czech Republic.

This year's Forum 2000 theme was Democracy's Clear and Present Danger: How Do We Respond? Speaking on the panel titled "China ahead of the CCP Congress: Perspective for Human Rights?" Sikyong highlighted that the situation in Tibet continues to remain grave. He noted that Xi Jinping has increasingly become insecure and despotic, strategically concentrating all the powers in his hands without any room for dissent. Sikyong Penpa Tsering also noted that there is a need for democratisation of China and to achieve this the international community should view the Tibetans, Uighurs, Hong Kongers and Southern Mongolians not as victims but as partners.

Sikyong further called upon the European Union to appoint special representations on Tibet in particular and China in general which would facilitate the Tibetans, Uighurs, Hong Kongers, Southern Mongolians and other peoples under Chinese rule to approach the EU

as a whole. This would also facilitate the EU to have a coherent policy on China.

Sikyong was joined by Executive Director of Campaign for Uyghurs Rushan Abbas and Founder and President of the Campaign for Hong Kong Samuel Chu as co-panelists. The Panel was moderated by journalist Katerina Prochaykova from Sinopsis.

On the sidelines of the Forum 2000, Sikyong had brief interactions and meetings with several dignitaries including the Czech Republic Prime Minister Petr Fiala, Czech Republic Foreign Minister Jan Lipavsky, EU Special Representative for Human Rights Eamon Gilmore, Canadian Ambassador to Czech Republic Ayesha P. Rekhi, Czech Ambassador to the European Union Edita Hrdá, Former Slovakian Prime Minister Iveta Radicova and Former Croatian Foreign Minister Vesna Pusic.

This year the Forum 2000 had a special session on Ukraine with a special live address from the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. The Forum 2000 is an annual conference which brings together world leaders, diplomats, human rights activists, intellectuals, civil societies etc. to discuss democracy, freedom and human rights.

CTA Observes Prayer Service for Natural Disaster and COVID-hit Tibetans Inside Tibet

The Central Tibetan Administration held a prayer service at the Sikyong Hall to express solidarity and mourn the death of Tibetans in Tibet due to natural calamities and the resurgence in Covid-19 cases.

5 Tibetans inside Tibet had died due to a flood although the extent of damage to property and livestock has not been reported. Addressing the gathering Sikyong said, "The death toll from the recent quake in Tibet did not specify how many of them were Tibetans and how many were Chinese. Regardless of nationality, we express solidarity for all those affected by the natural disaster which registered 6.8 on the Richter scale."

While taking note of the tightened COVID-restrictions, Sikyong added "The COVID-restrictions have added to the hardship of Tibetans inside Tibet. Though we can not ascertain the number of casualty, I wish all the affected Tibetans and Chinese a swift recovery and release from suffering. Through the Department of Religion, we have issued directive to the settlements to observe a regular prayer service in this regard."

After the prayer service, all the offices of CTA were closed for the day.

"With regards to the reincarnation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, His Holiness's repeated statements since 1969, the official pronouncement of September 24, 2011, or any guidance in future is inherently discretionary. No government nor any individual has the right to interfere in this matter."

- In Kashag's stand on the issue of reincarnation of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

Kashag's Statement on the 62nd Anniversary of the Tibetan Democracy Day



Officiating Sikyong Tahrlam Dolma Changra (the incumbent Education Kalon)

On this momentous occasion of the sixty-second anniversary of the Tibetan democracy day, the Kashag extends its greetings to Tibetan brethren in and outside Tibet and friends who support the just cause of Tibet.

Over the past sixty years, our commitment and ability to follow and make sound development of the democratic system has been the cornerstone of our remarkable achievement in furthering the cause of Tibet and developing a successful Tibetan community in exile. The democratic system, while in exile, is the strength and the driving force of our movement. It will also be the most precious gift to our Tibetan brethren when we are reunited.

In our statement on Tibetan Democracy Day last year, the Kashag spoke about how His Holiness the Dalai Lama initiated and steered the Tibetan people on the path of democracy. On this occasion, the Kashag will speak on the evolution of the Kashag and the Judiciary during the democratic process.

The Kashag was established by His Holiness the Seventh Dalai Lama Kelsang Gyatso when he assumed

spiritual and political leadership of Tibet in 1751. The Kashag at that time constituted of three lay and one monk ministers, the composition of which has since undergone gradual changes. However, the uninterrupted continuation of Tibetan government's legitimacy from the first king Nyatri Tsenpo to Gaden Phodrang has been symbolized by the handover of official seal, Katham Sishi Diky, by His Holiness the Seventh Dalai Lama to then Kashag. The tradition of handing over of the seal during the change of Kashag has continued until now.

After coming into exile in India, His Holiness the Dalai Lama once again announced the repudiation of the Seventeen-Point Agreement in Tezpur on 18 April 1959. On his arrival in Mussoorie on 25 April 1959, His Holiness the Dalai Lama told a gathering of Kalons and government officials to deliberate on the re-establishment of the Tibetan government in line with the modern system and assign responsibilities to work on it. On 29 April 1959, His Holiness the Dalai Lama was apprised of the minutes of the deliberation and accordingly, an interim first Kashag was constituted with the appointment of an

Acting Prime Minister, four ministries and their ministers and staff. On 20 June 1959, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said in his first meeting with the press that "wherever I am, accompanied by my cabinet, the Tibetan people recognize us as the Government of Tibet".

On 2 September 1960, the system of appointing Kalons and secretaries by His Holiness the Dalai Lama from the nominations presented by the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies was established. Further, the existing system whereby Kalons deliberated and decide on all matters was reformed. The Cabinet Council was constituted to decide important matters and Kalons were assigned responsibility to administer Religion, Home, Foreign Relations, Finance and Education through their respective offices.

Since the re-establishment of the Kashag until dissolution of the seventh Kashag and the tenth Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies on 11 May 1990, the term of the Kashag varied with the first Kashag administering for a few months; second, third and fifth Kashag for 3 years and the fourth, sixth and seventh Kashag for 6 years. The number of Kalons appointed remained five to seven. Although the Charter of the Tibetans-in-exile stipulated a five-year term for the Kashag, the tenures of the eighth, ninth and tenth Kashag remained 11 months, 17 months, and 3 years and 3 months, respectively. The five-year tenure was implemented from the eleventh Kashag.

When the Charter of Tibetans-in-exile was promulgated, there was a provision of passing on the executive powers and authority of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to a Council of Regency. However, direct election of Kalon Tripa was introduced in 2001 and with the past ten years' experience, in 2011, His Holiness the Dalai Lama devolved his political and administrative powers to the popularly elected leadership and the Council of Regency was also withdrawn. More

than 11 years have passed since these reforms were initiated. The Kashag, since 2001, has become an executive office headed by Sikyong, previously called Kalon Tripa.

Before the promulgation of the Charter, the Kalons were appointed through the system of selection of the nominees. When the Charter was adopted, the power to select nominees for Kalons and their appointment both were vested with the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies. Since a candidate needed to win at least 70% of the votes to become a Kalon, the Assembly was only able to elect two Kalons out of the required seven. This provision was amended in 1993 whereby His Holiness the Dalai Lama was to present a list of nominees not less than double the number of Kalons to be elected by the Assembly and seven candidates securing the highest number of votes would be declared elected as Kalons. In 1996, the number of Kalons was increased to eight. The 11th Charter Amendment in 2000 provisioned the Assembly to elect Kalon Tripa from a list of two nominees provided by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Kalon Tripa to nominate a maximum of seven Kalons, subject to approval and rejection by the Assembly through a simple majority vote. Addressing the 11th session of the 12th Tibetan Parliament, His Holiness suggested that Kalon Tripa be directly elected by the Tibetan people in exile. Accordingly, the direct election of Kalon Tripa by the Tibetan people was introduced at the 13th amendment of the Charter in 2001 and has been implemented since then.

Even though it is difficult to implement in an exile community, the Supreme Justice Commission is the highest Judicial Authority for the Tibetan individuals, public institutions in exile and the Tibetan Administration as stipulated in the Charter of Tibetans-in-exile. The Supreme Justice Commission, aside from criminal and property disputes handled by the host government, is empowered to interpret the Charter and invalidate any laws, executive orders and regulations that violate any of the provisions of the

Charter to safeguard democracy and to create a fair and equal society by protecting the fundamental rights of the people. According to the particular needs of the Tibetan Administration and people in exile, the Justice Commissions have been established to resolve disputes concerning service matters and benefits concerned with officials of the Central Tibetan Administration and to address the Tibetan people's appeal for their rights and duties. After the 25th amendment of the Charter, the Supreme Justice Commissioner is vested with the power to administer the oath of office to the heads of the Three Pillars of Democracy and Three Autonomous Bodies.

Although today is a moment for us to celebrate, some areas of Tibet have been facing problems of COVID-19 outbreak and natural calamities. The Chinese government's extreme disease preventive measures have affected the normal life and livelihood of Tibetans. We appeal to our Tibetan brothers and sisters in Tibet to exercise social distancing and preventive measures, and also recite mantra of Tara as per divination. As announced earlier, the Kashag re-appeals to Tibetans in exile to recite mantra of Tara.

On 23 June 2022, the U.S. Congress organized for the first time a hearing of experts on the historical status of Tibet. The experts – based on Chinese documents and international law – pointed out that **the Chinese government's claim that "Tibet has been part of China since antiquity" is not true.**

We would like to thank Representative Jim McGovern and Representative Michael McCaul of the U.S. Congress for introducing "the Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Conflict Act on 13 July 2022". It not only conforms to the Central Tibetan Administration's Middle-Way policy, but also helps to give leverage to our efforts to resolve the Sino-Tibet conflict through dialogue. We will continue to make efforts to encourage like-minded countries in Europe to do the same.

