



TIBETAN BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CENTRAL TIBETAN ADMINISTRATION

VOLUME 27 - ISSUE 2

MARCH - APRIL 2023

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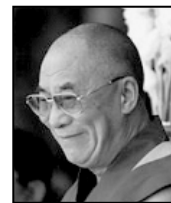
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TIBETAN BULLETIN

Tibetan Bulletin is an official bi-monthly journal of the Central Tibetan Administration.



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Contributions are welcome and may be addressed to the editor, Tibetan Bulletin. However the publisher regrets its inability to return unused articles unless they are accompanied by a self-addressed envelope with adequate postage.

Tibetan Bulletin is distributed free of charge. To subscribe please email the circulation manager or see back cover.

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Dharamshala - 176 215 H.P. India

Tel: +91-1892-222510 / 222457

Vol. 27, Issue 2
MARCH - APRIL 2023

Over 30 members of Foreign Parliamentary Delegation Join CTA's Commemoration of 64th Tibetan Uprising Day



Visiting Parliamentary delegation with the leadership of CTA on the 64th commemoration of Tibetan Uprising Day.

Over 30 members of a foreign parliamentary delegation joined the official commemoration of the 64th Tibetan Uprising in Dharamshala on 10 March 2023. United in solidarity with the Tibetan leadership and Tibetans in exile, the parliamentary delegation of Mexico, the European Parliament, Lithuania, and Taiwan marked the day by honoring the Tibetan martyrs who dauntlessly stood up against the occupation of the Chinese government.

The commemoration event was attended by visiting delegation of the European Parliament comprised of MEP Mikuláš Peksa, MEP Salima Yenbo, MEP Hannes Heide, and MEP Aušra Maldeikienė who are accompanied by Parliamentary Assistants Samuel V Samuel Vančo, Tomas Adamec, Martina Tesseri, Eduard Aleix Sarri Camargo who were joined by the delegation from Mexico Parliament consisting of MP Lidia Garcia Anaya, MP Dulce Maria Corina, MP Ines Parra Juarez, MP Salvador Caro Cabrera, MP Maria Elena Limon Garcia, MP Ma Teresa Rosaura Ochoa Mejia, MP Julieta Mejia Ibanez, MP Lidia Perez Barcenaz, MP Jose Miguel De La Cruz Lima and Lithuanian parliamentarian Arunas Valinskas.

The heads of three democratic pillars of the Central Tibetan Administration, Kalons, parliamentarians, secretaries, CTA's civil servants, directors, and the representatives of various NGOs were also in attendance.

Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel of the Tibetan Parliament and Sikyong

Penpa Tsering read out their respective statements of Parliament and Kashag.

Chief guest MEP Mikuláš Peksa in his key address expressed the EU's strong condemnation and criticised China's oppressive policies involving Mass DNA testing violating the rights of Tibetans and the forced assimilation of Tibetan children into the majority Han culture through the mandatory colonial barding system. He added that these pressing issues are taken into serious consideration by the EU. "I believe I speak for all my co-parliamentarians when I say that we will do every possible in our mandate to point out the injustices committed upon the Tibetan people. We will continue to hold China accountable for a transgression", said MEP Peksa.

Special guest Damon Wilson, President of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) commended the inspiring courage and the indestructible spirit of the Tibetan people while conveying his solidarity and support for the Tibetan people's struggle for freedom, justice, and democracy.

He underscored three points outlining ways the world could take inspiration from Tibet and the Tibetan people. He outlined that Tibetan people's resilience in sustaining the struggle for 64 years in exile without wavering once from the truth and pursuit of justice and principles of non-violence and compassion could serve as a model of inspiration for all freedom-loving people around the world. Secondly, he extolled the thriving Tibetan system of democracy as a moral exemplar around the world. Finally, he reminded Tibetans of the fortune and blessing of having His Holiness the Dalai Lama who is globally loved and revered for being a beacon of hope in the troubled world. "The world needs Tibet and Tibetans have so much to offer. Know that you are not alone. Know that we stand with you. Continue to be resilient to stand firm in the principles of justice, democracy, and non-violence. Your struggle for freedom is a beacon of

hope for so many around the world" he asserted.

Special Guest Arunas Valinskas, MP of Lithuania shared his experiences of growing up under the occupation of the Soviet Union and the collective lesson learned by the people of Lithuania during those turbulent times. He attributed their persistence and resilience to the compassion and sincere interest shown by His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Lithuania's struggle for liberty. "We will never forget the kindness and support shown by His Holiness toward Lithuania and we hope that we could repay a part of that debt", he said and further conveyed the certainty of Tibet enjoying freedom soon. "Know that your efforts are closely followed and encouraged by great numbers of friends all over the world. Stay true and committed to the principles of human rights and democracy", he said in conclusion.

Special guest Salvador Caro Cabrera lauded the resilience and commitment of the Tibetan people against China as the powerful oppressor. He encouraged the Tibetan people to firmly continue their pursuit of freedom, justice, and non-violence.

A high-level foreign delegation visit to Dharmashala such as this not only expresses their deep solidarity with Tibetans and their enduring cause but sends a bold and compelling message to China to take accountability for their injustice towards Tibetan people while calling out China to become a responsible member of the global community.



Tibetans and Tibet supporters at the commemoration event in Dharamshala.

China's Continued Enforcement of Human Rights Violations in Tibet Raised at the 52nd UNHRC Session

UN Member States raised concerns over systematic violations of human rights by China, including in Tibet, during the 52nd UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) session held in Geneva.

Underscoring grave human rights situation in China and regions under its control such as Tibet, distinguished representatives from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, European Union, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Japan, Lithuania, Norway, Switzerland, Sweden, United Kingdom and United States of America deplored continued violations of human rights by China. The Member States called China to abide by its obligations under international human rights law.

With regard to the deteriorating human rights situation in Tibet, Australia expressed concern over “erosion of educational, religious, cultural and linguistic rights and freedoms in Tibet”. Expressing “deep concerns” over human rights violations by China, Belgium raised the disturbing development of “compulsory boarding schools and DNA sampling” in Tibet.

Delegation from Finland said “evidence-based” rights violations by China in Tibet and other regions are “concerning” and called China that “Universal human rights need to be guaranteed for all – including persons belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities, human rights defenders, intellectuals and lawyers”.

Denmark underlined the UN reports of Tibetan children forcibly “separated from their families”, and reiterated calls on China to abide by its obligations and to work with the OHCHR.

Recalling the findings of the United Nation's Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Switzerland urged China to immediately end violations of human rights and release

all human rights defenders arbitrarily detained, particularly in Tibet.

The United Kingdom is “deeply” concerned by China's disregard for universal human rights and urged China to “reverse oppressive policies in Tibet”. The delegation further highlighted concern over the UN recent report of “one million Tibetan children were forcibly separated from their families to assimilate them into majority Han culture”.

Reiterating “deep concern” over rights violations by China and the ongoing “genocide and crimes against humanity” by China, the United States of America urged the human rights council to “maintain focus” on atrocities committed by China in Tibet and other regions, and also called upon the High Commissioner to “address them”. Similarly, Germany, Lithuania and Sweden expressed “serious” and “deep” concern over rights violations by China, including in Tibet.

The European Union, Austria, Czech Republic, Iceland, Norway and Japan expressed growing concern over rights violations by China.

Additionally, during an interactive dialogue on the situation of human rights defenders, the UN Special Rapporteur Mary Lawlo said China is a “disaster when it comes to human rights defenders”. The Special Rapporteur further noted “shocking” cases of 15 human rights defenders jailed by China for longer than 10 years.

In his maiden oral update of activities of the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights, the High Commissioner Volker Turk announced, with regard to China, the Office has opened “channels of communication with a range of actors to follow up on a variety of human rights issues” including protection of Tibetans, Uyghurs and other groups.

Deputies Salvador Caro Cabrera and Inés Parra Juárez Protest in Favour of Tibet at the Congress Of Mexico



Mexican Parliamentarian Salvador Caro Cabrera raising a Tibetan National Flag in solidarity with Tibetans at the Congress of Mexico.

On 26 April 2023, during an Ordinary Session of the Mexican Congress, Deputy Salvador Caro Cabrera and Deputy Inés Parra Juárez rose from their seats and displayed the Tibetan national flag for about 20 minutes at the time they shouted “Free Tibet” The action was given in response to the presence in the Parliamentary Area of the new Ambassador of China in Mexico.

The two Protestant Deputies are founding members of the Grupo de Legisladoras y Legisladores Amigos del Tíbet en México, which is made up of 19 Legislators belonging to five political parties and started its functions in November 2022. Several of these Legislators travelled last March to Dharamshala, in northern India, headquarters of the Central Tibetan Administration, to participate in the commemoration of the 64th Anniversary of the National Uprising Day. The presence of the Group, as well as its solidarity demonstrations in favour of the Tibetan cause and the future reincarnation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, were received with the greatest blessing and gratitude by all Tibetans.



Sincerity of PRC's Leadership Manifests in Policies and Programs Implemented in Tibet: Sikyong at CECC's Hearing on Tibet

Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration testified at the US Congressional-Executive Commission on China's hearing on Preserving Tibet: Combating Cultural Erasure, Forced Assimilation and Transnational Repression.

Apart from Sikyong, the witnesses for the hearing conducted on 28 March 2023 include Richard Gere (Chairman of International Campaign for Tibet), Lhadong Tethong (Director of Tibet Action Institute) and Tenzin Dorjee (Senior Researcher/Strategist at TAI). The testimonials of the four witnesses essentially stressed the new and worsening challenges faced by Tibetans in Tibet as Beijing implements new intensified repressive measures.

The commission headed by Chairman Smith and Chairman Merkley examined the unprecedented linguistic, religious and human rights repression in Tibet and the transnational repression faced by Tibetans abroad. After scrutinising the details of the testimonies, the commission will identify diplomatic and policy options for the United States and other like-minded countries to help preserve Tibetan cultural heritage as well as explore measures to defend against threats and intimidation targeting Tibetans in the United States and around the world.

In his testimonial, Sikyong detailed the Chinese government's complete disregard for the serious and urgent aspirations of the Tibetan people that have resulted in 157 tragic acts of self-immolation in Tibet since 2009 in the hope that the PRC government would pay some attention to their plight and that the international community would come to their rescue. He elaborated on both small and large-scale repression that is deliberately intended to annihilate the foundation of Tibetan culture and national identity. He testified on the recent implementation of colonial boarding schools across Tibet to assimilate Tibetan children into the

majority Han culture. Additionally, Tibetan youths are massively transferred to China for labour and incentivised migration of Han Chinese into Tibet is being carried out. He cautioned, "If the PRC is not made to reverse or change its current policies, Tibet and Tibetans will definitely die a slow death".

Despite the prevailing atrocities in Tibet, Sikyong pointed out that Tibet's case does not receive adequate global attention predominantly due to PRC's Orwellian gridlock system where they attempt to use all means of artificial intelligence to surveil people, control the flow of information precisely to keep the real situation of Tibet concealed from the outside world. And those in leadership roles in education, religion, culture and environment that have dared to speak against the PRC are being arbitrarily arrested or go missing.

"The sincerity of the People's Republic of China's (PRC) leadership manifests in the policies and programs being implemented in Tibet as we speak. In the last few years, evidence emerging from Tibet in the form of reports by the UN, independent institutes and scholarly research, the Chinese government's one nation, one language, one culture and one religion is aimed at forced assimilation and the erasure of the national identity of the Tibetans and other minority nationalities. Unsurprisingly, the international watchdog, Freedom House lists Tibet right at the bottom with Syria and South Sudan in their least free country index", said Sikyong. He reiterated his administration's unyielding commitment to peacefully resolve the Sino-Tibet conflict which currently remains at an impasse.

"As the Sikyong, I am fully committed to following the Middle Way Policy: the way forward shown by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and adopted by the Tibetan Parliament in Exile. This policy is aimed at finding a non-violent, mutually beneficial, negotiated and lasting solution to the Sino-Tibet conflict that can set

an example for this violence-ridden world. Resolution to the Sino-Tibet conflict can have profound geo-political implications for a more peaceful and secure region and the world", Sikyong assured. He thanked the chairman and members of the committee for organising this hearing which he noted was an impetus to Tibet's struggle for truth. He also expressed his gratitude to the US Congress for making necessary changes to the Tibet Policy Act and the introduction of a bill on Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Conflict Act which is yet to become a law.

Also at the hearing, US Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues Uzra Zeya delivered a video message raising concerns over the Communist Party of China's continued repressions inside Tibet, such as the enforcement of colonial-style boarding school system and involuntary mass DNA collection campaigns endangering the unique Tibetan identity.

"This administration will continue to shine a light on Tibet-related issues within our broader human rights concerns with the PRC, bilaterally or jointly with multilateral partners and promote accountability for the PRC's human rights abuses in Tibet and elsewhere", she assured and further guaranteed her dedicated support and efforts stating, "I am committed to continuing this administration's close and sustained cooperation with the congress to deepen our strong track record of supporting the Tibetan community and uphold an affirmative vision for human rights". She put forward two questions before concluding her address, asking the commission how the U.S government can assist in improving information flow into and out of the "Tibetan Autonomous Region" despite China's impenetrable great firewall. Secondly, she sought recommendations for garnering multilateral global support to elevate the issue of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's reincarnation.

Fifth Session of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile Adjourns



Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel giving his closing address.

The fifth session, the budget session, of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile concluded on 25 March 2023.

Chaired by Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, the final day of the session began with three official motions, starting with the tabling of an official resolution to constitute a Rules and Regulations Review Committee in the house. The house consisting of the Sikyong, DoS Kalon, and parliamentarians shared their opinions and concerns over the constitution of a Rules and Regulation Review Committee which was eventually passed with a majority vote.

