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US Capitol Hill Celebrates 16th Anniversary of US Congressional Gold Medal Conferment on His Holiness the Dalai Lama



(L-R) Congressman Chris Smith, ICT Chair Richard Gere, Congressmen Jim McGovern, Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi, Congresswoman Betty McCollum, and Sikyong Penpa Tsering.

The 16th anniversary of the conferment of the US Congressional Gold Medal to His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama was commemorated on 18 September 2023 at the Capitol Hill in Washington DC.

The celebration was attended by some high-level US lawmakers who have been constant friends of His Holiness and Tibet such as Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi, Congressmen Jim McGovern and Chris Smith, Congresswomen Betty McCollum and Jan Schakowsky.

Apart from them, Sikyong Penpa Tsering, International Campaign for Tibet Chair Richard Gere, ICT President Tencho Gyatso, former CTA Kalon Tenzin Namgyal Tethong, and the staff of State Department as well as USAID staff were in attendance.

Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi called the bestowal of the highest civilian honour to His Holiness as “a source of pride” and commended ICT Chair Richard Gere for his tireless efforts “to attract people to not only His Holiness, but to the cause of Tibet” for which she expressed her eternal gratitude. She also emphasised the bipartisan support of US legislators towards His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

While reiterating the bipartisan support towards His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the cause of Tibet, Congressman Chris Smith lauded the tremendous influence of His Holiness cutting across all political divides. He also praised the ICT Chair for his advocacy of Tibet cause, crediting his “enormous persuasive power” in greatly benefitting the cause of Tibet.

Congressman Jim McGovern expressed his admiration of His Holiness for his anti-war stance. He pushed China to engage with the Dalai Lama for the peaceful resolution of the Sino-Tibet conflict.

Congresswoman Betty McCollum thanked the ICT Chair for his commitment to the cause of Tibet and stressed championing human rights everywhere.

“We can not be passive about what is going on in Tibet”, said Congresswomen Betty and further thanked the Tibetan community for including them in this momentous celebration.

Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky narrated her own instance of meeting

with His Holiness during a difficult time in life when she lost a family member. She recounted the experience with deep gratitude.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering, in his key address, expressed gratitude for awarding His Holiness with such a significant award,

“This award is a huge honour for Tibetans suffering inside Tibet as it represents the sustenance of their indomitable spirit even after 64 years of Chinese suppression”, said Sikyong of the Tibetans in exile.

He then briefly apprised his recent visits to Latin America, new frontiers to the Central Tibetan Administration politically, and North America where he continues to undertake Tibet advocacy campaign. Furthermore, he assured the gathering of the good health of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

ICT Chair Richard Gere recollected his memories of the historic moment when the US Congressional Gold Medal was presented to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

“I felt so proud that the American experiment was embracing the Dalai Lama into the hierarchy of deities of our democracy. It was like he was giving us an award instead of us giving him an award, that he embraced us into his heart and this American experiment into his heart,” he said.

He also attributed the momentous occasion to purifying and refreshing the actions and motivations of those present. In his last words, he applauded the spiritual leader for overcoming the challenges of his circumstances and living up to his title.

The ceremony came to a conclusion with the performance of a Tibetan song paying tribute to His Holiness by the local Tibetan community.

China's "Order Number 19" Escalates its Continuous Religious Repression in Tibet

The Department of Information & International Relations (DIIR) is concerned about the new Chinese regulation which was set into motion on 1 September 2023 that will intensify restrictions on religious freedom inside Tibet and elsewhere in China. China's State Administration for Religious Affairs promulgated the "Measures for the Administration of Religious Activity Sites" or the "Order Number 19," marking a significant escalation in the People's Republic of China (PRC) government's ongoing crackdown on religious freedom.

The United Front Work Department of the PRC government announced the regulation on 31 July 2023 on its website. This regulation requires temples, monasteries, mosques, etc. to obtain official permission to carry out any religious activity that is targeted to strengthen and build a strong sense of Chinese nationalism. This will be achieved through publicity and education campaigns including promotion of Chinese language and "ethnic unity".