The demographic survey of Tibetans in exile was started on 18 July 2022. The collection of census in India, Nepal and Bhutan is completed. Once we receive the survey forms from the overseas countries, the status of Tibetan population will become clear. We hope that the population census will serve as the scientific database for the Central Tibetan Administration to implement its projects.

Since the last more than one year, the Sikyong, Kalons and concerned officials of the departments visited Tibetan settlements to assess the needs of the general public. It has enabled the Kashag to formulate projects for the next four years such as rehabilitation of those who don't have home, needy ones in the settlements and plantation of medicinal plants in the agricultural settlements. It helps to form a clear objective, structure and implementation of projects as per the needs of the people.

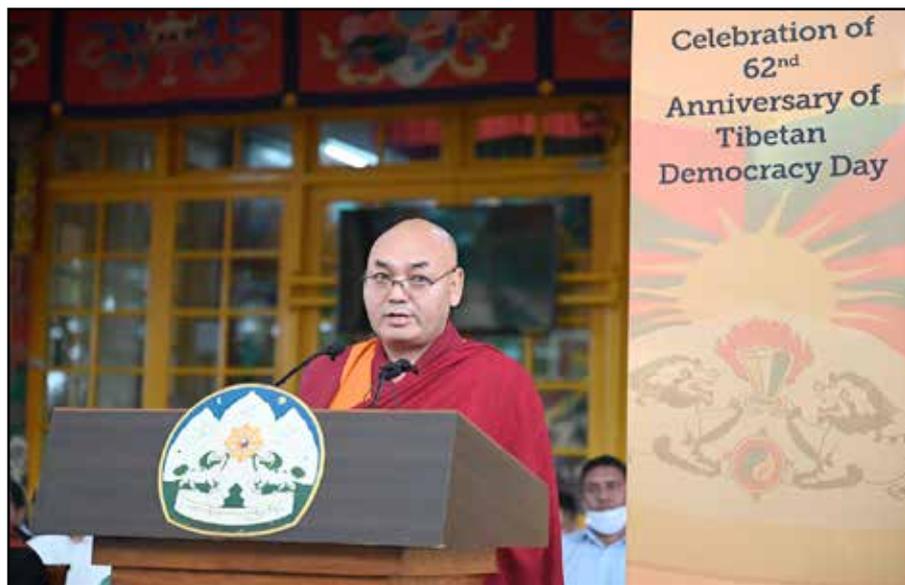
Although the Charter of the Tibetans-in-exile has undergone series of amendments during the thirty years since its promulgation, it still requires necessary reforms in accordance with the reality and democratic principles in view of the apparent issues. Thus, we hope a Charter Amendment Committee will be formed in the upcoming Parliament Session.

Lastly, we pray for the immediate end to conflicts and pandemic in the world. May His Holiness the Dalai Lama's meritorious deeds continue to flourish and all his wishes spontaneously fulfilled.

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Statement of TPiE on the 62nd Anniversary of Tibetan Democracy



Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel of the 16th Tibetan Parliament in Exile

We are marking a momentous occasion today, for it is the 6th day of the 7th month of the Water-Tiger Year in the 17th sexantry of the Tibetan Royal Year 2149, which corresponds to the 2nd day of September in the universal year 2022. It was on this day in 1960 that His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the irreplaceable leader of the Tibetan people, began the process to implement His long-desired aim to democratise the Tibetan governance system. It was the day on which a gathering of delegates from all the three provinces of Tibet and the different religious sects of the Tibetan people submitted a solemn oath on a sworn statement on the sacred Bodhi Gaya ground, vowing to be unwavering in straightforwardly following His Holiness the Dalai Lama on whatever plans and wishes he may espouse for the Tibetan people. And it was on that occasion that He decreed a provisional arrangement for the nomination of representatives by all the three provinces and religious sects of Tibet for the purpose of constituting the first Tibetan Parliaments in Exile. It is thus that 62 years have passed since these first members of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile received their letters of appointment from His Holiness the Dalai Lama and took their oath of office

before Him on the 2 September in 1960. Among all the communities of people living as refugees in exile, the Tibetan community stands out as one that is run under a democratic system. This is the basis on which the Tibetan people are able to carry out the struggle for our just cause and to preserve our traditional religious, cultural and linguistic heritage, with the ultimate aim being to achieve our national aspiration. The governance system of the Central Tibetan Administration is one that is fully democratic in all facets of its functioning. It is one that has all the characteristics of being able to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with any other genuine democratic system in this world. Our debts of gratitude for this wondrous achievement are owed to the long-term vision set out by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the guidance He has provided us from time to time whenever that was required. This is, indeed, a matter of joy as well as pride to the Tibetan people. Hence, in being mindful of the immense debts of gratitude impossible to repay that we owe to Him for all His acts of kindness and generosity, we on behalf of the entire people of Tibet offer our solemn, immeasurable depth of gratitude to His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama.

Over the last more than six decades, manifest and highly appreciable progress has been seen in the framework of the democratic system of the Tibetan people in exile in keeping with the evolving developments and circumstances. And it all began on the 2nd day of September in 1960, when the members of the first Tibetan Parliament in Exile took their oath of office with the establishment, for the first time, of the democratic governance system of the Tibetan people in exile. At that time, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, with great concern for the current as well as future long-term wellbeing of the Tibetan people, provided profound guidance of invaluable importance, by which He made it clear that the political character of the Tibetan government in exile should be based on the ideology of non-violence. And this was the premise on which our noble democratic path defined by the ideas of freedom, justice, and equality, has emerged. Then in 1961, a document outlining the salient features of a constitution for a future free Tibet was brought out. This was followed, in 1963, by the promulgation of a democratic constitution for the governance of the Central Tibetan Administration. Later, on the 21st of November in 1974, rules for the election of members of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile were adopted and announced for implementation. And, in 1991, His Holiness the Dalai Lama took another major step towards democratising the Central Tibetan Administration by turning the Tibetan Parliament in Exile into a full-fledged lawmaking body to become the legislative branch of the Tibetan democratic setup. Pursuant to this measure, His Holiness, on the 28th of June in 1991, gave his assent to the Charter of Tibetans in Exile after it was duly adopted by the Tibetan Parliament in Exile. He thereby ensured that the Tibetan democracy became a fully modern system based on the foundation of a written constitution. In yet another major steep, the Kalon Tripa, the executive head of the Central Tibetan Administration, began to be directly elected by the Tibetan people

in the year 2001. This was followed, in the year 2011, by the adoption of the 25th amendment of the Charter of Tibetans in Exile, whereby His Holiness the Dalai Lama relinquished all his political and administrative powers in favour of the leadership elected by the Tibetan people. Since then, the Central Tibetan Administration has continued to function and move forward in a democratic manner, with the leadership elected by the Tibetan people assuming full responsibility in their designated fields.

The democratic system of governance is based on the postulation that there be no discriminatory distinctions made on the basis of a person's social status defined by the question of whether he or she is powerful or weak, or rich or poor; whether that person is male or female; or on the basis of his or her ancestry. Rather, it is a system which views society in totality or in a general way, envisaging everyone as equal, with the primary consideration being given to acting on the basis of the will of the general public. For the purpose of realizing the institutionalization of such a great system, countries across the world have undergone immense tribulations that have included wars, uprisings, and struggles. The outcomes have been determined by victory or defeat in such turbulences. The realization of a governance system by the assertion of the power of popular will through such various means is a continuing trend even today. But that was not the case with the development of our democracy. Rather, it took place without the occurrence of any such turbulence, for it was gifted to us by His Holiness the Dalai Lama with delight and on account of His great affection for the Tibetan people. This is all too evident from the courses of the development of the democratic system of the Tibetan people in exile.

Of the list of 195 independent countries in this world today, around 167 are characterized as democratic. However, they differ in various ways on how fully democratic they all are, or how in different ways they fail to meet the criteria of being truly democratic.

Essentially, this depends on the question of to what extent the ideology of popular democracy could be implemented in the functioning of the governance system and the ways in which the leaders assume their responsibility. Likewise, while it is only to be expected that in a democratic society there is tolerance for a plurality of ideologies and diversity of points of view, the important consideration to bear in mind is that the fundamental basis of the existence of the Central Tibetan Administration is the cause underlying our freedom struggle. To ensure its effectiveness and success, we should ensure that there is no weakening of the unity of the Tibetan people. This is one of the most important considerations for the success of the Central Tibetan Administration, for it is something like the very existential essence of our democratic system.

Such then is the democratic system of the Central Tibetan Administration which has become an object of praise by a great many democratic governments and their peoples, governmental and non-governmental bodies, their prominent leaders, as well as private individuals. And these various entities have been continuously extending strong support to the issue of Tibet at all times and in every possible manner. This is the basis on which they have introduced a good number of legislative bills as well as motions and resolutions in their respective national parliaments. These include, for example, the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018 and the Tibetan Policy and Support Act of 2020, passed into law by the United States Congress. Likewise, on the 13th of July this year, two members of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress, namely, Rep. Jim McGovern and Rep. Michael McCaul, were able to introduce a bill titled "Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Conflict Act". Most recently, on the 3rd of August this year, members of the All-Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet raised and held discussions on a number of Tibet-related issues in the Indian parliament with great success.