As per the resolution, members of the Review Committee will be appointed by the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker. The appointed members will then review the rules and regulations of the Central Tibetan Administration including the Charter and submit their reviewed report to the Parliamentary Secretariat by the end of Feb 2024.

Likewise, an official resolution instructing the board members of the Gang-Jong Development Finance Private Limited through the Department of Finance (CTA) to follow up on the Gang-Jong Development Finance Private Limited's transition to an autonomous entity, based on the report of the Ad Hoc Committee and adhering to the rules of the Reserve Bank of India, was too passed with a majority vote. Thereafter, an official resolution for the

11th Public Accounts Report was passed acknowledging the cleared accounts of the offices of the Central Tibetan Administration that were recorded in the report and further instructed the Kashag to follow up on the committee's report.

The House proceeded with the legislative procedure's third reading and adoption, amendments to Article 5 (I), Article 6 (V)(VI)(VII), Article 7 (XII), Article 9 (V)(VIII), Article 12 (I to XI) of the Rules and Regulation for allotment of residential quarters for staff and former staff were adopted unanimously.

And an amendment to Article 9 of the Rules of Budget and amendments to Articles 7, 10, & 18 of the Rules and Regulation for Tibetan Voluntary Contribution and other contributions were also adopted unanimously.

The Revised Appropriation Act of 2022-2023 and the Appropriation Act of 2023-2024 were presented by Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang and supported by the Chairperson of the Budget Estimate Committee Youdon Aukatsang, where the revised appropriation Act was passed unanimously while the Appropriation Act was passed with a high majority in the house.

As per document no 40, the revised appropriation act of 2022-2023 authorised the issue and appropriation of a total of Rs. 2,935,742,298/ for the expenditure (annual budget and

interim budget) proposed to be made from the consolidated fund. And as per document no 41, the appropriation act of 2023-2024 authorised the issue and appropriation of a total amount of Rs. 3,034,006,055/ for the expenditure (annual budget) proposed to be made from the consolidated fund.

Afterward, the Secretary-General of the Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat Sonam Dorjee read out the leave of absence of the Parliament Members before the Speaker gave his conclusion speech.

The Speaker in his conclusion speech thanked the Sikyong, the Kalons, and parliamentarians for their participation and cooperation. He further informed the house of the obituary reference, solidarity resolution, resolution of gratitude to the US Speaker Nancy Pelosi, 11th Public Accounts Committee report, a resolution to follow up on the Gang Jong Development Finance Private Limited (GDF), legislature amendments, financial business, and other official resolutions passed in this session. He also briefed them on the upcoming parliamentary programs.

Emphasising the significance of unity, the Speaker advised everyone to consolidate their effort to further the common cause of Tibet and to abstain from the affliction of regionalism which also goes against the wish of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In order to yield fruitful and constructive deliberation, the Speaker advised the lawmakers to observe their conduct during the debate and follow the Rules and Regulations of procedure and conduct of the business of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile.

He thanked the Department of Finance, the Department of Information and International Relations, the Department of Security, the Department of Health, the Electrician of the Department of Home, and the Parliamentary Secretariat for their assistance during the ten-day parliament session.

UN Body Concludes Widespread Human Rights Violations in Tibet and Recommends China to Take Corrective Actions

The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights released its concluding observations following the third-cycle review of China's implementation of the UN Convention on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights held in mid-February this year. The UN committee has noted widespread violations by China in the implementation of its obligations under the Convention including in Tibet, Xinjiang, Hong Kong, Macau and Mainland China.

Forced Relocation and Rehousing of Tibetan nomads and small-scale Farmers:

The experts have expressed concerns about the "resettlement of nomadic herdsman, particularly Tibetan ones, is carried out in the State party without proper consultation and in most cases without free, prior and informed consent" as well as the small-scale farmers who have lost their "traditional lands and livelihoods owing to poverty alleviation schemes and ecological restoration resettlement measures, and that compensation for the expropriated property is often insufficient to maintain an adequate standard of living." The UN Committee has recommended China immediately halt all such forced relocation and rehousing programs and undertake meaningful consultation to explore alternative options with full, adequate and timely compensation.

Labour Conditions:

Expressing concerns about the poor working conditions, harassment at the workplace and lack of labour inspection mechanisms to investigate violations in Tibet, the UN Committee has recommended China ensure necessary resources for labour inspection and independent audit companies to take actions against entities in Tibet.

Cultural and Linguistic Rights:

The UN Committee has noted its

concerns about the severe restrictions faced by Tibetans regarding their right to take part in cultural life including the right to use and teach Tibetan language, history and culture. Furthermore, it has highlighted the closure of schools providing instructions in the Tibetan language followed by a "large-scale campaign to eradicate Tibetan culture and language" through the "assimilation policy of the State party, known as sinicization, including the coerced residential (boarding) school system imposed on Tibetan children."

Accordingly, the UN Committee has called on China to abolish the coerced residential school system and to allow private Tibetan schools to be established. Furthermore, it has recommended China take all necessary measures to ensure that Tibetans can fully exercise their right to cultural life, identity and practice and use the Tibetan language.

Religious Freedom:

The UN Committee has noted its concerns about the increasingly tighter regulation of religious practices and the systematic and massive destruction of religious sites including monasteries in Tibet. The Committee has recommended China "take adequate measures to protect cultural diversity and the cultural practices and heritage" of Tibetans "including by protecting and restoring religious sites."

Tibet Bureau Geneva participated in the review and submitted reports. Welcoming the concluding observations Representative Thinlay Chukki has noted that the "Chinese Government's widespread human rights violations in Tibet especially in terms of economic, social and cultural rights have been evidently noted by the UN Committee members. We sincerely hope that the Chinese government will take the corrective actions recommended by the UN Body. The UN body should

also undertake timely interventions to ensure that its recommendations are not relegated to documentation but are meaningfully implemented by the Chinese government."

16th Kashag Convenes 4th Permanent Strategy Committee Meeting

The 16th Kashag of the Central Tibetan Administration convened its fourth Permanent Strategy Committee Meeting on 6 April 2023.

During the three-day meeting, the Committee followed up with the implementation of measures prescribed at the previous three meetings and additionally, discussed the progress of the ongoing strategic programs and deliberate on future advocacy initiatives as per the committee's objectives.

The meeting, held from 6-8 April, is presided over by Sikyong Penpa Tsering and attended by all the committee members comprising former Kalon Tempa Tsering, former Kalon Dongchung Ngodup, and former envoy Kelsang Gyaltsen. In attendance were also Kalon Dolma Gyari (Department of Security), Kalon Norzin Dolma (Department of Information and International Relations), Secretary Karma Rinchen (Department of Security), Secretary Karma Choeying (Department of Information and International Relations), Secretary Dawa Tsering of the Tibet Policy Institute (TPI), and political secretary Tashi Gyatso of Kashag Secretariat. Ngaba Tsegyam, Secretary from the Gaden Phodrang office also attended the meeting.

Following the dissolution of the previous Task Force on Sino-Tibetan Negotiations by the 16th Kashag, this new Permanent Strategy Committee was established. The Committee held its first meeting in November 2021, the second meeting in July 2022, and the third meeting in November 2022 in Dharamshala.

Tibetan Speaker Interrupted by China at UN while Highlighting Cultural Rights Violations in Tibet



Representative Thinlay Chukki speaking.

Representative Thinlay Chukki while speaking on behalf of the Society for Threatened Peoples during the 52nd UN Human Rights Council Session on 15 March 2023 was repeatedly interrupted by the Chinese delegation.

Speaking at the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights, Representative Thinlay Chukki thanked the special rapporteur for the report on cultural rights of the migrants and brought to the attention of the Rapporteur the situation of Tibetan nomads in Tibet. Immediately the Chinese delegation raised a point of order and interrupted the statement. Calling the speaker “separatist” involved in “anti-China separatist” activities, the Chinese delegation stated that “allowing her to conduct in separatist activities severely violates the process and principles of the UN Charter” and requested the vice-president of the Council to stop the speaker from delivering her statement.

After considering the matter, Vice-President of the Human Rights Council noted that there have not been any violations of the rules and allowed the speaker to resume the dialogue. On resumption of the statement, the Chinese delegation once again interrupted the speaker noting that “this Representative severely undermines the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China” and called for “immediate stop.”

On the other hand, the US delegation called the attention of the Vice-President to allow the speaker to take the floor and not to interrupt without listening to the content of the statement.

The Vice-President, after due consideration of the UN procedures and principles, allowed the speaker to resume the statement.

In the statement Representative Thinlay Chukki noted that “Several Tibetan schools catering to the children of the Tibetan nomads have been closed and are being forced to attend colonial style residential schools.” Representative also highlighted the UN experts’ concerns on nearly one million Tibetan children being forcibly assimilated and the concluding observations of the the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural rights which called on the Chinese government to abolish the coerced residential school system.

In conclusion the Representative requested the Special rapporteur for “clear guidelines and recommendations to the Chinese government to protect the cultural rights of Tibetans particularly of Tibetan nomads who are forcibly relocated from their traditional lands with cultural heritage.”

For detailed news visit:
www.tibet.net

Swiss National Council Approves Extraordinary Humanitarian Action- A Step Closer to Finding Relief for Tibetans Without Papers

The Swiss National Council (One of the Houses of Swiss Parliament) passed a motion for extraordinary humanitarian action for asylum seekers, especially for persons receiving emergency aid from old-law asylum procedures on 16 March 2023. The motion was passed in favour with 100 to 81 votes and 5 abstentions.

The extraordinary humanitarian motion is aimed to find a humanitarian solution for rejected asylum seekers under the old asylum procedure of Switzerland. Switzerland enforced new asylum procedure from 1 March 2019 and the motion seeks relief for all the rejected asylum applicants who submitted their application before 28 February 2019.

Former National Councillor Marianne Steiff-Feller, who was also a member of the Swiss Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet initiated the motion on 16 March 2021. After her resignation, the motion was taken over and presented to the National Council by Councillor Niklaus Samuel Gugger on 16 March 2023.

National Councillor Niklaus Gugger, also the current co-president of the Swiss Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet, while presenting the motion noted that over 3,000 people are stuck in Switzerland under the old asylum law and as these people are very well integrated in Switzerland, there is a need to provide them humanitarian solution. He specifically noted that this is a solution aimed at specific people including Tibetan victims.

Couple of years back, on 10 March 2021, a joint petition with over 3,000 signatures was submitted to Swiss government calling for a humanitarian solution to around 300 rejected Tibetan

asylum seekers in Switzerland. The Swiss-Tibetan Friendship Association; the Tibetan Community of Switzerland and Lichtenstein; the Tibetan Women's Association of Switzerland; and the Tibetan Youth Association in Europe had jointly organised the mass signature campaign.

While submitting the petition, the then Special Appointee for Human Rights based in Tibet Bureau Geneva Thinlay Chukki had noted that, "this petition is of paramount importance because these Tibetans especially the youth are the future of Tibet's struggle and it is concerning to see them languish without any foreseeable solution," and had urged the Swiss government and the parliamentarians to find a humanitarian solution for these Tibetans.

The petition was also discussed during the last meeting of the Swiss Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet on 7 March 2023. Representative Thinlay Chukki, along with Member of Tibetan Parliament-in-exile from Europe Thupten Gyatso, President of the Tibetan Community of Switzerland and Liechtenstein Karma Choekyi, President of the Swiss Tibetan Friendship Association Thomas Buchli had urged the Parliamentarian members to support the motion.

Welcoming the passage of the motion, Representative Thinlay Chukki thanked the parliamentarians for their support to the motion and noted that, "It has taken over two years for the petition to be passed as a motion which will not only benefit Tibetans but also all other rejected asylum seekers. We sincerely hope that the motion will be passed from the Council of States and thereby implemented by the Swiss government granting humanitarian solution for the rejected asylum seekers stuck under the old asylum procedure."

The motion for extraordinary humanitarian solution will likely be tabled before the other house of Swiss parliament, the Council of States, during the next session.

Germany Calls for Closure of All Compulsory Boarding Schools in Tibet

The Federal government of Germany expressed concern over "increasingly deteriorating" situation in Tibet, and voiced its support to the UN experts' call to end all compulsory boarding schools and forced relocations of Tibetan nomads in Tibet, in a meeting held with the Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid, on 20 April 2023.

A representative from the German federal foreign office shared concerns over systematic violations of human rights in Tibet and expressed its support to the UN experts' recent findings on the situation in Tibet and called upon China to end compulsory boarding schools and forcible removal of Tibetans nomads in Tibet by the Chinese government. The foreign office representative underscored state-led forced assimilation of Tibetan language, culture and religion, and said the aim of boarding schools in Tibet is "to suppress Tibetan language and culture".

Detailing gross violations of human rights in Tibet by China, the German foreign office's representative emphasised Germany ensures the issues of human rights violations are not "lost sight of" by Germany.

Representative Thinlay Chukki of the Tibet Bureau-Geneva welcomed Germany's firm position to safeguard fundamental rights of the Tibetan people and said this "sends a clear message across Europe that the deplorable situation in Tibet under China can no longer be overlooked". She urged China to pay heed to international calls to uphold its international human rights obligation and respect the rights of Tibetan people instead of spending billions to whitewash its atrocities in Tibet.

Further information can be found on the German Parliamentary News service on <https://www.bundestag.de>.



Germany Calls for Closure of All Compulsory Boarding Schools in Tibet.



www.tibetonline.tv

Newly Formed Italian Parliamentary Intergroup for Tibet Launched in Italian Senate Building



Newly-formed Italian Parliamentary Intergroup for Tibet Launched in Italian Senate Building.

