

International Tibet Youth Forum

Empowering Voices and Inspiring Action for Tibet's Future

Dharamshala, India

The Department of Information and International Relations of the Central Tibetan Administration is organizing the International Tibet Youth Forum (ITYF) in Dharamshala from 18 to 20 July 2023. The Central Tibetan Administration led by Sikyong Penpa Tsering considers Tibet advocacy as one of the foremost priorities in restoring freedom for Tibet. In its resolute commitment to strengthen, sustain, and advance the Tibetan call for freedom globally, the 16th Kashag has asserted the indispensable role of the Tibetans in exile, with a special focus on youth in exploring their potential and skills in spearheading the global Tibet advocacy movement.

The International Tibet Youth Forum will bring together over a hundred young Tibetan participants and a group of speakers from across the globe, including Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, India, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the United States. The forum aims to create a common avenue for the Tibetan youth to exchange ideas, voice their concerns, and discuss challenges and the progressive path forward. Through meaningful discussions, participants will focus on initiating and mobilizing nonviolent advocacy actions in their respective regions by developing personalized region-specific strategies.

Today, our greatest concern is the Chinese government's renewed policy of "consolidating the sense of single Han national identity", China's education policy, suppression, and Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism aimed at the extermination and Sinicization of the Tibetan culture, language, religion, and way of life, and the destruction of Tibet's pristine ecology. There is an urgent need more than ever before to reverse the Chinese government's misguided policy on Tibet. Otherwise, it will result in irreversible damage to the Tibetan identity, natural environment, peace, and stability in the subcontinent.

At the same time, the Tibetan community in the diaspora is undergoing significant social and demographic changes. As of Today, Tibetans are spread around the world and have established Tibetan organizations in at least 20 countries. While these changes bring about their own set of challenges, they also present a unique advantage. As citizens of their host countries, with their deep integration into the international community and a comprehensive understanding of the local languages and governance structures, Tibetans are presented with an exceptional opportunity to actively engage in mobilizing international support for Tibet in their respective regions. In light of these circumstances, CTA recognizes that it is more crucial than ever to nurture Tibetan youth as future leaders who will become the vanguards of the Tibetan movement in securing the future of Tibet.

The three-day forum will commence by providing an overview of the historical significance of Tibet and its unique Tibetan cultural and traditional identity, followed by in-depth discussions on the pressing situation within Tibet and the transformative journey of the exiled Tibetan community under the benevolent leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Moreover, this forum will impart strategic and advocacy tactical skills necessary to channel the participants' efforts into effective advocacy tools and networks. The forum will provide ample opportunity for the participants to establish a close-knit network of Tibetan youth and engage in meaningful group discussions in understanding the scope, challenges, and opportunities while outlining a region-specific plan of action. The International Tibet Youth Forum will conclude with the adoption of a Forum declaration.

Through such endeavours, we aim to foster a resilient cohort of young Tibetan leaders capable of spearheading, upholding, and empowering the Tibetan freedom movement toward a meaningful, long-lasting, and negotiated resolution to the protracted Sino-Tibet conflict, driven by unwavering principles and a commitment to safeguarding Tibet's future.