Likewise, over two days – on the 22nd

and 23rd of June this year – the 8th World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet was held in the United States Capital Washington, DC. Its inauguration was graced by the presence of the United States House of Representative Speaker Nancy Pelosi who addressed the gathering. Those who personally attended the meeting this time included members of parliament from 28 countries, while a section of others took part in the meeting by means of an online presence. Besides, at a hearing on the historical status of Tibet under the theme of "Tibet: Barriers to Settling an Unresolved Conflict" held by the United States Congressional-Executive Commission on China in Capitol Hill, scholars with expertise in history presented testimonies by which it was proved that the country was historically never a part of China. Likewise, the 8th World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet saw the revival of the International Network of Parliamentarians for Tibet (INPaT) and the adoption by unanimous decisions of the meeting's "Washington Declaration" and "Washington Action Plan". There is no doubt that these actions conveyed a clear and unambiguous message to the government of China. And it would have become clear to the government of China that the issue of Tibet is undoubtedly international, not just a matter of China's internal affairs.

It does not bear mentioning that we the Tibetan people living in exile have been fortunate to be enjoying freedom and democracy under the leadership and guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Nevertheless, we remain intensely mindful of the fact that to our fellow Tibetans living in Tibet, life under the rule of the Communist Party of China is still defined by continuous deprivation of basic human rights and freedoms, and total absence of democracy and so forth. As a result, they continue to remain subject to arbitrary arrest, detention, persecution and imprisonment, violent repression and torture, and so forth. And this is compounded today by new clampdowns being carried out by the government of China in the name of implementing a "zero Covid" policy for eliminating the Covid-19 pandemic,

which first broke out in late 2019 in the central Chinese city of Wuhan. In the name of the implementation of this policy, the Tibetan people are being subjected to immense hardship in terms of their freedom of movement, their ability to ensure their daily food and other essential supplies, and so forth. But in substantive terms, there was no real prevention and security against the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic in Tibet. Rather, as if to deliberately cause the spread of the pandemic disease, the Chinese government forces the Tibetan people to attend public gatherings for the purpose of subjecting them to political propaganda and education. Thus, the government of China has been abusing its opportunities and powers without showing any concern for the life of the Tibetan people, which is, of course, an utterly wrong thing to do.

Apart from that, the government of China has issued coercive orders by which it has imposed a ban on Tibetans from making any sort of contact with people outside the People's Republic of China. Apart from that, irrespective of the question of whether or not it was actually implementing the law, there still exists what is called the "Law of the People's Republic of China on Regional National Autonomy" and other related legal provisions available for everyone to see with utmost clarity. Nevertheless, the government of China has gradually been undermining this law over the years, with the result that today its aim is to obliterate the relevance of these legal provisions. In fact, its policy has now shifted to emphasize a campaign to assimilate the different ethnic groups in the People's Republic of China for the purpose of developing a common national identity with the claim that the Chinese nation is a community of all ethnic groups. Under it, China is vigorously enforcing campaigns to promote what it calls the common national language and comprehensive implementation of its policy to Sinicize all religions existing in the country, for which purposes it has been issuing orders and directions on successive occasions. A new policy is especially being implemented for ethnic minorities in an

attempted move to create the impression that China is now an ethnically homogenous country. With moves such as these, the government of China has, to put it in a nutshell, embarked on implementing a diabolical policy to obliterate the very ethnic and cultural identity of the Tibetan people. Fraternal Tibetans who have been enduring the Chinese occupation rule in Tibet have made clear their total rejection of these policies by carrying out endless series of peaceful protests, which continues to this day. And we the Tibetan people living in exile should never forget that it is our primary duty to publicize the issue of Tibet and to strive to win support for it from the international community.

The Tibetan Parliament in Exile has been continuous in establishing rapports with members of parliaments in countries across the world from time to time and as and when opportunities arose and this remains an ongoing programme. Also, the Tibetan Parliament in Exile has ongoing scheduled programmes to maintain the standards of democratic processes in the Tibetan community in exile. For this purpose, it has been imparting workshop training on the conduct of the proceedings of the Local Tibetan Assemblies and the discharge of their functions to the Settlement Representatives and Welfare Officers, members of the Local Tibetan Assemblies, and members of the regional Tibetan Freedom Movement offices in the different Tibetan settlements and cluster communities. And so, this year, such training was conducted for the Phuntsokling Tibetan Settlement in Odisha state, the Phendeling Tibetan Settlement in Mainpat, and the Norgyeling Tibetan Settlement in Bhandara. For all these settlements, the training was held in the month of July in the Odisha Tibetan settlement. Likewise, for the settlements in Ladakh, including the Jangthang region, the training for the members of the Local Tibetan Assemblies and the members of the regional Tibetan Freedom Movement offices was held at the Ladakh Sonamling Tibetan Settlement in the month of August. In the near future, the plan is to hold such training

for the members of the Local Tibetan Assemblies and the members of the regional Tibetan Freedom Movement offices in the Tibetan settlements in Kalimpong, Darjeeling, Gangtok, Sonada, and Rawangla in the month of October this year. Meanwhile, it has been decided that after the conclusion of the session of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile this September, the members will travel to New Delhi to hold a five-day strategy meeting. Likewise, the programme for members of the current Tibetan Parliament in Exile for the first two and half years of its term to undertake visits to meet with the members of the Tibetan public in the settlements assigned to them has already been underway. And it is important that the members of the Tibetan public take a keen interest and participate actively in meetings with the members during the visits. Besides, a fair number of programmes have already been finalized for members of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile to undertake visits to countries in Europe for the purpose of lobbying support for the issue of Tibet.

Over the last more than six decades, governments and people across the world, including especially of India, have routinely provided support, guidance and facilities, and extended the hand of friendship to the Tibetan people with regard to our exile situation, our political cause, for the preservation of our religious and cultural heritage, and for our just cause. To all of them, we take the opportunity provided by this occasion to express our heartfelt gratitude.

Finally, we pray that His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the irreplaceable leader of the Tibetan people and the ultimate reservoir of protective power and refuge to the sentient beings in the Three World Realms, but especially to our people of the Snowland of Tibet, may live for a hundred aeons and on this basis see all his plans and wishes seen fulfilled without any obstacle and with spontaneity, and that the just cause of Tibet may prevail on the basis of the sustenance and progress of the Tibetan democratic system.

China's Mismatched Zero-Covid Policy Endangers Tibetan Lives in Tibet: Kashag's Press Statement

In the wake of rising Covid-19 cases in Tibet, China proceeds to adopt draconian measures to enforce its Zero-Covid Policy which is evidently causing more harm than good. The mismanagement of the pandemic outbreak in Tibet only exposes Beijing's failed Covid-policy implementation resulting in the endangerment of Tibetan lives. In an attempt to present itself as a role model in curbing the outbreak, China is downright disregarding the safety and security of Tibetans in need of medical assistance and covid care evidenced by the dire lockdown conditions being reported and exposed online by a number of affected Tibetans. Tibetans complained about crowded quarantine facilities, food scarcity, lack of medical supplies and unhygienic living conditions. Some Tibetans likened the condition to being worse than a prisoner and another Tibetan was beaten up for protesting against the dire living situation under the Covid lockdown.

China publicly reported the first Covid outbreak in Tibet on 8 August this year, with 22 cases of Covid-positive in Lhasa and Ngari. This has been the first official admission of Covid in Tibet after the repeated public announcements of the Zero-Covid policy in the "TAR" since early 2020. Within weeks, at least 3627 people had reportedly tested positive indicating a rapid increase. Strict government-imposed lockdowns were soon enacted in Lhasa, Shigatse, and Ngari after news of positive cases were reported from nearby areas of Nagchu, Chamdo, Lhoka, and Nyingtri. Currently, an estimated 53,076 people reside in isolation centres in the "TAR" alone. Meanwhile, a number of Tibetan areas outside of the "TAR", including Karze and Ngaba in Kham and Amdo provinces respectively, continue to report daily Covid cases resulting in sporadic lockdowns, Chengdu being the worst-hit area in China's Sichuan.

Meanwhile, China's propaganda machinery has been actively covering

up the situation. China's state media claimed no shortcomings in the implementation of the zero-covid policy during the latest covid outbreak in Tibet. When the Covid cases escalated, Chinese authorities labelled the BA.2.76 virus as a "foreign import" and misled the public with false claims of high-quality medical services and timely supply of essential commodities. On 9 August, the "TAR" Internet Network Information Center called for "striking hard" on those "spreading pandemic rumours" and warned that "offenders" would be severely dealt with. Several propaganda videos even depicted Chinese Communist Party officials as heroes in their "tough battle against the Covid".

Tibetans' desperate need to tell the truth about the miserable conditions inside China's quarantine camps and Zero-Covid's implementation exposed these false campaigns. On the internet, videos demonstrate overcrowded and tacky makeshift hospitals, as well as buses transporting large numbers of people to these facilities. In reality, these facilities aren't equipped with basic necessities such as clean drinking water, food, health facilities and a healthy environment. A Lhasa resident recently compared Lhasa's current situation to the worst days of Shanghai's two-month lockdown when people were left to starve. The spread of the virus proliferated due to officials' mismanagement of mixing infected with those who are not infected, resulting in sickness at every level of society, from police to volunteers.

Despite the risk of reprisals in different forms, Tibetans have resorted to social media platforms to reveal their predicaments and made appeals to local authorities to immediately meet the needs of the Tibetans locked up in quarantine camps regardless of whether they contracted Covid or not. One person said: "We do not have Covid, but they still took us away. Who will be held responsible?" Another person

stated, "Feeding filthy and spoiled food at the quarantine center does not seem appropriate. They are patients, not prisoners. If they cannot be cared for, they should not be quarantined in such deplorable condition". The authorities' unsympathetic actions were openly criticised by others. "We were kept together with eight hundred others. Neither the food nor the medicines nor the medical staff is adequate to care for us. Without food, how can starving kids survive?", another Tibetan asked.

