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# TIBET INFORMATION OFFICE

Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama  
FOR AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND SOUTH EAST ASIA

To  
Senator the Hon Penny Wong  
Minister for Foreign Affairs,  
Parliament House,  
Canberra ACT 2600

19 December 2022

Dear Minister Penny Wong,

I understand that you will be visiting China this week with the planned meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Beijing. On the eve of your visit to China, I am writing on behalf of Tibetan people for the success of your official visit to China and also to urgently request you to raise the Tibet issue in the strongest terms possible with your counterpart Wang Yi and other Chinese Communist Party leaders.

I would like to call on you to make the protection of Tibet's distinct culture, religion and national identity a priority in your interactions with the People's Republic of China. In particular, to raise the issue of whereabouts of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the Dalai Lama appointed Panchen Lama – the world's youngest political prisoner, who ever since his appointment at the age of six had disappeared along with his parents in 1995. Likewise, thousands of Tibetans are languishing in Chinese prison for simply exercising their fundamental rights. I earnestly request you to urge the Chinese government to immediately declare his whereabouts and release all the Tibetan political prisoners by upholding China's commitment to international law and universal freedom.

The situation inside Tibet is critical and is currently facing an existential threat to the Tibetan national identity under the repressive China policies which are predominantly subjected to cultural assimilation, economic marginalization, and ecological destruction. In spite of its significance, the Chinese government viewed the century old Tibetan religion and cultural identity as the biggest hurdle to their illegitimate control over Tibet. Since 2009, at least 157 Tibetans were known to have self-immolated, calling for freedom and return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet. Earlier this year, we have witnessed self-immolations of Tsewang Norbu, a young prominent Tibetan singer in Lhasa, and Taphun, an 81 year old in Ngaba region. Tibetans are continuously driven to take such drastic actions due to China's constant denial of fundamental freedom and justice.

Inside Tibet, there is a huge prevalence of China's Colonial boarding schools with nearly one million Tibetan children who are blocked from accessing their own language and culture. China is also coercively harvesting mass DNA collections inside Tibet including that of children as early as 6 years old. Tibet has virtually become an Orwellian Surveillance State. Such are disturbing and has negative implications not just for Tibetans but to the wider humanity.

Therefore, I once again call on you to use the opportunity of your visit to China to make a strong public statement highlighting the Australian Government's concerns of the current situation in Tibet and calling on the need for an earnest dialogue to resolve the longstanding Sino-Tibet Conflict between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama and his representatives.

With highest regards

  
Mr Karma Singey  
Representative  
Tibet Information Office, Canberra



8/13 NAPIER CLOSE, DEAKIN ACT 2600 AUSTRALIA

Telephone : + 61 2 6285 4046 • Fax : + 61 2 6282 4301 • Email : rep.au@tibet.net • Web : www.tibetoffice.com.au