The newly formed Italian Parliamentary Intergroup for Tibet was launched in the Italian Senate Hall on 9 March 2023, eve of Tibetan National Uprising Day. A joint press conference was organized in the Senate to announce the launch of the intergroup as well as to announce the Europe Stands with Tibet protest march being organized on 10 March in Rome to commemorate the 64th anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day.

In the presence of chief guest for the occasion Deputy Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile Dolma Tsering Teykhang, Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama Thinlay Chukki at Tibet Bureau Geneva, Member of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile from Europe Thupten Gyatso, the Intergroup was launched by Co-Ordinator of the Intergroup Senator De Priamo Andrea and members of the Intergroup Senator Terzi di Sant'Agata Giulio, Member of Chamber of Deputies Malavasi Ilenia, Senator Domenica Spinelli and former co-ordinator of the Intergroup Luciano Nobili.

During the press conference President of the Italia Tibet Association Claudio Cardelli and President of the Tibetan Community of Italy Tseten Bergamo welcomed the gathering. Co-Ordinator

of the Intergroup Senator De Priamo Andrea noted the importance of the intergroup and committed to carry forward the tasks of the former intergroup. He further committed to work towards passage of important resolutions on Tibet as well as to highlight the situation in Tibet at the parliament.

Members of the Intergroup Senator Teryi di Sant'Agata Giulio, On. Malavasi Ilenia and former co-ordinator of the Intergroup Luciano Nobili also reiterated the commitment and spoke at length about the worsening human rights situation inside Tibet under the Chinese government rule.

Representative Thinlay Chukki expressed her gratitude and congratulated the parliamentarians on the successful formation of the Italian Parliamentary Intergroup for Tibet. Giving a brief overview of the Tibetan National Uprising Day and the current situation in Tibet, she also thanked the Tibetan community of Italy for undertaking the important task of organizing the Europe Stands With Tibet event.

Chief Guest for the occasion Deputy Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile Dolma Tsering Teykhang

highlighted the deteriorating situation in Tibet and noted that the Communist Chinese Regime is systematically attempting to erase the Tibetan culture, religion, language and identity. Expressing serious concerns about the colonial style boarding schools in Tibet where nearly 1 million Tibetan children are being forcefully assimilated, she urged the UN to carry out detailed research on the ground realities of human rights violations in Tibet. She further spoke about the significance of the Tibetan plateau and noted that the ill-informed Chinese government policies including excessive mining are destroying the fragile environment of Tibet thereby gravely contributing to global warming. In this regard, she urged the international community to press China to preserve and protect the Tibetan plateau and its natural resources.

Speaking at the conference, Member of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile from Europe Thupten Gyatso noted that Tibet has historically been a sovereign state and the invasion and occupation of Tibet remains an unresolved international conflict. International jurist and author of the book *Tibet Brief 20-20* Michael Van Walt Van Praag also shared his insights about the situation of Tibet and its legal status under the international law. Italian Buddhist Union President Scianna Fillippo also spoke about the importance of Tibetan Buddhism and how the religious rights of Tibetans in Tibet is being curtailed by the Chinese government.

Nearly 1000 Tibetans and Europeans from Tibetan communities and Tibet Support Groups across Europe are expected to participate in the Europe Stands with Tibet event on 10 March marking the 64th commemoration of Tibetan National Uprising Day.

For detailed news visit:

www.tibet.net

“Vocational Training” by China Threatens Tibetan Identity and Carry Risk of Forced Labour in Tibet, Says UN Experts

A group of six UN experts jointly issued a press release expressing concerns over so-called vocational training and forced labour transfer programmes being carried out in Tibet by China, in a press release on 27 April 2023. This press statement is issued following the joint communication sent to the Chinese government on the matter.

The experts noted these programmes are being “used as a pretext to undermine Tibetan religious, linguistic and cultural identity, to monitor and politically indoctrinate Tibetans”. The experts also warned such programmes could lead to situations of forced labour.

Hundreds and thousands of Tibetans have been forcibly removed from their traditional sustainable lives to low-skilled and low-paid employment since 2015 under the “programme described as voluntary, but in practice their participation has reportedly been coerced”, said the UN experts.

The experts noted that the labour transfer programme is operated by a network of so-called vocational training centres, which focus less on developing professional skills, but press more on cultural and political indoctrination in a militarised environment. Furthermore, the experts echoed that Tibetans in the programme are barred from using Tibetan language and dissuaded from any form of expression of their religious identity. Both of which are regarded as “obstacles to poverty alleviation by the authorities”.

China claims so-called vocational training and labour transfer focused on improving living conditions. Whereas, the UN experts categorically detailed underlying issues that the programme “further impoverished Tibetans and lead to forced labour”.

The UN experts called upon China to: clarify the measures in place for Tibetans to opt out of vocational training and

labour transfer programmes; monitor the working conditions of Tibetans in their new places of employment; and to ensure respect for Tibetan religious, linguistic and cultural identity. The experts also urged the Chinese government to indicate steps that the state intends to take to comply with its international obligations to prevent forced labour and trafficking, and to ensure access to remedy and compensation for victims of such practices.

Welcoming the UN expert’s press release, Representative Thinlay Chukki of the Tibet Bureau-Geneva thanked the UN experts for undertaking their mandate and monitoring the situation in Tibet closely. “The experts’ detailed communication and press release on the forced labour including subjecting Tibetans to low-skilled and low-paid work, categorically debunks the Chinese government’s desperate narrative of ‘development in Tibet.’ It is time the

international community including the UN and member states question China on ‘development in Tibet’ especially development for whom and development at what cost,” remarked Representative Thinlay.

The group of experts who remain concerned and raised the issue include: Tomoya Obokata, Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences; Siobhán Mullally, Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children Ashwini K.P., Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance; Alexandra Xanthaki, Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights; Fernand de Varennes, Special Rapporteur on minority issues, and Saad Alfarargi, Special Rapporteur on the right to development.

THE 11TH PANGCHEN LAMA TURNS 34 TODAY

Abducted by China over 27 years ago

Name - Jetsun Tenzin Gedhun Yeshe Trinley Phuntsok
Pal Sangpo or Gedhun Choekyl Nylma

Age - 34 years old (born 25 April 1989)

Current Status - Enforced Disappearance along with his
entire family for over 27 Years (since 17 May 1995)



FACTS	IMPACT	CALL FOR ACTIONS	VIOLATIONS OF LEGAL INSTRUMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officially Recognised as the 11th Panchen Lama on 14 May 1995 • One of the Highest and Important Religious Leaders in Tibetan Buddhism • Human Rights Violations • No Information on Well Beings and Whereabouts • No Access to Religious Education • Once the Youngest Prisoner of Conscience in the World (6 Years Old) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interference with Tibetan Religious Traditions • Weakening of Social, Moral, and Spiritual Fabric of Tibetan Life • Striking at the Tibetan Religious Identity and Consciousness • Violation of Tibetan Peoples’ Shared Rights • Collective Sense of Grief over the Long-term Disappearance of an Important Religious Leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Information on Panchen Lama • Guarantee Access to Tibet for UN Procedures, Governments and Media • Uphold China’s Constitutional Guarantees and International Obligations • Release Panchen Lama and his family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Declaration of Human Rights • UN Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance • UN Convention on the Rights of the Child • International Convention on Civil and Political Rights • UN Convention against Torture • The Constitution of the People’s Republic of China

Tibet Advocacy Section, DIIR, Central Tibetan Administration

Parliamentary Delegation Raise Concerns Over Continued Oppression in Tibet at Joint Press Meet



Delegations during the press conference at Sikyong Auditorium on 10th March 2023.

To demonstrate their genuine solidarity and support towards resolving the Tibet-China conflict and to express their concerns over China's enforcement of repressive policies inside Tibet, the distinguished guests of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), who were invited at commemoration of the 64th anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day, spoke at the joint press conference organised by the Department of Information and International Relations, CTA.

The visiting guests comprise a four-member European Parliamentary delegation led by honourable Mikulas Peksa; a nine-member Parliamentary delegation of Mexico led by honourable Salvador Caro Cabrera (members of Tibet Support Groups); and honourable Arunas Valinskas, a member of the Lithuanian Parliament.

Addressing the press meeting held at Sikyong's Auditorium, Member of the European Parliament honourable Mikulas Peksa briefed the collective experiences of his and his co-parliamentarians' visits to the CTA and other Tibetan institutions in Dharamshala, expressing that they witnessed very good cooperation within the CTA and the excellent care provided to Tibetans in exile and other countries. He added, "we have also witnessed very good signs of cooperation between the

CTA and its host country India."

Honourable Salvador Caro Cabrera, who led the nine-member Parliamentary delegation of Mexico, shared their contentment about meeting with His Holiness the Dalai Lama this morning. He contended that His Holiness is just and legitimate (solution to) the cause of Tibet. Highlighting their visit to Dharamshala as a gesture of support for the Tibet cause, he stressed their denouncement of the one china policy that intends to endanger Tibetan identity. He encouraged non-violence as the guaranteed measure to resolve differences and conflict. To terminate China's continued execution of atrocities inside Tibet, he acknowledged the existence of a "big team" in Mexico to work on the issue while ensuring their dedicated commitments to resolving the Sino-Tibet conflict.

Representing the third group of the delegation, honourable Arunas Valinskas, a member of the Lithuanian Parliament, lauded that "it's truly fascinating to see what the Tibetan people in exile have done with organising themselves and maintaining their democracy" despite multiple challenges. He assured the existence of numerous groups in Lithuania contributing and supporting the cause of Tibet, including parliamentary and non-parliamentary groups, NGOs, and

many intellectuals. Considering the connection between the Lithuanians and Tibetans as "interesting" yet "strange" given the distance and distinction between the two, he said, "if you think about (the relations) in a deeper way, it stops being strange because our nations have gone through similar trials and tribulations". He continued, "being the victims of oppression is what makes us similar".

Following the address from the team leaders of each delegation, the speakers answered questions from reporters representing both Tibetan and Indian media houses that were assembled at the joint press meeting.

When asked about their views on the intervention of the Communist Party of China in recognising His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama's reincarnation, the three unanimously condemned China's interference. Arunas Valinskas underscored the issue of His Holiness' reincarnation "as a matter of wider principles of religious liberty and freedom of conscience whether it's reincarnation or just the matter of Tibetans to practice their religion". At the same time, Salvador Caro Cabrera stressed the requisite of global attention on this matter, while Mikulas Peksa regarded His Holiness and CTA as the legitimate authority in recognising the reincarnation of the current Dalai Lama.

The visitors further answered various questions raised by the media persons concerning the possibility of appointing a special coordinator for Tibet in the European Union, the trajectory of China's domestic politics and its repercussions to Tibet and the wider world, and the authenticity of the dialogue if happened between Tibet and China. The three representatives of visiting delegation also shared their respective experiences of meeting with His Holiness and the messages they want to convey to China by attending today's official event of the 64th anniversary of the Tibetan People's Uprising Day.

Sikyong Speaks on 72 Years of Chinese Colonial Rule in Tibet, Urges Global Community Not to Recognise China's Suzerainty of Tibet

Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration took part in a webinar titled “Seventy-two Years of Chinese Colonial Rule in Tibet” organised by The Democracy Forum shortly after his arrival in the UK on 24 April. Sikyong was among the panel of experts speaking about the Tibetan people and their struggle for freedom from oppressive Chinese rule.

In his keynote address, he explored key events in Tibet's recent history including the forgery committed by Chinese leadership at the signing of the 17-point Agreement with Tibet that led to a decade-long cultural revolution in Tibet until the end of Mao's era in 1976. Sikyong detailed the aftermath catastrophe impacts of the cultural revolution on the Tibetans for a long time until the takeover of leadership by Deng Xiaoping who allowed a degree of leniency to prevail in Tibet as far as policies and programs were concerned provided that Tibetans don't seek independence.

It was during Deng Xiaoping's era, Sikyong noted, that the hope for Sino-Tibet dialogue was made possible as Tibetan facts-finding delegation and exploratory teams were allowed to visit Tibet and Beijing between 1979-1984. However, by the mid-90s and the end of Deng Xiaoping's leadership, the situation drastically worsened. China demonstrated a lack of political will to engage and reciprocate the numerous initiatives of His Holiness's pursuit of a dialogue with them. Only in 2002, Beijing expressed its willingness to a dialogue with the representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Since then, a nine-round of talks took place between the delegation of the Tibetan leadership and the leadership in Beijing. The Tibetan side put forward some concrete proposals that will help build trust and confidence and move the ongoing process to a new level of engagement aimed at bringing about substantive negotiations to achieve a mutually acceptable solution to the

Tibetan issue, however, the leadership in Beijing refused to comply with any of the proposals set forth by the Tibetan counterparts and instead wanted His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Tibetans to legitimise Tibet as an integral part of China.

“Tibet stands as one of the least free countries in the world in the last 72 years of Chinese colonial rule in Tibet contending with South Sudan and North Korea. We are dying a slow death. Our culture is dying a slow death. All the policies and programs of the Chinese government are aimed at eradicating the Tibetan national identity and Tibet's environment,” Sikyong remarked and lamented that the Chinese government knowingly commits such atrocity. He raised concerns about the separation of 1 million Tibetan children from their families and who are forced assimilation at colonial boarding schools. He condemned this policy had anything to do with providing education so much as to sinicise the Tibetan children in its pursuit of the One China Policy.

In an effort to counter this growing aggression of China, Sikyong implores the global community not to recognise

China's suzerainty of Tibet as China would have it. He said the right to give this legitimacy belongs only to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people.