Due to the bravery of the Tibetans and their mounting exposé of the atrocious conditions over the recent days, Dradul, Lhasa City's executive Deputy mayor, came forward to apologise for the city government's mishandling of the Covid outbreak during a media briefing recently, vindicating public outcry of serious mismanagement and gravity of the Covid situation.

The Central Tibetan Administration calls on Beijing to adequately acknowledge the public criticisms made by Tibetans who have genuinely expressed their frustration at the lack of sufficient facilities and protect them from reprisals for honest opinions of the government's mismanagement.

It is perceived that the mismanagement of the Covid outbreak in Tibet could be linked to the upcoming 20th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party. The Zero-Covid policy, prioritised by Xi Jinping, China's president, is likely being used to seize and suppress the parties' so-called dissenters ahead of its most significant meeting. Yet, it is imperative that the government respects the rights of the Tibetan people under its international obligations and ensures that they are treated with respect and have access to adequate medical facilities and basic necessities under its Zero-Covid policy. During these trying times, the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), requests the Chinese government to allow timely aid in the form of medicines

and basic necessities to be extended to Tibetans to overcome the Covid crisis. CTA hopes China will permit them to utilise its experience and expertise to work on tackling the Covid outbreak in Tibet. We remain steady to extend any assistance in the form of immunity boosters Tibetan medicines, medical equipment, nurses, and volunteers without a second thought or hesitation to help Tibet fight the pandemic.

“Currently, it is reported that Tibetans inside Tibet are facing severe restrictions as a result of the coronavirus pandemic’s spreading in Tibet. The public is facing great difficulties.

To some extent, the Tibet-China struggle is linked to the Buddha’s teaching. The Chinese can never change the mindset and behaviour of the Tibetan people, which are rooted in their religion and culture. Rather, the Tibetan Buddhist tradition and its associated culture will gradually spread further and further into China itself.

You do not need to feel disheartened when faced with temporary difficulties.

We Tibetans have a unique karmic connection with Avalokiteshvara, who is our guardian deity. Therefore, you should pray to the three enlightened deities in Lhasa: Jowo Lokeshvara, Jowo Shakyamuni, and Jowo Akshobyavajra.

Although you are physically distant from me, since we have an uncommon connection based on our karma and prayers, you can think of me, Gyalwa Rinpoche, the Dalai Lama. What is most important is that you should feel at ease and trust that the truth will eventually prevail.

As for myself, I am now 87 years old and in good health. My doctors have assured me after examining me that I will live for another 15 to 20 years. So, you Tibetans in Tibet, please feel at ease and be happy. China is changing. The day will come when we, Tibetans in exile and Tibetans in Tibet, will be reunited and can meditate together on bodhichitta and the view of emptiness. I send you my greetings”

- His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibetans in Tibet on Covid crises

Kashag’s Position on the Issue of Reincarnation of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

The government of the People’s Republic of China adopted the so-called law on ‘Management Measures for the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas in Tibetan Buddhism’, in 2007. Since then, the PRC has taken over the management of all monastic administrations and in particular, took complete control over the power to recognise reincarnated Lamas/Living Buddhas, and continue to use it to meet their political ends.

Moreover, the PRC government, in real-time, conducts workshops, discussion forums, talk shows and uses various means to promote a false narrative on the issue of reincarnation in general; and on the reincarnation of the present Dalai Lama in particular. These activities are conducted on all the ordained and laity throughout Tibet.

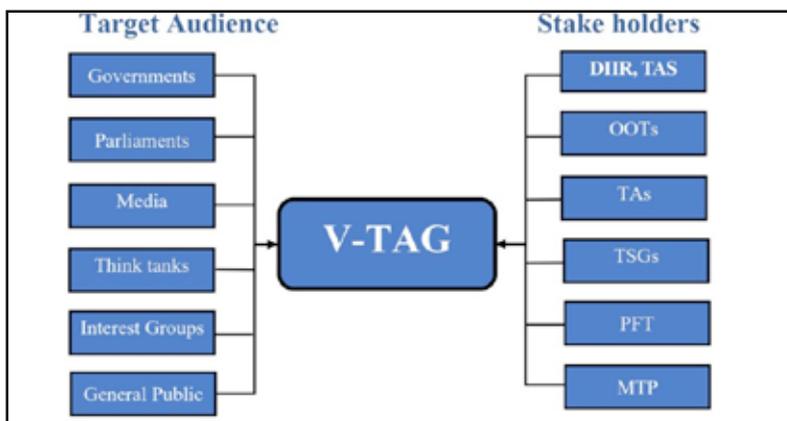
It is also a fact that the issue of reincarnation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama continues to be discussed within our community and without as well. Therefore, The Kashag/Cabinet of the Central Tibetan Administration felt the need to present this Position Paper for everyone’s information.

1. The Kashag has firm belief that His Holiness will live to the ripe age of 113 as per propitious prescient and the repeated assurances of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.
2. The system of recognising reincarnated spiritual beings is a religious practice unique to Tibetan

Buddhism. The fundamental thought behind this philosophy is to accept the principle of life after death.

3. While extending our sincere appreciation and thankfulness to those freedom-loving democratic countries around the world, including the United States of America for their complete endorsement of His Holiness’s thoughts on this matter; we will pursue with due diligence to obtain similar support from as many like-minded countries as possible.
4. With regards to the reincarnation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, His Holiness’s repeated statements since 1969, the official pronouncement of September 24, 2011, or any guidance in future is inherently discretionary. No government nor any individual has the right to interfere in this matter.
5. This religious activity has to be conducted as per the responsibilities that His Holiness the Dalai Lama enshrines and entrusts. We have full confidence in the leadership of the Central Tibetan Administration at the time to take responsibility as entrusted.
6. The Kashag is in the process of working on other related matters that need to be addressed concerning this issue.

May all be assured.



TCV Global Family and North American Tibetan Association Offer Long Live Prayers to His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Representatives of the TCV Global Family and the North American Tibetan Association (NATA), the two groups offering prayers for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's long life, gave him a traditional welcome as he walked into the yard of the Tsuglagkhang, the Main Tibetan Temple today. There were musicians, singers and dancers, groups of them in costumes belonging to different regions of Tibet. His Holiness smiled and waved as he walked steadily towards the lift and again as he walked around the temple to the door.

An estimated 5000 people had gathered to take part in the event, including 700 from the TCV Global Family and 150 from NATA. There were in addition hundreds of students currently attending TCV schools.

Facing His Holiness directly, and leading the ceremony, was Ling Rinpoché. To his left sat Samdhong Rinpoché and Kirti Rinpoché, while to his right was Ringu Tulku, the Abbot of Namgyal Monastery, Thomtog Rinpoché and the monastery's Dorjé Löbpön.

The ceremony began with the recitation of a prayer invoking the previous incarnations of Avalokiteshvara in India and Tibet composed by Trulshik Rinpoché. The subsequent long-life prayer was based on the Fifth Dalai Lama's 'Amitayus Extracting the Pure Ambrosia'.

As a procession of offerings was carried through the temple including volumes of scripture, statues and bundles of fabric, the Chant Master performed a mandala offering. Ling Rinpoché got to his feet and stood before His Holiness to recite a tribute and request.

"Homage to the Three Jewels," he began. "This is a request from members of TCV past and present, students, staff and teachers, as well as from Tibetans living in North America to you, the object of veneration of all Tibetans.



Jetsun Pema, former President of TCV and sister of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, presenting a traditional white scarf to Him during the Long Life Prayer offering.

"Although you were enlightened aeons ago, you continue to give teachings that accord with the aptitudes of sentient beings across space. The books of Kadam say Avalokiteshvara has appeared many times as a human being. There were the Dharma Kings of Tibet and the First Dalai Lama, who was a disciple of Jé Tsongkhapa. Then there was the Fifth Dalai Lama who took responsibility for the temporal and spiritual affairs of Tibet. The government he led involved monastic and lay representatives and foreshadowed democracy in that it was not authoritarian.

"The 13th Dalai Lama made many changes to Tibet's systems of government and education. He introduced hydro-electric power to Tibet and formulated a Tibetan currency.

"In due course, you were born in the vicinity of Jé Tsongkhapa's birthplace as was indicated by visions in Palden Lhamo's sacred lake. You studied with your tutors, Kyabjé Trijang Dorjé Chang and Kyabjé Ling Dorjé Chang. You took the vows of a fully ordained monk under Ling Rinpoché's tutelage.

"You have never wavered from the practice of bodhichitta and have sown

the seeds of enlightenment in numerous disciples. With great courage you have given the Kalachakra Empowerment on many occasions. You've studied logic and philosophy, as well as receiving many tantric empowerments, teachings, transmissions and commentarial explanations.

"Being fully qualified by all this knowledge, you accepted temporal and spiritual responsibility for Tibet at the age of sixteen. You reformed the Tibetan system of government and introduced a sense of justice. Giving teachings to hundreds of thousands of people you also sowed the seeds of the spiritual path.

"You've travelled the world and addressed so many different people. Even the most learned scholars are no match for you when it comes to giving explanations. You have served the Dharma and sentient beings in profound and vast ways.

"After the occupation of Tibet and the imposition of oppressive Chinese communist rule you came into exile followed by tens of thousands of Tibetans. With far-sighted vision you saw to it that Tibetan refugees were provided for. You

established settlements where they could live. You set up medical facilities to take care of their health. You re-established the great monastic centres of learning, as well as institutions such as the Central Institute for Higher Tibetan Studies, that have produced many scholars qualified to become abbots.

“Students from the Himalayan regions and Mongolia have been made welcome at these centres of learning where the tradition of rigorous study has continued without decline.

“You criticized the practice of Shukden or Dolgyal.

“Out of kindness you have spread the Dharma even in lands where the Buddha’s teachings had not been heard before.

“You have worked to create harmony among the various Buddhist traditions of Tibet, and among the major religious traditions of the world.

“You reassessed the teaching of the Buddha in terms of three categories—science, philosophy and religion, and commissioned the compilation of books entitled ‘Science and Philosophy in the Indian Buddhist Classics’. You created a new bridge between modern science and traditional Indian knowledge.

“With a vision of resolving the Tibetan issue in a mutually beneficial way you formulated the Middle Way Approach, a non-violent, secular approach. Based on your peaceful legacy you have been granted such awards as the Nobel Peace Prize and the Congressional Gold Medal.

“Inspired by your vision Tibetans living inside Tibet have come into exile to gain an education and scholars who have trained in exile have gone back to Tibet to teach.

“You have raised awareness of the urgent need to protect the world’s natural environment.

“You instigated the introduction of a democratic system among Tibetans

in exile in which all adults, men and women, can participate. In 2001 you began to retire and in 2011 you devolved all your temporal responsibility to the elected leadership.

“You have dedicated your life to the welfare of sentient beings and revealed that you are guided by four commitments. According to the first, you are committed to promoting human values. The second involves encouraging inter-religious harmony. The third concerns the trust the Tibetan people place in you and your role as their spokesperson. This extends to raising awareness of the need to keep Tibetan culture alive and to protect the natural environment of Tibet. Finally, you have declared your dedication to reviving interest in ancient Indian knowledge, particularly as it pertains to the workings of the mind and emotions.

“We cannot fully repay the kindness you have shown us Tibetans and sentient beings as a whole. However, as a token of our gratitude we are conducting this ceremony involving different kinds of offerings and fervent prayers to request you to live long. Your life is of utmost importance to Tibetans; it is indispensable to the benefit of all sentient beings. We pray you will continue to show concern for all sentient beings, especially the people of Tibet.”

Ling Rinpoché then presented His Holiness first with the mandala offering then a statue of Amitayus, a scripture and a chörten, which together represent the body, speech and mind of a Buddha. Next, he offered a vase of long-life nectar, a bowl of long-life pills and a long-life wand. These were followed by ritual cakes of different shapes and colours representing the four kinds of activity—peace, increase, control and force. There was a tray bearing the eight auspicious symbols, the parasol, fish and so forth. Next was a tray of the eight royal emblems, a wheel, jewels, a queen and so forth and lastly the eight auspicious substances, which include materials offered to the Buddha and blessed by his accepting them—a right-coiling conch shell, yogurt, durva grass, vermilion, bilva fruit, a mirror, giwang

medicine and white mustard seed.

The prayer for His Holiness’s long life composed by his two tutors was recited and followed by a prayer to the Dharma protectors of Tibet written by His Holiness. There was a musical interlude as children from TCV played and sang a song whose chorus was, “May you live long.”

“Today,” His Holiness declared, “Tibetans in exile, young and old, have offered this prayer for my long life. And although they are not physically here with us, they are joined by several million Tibetans in Tibet who show whole-hearted faith and regard for me. There may even have been people elsewhere around the world who have heard that this ceremony was taking place.

“Tibet is known as the land with a special connection to Avalokiteshvara. I am someone who has been blessed by Avalokiteshvara and have links to him through karma and prayers. I’ve tried to work for the flourishing of the Dharma and Tibetan culture and I offer any contribution I have made by way of practice to Avalokiteshvara. I will live for another two decades for the sake of Tibetans and the cause of Tibet.

“I meditate on bodhichitta and emptiness every day as a result of which I feel at ease in my mind and I’m physically fit. Bodhichitta is my principal practice. It brings me inner strength, free from anxiety and fear. I urge all of you too to work hard to develop bodhichitta, confident that you’ve been blessed by Avalokiteshvara.

“I’m getting older, but I can still talk. Those who have a connection with me in this life will be cared for by Avalokiteshvara in life after life until enlightenment.”

His Holiness then gave a reading transmission of a sadhana entitled ‘Inseparability of the Spiritual Master from Avalokiteshvara’ that he composed many years ago at the request of Assistant Cabinet Minister, Shankawa

Gyurme Sonam Tobgyal who, with sincere faith and offerings, asked His Holiness to write a simple and complete sadhana about the inseparability of Avalokiteshvara and himself.

“I have made this life worthwhile,” His Holiness disclosed, “and I’m determined to keep up the work. The Tibet issue will be resolved.”

The ceremony was concluded with recitations of the Prayer for the Flourishing of the Teaching of the Buddha and the Prayer of the Words of Truth.

Five Organisations Offer Tenshug for His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s Long Life

On 7 Sept 2022, five organizations; the Tendhong Cultural Preservation Society (Mön), the International Jonang Well-being Association, the Domey-Mang-Bha-Ja-Sum Association, the Namgyal Higher Secondary School, Nepal, and the Sydney Tibetan Association came together to offer a prayer for His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s long life at the Tsuglagkhang, the Main Tibetan Temple in Dharamsala. His Holiness met their representatives at the gate to his residence and they escorted him as he walked through the temple yard, smiling and waving at well-wishers on the way. He was presented with the traditional Chema Changpu from which he took a pinch. Further on a group of dancers performed for his delight.

In the temple, facing His Holiness as he sat on the throne before the statue of Buddha Shakyamuni was a line of lamas who led the prayer—Gyabong Rinpoché, Abbot of Tawang Monastery, the Dorjé Löbpön of Namgyal Monastery, Jonang Gyaltsab Rinpoché, Ganden Tri Rinpoché, Ling Rinpoché, Guru Tulku Rinpoché and Khenpo Nyima Tashi, Abbot of the Kagyu Monastery in Jang,

Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh.

Ganden Tri Rinpoché came forward to welcome His Holiness as proceedings began with the recitation of a tribute to the various incarnations of Avalokiteshvara who have appeared in India and Tibet. Addressing the congregation His Holiness told them, “I have a simulated experience of the awakening mind of bodhichitta. I renew the wish expressed in this verse every day,

*As long as space endures,
And as long as sentient beings remain,
Until then, may I too remain
To help dispel the misery of the world.*

“I belong to the lineage of Dalai Lamas and have a strong link to the people of the Himalayan region. I was recently in Ladakh and I hope to make a visit to Mön Tawang again soon.

“In this life alone I’ve been able to serve the Dharma and sentient beings and I make a determination to live long in order that I may continue to do so. I feel I can live for another 10 to 20 years or so. I’m not concerned with money or fame, only with being able to benefit others. And for that reason, I pray to live long. The prayer that is being performed today involves Arya Tara and I say her mantra for longevity every day.

“During my recent visit to Ladakh and Zaskar I was moved by the faith and trust of the people there. Tibetans in Tibet are also unflinching in their devotion, but they are living under oppressive conditions. Meanwhile, an increasing number of people in China are taking an interest in Buddhism and even Chinese officials are beginning to acknowledge that I’m not the reactionary they make me out to be. In fact, in Tibet, it’s not just a matter of human beings, there are spirits and deities who have faith in me because I’m resolute in my efforts to cultivate the awakening mind of bodhichitta for the benefit of others.”

At a certain point the Chantmaster made a mandala offering and a procession of people carrying gifts began to file through the temple. Ganden Tri

Rinpoché approached the throne to recite the eulogy and request to His Holiness to live long.

“You are the leader of the Tibetan people,” he declared. “We, members of five organizations, including people from Arunachal Pradesh, the Jonang tradition and so on, pay our respects at your feet.

“It was prophesied that Avalokiteshvara would appear in Tibet, which he did. Nyetri Tsanpo was followed by others, the line of Dalai Lamas among them, most especially the 13th Dalai Lama, whose reincarnation, born in Amdo near Kumbum, you are. You studied rigorously in the traditional way.

“With undaunted courage you have served others without tiring. With fortitude and skilful means, you have discharged spiritual and temporal responsibilities in leading the Tibetan people. You introduced democracy so we can elect our representatives.

“The award of the Nobel Peace Prize and the Congressional Gold Medal acknowledged your contribution to humanity.

“369 years after the Great Fifth Dalai Lama you devolved your political responsibilities to Tibetans’ elected leaders.

“You have also taken steps to protect the environment. These are just some of your achievements—there are many more.”

“We pray that, like Thangtong Gyalpo, you may live to be 125 years old. We pray that we may be taken care of by you and pledge that we will abide by your instructions. Therefore, we make these offerings to you.”

Tri Rinpoché then offered a statue of White Tara, a copy of the ‘8000 Verse Perfection of Wisdom Sutra’ and a chörten to His Holiness. He presented a vase containing the nectar of long life. His Holiness took a drop and then offered it to Tri Rinpoché in turn. Likewise, when long life pills and the

elixir of immortality were presented to His Holiness, he also offered them to Tri Rinpoché.

Jonang Gyaltsab Rinpoché was in the middle of offering emblems of the eight auspicious substances when the Nechung Oracle appeared in spontaneous trance and came forward to pay his respects to His Holiness.

Representatives of the patrons of today's ceremony filed past the throne and received a silk scarf and protection cord from His Holiness. Guru Tulku Rinpoché offered a silver statue of Thangtong Gyalpo.

“As I said earlier,” His Holiness remarked, “I have strong links with the people of Arunachal Pradesh and the Himalayan region. Because of karma and past prayers, I have been able to serve them as well the Dharma and other sentient beings. And because I have this opportunity, I firmly aspire to live another two decades. I'd like to thank all of you, members of these five different organizations, for conducting this ritual for my long life today.

“I understand the Covid pandemic is rife in Arunachal Pradesh and also in Tibet. I will make prayers that it may be subdued. In China too the situation is serious. Let's pray to Arya Tara to help Tibetans and Chinese at this time, to relieve their suffering and alleviate the fear in their minds. We also need to remember the people of Xinjiang with love and compassion.