Apart from Sikyong, the key speakers at the webinar include Chris Law MP, Co-Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Tibet Dr Martin Mills, Director, Scottish Centre for Himalayan Research, University of Aberdeen Prof. Dibyesh Anand, Head of School of Social Sciences and Professor of International Relations, University of Westminster. Humphrey Hawksley, Author & former BBC Asia correspondent moderated the forum.

The Democracy Forum is a non-profit organisation founded in 2009 under the patronage of Baroness Nicholson of Winterbourne. Its principal goal is to advance democracy, peace and the rule of law to counter religious fundamentalism and intolerance in the global community. Since its inception, the forum has hosted and co-hosted seminars on a wide variety of topics relating to democracy and human rights across the world.



Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration taking part in a webinar titled “Seventy-two Years of Chinese Colonial Rule in Tibet” organised by The Democracy Forum

Australian Parliamentary Delegation Assures Continued Support for Tibet Cause at Press Conference in Dharamshala

The four-member delegation of the Australian All Parliamentary Group for Tibet, who visited Dharamshala on the invitation of the Tibet Information Office in Canberra, held a press conference on 19 April 2023 to express their support for the Tibetan people and their interest in preserving Tibet's unique cultural heritages that are endangered by the Chinese Communist Party's sinicization campaign.

DIIR Secretary Karma Choeying commended the visiting delegation for attending the press conference and introduced the MPs and Senator, namely MP Sharon Claydon (Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives), Senator Janet Rice, MP Sophie Scamps and MP Susan Templeman, to the media.

Recalling their worthwhile yet fulfilling experiences of meeting with the exiled Tibetan leadership and visitations to both governmental and non-governmental institutions in Dharamshala, one of the core leaders of the delegation, MP Susan Templeman, said, "Australia has recognized that there are real challenges for Tibetans in Tibet and there are threats to culture, education, language and your Tibetan way of life" at the press conference. She acknowledged their goal of the visit is "to get a deeper insight into those issues" and "to see what we can do as an Australian friend to be able to assist" while mentioning that they are representing the All Party Parliamentary Friendship Group for Tibet.

Following MP Susan Templeman, Senator Janet Rice, who has been advocating for the Tibetan people for an extended period in Australia, raised her and her colleagues' collective concerns over the ongoing violation of Human Rights in Tibet, such as forced Chinese boarding schools. She said, "It has been wonderful to get a sense of hope and inspiration from the Tibetan people here in Dharamshala" through meetings. In addition, she shared her encounter with Sikyong Penpa Tsering and Deputy



(L-R) Susan Templeman MP, Senator Janet Elizabeth Rice, Sharon Claydon MP, and Dr Sophie Scamps MP from Australia.

Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang during the 8th World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet in Washington and described meeting them again as "meeting old friends." Before closing her remarks, the Senator ensured, "When we return to Australia, we will continue to work tirelessly to get justice for the people of Tibet."

Deputy Speaker of the Australian House of Representatives MP Sharon Claydon, expressed her delight in seeing her Tibetan counterparts and witnessing the well-exercising Tibetan democratic polity. Lauding the Central Tibetan Administration for its extraordinary operation under an unusual situation filled with challenges, she labelled it as "the most extraordinary innovation in a democracy that I've seen". She paid her tributes to the Tibetan Parliamentarians and people across the globe for their active engagement and participation in democracy despite residing sporadically in different parts of the world and said, "That is a highly successful model of democracy". She further commended the "extraordinary spirit and resilience of the Tibetan people".

Sharing her proud moments as MP from Sydney of witnessing the large

and vibrant Tibetan community thriving in her electorate, MP Sophie Scamps assured her assistance in seeking the continued protection the Australian government has rendered to the Tibetan community. She also reiterated the shared principles of human rights, freedom, and cultural and religious rights between the two cultures.

Before concluding the press conference, the speakers answered the queries from the media, touching on the topics of the possibility of adopting a Tibetan Policy and Support Act in Australia and the installation of a Special Coordinator for Tibet, to which the delegations assured to propose the same for discussion among the members of All Party Parliamentary Friendship Group for Tibet in Australia. Similarly, they shared the key issues they discussed with His Holiness the Dalai Lama during the meeting a day before.

The delegations were accompanied by ATC's Executive Officer Zoe Bedford and Representative Karma Singey at the press conference. It was wrapped up following a vote of thanks from DIIR Additional Secretary Tenzin Lekshey, the spokesperson of CTA.

Kashag's Statement on 64th Anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day

Today is the sixty-fourth anniversary of the Tibetan People's Uprising against the occupation of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1959, the thirty-fourth anniversary of the PRC's imposition of the first martial law in Tibet in 1989 after three successive annual mass protests in Tibet's capital Lhasa and the fifteenth anniversary of the peaceful protests that erupted across the three traditional provinces of Tibet in 2008. On this solemn occasion, we remember and honour our compatriots and martyrs who have given their lives for the cause of Tibet. We stand in solidarity with their family members and with those who are still suffering under the oppression of the PRC's occupation.

We extend warm welcome to our distinguished guests comprising of four-member European Parliamentary delegation led by Mr Mikulas Peksa, nine-member Parliamentary delegation of Mexico led by Mr. Salvador Caro Cabrera, members of Tibet Support Groups, Mr. Arunas Valinskas, Member of Parliament, Lithuania, and Mr. Damon Wilson, President of National Endowment for Democracy. We wholeheartedly thank them for coming all the way to join with us on this momentous occasion as a gesture of their political support for the Tibetan people.

Sixty-four years ago, on this day, His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama was invited to a theatrical show at the Chinese military headquarters in Lhasa. Against the tradition, His Holiness was ordered to attend the show accompanied by a limited number of unarmed guards. When this information reached the Tibetan people, they rose in unison in mass uprising to implore His Holiness the Dalai Lama not to attend the show and to protest against the repressive policies unleashed by the PRC government in Tibet. The uprising broke out as memories of the so-called democratic reforms imposed in Kham and Amdo few years ago were still vivid. Tibetans were subjected to simultaneous land reform and cooperative system

by confiscating their land, livestock and means of production in the name of collectivisation and raising the taxes. In the name of religious reform, monks and nuns were forced to disrobe and monasteries were demolished. When Tibetans protested, lamas and lay leaders were imprisoned through deception. Tibetans were massacred and suppressed by labelling them as "bandits" and "rebels". The Tibetans also witnessed how the PRC leadership in Tibet blatantly violated the terms of the 17-Point Agreement for about eight years.

The Tibetan National Uprising averted the visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and other Tibetan spiritual and political leaders to the Chinese army camp, thus turning the fate of the Tibetan people. Guarded by Tibet's deities and oracles and escorted by soldiers of the Tibetan National Army and Chushi Gangdruk Defenders of the Faith Volunteer Army, His Holiness the Dalai Lama along with ministers of the Kashag safely made their way into exile in freedom, followed by some 80,000 Tibetans, including Tibetan government officials. It laid an unshakable foundation for Tibetans in their spirit and courage to resist every attempt made by the PRC government to erase the Tibetan national identity.

The invasion of Tibet by the Chinese Communist Government led to the death of an estimated 1.2 million Tibetans, destruction of more than 6,000 monasteries, as well as deforestation and destruction of wildlife and exploitation of mineral resources. Failing to learn lessons from the immense destruction caused to Tibet, the PRC authorities are repeating the mistake and even blindly carrying out harmful actions to cover its guilt.

In the 1980s, while implementing reform and opening-up policy, Deng Xiaoping put forward his strategic thinking on development based on two overall situations. Firstly, to open up and develop the eastern coastal areas with the help of central and western

regions. Secondly, the coastal areas in turn help accelerate the development of the central and western regions when they reach a level of moderate prosperity in late 1990s. However, at the start of the new millennium, the so-called Western China Development Programme was implemented. The "Programme" involved projects such as West-to-East Power Transmission, West-to-East Gas Pipeline, Qinghai-Tibet railway, Returning Farmland to Forest and Grazing to Grasslands, infrastructure development and so on. In reality, these are colonial policies aimed at exploiting the resources of the western region and maintaining national security rather than improving the livelihood of the local people. Looking at the programme being implemented for a targeted period of fifty years, there are hardly any projects which are of real benefit for Tibet and Tibetan people's livelihood. Hence, Deng Xiaoping's strategic thinking on development has become an empty slogan. Not only has the wealth gap between China and Tibet grown wider, the Tibetan region and Tibetans have today become a mere romanticized objects for wealthy Chinese. Today, Xi Jinping continues to advocate common prosperity, but how long will it take to see it materialize is difficult for anyone to say.

To consolidate sense of community for the Chinese nation, the PRC government is currently implementing a policy of one nation, one culture, one religion and one language through Sinicisation of Tibetan Buddhism and promotion of Chinese language across Tibet. Tibetan children are forced into a vast network of colonial-style kindergartens and boarding schools to learn Chinese language and way of life. The PRC government is enforcing an assimilationist language policy in these schools in complete disregard of the universally-adopted education system and international human rights standards. In a report on 6 February this year, the United Nations Independent Experts voiced alarm over the PRC government's policy aimed at assimilating over a million Tibetan



Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the 16th Kashag.

children culturally, religiously and linguistically through a residential school system. The so-called Tibet Statistical Year Book 2021 recorded 4,491 pre-primary school children in 2000, which has sharply risen to 23,414 in 2010 and 150,934 in 2020.

To speed up assimilation, marriages between Tibetans and Chinese are rewarded to promote “model family of ethnic harmony.” Likewise, thousands of Tibetan children are being sent to so-called Tibetan schools in Chinese areas. In the name of job placement, mass transfer of young Tibetans as surplus laborers to Chinese areas are undertaken on a large scale. There is massive increase in the number of Chinese officials and work teams being sent to the Tibetan areas. Moreover, 5,570 Tibetan residents of Chone County and Batse County were forcibly relocated to Guazhou County in Jiuquan on the pretext of dam construction and water conservation in their regions. 2,257 families in Drukchu County were resettled in Lanzhou Xinqu in the name of migration for ecological conservation. Furthermore, Tibetans in Tsoe City, Thewo County and Chone County are set to be relocated. 13,415 local residents were displaced due to hydropower projects under the Ministry of Water Resources on Gyalmo Ngulchu (Salween), Nyagchu (Yalung) and Zachu (Mekong) rivers. Similarly, more than 13,000 Tibetans in Ngaba Prefecture were relocated and over 3,000 are

planned to be displaced. These mass relocation of Tibetans are equivalent to Stalin’s policy of forced resettlement of millions of ethnic minorities over many decades in the 1930s which was declared illegal and criminal repressive acts by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on 14 November 1989.

Similarly, over 100,000 Tibetan nomads from about twenty counties in Nagchu, Ngari and Shigatse prefectures were relocated to City No. 4 constructed in Sinburi in Gongkar County in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). It raises serious doubt and suspicion as to how will this project provide sustainable livelihood for the relocated people and for what purpose will their native land be used for.

The PRC government, in the name of combating separatism and maintaining social stability, is controlling every movement of Tibetans with measures more draconian than the time of the Cultural Revolution. Every town, village, street, pastoral areas and grasslands are constantly surveilled using latest technology through Grid Management System. Last month, a so-called “Regulations on Network and Information Security” in TAR came into force. It tasked government departments, state and public organs above the county level to monitor and control information on the internet. The regulation criminalises even forming

and participating in social media group with “separatist forces”. The Chinese government has intensified its campaign of forcibly indoctrinating Tibetans including students, nomads, farmers and even monks and nuns with communist ideology. Large-scale collection of data from Tibetans through DNA extraction, Iris scan and facial recognition are being carried in the name of social management.

In March last year, 81-year-old Taphun died after setting himself on fire in front of the police station near Kirti Monastery in northeastern Tibet in protest against the PRC government’s repressive policies. He became the 157th confirmed and known Tibetan to self-immolate in Tibet since 2009. The Kashag again appeals to the Tibetans to preserve their lives in order to contribute all their energy for the cause of Tibet.

Extremely concerning reports of enforced disappearance and extrajudicial imprisonment of Tibetan writers, intellectuals, language advocates, human rights and environmental activists and those advocating against animal slaughter continue to emerge from Tibet. Tibetan political prisoners are released in failing health condition and are kept under constant surveillance. Last July, Jigme Gyatso, a former political prisoner arrested during the 2008 pan-Tibetan protest, died of poor health. Another former political prisoner, Geshe Tenzin Palsang, who was sentenced to prison in 2012, passed away last September. A Tibetan was reportedly beaten to death by the Chinese police for allegedly carrying groceries to an old age home. Tibetans are beaten to death for simply performing religious activities. Also, arrest of Tibetans for keeping photos of His Holiness the Dalai Lama continues unabated.

The whereabouts of the Eleventh Panchen Lama Tenzin Gedhun Yeshe Thinley, popularly called Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, still remain unknown following his abduction by the Chinese authorities in 1995. The Central Tibetan Administration will make every effort to seek the immediate

release of the Eleventh Panchen Lama and other Tibetan political prisoners and appeal for continued support from the governments, human rights organizations and individuals. We thank everyone who takes initiative in this advocacy campaign.

The Law of the People's Republic of China on National Regional Autonomy stipulates that the chairman and vice-chairman of the regional congress, chief and deputy chief prosecutors of the People's Procuratorates, president and vice-president of the People's Court of the national autonomous areas, heads of the autonomous regions, prefectures and counties should be those from the nationality exercising regional autonomy in that area. However, in the so-called TAR, the representation of Tibetans in the leadership at the county, prefectural and regional levels is barely 43%. And if the roughly 80% Tibetans who make to the powerless bodies like political consultative conference is not taken into account, the percentage of Tibetan representation will definitely be much lower. In the overall leadership of the "TAR", about 10% are so-called Chinese cadres aiding Tibet dispatched from China, which shows how much authority the PRC government gives to the Tibetans to govern themselves. Similarly, in the last year alone, around 139 Tibetan officials in the "TAR" were placed under investigation and expelled under the pretext of transgression of law and corruption. Many suspect this as the Chinese government's established mechanism aimed at stifling capable and promising Tibetan officials and the skills and potential of the Tibetans. The current year report of the so-called People's Procuratorate of the TAR reported the investigation in some cases from 1990, which completely disregards the judicial prosecution period.

Tibet's capital Lhasa was placed under severe lockdown continuously for over 100 days last year under the zero-Covid policy, causing enormous hardship in the people's daily life which pushed some to even commit suicide. Some were also arrested for distributing videos and information on the situation

and their whereabouts remain unknown. According to information trickling out from Tibet, after the sudden lifting of the lockdown in December 2022, many Tibetans died due to lack of medical facilities as large number of dead bodies were seen being carried to the crematorium daily. The offices of the Central Tibetan Administration and Tibetan community held weekly prayer services for the deceased and for those affected by the pandemic.

Looking for the welfare and respecting the aspirations of the people is the basic condition for a government to earn legitimacy. Hence, if a government flagrantly implement policies of eradicating a nationality, then the people have the natural right to protest the government's policy and even reject the government for their own protection.

The Central Tibetan Administration is hoping to find a mutually-agreeable way forward to discuss Tibet's future status based on the Middle-Way Policy. In this regard, we are ready to engage with the PRC government based on equality and friendship to seek a mutually beneficial and lasting solution. Moreover, we urge the PRC government to immediately stop its flawed policy of eradicating the Tibetan identity.

We welcome the reintroduction of the bipartisan and bicameral Bill of Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Conflict in both the Houses of the US Congress in February 2023 by House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Michael McCaul, Congressman Jim McGovern, Senator Jeff Merkley and Senator Todd Young. It will reinvigorate the hope and determination of the Tibetan people. The Bill is aimed at finding a resolution to Sino-Tibet conflict while recognising the true historical status of Tibet and urgency of the current situation. Similarly, on 14 December, the Canadian Parliament unanimously adopted a resolution endorsing the Middle-Way Approach and supporting the resumption of a dialogue between the Tibetan representatives and the PRC government. The said Bill and Resolution will certainly give meaningful leverage

to the Middle-Way Approach as a win-win solution to the Sino-Tibet conflict.

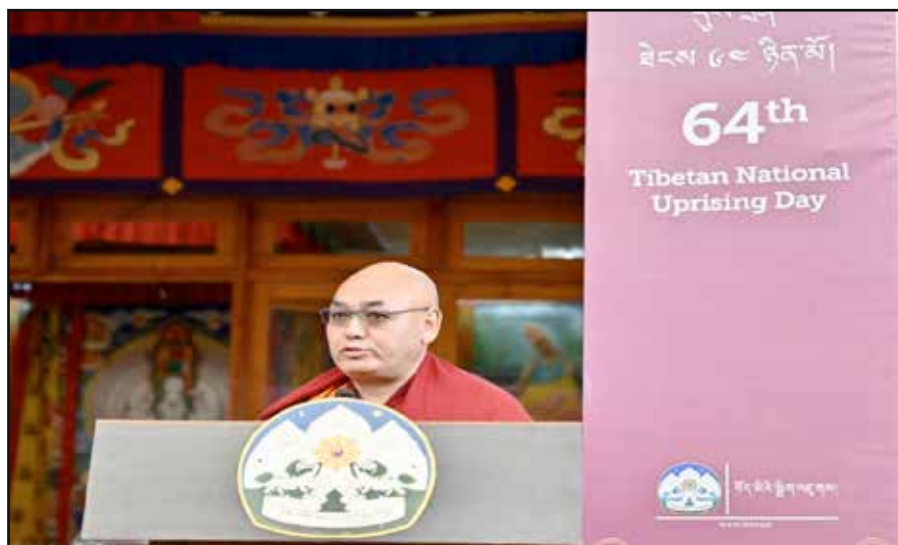
His Holiness the Dalai Lama emphasises the cultivation of love, compassion and concern for the well-being of others with a sense of oneness of humanity. If we can practice his advice in our daily lives, it will certainly pacify the enmity in this world engulfed in war and overcome the problems of natural calamity, pandemic, and famine.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama is not only the protector and symbol of Tibet and the Tibetan people, but also an unparalleled leader revered across the world for his commitment to promote human values and religious harmony, preservation of Tibet's Buddhist culture and revival of ancient Indian knowledge. We will resolutely oppose the PRC government's baseless accusations of labelling His Holiness the Dalai Lama as separatist and every attempt to obstruct His Holiness's meritorious service for the world. Moreover, the PRC government will lose the key to resolve the Sino-Tibet conflict if it fails to positively recognise the historic bond between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people and the reality of the current situation.

I would like to take this opportunity to express the Tibetan people's sincere gratitude and appreciation to India for providing us a second home and its unwavering support as well as to the United States and other Governments, Parliamentary Tibet Support Groups including the newly-formed Parliamentary Tibet Support Groups in Mexico and Spain following the Eighth World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet, Tibet Support Groups and individuals who support truth and justice. We also thank the Tibetan Associations, Voluntary Tibetan Advocacy Groups and Non-governmental Organizations for their voluntary advocacy campaigns.

Finally, I pray for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the simultaneous fulfillment of all his wishes. May the truth of Tibet prevail soon and peace spread across the world.

Statement of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on 64th Tibetan Uprising Day



Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel of the 17th Tibetan Parliament in Exile.

Today we mark the day in 1959 when the communist Chinese government carried out a brutal armed suppression in Tibet's capital Lhasa. It was a part of an elaborate series of machinations by China which even included a plot on the very life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, a situation impossible for the Tibetan people to endure. It was therefore inevitable that tens of thousands of Tibetan people from all the three provinces of the country, both lay and clerical, rose in a spontaneous upsurge of protests in Lhasa with the singularity of a common thought on the wellbeing of their nation in their minds. And today, we commemorate the 64th anniversary of that momentous, historic occasion. Today is also our Martyr's Day, when we remember the patriotic valour of the men and women of our nationhood. And so, on behalf of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile, I offer my tribute and obeisance to the patriotic men and women of Tibet who have sacrificed their all, including their very lives, for the sake of the religious, political, and ethnic identity of the nation with indomitable courage and deeds. At the same time, I also offer my sense of empathy and solidarity with the men and women in Tibet who continue to be subjected to this day to untold suffering under the oppressive rule of the government of China.

Tibet and China have since ancient

times been nations renowned for their dominance and influence in the continent of Asia. They were neighbouring countries with their own separate histories of evolvement. Frequent incidents of armed conflict had occurred between them across their common borders. And in one of the border peace settlements between them, the two countries concluded a peace treaty which established "a great era when Tibetans shall be happy in Tibet and Chinese shall be happy in China", a situation which shall never be changed. A stone pillar bearing the inscription of this treaty in both Tibetan and Chinese languages could still be seen standing in front of the Tsuglakhang Temple in Tibet's capital Lhasa as a stark evidence of that event. Nevertheless, the communist government of China, being inspired by an evil design to seize the territory as well as the human and natural resources of the Snowland of Tibet, proclaimed in 1949 an announcement of a pretext to carry out what it called a peaceful liberation of Tibet. And so, it launched an armed invasion of all the three provinces of Tibet, during which it took the lives of hundreds of thousands of Tibetan people. Besides, the fact that the Tibetan people felt compelled to stage an uprising in Tibet's capital Lhasa on the 10th of March in 1959 as a result of a rising crescendo of oppression under the domination of China remains

an indelible mark in the history of the Tibetan nation.

In the year 1951, the government of China coerced a delegation from the government of Tibet to sign a so-called 17-Point Agreement. Over time, however, it kept on trampling on each and every provision of that agreement. Those actions eventually compelled His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the temporal head and spiritual leader of Tibet, to go into exile to India, along with his council of government ministers, to be followed by some eighty thousand ordinary Tibetan people. The history of Tibetan exile since then is now 64 years old.

After it completed its seizure of the entire territory of Tibet, the communist Chinese government unleashed a devastatingly devious series of policies aimed at the obliteration of the very identity of Tibet, including its ethnicity and culture. Under one such policy campaign alone, namely the Cultural Revolution, the entirety of the districts and estates, monasteries and temples, household corporations of lamas, and so forth that had histories dating back over a thousand years and which bore characteristic features of Tibetan cultural heritage, were targeted for destruction. From the ruins of these destructions, sacred and precious items that were emblematic of the body, speech and mind representations of the Buddha, other valuable religious items that were made from such materials as gold, silver, and copper; representations of body, speech, and mind of the Buddha and articles of worship as well as ornaments and jewellery belonging to households, and so forth were taken to China. In addition, abbots, lamas, and tulkus, as well as geshe; other monk leaders such as chant masters and discipline masters; besides government and district officials were sought to be humiliated by being capped with conical paper hats on which various types of gross criticisms were written. They were then taken around town and before assembled crowds of people. At such forced public gatherings, they were subjected to violent struggle sessions, with students

being made to take on their teachers, and children being made to take on their own parents, as the former taunted the latter with violence and outpouring of criticisms as ordered. What is more, Tibetan women were subjected to sexual molestations. These and other manners of inhuman atrocities have become parts of the lore of the historical sequence of Chinese atrocities in Tibet and could never be forgotten.

Even to this day, China continues to carry out in Tibet policies of atrocities in the name of such campaigns as 'education in socialist thought', 'education in patriotism' and so forth with a design to obliterate the Tibetan national identity. To the Tibetan people, the endless sequence of such atrocities remains a struggle they have no choice but to endure day and night, utterly unbearable as they may be. Nevertheless, the Tibetan people in Tibet have stood their ground with indomitable determination borne of a feeling of common cause with their brethren, like the unassailable solidness of a mountain, to resist by direct, indirect, and other means the atrocities of the government of China. Even so, the Chinese government has remained just as unrelenting across the barriers of times past, present, and future, carrying out its political objectives by means of exerting political pressure on the Tibetan people, subjecting the Tibetan people to a range of discriminatory treatments that includes those in cultural, social, economic and other fields, with the intended purpose of effecting an ever-worsening trend of the human rights situation in Tibet. Corroborations of these fact have continued to appear in a number of international reports to this day.

Likewise, the government of China continues to remain guilty of carrying out a devastating destruction without any sense of any limit the natural environment of Tibet. In Particular, in its attempts to make Tibet a part of China as an established fact, it has been distorting the national history of Tibet and misusing its historical artifacts by means of museum displays, publications in magazines, newspapers,

on websites, and use of every other kind of media. Such false and utterly baseless propaganda publicity claims continue to be carried out by the Chinese government in countries across the world. Along with it, the government of China remains relentless in implementing in Tibet what is now a patently overt brutal policy of obliterating the unique cultural heritage of the Tibetan people, our traditions and customs, language, ethnic identity, and so forth. China's current religious policy in Tibet says that "authorities at all levels should keep up the momentum of Sinicizing Tibetan Buddhism, led by the ideology of socialist core values, to ensure the success of this policy under the power of the excellent culture and tradition of China". China is thus actively implementing in Tibet a policy to Sinicize the Tibetan tradition of Buddhism. This is a total violation of the philosophical doctrines, the practice of the curricula of three trainings, and the Sutra and Tantra precepts of the Tibetan tradition of Buddhism. China should not only put an immediate end to this policy but it also must respect the freedom of religious belief not only especially of the Tibetan people but also of all other ethnic groups who have traditionally been believers in the Buddhist religion. On this basis, the government of China should base its ideology on the values of compassion and non-violence as discoursed in the Buddhist texts. If the government of China redirects what it calls the China dream with the adoption of such Buddhist values and takes the lead, the results will be social harmony, stability, and peaceful coexistence. More than that, there is no need to say that it will have a corollary effect of bringing about peaceful coexistence among nations across the world. So, it is extremely important that the leaders of China make no mistake in what direction they take in steering the destiny of their country.

Likewise, it bears pointing out that the government of China has been continuous in interfering in and making abusive misuse of the unique Tibetan Buddhist tradition of the process for the discovery and recognition of the religiously important reincarnations of

its Tulku figures. It has trampled on the customary Tibetan Buddhist practice of the discovery and recognition of reincarnations of religious leaders by passing regulations that are actually in direct contradiction with its previous assurances. In particular, China has already been carrying out preparations for the installation of its own candidate for the reincarnation of the present Dalai Lama. Through its official media, China has been proclaiming to the world the imperative of its claimed right to install its own choice of the reincarnation of the present Dalai Lama. To the government of China this is nothing but a matter of asserting of political power, for it keeps reiterating this assertion of right in a sort of mad tantrum while having no factual basis whatsoever to sustain its claim. The reality is that in the traditional Tibetan practice for the discovery and recognition of the reincarnations of tulkus, the decision resides in the concerned religious leader alone. Any claim of anyone else being entitled to interfere with it in a coercive manner is totally baseless in as much as there is no scope for any such meddling. In particular, in the case of the reincarnation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, speeches have been given on successive occasions, clearly expressing his wishes. It goes without saying that these alone will be the basis on which Tibetans both in Tibet and in exile as well as the entire people in the international community will exercise their right of recognition of his reincarnation.

Last year China introduced what it described as standards and curricula of language education and test for primary and middle school students, which was a part of what it called its standard language education programme under its 14th Five-Year Plan. This in turn was a part of a policy plan introduced way back in 2009 by China's ministry of Education and its Department of Language Application and Administration for making a switch to Chinese language the entire education programme in the primary and lower middle schools as well. This plan envisages that by the year 2035, the languages of all the other nationalities in the People's

Republic of China will have been eliminated and the common language – which is the Chinese language – will have replaced them. This action of the Chinese government is direct negation of the rights of minorities granted under China's own Law on Regional National Autonomy. This policy is already being vigorously enforced in Tibet today to the extent that parents have been left with no alternative but to make efforts to reinforce their exertion on their children's learning of Chinese language.