“In addition, I pray that we may continue to preserve and promote the teaching of the Buddha through study, reflection and meditation.”

Finally, His Holiness was requested to give the oral transmission of the six-syllable mantra, Om mani padme hung, which he did. He revealed that he recites this mantra, along with the ‘Praise to the Buddha for Teaching Dependent Arising’, every morning and prays to Avalokiteshvara that there may be peace in the world. He led the crowd in reciting a full rosary of Om mani padme hung.

As he left the temple and made his way down to the yard where his car awaited, His Holiness looked right and left, up and down, and wherever he could see people he smiled and waved to them—and they smiled and waved back.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Greets Prime Minister Narendra Modi a Happy Birthday

On the occasion of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's seventy-second birthday His Holiness the Dalai Lama has written to him to offer his warmest good wishes and prayers for his continued good health.

“It's wonderful,” His Holiness wrote, “that India has successfully met the challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic. Although we have not seen the complete end to it, India today is better placed to address similar challenges in the future.

“As the longest-staying guest in India I have observed its development first hand. Now the country is also a rising economic power and a leader in science and technology.

“India's strong democratic foundation is an example of peace and stability. Having one of the youngest populations is an asset that will enable further



His Holiness the Dalai Lama with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

development and the fulfilment of positive aspirations. I am delighted to say India is poised to assume its rightful place in the world.

“I have great admiration for the way Mahatma Gandhi made the age-old practice of ‘ahimsa’ appreciated across the world,” His Holiness continued. “May I reiterate that on my part, in addition to seeking to promote this principle wherever possible, I am deeply committed to creating greater awareness of the power of ‘karuna’ to help us all lead a happy and meaningful life. These values are treasures from the Indian tradition.

His Holiness ended his letter with thanks. “Once again, I would like to take this opportunity to express deep gratitude to the government and people of India for the warm and generous hospitality we Tibetans have enjoyed since we were forced into exile in 1959.”

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His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Dialogue with Youth Leaders from USIP



His Holiness the Dalai Lama's dialogue with United States Institute of Peace (USIP) youth leaders

First Day: When His Holiness the Dalai Lama entered the audience room at his residence to meet young leaders and peace-builders from the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), he carefully scanned their faces and warmly wished them, “Good morning.”

David Yang, Vice President for Applied Conflict Transformation at USIP, as the moderator announced that this was the seventh interaction between His Holiness and USIP delegates. He mentioned that over the last two years the meeting had taken the form of an online virtual dialogue, but that they were now happy to be back in person.

Part of the young leaders training has involved story-telling and Yang made clear that they wanted to share with His Holiness how children of war can become leaders for peace. There would be four themes: belonging, compassion, inner peace, as well as equality and justice.

Kuol from South Sudan, who is using his bitter experience of being a child soldier to build peace and make sure no child carries guns at a tender age, opened the conversation. He spoke of the time when war was at its peak in his country, when there were no men left in the villages, only women and children. Whenever a family had two boys, one was taken to become a soldier. Now he wants to

give them access to education and other opportunities.

Ruby from Syria realized that achieving peace requires anthropological and ethnographic sensitivity and studied accordingly. She has been working on projects related to peace-building, justice, women's rights, and climate issues. She talked about her realization that men and women are equally capable, but both need to be powerful and strong.

Angela from Colombia is a psychologist who has focussed on non-formal education methodologies, workshops, leadership and soft-skills development with teenagers and adults. She too stressed the need for people in conflict affected areas to be strong and brave, and to become part of the solution.

Okash from Somalia, whose work focusses on social innovation, education, employment and entrepreneurship as tools for eradicating poverty and building sustainable peace, spoke of a turning point when he encountered two men with guns. One was a former classmate. He resolved to become an educator to impart skills that would enable such people to get jobs and contribute to building a peaceful Somalia.

Mojisola from Nigeria actively engages in the fields of gender, peace-building and human rights. She facilitates

workshops on women, youth, peace and security, using story-telling, role play and dialogue. She described the troubles her mother faced and her efforts to create a club for women to support each other and help each other withstand prejudice and pressure.

Leonardo from Colombia works in the arts, alternative development and constant learning. He has brought together former FARC combatants and ordinary citizens through the exchange of hand-written letters. Finding himself alone in a school room brought home to him the importance of ensuring that no one feels left behind or left out. It is important, he says, to make sure people feel they belong.

Responding to the first set of presentations, His Holiness declared: “We have to make an effort to create a more peaceful world and a happier humanity. We can identify differences between us in terms of race, nationality, and religion, but we would be better instead to think of humanity as a whole. We all have equal rights. We are all born from a mother and most of us drink her milk. We depend on her kindness from the start of our lives. Warm-heartedness is an appropriate response.

“Modern education tends to focus on material goals rather than inner values. It seems to encourage a sense of ‘us’ and ‘them’, instead of emphasising that we are essentially the same and we have to live together.

“Each of us has two eyes, one nose, one mouth. If one of us were to have three eyes, that would be a surprise. If we examine our brains, they are equally complex. Therefore, we have to encourage a strong sense of brotherhood and sisterhood.

“As I said we're all born the same way, and in the end we all die the same way. When that happens, it's not ceremony that's important, but whether we have the warm affection of relatives and friends around us. As I told former PM Manmohan Singh, I expect to live

another 15 or 20 years, but when I die, I'd prefer to be free and surrounded by friends in India not hard-hearted Chinese Communist officials.

"Freedom is important in our lives. We need to be free to be able to exercise our brains, to be able always to ask, 'Why?'" From this point of view totalitarian systems are wholly unfavourable. It's freedom that fosters warm-heartedness and compassion, which in turn lead to inner peace. When you're warm-hearted there's no basis to be afraid. Fear is bad for the mind and too easily leads to anger. And anger is the real foe of peace of mind.

"I practise compassion, so wherever I go, I smile and feel happy. As human beings we have to find how to live together in peace."

Questioned about what makes a good leader, His Holiness stressed the advantages of elected leadership. Asked how to overcome anger, he suggested examining the circumstances that prompt those who make you angry to do so. He recommended taking a wider, longer-term view. Invited to suggest how men and women can learn to live together, he simply observed that men need women and women need men, and everyone laughed.

A second set of story-tellers spoke about compassion. Sebastian from Colombia, who has contributed to issues of peace-making, problem solving, government and strengthening democracy in different parts of the world, recalled confronting a combatant. He described how his own hostile feelings dissolved when a small girl appeared and his opponent picked her up and hugged her.

Helina from Ethiopia, who wants to make a difference by empowering young leaders to participate in peace projects and reduce risk and inequity in vulnerable communities, suggested that to bring about change, we have to appreciate humanity.

His Holiness intervened to voice his well-known admiration for the spirit of the European Union (EU). He remains

impressed that after centuries of conflict between France and Germany, following the Adenauer and de Gaulle founded the EU. Since then, there has been no violence among the Union's members. He suggested that the rest of the world would do well to follow this example in pursuit of peace. What's crucial, he said, is to achieve inner peace, but you can't buy peace of mind in a shop. It's not something that can be produced in a factory.

Anna from Venezuela reported her indignation at seeing tanks on the streets of her country. She challenged them with only a wooden shield for protection. She felt quite alone, distressed to see so much destruction. Once back in a safe place she asked herself how this could happen and is now dedicated to helping young people, especially women, work to build peace.

Wonderful, His Holiness replied. We all want to be happy and to live in peace. But we have to work for it taking the whole of humanity into account.

"We need to aim for a completely demilitarized world," he added. "I'm from Tibet where Chinese Communists have everything under tight control. But the Tibetan spirit is strong and we have preserved the Nalanda Tradition. Instead of relying on guns, we cultivate compassion. Six million Tibetans put their faith in what the Buddha taught about forgiveness and compassion.

"And because climate change is so serious, we must also pay attention to ecology."

Denis from South Sudan works as a journalist reporting on the environment and peace-building—including water management, pollution, and climate change. He reported that he has seen so many violations of human rights, but what inspires him is the example of people like Martin Luther King Jr, Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi who worked to create peaceful societies free from hatred and grief.

Paska, also from South Sudan, speaks

about social issues with specific focus on peace, gender, culture and history. She is trying to transform lives through evidence-based advocacy and campaigning for peaceful change. When conflict broke out in 2013, she crossed the border into Uganda and met an old man who told her how he felt he'd always been running away. When she returned, she was very moved by the story of a woman beaten to death by her brother for refusing to marry a man her family had chosen for her. She felt a strong need to do something about it—not to run away any more. She is determined that women and girls should have a choice.

Noral from Nigeria, recalled his ninth birthday, when his mother had prepared his favourite rice dish for him. That very day three men broke in and raped and murdered his mother in front of him. He described how hard it is to get over what happened even 20 years later, but he is committed to seeing that women are no longer subject to violence and rape.

Responding to David Yang's asking how he has been able to sustain compassion in his own life, His Holiness declared:

"I believe that as human beings we are all fundamentally compassionate. We have to build a world founded on human values—a demilitarized world, a world no longer dependent on the use of weapons. When people fight and die, their minds are not at peace, but we can imagine building a world based on compassion."

Asked what qualities are required to bring about peace, His Holiness remarked: "I'm a Buddhist and as soon as I wake every morning, I remind myself that all human beings are the same as me—we all want to be happy. I resolve to use my life to ensure that other beings are happy. It's compassion that brings about peace of mind, not anger and hatred, so we need to focus on the whole of humanity as being our brothers and sisters."

His Holiness recommended putting negative experiences behind us and



Hazar, a Kurd from Iraq sharing his story on the second day of the dialogue

setting positive goals. He said it's possible to teach people to be more compassionate because we all have a seed of compassion from the start of our lives—we just have to nurture it. The key factor is to cultivate warm-heartedness.

David Yang summarized a session that had touched on belonging and the warmth of family and community bonds.

"I'm honoured to be meeting with people who have their future ahead of them," His Holiness remarked. "How we live from day to day affects our future. I repeat, warm-heartedness is the key factor. I think about it always because it's warm-heartedness that brings us peace of mind. See you tomorrow."

Second Day: David Yang, the moderator, reminded everyone that yesterday they had discussed how children of war can become leaders for peace. He asserted that peace-building is a spiritual effort and that after exploring belonging and compassion yesterday, the themes for discussion today would be inner peace and a commitment to equality and justice.

To start with, Angie from Colombia, a psychologist who is passionate about social challenges, diversity and multiculturalism spoke of her love of education and learning. In her work she tries to make education more attractive to more people.

Esra from Sudan is deeply involved with content creation and using it to make a difference, helping individuals and organizations fulfil their vision. She tries to make a positive impact on society and is active in education and peace-building

through her writings and educational courses. It's by engaging in education that Esra's students learn about inner peace.

Patrick from South Sudan takes a special interest in youth, peace and security. He strongly advocates youth participation in policy development and decision making for positive change. He explained how in 2016 he found himself stranded in another country and realized how tired he was of not being able to contribute to salvaging his own country. This prompted him to engage in peace-building with other young people.

Arij from Tunisia is a debate facilitator. When she began to speak in public, she was nervous, but has acquired strong public speaking skills that have enabled her to deliver workshops on different themes related to peace and make a positive influence. Having gained confidence herself, she has learned to train others to speak out too. She remarked that some people lose hope that Tunisia will ever find peace, but she is determined not to despair.

Hazhir is a Kurd from Iraq. He is a political and economic analyst and journalist who covered the ISIS war. Since then, he has been involved with providing shelter and food to refugees. He says that when he asked himself what he wanted, he realized that, most of all, he and the people of Kurdistan wanted equality. He stated that it's difficult to feel inner peace when others routinely deceive you and deny your rights. It's in such a context that Kurds are trying to preserve their identity.

Roya from Libya, is focussed on leading and supporting projects that drive peace and reconciliation, arts and cultural engagement, development, economic stability and education. She says that having realized that she had the ability to bring about change, she makes a point of encouraging others likewise to understand that each one of us can help others. We can make a difference.

Sophia from Venezuela recounted that she and her best friend ran for election as

Secretary General of their school United Nations organization. The students first gave the impression that Sophia's friend would be most suited and that she would be least suited to the role. However, everyone was taken by surprise when she was actually elected. She said she learned that if you're going to be a leader you have to be confident.

David Yang told His Holiness that he is regarded as a leader with regard to inner peace. He asked him to describe how he felt when he had to leave Tibet.

"First of all, there was a danger to my community and to my own life," His Holiness replied. "I escaped because the situation had become urgent. When the Chinese military officers wanted to know where the Dalai Lama was staying within the Norbulingka Palace, we didn't know if it was so they could provide protection from bombardment, as they claimed, or so they could more readily target me. Once I'd become a refugee, I felt happier because I was free.

"In today's circumstances, all seven billion human beings alive today want equality. As I've said, we are all the same. No one is better or more deserving than anyone else. The UN should not only involve political leaders but representatives of ordinary human beings. We need to look realistically at the situation we find ourselves in because we all have to live together.

"We need to think more about what the common interest is, much like the European Union. We need a Union of Humanity."

In answering questions put to him by the youth leaders His Holiness talked about reaching decisions. He explained that, although he has resigned from all political activity, whenever there is a decision to be made, he always consults the people involved.

His Holiness was asked whether some of his people may have wanted to fight back against the Chinese. He agreed that some did. However, he described it as an emotional response rather than the result

of thinking things through in a realistic way. Thirty years ago, he said, world opinion counted for less. Today, it can make a difference. Now, he reaffirmed, is a time when problems should be resolved through dialogue.

He reiterated that it's basic human nature to be compassionate. He said we can see this among children who don't concern themselves with superficial differences. To discriminate between this or that race, nationality or religion is an old way of thinking.

"When we left Tibet," His Holiness clarified, "we did think in terms of differences between Tibetans and Chinese Communists. If we had considered what we had in common as human beings and that the land belongs to humanity in general the outcome might have been different."

"I feel we shouldn't focus too much on what is past. We have to look at things from different angles. As it's turned out, I've found it helpful to have become a refugee."

Asked whether there will be a fifteenth Dalai Lama and if there is, where will he be born, His Holiness replied with a chuckle that that was his business.

"I'm now 87 and I think I can live for another 15 or 20 years, so whether or not there will be a fifteenth Dalai Lama is not my main concern right now. Probably I'll be born on this planet because I have a connection to this world. The first Dalai Lama said he wanted to be born in Tibet so he could continue to serve the Tibetan people and the Buddhadharmā. "My determination is to serve sentient beings, but I'm especially familiar with this planet and its people. But where I'll be born, I don't know. I have a connection to the Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara. I'm something like his representative, so it may be a matter of his wish."

"There is a famous lake in Tibet and three letters were revealed on its surface which indicated where I had been born. A for Amdo, Ka for Kumbum and Ma referring to my name Lhamo Dhondup.

Employing such mysterious forces can help us see further ahead." David Yang introduced five more youth leaders who would talk about equality and justice.

Gloria from South Sudan is deeply concerned about human rights and civic rights issues. She pushed for tax exemptions on sanitary products to scale down gender inequality, especially in schools. She told the story of a school friend who was taken by surprise when she had her first period at school. Despite her friends' help she felt shamed by the jeering comments of other classmates. Next day she didn't come to school.

Gloria asked herself why a natural bodily function would bring such shame. She resolved that she had to do something to help girls understand their bodies and reduce the stigma of menstruation. She was keenly aware that girls also have a right to education.

His Holiness commented that decisions should not be made under threat of force or as a result of bullying. That's an old way of thinking. Now, we're all equal and have a right to decide things for ourselves.

Mamdouh from Syria led two peace-building and development projects during wartime helping war casualties, people with disabilities, local communities and internal refugees. He described being frustrated trying to bring about change. He said he's been banging on doors for ten years—sometimes they open, sometimes they don't. We are trying, he declared, and we can all help. Mohamed from Somalia has hands-on experience in areas of post-conflict justice, local government and peace-building. He spoke of meeting a woman whose legal case had been dragging on for years. He saw this as a case of justice delayed being justice denied. He observed that although rights are laid out in the constitution, people can't exercise them. Many have left the country in search of other options, but he feels that if he doesn't stay, who will stay to build a more peaceful Somalia?

His Holiness remarked that the world is

becoming more democratic, so people can raise their voices and their voices can be heard.

Isabela from Colombia is moved to defend human dignity and fundamental rights. She told of her shock when her mother told her that her father had shown her how to use a gun when she was only four years old and placed a gun under her pillow by way of defence. Isabela asked herself why people should live in fear like that and decided to become a lawyer. She is concerned to protect human dignity and to see that all children have access to education.

Nissa from Libya announced that she is a climate change activist. She described being moved by the film, *An Inconvenient Truth*, which woke her up to facts about pollution and climate change. She decided to teach children about these things and was baffled to find that children can readily understand what global leaders apparently cannot.

"Climate change is serious," His Holiness agreed. "We have to take steps to green the world by planting and taking care of more trees. I was recently in Ladakh where the dry, sandy environment is changing because there are more trees. Faced with a crisis like climate change we cannot afford to fight among ourselves. We have to work together."

Responding to questions again, His Holiness repeated that we need to look at things from a wider perspective. With regard to Tibet, he mentioned Tibetans' deep cultural heritage, which includes a profound understanding of the workings of the mind and emotions. This culture



Gloria from South Sudan delivering her presentation on the second day of the dialogue

has been kept alive. He noted wryly that very few Tibetans had become Communists, but quite a number of Chinese had become Buddhists.

His Holiness reported that professors in Chinese universities have read books published by Tibetans in exile on science and philosophy in Buddhist literature. They have acknowledged that Tibetan Buddhism has indeed preserved the Nalanda Tradition, which adopts a scientific, investigative approach.

Asked how to achieve justice without losing compassion, His Holiness

observed that the important thing was to avoid doing harm. He added that helping sentient beings can be a source of great satisfaction.

“All of us,” he added, “animals as well, have basic rights that we need to protect.”

Asked to say how you make your voice heard, His Holiness replied that first you should be honest and second you should act out of compassion. That’s the right thing to do. The main thing is to forgive and practise compassion.

David Yang thanked members of His Holiness’s office, his attendants, and the audio-visual team. He thanked the 26 youth leaders who represent hope for the future. And finally, he thanked His Holiness for his inspiring contribution.

His Holiness responded, “Thank you. As part of the seven billion human beings alive today we have a responsibility to work to create a happy humanity and a peaceful world.”

He then invited the youth leaders and USIP staff to join him for lunch.

US Policy on Tibet Has Lost its Way. We Want to Change That

- by Jim McGovern and Michael T. McCaul (US Senators) for The Diplomat

Qin Gang, ambassador to the United States from the People’s Republic of China (PRC), wrote in the Washington Post recently that “Taiwan has been an inseparable part of China’s territory for 1,800 years.”

The problem is not only that his statement is historically inaccurate — but it also follows a pattern of revisionism from PRC officials. In addition to Taiwan, this revisionism has been aimed at undermining the dignity and freedom of the Tibetan people, whom the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) does not consider worthy of basic human rights.