Today, under the rule of the Chinese government, a large number of new boarding schools are being built in Tibet. Unwilling parents are being coerced with intimidation and threats to enrol their reluctant children in these schools. Four Special Rapporteurs of the United Nations Human Rights Council have determined in a report that the number of Tibetan children being kept in these schools number nearly a million. Among them are stated to be children who are as young as three to four years old. These children are being educated in an environment in which they are cut off from even a semblance of their ethnic and cultural identity and consciousness. The purpose is to try to mould these Tibetan children into a generation of people who would love the communist Chinese government and repose their loyalty to it. However, facilities in these schools are appallingly abysmal. And the extreme distress and feeling of loneliness of these children in such a situation is compounded by the fact that they are kept away from their parents and society and left without anyone in whom they can repose their trust. Such is the situation in which the Tibetan children are being subjected to beating, sexual molestation, discrimination, and other forms of ill-treatment, with reports emerging about them continuing to be distressingly numerous. And so, I take the opportunity of this occasion to especially highlight these efforts by the government of China to implement a policy of establishing so-called boarding schools as a means to obliterate the ethnic identity and culture of the Tibetan people. And I appeal to the United Nations as well as leaders of countries in

the international community to request the government of China as well as bring pressure on it to bring to an end this ill-conceived boarding school project.

Also Today, China is actively carrying out in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region a policy of compulsorily collecting their DNA samples. According to some researchers, China has been inconspicuously carrying out this programme from about the year 2013. And today, DNA samples are being harvested from Tibetan children as young as five years of age, as per a finding of a report by the international human rights organization Human Rights Watch. To put it all in a nutshell, China has, since its occupation and annexation of Tibet, and to this day, been implementing a policy of colonialism, giving no consideration whatsoever to the wishes of the Tibetan people, and relying on nothing but a policy of violent repression. And this was the reason why in 1959 as well as in the years 1987, 1988, and 1989, there were a series of large-scale peaceful protests in Tibet. And then there was the large-scale peaceful uprising protests of the Earth-Mouse Year in Tibet in 2008. And since the year 2009, there has also been a series of protest self-immolations as well as various other forms of protests against Chinese rule across Tibet. And so it was that the Tibetan people have been continuous through the vicissitudes of time in protesting against the erroneous policies of the government of China. And this is a situation which cannot in any way come to an end so long as the just cause of the Tibetan people continues to remain unresolved.

As per the World Health Organization, the Covid-19 global pandemic has, since its outbreak from the central Chinese city of Wuhan towards the end of 2019 and spread to countries across the world, made a total of more than seven hundred and fifty-eight million people ill and killed a total of nearly seven million people worldwide as of the 25th of February in 2023. China has previously been implementing what it called a Zero-Covid policy, under which draconian measures were imposed on

the movement of people. However, from about the end of November last year, strong protests against this policy erupted from various parts of the People's Republic of China. These protests led to a defeat of the Zero-Covid policy and the government of China had no choice but to restore the people's freedom of movement. However, this led to a massive increase in the spread of the pandemic infection. Although it remains difficult to find out the numbers in Tibet at that time, postings of pictures made on social media platforms have shown that there had been a severe lack of medical facilities which was compounded by a paucity of other serious problems, as a result of which there were sicknesses and deaths unprecedented in history. For all those victims, I take this opportunity to express grief as a way to empathize with them and to offer dedication of merit and prayers of aspiration as well as to express condolences to the surviving bereaved families.

The Tibetan people in Tibet have been resolute in never acquiescing to the policies of the government of China to obliterate their ethnic identity and its racially discriminatory oppression of them. Rather, they have remained indefatigable in reaffirming their determination to continue their campaign of peaceful resistance. These have certainly been not wasted efforts. In many countries across the international community, laws and resolution have been passed on successive occasions, proclamations issued, and speeches made to express support, sympathy, concern and so forth with regard to the issue of Tibet and the situation in the Chinese occupied territory. By these means, vigorous direct, indirect, and other efforts have been made in attempts to convince the government of China to end its policy of violent repression in Tibet. These efforts have also been directed at the realization of talks between the Chinese government and envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for the purpose of achieving a negotiated solution to the issue of Tibet on the basis of a mutually beneficial middle-way approach of the Tibetan leadership in exile. On the issues of

ensuring the improvement of the human rights situation in Tibet at present and achieving a negotiated solution for resolving the issue of Tibet, our determination remains resolute. Hence, we reiterate our call on the leadership of government of China to seize the opportunity that exists today to resume the Sino-Tibetan dialogue.

Following the holding of the 8th World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet in the United States Capital Washington, DC, last year, Tibet support groups have been newly established in the Chamber of Deputies of the parliament of Mexico in South America and in the Senate of the Spanish Parliament. These have been major achievements in the Tibetan struggle and we offer our appreciations to everyone who took responsibility for the success of these efforts. It is a matter of great significance that delegates of members of European Parliament, as well as from the parliaments of Mexico and Lithuania have especially arrived to take part in this commemorative event. Their support for the just and non-violent cause of Tibet is of great importance and I take this opportunity to offer them special words of gratitude.

It is an ongoing programme of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile to group its members into delegations to lobby for support for the issue of Tibet and our plan is to further expand this campaign effort in the new year. The most important thing about achieving a just solution to the issue of Tibet is that Tibetans ourselves should take the primary responsibility for it. As regards the Tibetan people in Tibet, their courage, selflessness, and determination remain solid as a mountain. And it is important that as far as the Tibetan people living in exile are concerned, they have a duty to prove their worthiness with regard to the struggle for the just cause of Tibet by being mindful of the gratitude they owe to the kindness of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and by means of a proper use of their democratic freedoms.

I also take the opportunity of this occasion on behalf of Tibetan people both in Tibet and in exile to offer greatest of gratitude

to the government and people of India who have extended to us all facilities of rehabilitation and assistance, as well as to the other countries, organizations, and private individuals who have taken interest in and extended support on the issue of Tibet.

Ultimately, I offer prayers that His

Holiness the Dalai Lama, the master of all teachings of the Buddha and saviour of all beings, may remain with us for a hundred aeons, that, on this basis, all his sacred wishes may be seen fulfilled with spontaneity, and that the just cause of Tibet may be seen accomplished in all speediness so that the Tibetan people in Tibet and in exile may be reunited.

Tibetan Parliament Issues Statement in Response to Misinterpreted Video of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama is a champion of world peace and the master of all teachings of the Buddha. To the Tibetan people, He is the ultimate protector, irreplaceable leader, and guiding light. He is the embodiment of the Tibetan people's identity, the emblematic symbol of their unity, and their free spokesman. He has devoted His life to carrying out four principal commitments for the benefit of humanity. These include the fact that as a human being, He has striven to promote human values. This, in His view, is the basis of happiness for everyone – whether as an individual, family, or society. In particular, the education in secular ethics, which His Holiness the Dalai Lama has pioneered and espoused, has become widespread and is being strongly implemented across the world.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has routinely granted audience to people from within and outside communities across the world whenever they sought it. These people have belonged to a variety of different religions, occupational pursuits, races, and heritage. Besides, to the seven to eight billion people of this world, He has become an important source of inspiration in their efforts to achieve peace, well-being, and happiness. His Holiness is the epitome of compassion. It is an all too well-known fact that whether you are a youngster, an adult, an elderly person, or whatever your national origin may be, He never belittles whatever questions you put to Him or whatever requests you make to

Him. Rather, He makes utmost efforts to satisfy everyone to the best of his ability. On occasions, on an understanding of having developed a fellow feeling, His Holiness interacts in a clearly playful manner with others, such as by pulling their beards or touching His cheek or nose with theirs. And so, His Holiness has adopted numerous different ways to informally interact with people in a wholehearted manner. This mannerism on His part has resulted in nothing but elation in the minds of the many people whom He has interacted with thus. This is borne out by the fact that His Holiness the Dalai Lama has repeatedly ranked among those at the top of the lists of leaders most admired or loved by people in opinion polls conducted with the participation of people from across the world. Hence, it has become of utmost importance that all concerned persons should, build their awareness of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's usual way of thinking and acting, and take responsibility to make efforts to create an understanding of the truth by dispelling the misconceptions that have arisen on the major international media and in communities.

The Central Tibetan Administration and, especially, His Holiness the Dalai Lama have been uninterrupted targets of vilification by the communist Chinese government. It is a campaign that the Chinese government has kept on pursuing at all times, and in every possible manner, both domestically and internationally, employing various sorts

of media, private individuals and so forth. Its vile policy objective continues to attempt to destroy or otherwise degrade Tibetan society. There is, of course, no way the Chinese government can mislead people in the international community with a sense of discernment and integrity. However, on occasions, when the Chinese government did manage to mislead a few people with their disingenuously false information, people with a sense of integrity both within and outside the community, as well as organisations have continued to provide timely clarifications, for which we offer our compliments. We see it as important to emphasise that whenever such incidents occur, all should, instead of going astray by following misinformation, pay close attention to all aspects of the issue – outward, inner, as well as hidden – with care, caution and steadiness of purpose to be able to counter them effectively.

We have been deeply hurt and saddened by the misinterpretation being currently given to an incident in a recent event with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, where without proper research, irresponsible and careless sort of explanations and comments were being given to it in the media. There is, of course, no need to mention the fact that the activities of His Holiness the Dalai Lama are objects of great interest and delight for many hundreds of millions of people from across the world. His Holiness has very graciously acceded to pleas to live a long life for the happiness and wellbeing of sentient beings as well as for the sake of the Buddha dharma and sentient beings. In keeping with this noble promise, we ardently pray with utmost devotion that His Holiness the Dalai Lama continues to adhere to this commitment to keep carrying out his noble deeds on the basis of living a long life.



CTA Offers Long Life Prayers to His Holiness the Dalai Lama on Behalf of Tibetan People



Gaden Tri Rinpoche presenting traditional offerings to His Holiness the Dalai Lama during the Long Life Prayer offered by CTA at the Main Tibetan Temple in Dharamsala, HP, India on March 15, 2023.

Under a clear blue sky on 15 March 2023, the rising sun was catching the peaks of the mountains as His Holiness the Dalai Lama arrived at the gate to his residence this morning. He was received by President of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) – Sikyong Penpa Tsering, Speaker of the Parliament – Khenpo Sonam Tenphel and Chief Justice Commissioner (Acting) – Karma Dadul.

As monks playing horns led the way, the three officials escorted him under an arch of flowers to the temple where the CTA were to offer a ceremony of prayers for his long life on behalf of all Tibetans inside and outside Tibet. In addition to smiling and waving to members of the crowd, His Holiness stopped now and then to listen to singers and watch dancers who performed for him.

Once in the temple, His Holiness took his seat on the throne and the Gaden Tri Rinpoché stepped forward to greet him and then sat down again in the centre of a line of Lamas who represented Tibet's religious traditions.

To the left of Tri Rinpoché, who is the leader of the Geluk Tradition, representing the Sakya Tradition,

was Chopgyé Trichen Rinpoché; representing the Nyingma Tradition, Ringu Tulku and Khenchen Nyima Gyaltzen; to Tri Rinpoché's right, representing the Bönpo Tradition, was Menri Trizin Rinpoché; representing the Drukpa Kagyu, Khenpo Ngédön Rinpoché; and representing the Jonang Tradition, Jonang Gyaltzab Rinpoché.

Prayers began with Trulshik Rinpoché's 'Clouds of Ambrosial Blessings'. Meanwhile tea and sweet rice were served.

As part of the ceremony five monks dressed in ornate costumes representing dakinis from the eight cemeteries, the 24 dakini places and the pure lands came forward. They would request the Lama not to remain in the world, but to come with them to the pure lands. The monks performing the Long-life ritual replied that, as all the Buddha's doctrines were still present, the holder of these doctrines should remain in the world for the welfare of sentient beings and made clear that he was being requested to do so. They told the dakinis that they should return to their own abodes.

The disciples renewed their pledges to the Lama and begged him to remain

while asking the dakinis to leave. In order that they would not depart empty-handed, the dakinis were offered an effigy in place of the Lama, with the assurance that, because of the blessings it had received, it was more precious than the actual Lama and should be taken instead.

The master of the ritual then told the dakinis he would offer them whatever they wished, but requested them to leave him the ribbons representing the light rays by which the Lama would be led to the pure lands. He then cut the ribbons, symbolically severing the Lama's path to the pure lands, and wrapped them around the dakinis' necks. One by one the monks representing the dakinis turned and left the temple, following which the effigy of the Lama was also taken out.

Next, the Nechung Oracle, who had been invoked and gone into trance in the Kalachakra Temple, entered the Main Temple at a run. He paid his respects to His Holiness and offered him representations of the body, speech and mind of the Buddhas. He was followed by the Yudrönma oracle, who likewise paid her respects.

Nechung gathered the Ganden Tri Rinpoché, the Sikyong and the Speaker together before His Holiness and delivered his request before his trance came to an end.

In conjunction with an elaborate mandala offering, the Ganden Tri Rinpoché stepped forward and, flanked by the Sikyong and the Speaker, began to read an appreciation of His Holiness's deeds and a supplication to him to live long.

"We, the Central Tibetan Administration—on behalf the Tibetans inside and outside Tibet, and the Protective Deities of Tibet—bow at your feet and briefly request Your Holiness, to live long. We also renew our rock-solid pledge to you.

"Avalokiteshvara is the special deity of Tibetan people. As you promised

in the past, "May I be like a parent to the beings of the Snow Land", you manifested as the "Three Ancestral Kings"—Songtsen Gampo, Trisong Detsen and Tri Ralpachen—and then the series of Dalai Lamas.

"You were born in the Tsongkha Dekham region of Amdo and grew up in Tibet at a time of great turmoil, but still you diligently pursued your education becoming a top-ranking scholar, a holder of the Geshé Lharampa Degree. At the age of 16, you took up temporal and spiritual responsibility for Tibet. You introduced reforms.

"When we came into exile, we knew no one, but under your guidance we built settlements, monasteries, nunneries and schools.

"You introduced the idea of democracy to our exile community, made changes to the way it was fulfilled as necessary, and finally, by devolving your responsibilities to the elected leadership, actually implemented a fully functioning democracy.

"You have explained the value of love and compassion in creating a peaceful, more compassionate world. You have promoted inter-religious harmony. You have encouraged the preservation and promotion of Tibetan religion and culture as well as the protection of Tibet's natural environment. You have revealed that the Tibetan Buddhist tradition is like a treasure for the world, and you have supported the revival of ancient India wisdom. These are your principal commitments.

"You have participated in the many Mind & Life Conferences that have provided opportunities for modern scientists and Buddhist scholars and practitioners to learn from each other. You have overseen the SEE Learning programme that demonstrates how such basic human values as compassion and warm-heartedness can be combined with a modern education.

"You are unanimously honoured and respected as the protector, refuge and

guardian of all the people of Tibet, China, and Mongolia

"We offer you the seven royal emblems that represent the vast ocean of Buddhafields; we offer representations of the body, speech and mind of the buddhas, along with the eight auspicious symbols and the eight auspicious substances. We also wish to make an offering of practice.

"We strongly pray to Your Holiness not to waiver from your pledge to live to more than 125 years of age.

Remain until cyclic existence comes to an end

As protector of the Land of Snows
Whose beings are without protection.
Continue to incarnate until all beings are enlightened

And bestow blessings of the four excellences:

Spiritual knowledge, prosperity,
happiness and liberation.

"In 2011, when Your Holiness devolved your temporal authority to the elected leadership, you retained only the title 'Fourteenth Dalai Lama' and yet the inextricable historic bond between the Dalai Lamas and Tibetan people remains as strong as ever.

"We the Tibetan people wholeheartedly request Your Holiness to kindly accept our request, as the Seventh Dalai Lama has written in his 'Praise to Avalokiteshvara':

Even your own name is blessed.
Whoever hears it will be freed from fear.

Those who keep your name in mind will reap fruit similar to performing devotions to countless buddhas.

This has been taught by the great sage with words of truth,

and so, with great hope we make a prayer that you, great protector, whose mind is undistracted, will rescue these desperate sentient beings."

The Lamas representing their

respective traditions came forward to formally offer His Holiness representations of the body, speech and mind of the Buddhas. Meanwhile a procession of people bearing offerings filed through the temple. Musicians and singers performed in the background. At the end came an elderly man in a white chuba carrying a Tibetan flag.

Addressing the crowd, His Holiness told them, "I don't have much to say today. Not only are beings with form here, but the formless beings of Tibet have joined us in this Long-life Ceremony. "Tibet has gone through great difficulties, yet we have sought to preserve our Buddhist culture and traditions for the wider benefit of the people of China, Mongolia and Tibet. At the same time interest has grown in the West and scientists have been eager to learn about the inner workings of the mind and emotions. In taking part in this I feel I have achieved some benefit for the doctrine. I intend to continue to do what I can in the coming decades.

"Today, the people and protectors of Tibet, such as Nechung, have offered this Long-life Ceremony on my behalf. I am physically well and I will continue to do all I can to preserve the Dharma in the Himalayan regions. The purpose of Buddhism is to be of benefit to others. I pray that relying on this very body I may continue to bring about others' welfare. Please join me in making similar aspirations."

"Times are changing and truth will prevail. There are indications that things will change for the better in China before long. Therefore, please remain strong and preserve your sense of brotherhood and sisterhood. Be cheerful and remain at ease."

-His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama to Tibeans inside Tibet

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Addresses Global Buddhist Summit 2023

When His Holiness the Dalai Lama arrived at the Ashok Hotel, venue of the Global Buddhist Summit 2023, he was welcomed by Dr Abhijit Halder, Director General of the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) and Ven Dr Dhammapiya, Secretary General IBC. The Summit organizers had provided a golf-cart to carry His Holiness to the auditorium. The congregation rose to their feet when he entered the room.

His Holiness walked onto the daïs and bowed before a statue of the Buddha set up there. Next, he greeted the various Buddhist dignitaries he was joining on the stage as he made his way to his seat, but before he sat down, he saluted members of the congregation gathered in the hall.

To His Holiness's left on the daïs sat His Eminence Rev Khamba Lama Gabju Choijamts Demberel (Mongolia), Chamgon Kenting Tai Situpa (Tibet), Ven Bhikshu Dhamma Shobhan Mahathero (Nepal), and Most Ven Thich Thien Tan (Vietnam). To his right sat Most Ven Waskaduwe Mahindawansa Mahanayake Thero (Sri Lanka), Most Venerable Abhidhajamaharahthaaguru Sayadaw Dr Ashin Nyanissara (Burma), His Holiness 43rd Sakya Trizin, Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoché (Tibet), His Eminence Padma Acharya Karma Rangdol (Bhutan), His Eminence Kyabjé Yongzin Ling Rinpoché Tenzin Lungtok Thinley Chöphak (Tibet) and Ven Dr Dhammapiya (India).

Ven Dr Dhammapiya opened the morning's proceedings by welcoming His Holiness, the venerable guests and members of the audience. He noted that yesterday, the summit had heard about the different Buddhist traditions that have evolved in different parts of the world. Each of these is like a different coloured flower growing from the same stalk, which is the teaching of Buddha Shakyamuni. The Buddha gave different teachings to different people of different capacity in different places so, he said,

it is good to remind ourselves of what is said in verse 194 of the Dhammapada:

Happy is the arising of a Buddha;
happy is the exposition of the Ariya Dhamma;
happy is the harmony amongst the Sangha;
happy is the practice of those in harmony.

He suggested that all communities of the Buddhist Sangha need to step forward to address the challenges before us in the world today. We are all human beings, he observed. We are not that different from one another. We share the same air and the same water. Therefore, we have to adopt a global point of view to promote world peace, protect Mother Earth and practise compassion. We need to implement the universal values implicit in all religious traditions to help us all.

"Let's join hands," he said, "to work in harmonious unity to promote the Buddha's teachings for the welfare and happiness of all sentient beings."

Colonel Rajesh Jindal, the moderator, introduced a group of Theravadin monks who chanted auspicious verses in Pali. They were followed by monks from the Sanskrit tradition chanting in Tibetan.

Jindal explained that Most Venerable Abhidhajamaharahthaaguru Sayadaw Dr Ashin Nyanissara (Burma) had been invited to speak, but had been unable to attend. His message was read on his behalf. In it he emphasized the importance of cultivating a good heart and its implicit qualities of love, compassion and forgiveness.

He observed that if there is no peace in individuals' hearts, there will be no peace in the world. And the only way to achieve that peace is to practise insight meditation. Such meditation can help us achieve a balanced mind; just as cultivating compassion enables us to change a negative mind into one that is



His Holiness the Dalai Lama addressing the gathering. Photo/OHHDL

positive. The Most Venerable's message concluded with the wish may peace and harmony prevail throughout the world.

Col Jindal introduced Prof Robert Thurman, a very old student of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, to represent the academic study of Buddhism at the summit. Thurman began with a plea that he felt a little intimidated to be speaking in front of His Holiness, but made up for it by reciting a prayer to Avalokiteshvara. He noted that His Holiness also declares that world peace comes from inner peace and that people need to be educated in the ways to achieve such tranquillity.

Thurman recalled that in his address to the summit yesterday Prime Minister Modi announced that India has historically been dedicated to 'ahimsa', non-violence or doing no harm. This is important when it comes to people being willing to die rather than take life. Thurman noted that the Buddha was born into a warrior family, but abandoned that kind of life in order to overcome the obscurations in his mind. Great Indian universities such as

Nalanda developed an approach to education that enabled participants to come to understand the nature of reality and, in terms of psychology, how to transform the mind. The core curriculum of Nalanda has been preserved in the great monasteries of Ganden, Drepung and Sera, which are currently re-established in South India.

Thurman mentioned the importance of Buddhists engaging in discussion with scientists. He suggested that a common scientific and materialistic view of life such that we become nothing when we die is an error with ethical implications. If, at death, we become nothing, it's easy to believe that we will not need to face the consequences of our actions. Instead, he concluded, we have to find ways to take care of everyone.

Next, Col Jindal invited His Holiness to address the Global Buddhist Summit 2023. His Holiness spoke in Tibetan, which was translated into English by Dr Thupten Jinpa, and began by reciting a verse of salutation to Buddha Shakyamuni.

"One thing that defines the Buddha's teaching," His Holiness declared, "is his explanation of dependent arising. Of the two syllables of the Tibetan term for this, 'ten-jung', the first means dependent and the second, arising. This gives us an insight into reality. Everything is dependent. Nothing is independent. Things arise in dependence on other factors. Since nothing is independent, everything comes about through dependent relationships.

"Why is understanding dependent arising important? Because when we don't have this insight, we grasp at self as something substantial and real. This in turn can lead to our drawing distinctions between 'us' and 'them' that feed conflict. We develop attachment to those like us and aversion to others who we see as different.

"Compassion too is at the heart of the Buddha's teaching. Chandrakirti indicates this when he pays homage to compassion at the opening of his 'Entering into the Middle Way'. He compares compassion to a seed, to the moisture that allows the seed to grow

and to the eventual fruit. “The heart of the Buddha’s teaching is a combination of compassion and wisdom and as Buddhists our task is cultivate these two qualities.

“Many of the problems we face are to do with how we view reality. We tend to accept that things exist in the way they appear. We project a sense of reality onto what appears before us. The Buddha’s teaching of emptiness helps us see that what we perceive does not reflect reality. Then we can overcome our feelings of attachment and craving. And when we do that, the mind becomes pure.

“As Buddhists we need to pay attention to the process by which we grasp at the reality of things. If no solution to our problems was presented, to focus only on suffering would be demoralizing. When we achieve insight into reality, we can also see that it is possible for us to attain enlightenment. So, as a result of deep reflection we gain a sense of freedom.

“I struggle with this, but feel I am making progress. Chandrakirti says when you are able to gain deep insight into reality, compassion for suffering beings arises naturally. He states that on the two wings of insight and compassion we will soar to the further shore of enlightened liberation. I’m now in my late 80s, but I continue to practise and aspire to reach the path of preparation.”

His Holiness mentioned that the Tibetan tradition also includes tantra and meditation on deities, but he feels that what really has an impact on the mind is the cultivation of wisdom, insight into reality, and compassion for all beings. These are the practices that have most enabled him to transform his mind.

He revealed that because this was a gathering of followers of the Buddha, he had shared his own experience to show that if we take our Buddhist practice seriously, pursuing deep inquiry into reality and nurturing compassion, while also refining the practices of resting and analytical meditation, it will make a difference to our day-to-day lives. He

advised that we can all aspire to higher levels of realization. Therefore, he urged his listeners to make the appropriate effort.

“Rituals are not important,” he continued. “What we need is the cultivation of resting and analytical meditation, an understanding of reality and the practice of compassion. These are the sort of teachings that come alive within you, therefore they’re worth the effort.

“I can also assure you that paying attention to the courage of compassion enables you to transform adversity into opportunity.

“I was born in north-east Tibet and came to Lhasa where I studied the works of Buddhist masters who presented ways to develop wisdom and compassion. Their advice had a deep impact on me. Another factor that distinguishes Buddhism is the wide collection of means to effect inner transformation. It’s very rich in meditation practices that have an impact on our day-to-day conduct. Incorporating the Buddhadharma into our lives is a way of expressing gratitude to our teachers.”

Shartsé Khensur Jangchub Chöden offered a vote of thanks. He thanked His Holiness for his eloquent and uplifting address. “You are an inspiration to many people on this planet, something that will continue into future generations. We need your advice and guidance—please live long.” He went on to thank Prof Robert Thurman and Sitagu Sayadaw for their contributions. He thanked the other guests on the daïs, as well as the other participants in the hall, for coming.

In a meeting with the Heads of International Buddhist Delegations that continued into lunch His Holiness mentioned the growing interest in Buddhism across the world. Part of its attraction at this time, he said, is its use of reason.

Dr Dhammapiya asked His Holiness to come back again and again in the future for the benefit of sentient

beings. His Holiness replied that this accords with prayers he makes every day, especially one of the verses from Shantideva’s ‘Entering into the Way of the Bodhisattva’:

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.
10/55

His Holiness made a point of emphasising the importance of study and investigation. He revealed that the Buddha encouraged his followers not to accept what he taught on the basis of blind faith but to examine and investigate it well.

He recalled that in 8th century Tibet King Trisong Detsen convened a debate between Chinese Hvasang meditators and the Indian master Kamalashila. When the king declared Kamalashila the winner and requested the Chinese monks to leave Tibet, he ensured that the Indian tradition became the mainstream presentation of Buddhism in the Land of Snow.

His Holiness declared that Tibetan Buddhists are grateful to Shantarakshita, the great philosopher and logician from Nalanda, and his disciple Kamalashila for the weight they gave to logic and debate.

Reaching back to his own experience once more His Holiness explained that when he was studying in Tibet, he received valuable help not only from his tutors but also from a team of diligent assistants. When he thinks back now, he feels really indebted to them all.