Speaking up for the truth must be part of any foreign policy that prioritizes human rights. Pushing back on these lies, and the human rights atrocities they perpetuate, requires innovative solutions to counter misinformation. We believe that our new bill, the Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Conflict Act, will do just that.

For years, PRC officials have attempted to rewrite history in order to further their own agenda and systematically deny entire groups of people even the most basic freedoms.

For example, consider Tibet. In 1950, the People’s Liberation Army occupied Tibet, the first-ever CCP presence on Tibetan soil. A decade of broken promises about autonomy led to a revolt in 1959, and the PRC unilaterally asserted its right to rule. For decades now, PRC officials have denied the people of Tibet the ability to practice their own religion, speak their own language, and partake in their own culture, even driving the Tibetan spiritual leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, into exile.

Self-determination — the right of a people to decide how they are governed — is a fundamental human right enshrined in international law, including a key treaty ratified by the PRC government. But since the 1950s, the PRC has denied Tibetans this right. Every major decision in Tibet is made by CCP officials.

For decades, the Dalai Lama has fought for his people’s right to determine their fate under an approach called the “Middle Way,” a term that represents a compromise between total PRC control and full Tibetan independence. But over time, this position has been eroded by PRC propaganda that

redefines Tibet’s status and history. Abetted by an international community unwilling to push back, Chinese officials have claimed Tibet as an internal matter that is of no business to outsiders.

Since the 1990s U.S. administrations of both parties have called on Chinese authorities to engage in dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives. To entice the CCP officials to participate in this dialogue, U.S. officials began stating that the U.S. considers Tibet a part of the PRC. Dialogue did start, but stopped in 2010. The CCP chose oppression over negotiation, and yet the U.S. has allowed the concession to remain.

So why do American diplomats continue to say, “Tibet is part of China?” This kind of rhetoric undermines both the U.S. position and the Tibetans’ freedoms. The CCP then uses it to support the lie that “Tibet has been a part of China since ancient times,” and the State Department perpetuates this propaganda by failing to rebut it. Young foreign service officers enter with the impression that, rather than an unresolved conflict, Tibet is an internal matter of China, which is exactly what PRC wants them to think.

U.S. policy on Tibet has lost its way. That is why we are introducing the Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Conflict Act. The bill would make it U.S. policy that the Tibetan people have a right to determine how they are governed, and ensure that U.S. policymakers accurately treat this issue as an unresolved conflict between Tibet and the PRC, not as an internal affair of China.

Finally, our bill gives the State Department important new tools to

counter PRC disinformation on Tibet. It directs the State Department's Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues to ensure that U.S. government statements and documents do not support PRC propaganda on about the history of Tibet, the Tibetan people, and Tibetan institutions — including the Dalai Lama. We believe our bill will strengthen bipartisan support for dialogue between PRC officials and the Dalai Lama.

The CCP's fabricated history and claims

of ancient ownership of Tibet are part of a larger neo-imperialist effort to expand the CCP's control and deprive people of their freedom, autonomy, and self-determination. We see it in Taiwan. We see it in Xinjiang. We see it in Hong Kong. And we see it in Tibet.

The US should support the people of Tibet in pushing for a say in how they are governed. And we should push back on the CCP's distortion of history rather than abetting it. Our bill does just that.

Tibet: New Re-Education Program for Buddhist Monks and Nuns

- by *Lopsang Gurung for Bitter Winter*

It all started in May. Buddhist monks and nuns were summoned all over Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), and asked to participate in re-education courses that would teach them the “Three Consciousness”: national consciousness, citizen consciousness, rule of law consciousness. They already knew before the program started that “national consciousness” means supporting the Chinese rule in Tibet and condemning “separatism,” and “citizen” and “rule of law” consciousness means learning to obey without questions the CCP, the Central Committee, and Xi Jinping.

Beleaguered Tibetan monks and nuns have been submitted to several re-education programs before, yet they report that this one is somewhat new. They certainly knew what they would be taught to support, but this time they were asked to specifically renounce and condemn four movements.

First, they should condemn Tsethar or “merit release,” i.e., the Buddhist practice of releasing animals destined for slaughter. The practice has now its critics among environmentalists, who claim that the animals released into the wilderness may create an unbalance in the ecosystem. However, what disturbs the CCP is more Tsethar's religious meaning and the fact that it happens outside a system of dealing

with domestic animals that is rigidly regulated by the authorities.

Second, monks and nuns are asked to condemn the Saka Dawa fasting. Saka Dawa is the holy month around Vesak, the feast that celebrates the birth, enlightenment, and death of the Buddha. Many Tibetans fast for two (or three) days, and do not eat meat during the whole month (despite Western misconceptions, many Tibetan Buddhists are not vegetarian).

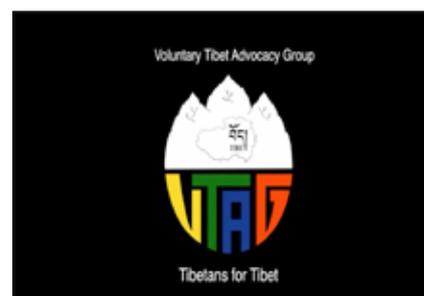
Third, monks and nuns are told to celebrate Losar, the Tibetan New Year, and incite lay Buddhists to do the same. To outsiders, this may seem strange, as Losar is a quintessential Tibetan festival, is connected with the Tibetan calendar, and it would seem that its celebration reinforces the Tibetan identity and resistance to Sinicization. However, after the bloody repression of the mass uprising of 2008, Tibetans inside the borders of China decided to protest by abstaining from celebrating Losar.

The movement was started in 2009 and was a great success, thanks to the spontaneous mobilization of the Tibetan population. The CCP has often argued that those who do not celebrate Losar are manipulated by the monks. Every year, monks are arrested. The paradox continues, as the CCP on the one hand systematically destroys Tibetan culture,

on the other hand asks monks and nuns to promote Losar festivals, because not attending them is perceived as a protest against China.

Fourth, monks and nuns are taught to take a stand against the “farmers' strikes,” another form of non-cooperative protest in which farmers refuse to cultivate their land to protest the suppression of Tibetan language and culture. The protest started in parts of historical Tibet that are now included in the Chinese province of Sichuan, but extended to TAR as well.

All these are forms of non-violent protest, which particularly disturb the CCP. The Chinese authorities often do not know how to react without causing more protest. They seem to believe their own mythology that all Tibetan protests are organized by monks and nuns, and thus try to compel the latter to “cooperate, or else.” Silencing the nuns and monks, however, will not stop the increasingly successful resistance of an entire people.



CTA Mourns Demise of Former Representative of Nepal, Wangchuk Tsering



Officiating Sikyong Tharlam Dolma Changra addressing the gathering during prayer service.

The Central Tibetan Administration held a prayer service to mourn the demise of Wangchuk Tsering, former representative of Office of Tibet, Nepal, who passed away on 21 September in Canada.

The leadership of CTA headed by officiating Sikyong Tharlam Dolma Changra, Kalon Gyari Dolma, Secretaries of various Departments and Autonomous bodies along with officials and staff attended the mass prayer.

Delivering the eulogy for the deceased, Officiating Sikyong Tharlam Dolma, "It is apparent that the deceased led a life dedicated to public service. We are reminded by these gatherings that our mortality is a constant reminder for us to lead a worthwhile life devoid of regrets." She condoled the family wishing them strength in overcoming this tough time and simultaneously rededicated her prayers to Tibetans inside Tibet affected by the Covid-crisis for swift resolution.

Wangchuk Tsering: He was born in Lhasa in 1939 and studied Tibetan in Lhasa and Shigatse. After arrival in India in 1956, he attended school at Kalimpong and Darjeeling. Between 1962-63 he volunteered to provide training to young Tibetans. From 1965-66, he studied political science at Cornell

University. He served in the free press association in 1959-61. He served in the Department of Security of the CTA from 1962-70 excluding the brief hiatus for education. Thereafter he led the carpet manufacturing factory established for the sustenance of the refugee community which was a successful venture. Among others he also served as the President of the Regional Tibetan Youth Congress between 1972-96 and for many years as the President of regional Utsang association. His final role was as per the directive of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Kashag to serve as the Representative of Office of Tibet, Nepal for four years from 2001-05. After this he immigrated to Canada where he resided until his last breath.



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Warm-heartedness is not blind when it is combined with intelligence. We view behaviour as harsh or gentle largely on the basis of appearances, but the real distinction depends on the motivation with which it is done.

-His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

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QUOTES

“Since we suffer because of ignorance, we have to eliminate all distorted views and develop the correct view. If we are to do this, we need to study, reflect on what we’ve learned and meditate on what we’ve understood.” His Holiness the Dalai Lama during teaching a group of South East Asians

“If we are to bring about peace in the world, we need to pay attention to how to achieve peace of mind within ourselves.” His Holiness the Dalai Lama during the teaching of Dharmakirti’s ‘Commentary on Valid Cognition’

“Based on the findings recorded in the Michale’s book, the US Congress held hearing on experts’ testimony on the historical status of Tibet and moved a legislation saying that Tibet is an unresolved conflict. Despite such historical findings, we are still committed to the Middle Way policy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, which is based on pragmatic approach considering the reality of the situation inside Tibet,” Sikyong Penpa Tsering when addressing All Party Japanese Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet

“Over the past sixty years, our commitment and ability to follow and make sound development of the democratic system has been the cornerstone of our remarkable achievement in furthering the cause of Tibet and developing a successful Tibetan community in exile. The democratic system, while in exile, is the strength and the driving force of our movement. It will also be the most precious gift to our Tibetan brethren when we are reunited.” Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel during the 62nd Tibetan Democracy Day