Before the meeting dispersed, and His Holiness left the Summit, he presented each of the Heads of Buddhist Delegations with a statue of the Buddha.



Campaign Against Dalai Lama has Deeply Hurt Tibetans' Sentiments

- by Prof. Kaveri Gill for Phayul

More than a month after the actual event, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has suddenly been taken to task in India and across the world over his supposed questionable public interaction with a child, accompanied by his mother and a large group of students from Delhi. The judgment was made purely on the basis of a calculated short clip of the long meeting, mysteriously circulated on Twitter just weeks after the Tenth Jetsun Khalkha Dhampa Rinpoche and a vast entourage of Mongolian Tibetan Buddhists requested and received the transmission of a deity whom his predecessor was a greatly accomplished practitioner of. Whilst giving the teaching in the Main Temple in Dharamshala on March 8-9, the Dalai Lama specifically mentioned this, although the media coverage that followed this internal Buddhist matter focused only on how the Dalai Lama's recognition of the reincarnated boy affected Mongolian and Communist Party of China (CPC) relations.

Did social media stop to ask who stood to gain by such a blatant attempt to tarnish the unblemished record of the Dalai Lama, as a beacon of non-violent resistance against the most powerful aggressor in the world and every odd? No, because the urge to provide click-bait content and react to it dominates our lives, and this is before the coming takeover of open-source AI. A lifelong proponent of child and youth rights, both Tibetan and non-Tibetan, the Dalai Lama has been extended no spirit of open-minded enquiry and benefit of doubt on the circus that is social media and the internet today, where trolls and bots have metaphorically hanged, drawn and quartered him on scant evidence and worse, little regard for it when presented ad nauseum by Tibetans in some detail via videos and articles.

Nowadays, decolonising and decentering knowledge systems are what takes up much discussion time in classrooms of

universities and other fecund intellectual spaces across the globe. Yet, in this instant, what salacious meaning we impute to the body part that is a tongue – unlike a nose or a beard, also known to uniquely and playfully be a part of the Dalai Lama's interactions – and how we perceive a phrase presented in self-taught broken English by an 87-year-old monastic, must conform to the hegemonic hypersexualised cultural and linguistic understanding of the dominant world. Hasty a priori judgements made on the basis of a slice of the actual interaction were not retrospectively reconsidered or apologised for, with scant regard for Tibetan customs and what Tenzin Pema explains as oothuk (a forehead to forehead greeting) or po (a kiss on the lips between elders and children) or what Tenzin Jigme painstakingly describes is the innocent meaning of che le sa (lost in translation as “eat my tongue”, a phrase most commonly used in Amdo, the province to which the Dalai Lama belongs).

Predictably, write ups in the mainstream media inevitably ended with how the Dalai Lama has stoked controversy before, by claiming if the next Dalai Lama were female, she'd have to be attractive, even though the BBC journalist's intent and ethics with regard to the interview in question were highly suspect. It is as if the only prism through which people and actions are to be judged is a quick, one-size-fits-all MeToo lens. And this must uniformly apply even in countries as diverse as India, where child rights activists came on television to argue for suo moto action against the Dalai Lama, with the onus on him to prove a lack of sexual intent. But one also wonders where these protectors of child rights are when there is across the board silence on the atrocities committed against Tibetan children in Tibet, with one million of them forced into Chinese colonial boarding schools, or when Uighur women and children suffer grave abuses in reeducation

camps. It is at such moments of selective and limited outrage that one begins to question the consistency, moral high ground and political expedience of liberals supposedly standing for universal progressive values.

It could be argued that there are enough instances of child abuse in religious institutions, east and west, and the interpretation of the Dalai Lama's very public and innocent playful interaction was a grave casualty of that inherent mistrust. Herein lies the greatest tragedy, for the Dalai Lama's first and most sustained project has been the betterment of Tibetan children in exile, who are seen as the seeds of the future Tibet, and the holistic education of all children and youth, via the promotion of a universal ethics-based curriculum, based on two central tenets of our common humanity and profound interdependence. To sacrifice the Dalai Lama's impeccable credentials on every front over eight decades of a very public life, a Middle Way non-violent David to a brutal expansionist Goliath, on the altar of a false, fickle and morally decrepit social media, is the ultimate folly of an unhinged age.

The sentiments of Tibetans have deeply and rightly been hurt by the way this campaign against the Dalai Lama has been generated and whipped up by social media, including in India, a country Tibetans in exile have thus far loved as their second home. In the wake of this attack, perhaps many of the younger generation will question whether they are truly accepted and belong. Tibet's experience at the hands of China, and that of the Dalai Lama at the hands of the CPC, as the single symbolic and real force between the occupying power and the occupied, should serve as notice to all countries and peoples across the world who stand for the truth. We lose sight of this at our own peril.

The Defamation of the Dalai Lama: An Intercultural Analysis

- by Dr. Tenzin Dorjee for Tibetan Review

Last week on social media, a cropped video went viral depicting His Holiness the Dalai Lama kissing an Indian boy and saying “suck my tongue.” The video lacked any context which quickly led to the kneejerk hyper-sexualization of its content and outlandish accusations of child abuse. Contextual misappropriation and a lack of cultural sensitivity contributed to the defamation of a beloved global icon. Unfortunately, in an epic failure of journalistic ethics, major media outlets across the globe neglected to interview the subjects in question, and amplified the distorted images. When the Dalai Lama’s press office apologized for the furor, the global press lacked the cultural competency to decode the apology. It chose to capitalize on sensationalism instead.

The interaction took place on February 28 in Dharamsala at a livestreamed charity event (archived on the official website). During a Q & A period, the boy asked the Dalai Lama if he could offer him a hug. The 87-year-old leader sought the help of his aides twice to understand the boy before welcoming him onstage, and teasing him in a grandfatherly way. Both the boy and his mother were exuberant in media interviews shortly thereafter.

As a Tibetan-American Buddhist and intercultural communication scholar, I teach my students that contextual misappropriation distorts communication. The social media and news reports perversely misconstrued and misplaced the Dalai Lama’s interaction with the boy as a sexual encounter. Unfortunately, even some child rights advocates also rushed to frame the incident as abuse.

According to Expectancy Violations Theory (EVT), human behaviors often violate each other’s expectations, which is true and rampant in an intercultural setting. The video clip violated the cultural expectations of many worldwide. Studies overwhelmingly show negative

evaluations of such violations. This week protests erupted globally against defaming the Dalai Lama. Today (Apr 21), the Dalai Lama delivered a keynote speech on compassion, altruism, and wisdom of interdependent origination at the Global Buddhist Summit in New Delhi to tackle global challenges and praxis.

Communicative meaning is socially encoded and decoded in a given sociolinguistic community. The Dalai Lama’s statement as made in English—“Suck my tongue”—caused much confusion since the verb “suck” in English has an explicit sexual connotation, but nobody bothered to check the meanings of the Tibetan word “hJibs” (Phonetics: Jib) for “suck” which is devoid of any negative or sexual implications. In the Tibetan language, when a mother breastfeeds her child, she says “Jib Dang” meaning “Suck it” which conveys a sense of nourishing or feeding.

Our culture also has healers called Jib Gyab Khan (“Suckers”). Years ago, I recall a rabid dog bit some local Tibetans in south India. They went to see a known healer “sucker” believing that poison would be literally sucked out of their systems via a cone-shaped pipe or direct kiss on the body.

Tibetans stick out their tongues as a sign of respect. Tibetan elders often tease their grandkids, coaxing them for kisses at each feeding. When eating tsampa (roasted barley flour), they may say “Dang po O chig tre dang” (“First, give me a kiss”) gesturing to their cheeks, their nose, and their lips, before sticking out their tongues in jest to finally say, “Da na la gas med. Nga’ che le za” (“Now, I have nothing to give you. Just eat my tongue”). Considering the intergenerational context, public setting, and how he said it, the Dalai Lama clearly meant no harm.

Tibetan humor is often lost in translation.

But it is one of the few things that has kept us alive in the face of the ongoing cultural genocide in Tibet. The Dalai Lama is the exceptional leader who has dismissed formality by puckering his lips, tugging on beards, and making fart jokes. His self-deprecating humor brings levity into people’s lives, and hope to a world in despair.

Sadly, further confusion occurred when the Dalai Lama’s Office issued an apology over the incident because norms for apologizing vary widely across cultures. In collectivistic Asian cultures, members apologize easily in crisis or conflict situations, out of relational concerns to give face to others. In other words, offering an apology does not necessarily entail one is guilty of wrongdoing as is assumed in individualistic Western cultures.

The character defamation brought on by this episode has utterly shocked Tibetans, whom all wish we could have been as fortunate as that little Indian boy. The Dalai Lama should not have to apologize for anything. It is he who deserves the apology.



Sixth session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile will be held from 19th September 2023 (Tuesday) to 28th September 2023 (Thursday) for 9 days in the Parliamentary Hall, Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat.

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CTA Observes Memorial Service to Grieve Demise of Staff Ngawang Gyaltsen



A prayer service was held by the leadership and staff of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) to express their sorrow over the tragic demise of civil servant Ngawang Gyaltsen, who passed away at around 2 AM of 26 April. Late Nawang Gyaltsen was a Rangkhong leje (department's internal staff) at the Home Department whose post is equivalent to Deputy Secretary and was on a half-paid sick leave lately due to illness.

Following the presentation of brief biography of the deceased by Cabinet Secretary Tsegyal Chukya Dranyi, the officiating Sikyong Kalon Tharlam Dolma Changra bemoaned the death by expressing her condolences.

“Having had the opportunity to serve an administration established by His Holiness the Dalai Lama is for sure a fortunate and meritorious deed”, Kalon said.

The prayer service was attended by acting Chief Justice Commissioner Karma Dadul, officiating Sikyong Kalon Tharlam Dolma Changra, Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang, Justice Commissioner Tenzin Lungtok, Election and Public Service

Commissioner Wangdue Tsering Pesur, Audit General Pema Dadul Arya, standing committees of the 17th Tibetan Parliament in exile, Secretaries and staff of the CTA offices.

Brief bio: Ngawang Gyaltsen was born on 1 November 1966 in Odisha Phuntsokling Settlement to Wangdue Tsering and Palmo. After completing his schooling at Central School for Tibetans (CST) in Mussoorie, he enrolled in Punjab University to obtain his Bachelor's degree. On 1 July 1992, he began his probation period at the Research Desk of the Finance Department, CTA in Delhi and was later appointed as permanent staff at the same desk on 1 January 1993. On 26 February 1997, he was promoted as the Deputy Director of the section. On 30 September 2003, he was transferred to the publication section of Finance Department. He was later made the internal staff of the Home Department to a position equivalent to Section Officer on 6 August 2004 and was promoted to Under Secretary-equivalent post on 2 April 2009. Since his promotion to Deputy Secretary-equivalent post on 25 July 2016, he has been serving the position till his tragic demise.

CTA Holds Prayer Service to Mourn Sudden Demise of Staff Namgyal Phuntsok

The leadership and staff of Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) held a prayer service on 25 April 2023 to mourn the untimely demise of Namgyal Phuntsok, a staff at the Department of Information and International Relations, who passed away earlier that morning at around 3 AM.

The prayer service was attended by acting Chief Justice Commissioner Karma Dadul, officiating Sikyong Kalon Tharlam Dolma Changra, Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang, Justice Commissioner Tenzin Lungtok, Audit General Pema Dadul Arya, standing committees of the 17th Tibetan Parliament in exile, Secretaries and staff of the CTA offices.

Offering her heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family members, the officiating Sikyong Kalon Tharlam Dolma Changra stated, “Despite knowledge of the transience of life, it is more heartbreaking when an active public servant passes away suddenly”. At the same time, Cabinet Secretary Tsegyal Chukya Dranyi presented a brief bio of the deceased.

Brief Bio: Namgyal Phuntsok was born on 11 February 1982 to Tsering Dorjee and Yangchen (late) in Bylakuppe. After successfully completing the six-month probation period on 2 August 2010, he was appointed as CTA's permanent staff at the Department of Health on 1 March 2011. On 24 January 2019, he was transferred to the Department of Information and International Relations, where he has served hitherto. He is survived by his wife, Tenzin Dechen and their two children.

I believe in altruism. No matter how capable a person may be, no one can survive alone. We depend on the community in which we live. By dedicating ourselves to the welfare of others, we actually bring about our own benefit.

-His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

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“Many of the problems we face are to do with how we view reality. We tend to accept that things exist in the way they appear. We project a sense of reality onto what appears before us. The Buddha’s teaching of emptiness helps us see that what we perceive does not reflect reality. Then we can overcome our feelings of attachment and craving. And when we do that, the mind becomes pure.” - His Holiness the Dalai Lama during the Global Buddhist Summit 2023

“The sincerity of the People’s Republic of China’s (PRC) leadership manifests in the policies and programs being implemented in Tibet as we speak. In the last few years, evidence emerging from Tibet in the form of reports by the UN, independent institutes and scholarly research, the Chinese government’s one nation, one language, one culture and one religion is aimed at forced assimilation and the erasure of the national identity of the Tibetans and other minority nationalities.” - Sikyong Penpa Tsering when addressing the CECC hearing on Tibet

“We have been deeply hurt and saddened by the misinterpretation being currently given to an incident in a recent event with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, where without proper research, irresponsible and careless sort of explanations and comments were being given to it in the media. There is, of course, no need to mention the fact that the activities of His Holiness the Dalai Lama are objects of great interest and delight for many hundreds of millions of people from across the world.” - TPiE’s Statement in Response to Misinterpreted Video of His Holiness the Dalai Lama