These coercive measures, as well as a number of similar "orders," are intended to maximise the PRC government's control over Tibetan Buddhist cultural and political affairs. In particular, Article 27 of the Order No. 19 stipulates that members of the management organisation of religious activity sites must be "loyal supporters of the leadership and rule of the Chinese Communist Party" and "be mainland residents with Chinese nationality." Under this unlawful regulation, Tibetan monasteries in Tibet that refuse to denounce His Holiness the Dalai Lama

or express reverence and loyalty to His Holiness, whom the PRC considers as "separatist", remain particularly vulnerable to face crackdown by the Chinese authorities.

The Legislative Persecution of Tibetan Buddhism

Buddhism is one of the only five officially recognised religions of China, and its "normal religious activities" are nominally protected under the thirty-sixth Article of the Chinese Constitution of 1982. Yet, the PRC government has frequently redefined and misinterpreted "normal" in order to justify further restrictions on constitutional freedoms in the name of maintaining social stability. The new measure forbids religious sites to restrain from carrying out activities that "endanger national security," "disrupt social order" and among other things, "harm the national interest." This vague and broad definition of "endangering national security" and "disrupting social order" not only criminalises political activities and exercise of fundamental human rights and freedom. But it also makes Tibetan Buddhist cultural and traditional activities susceptible to illegal persecution and punishment as and when the Chinese government deems necessary.

Since 1994, PRC authorities have extensively conducted "patriotic re-education" campaigns in Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and nunneries that encourage loyalty to the State and the denunciation of any support and allegiance for His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In 2010, the PRC government passed the "Order No. 8," officially known as "Management Measures for Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries," that increased the government's management and control over the internal affairs of Tibetan Buddhist monasteries. By enacting the "Order No. 5" or "Management Measures for the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas in Tibetan Buddhism," in 2007, the Chinese Communist Party claimed and asserted its "control of the process of

recognising important reincarnations of Buddhist lamas," with the long-term target of interfering in the process of selecting and recognising the 15th Dalai Lama.

Prior to the promulgation of Order No. 5 in 1995, China forcibly disappeared the 11th Panchen Lama, Jetsun Tenzin Gedhun Yeshe Trinley Phuntsok Pal Sangpo, following his recognition by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, as the reincarnation of one of the highest lamas of Tibetan Buddhism. The 11th Panchen Lama has remained disappeared for the last 28 years with no information available on his well being and whereabouts despite repeated attempts from the international community.

Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism

Tibet is still undergoing religious repression with intensified and stringent religious policies and practices after decades of illegal occupation by the PRC government. Since Xi Jinping's consolidation of power, the CCP has wantonly prioritised the imposition of the policy of "Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism", which forces religious groups to put the Party above religion by supporting the Party's rule and ideology. The Chinese authorities have routinely restricted Tibetans' access to religious sites, banned religious gatherings, destroyed religious sites and symbols, indoctrinated Tibetan monks and nuns, tortured and persecuted Tibetan clergy in prison, and detained Tibetans who participated in religious activities honouring His Holiness the Dalai Lama or found in possession of his portraits. Additionally, nearly one million Tibetan children, aged 4 to 18, are currently forcibly enrolled and placed into Chinese colonial-style boarding schools in Tibet away from their parents, where they are deprived of the opportunity and the space to learn and practice their Tibetan language, culture and religion on a daily basis.

The PRC government repeatedly exerts its intent to interfere in the reincarnation



of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, claiming it has the ultimate authority to appoint his successor, which is historically and traditionally untrue, and thus, have been rejected by the Tibetan, Buddhist, and the international community. His Holiness the Dalai Lama, in a 2011 statement, clearly stated that the person who reincarnates has sole legitimate authority over where and how he or she takes rebirth and how that reincarnation is to be recognised. Therefore, the ultimate authority of his reincarnation remains with His Holiness and no other government or individual.

The PRC government has continuously enacted new laws and regulations that restrict Tibetans' legitimate exercise of their right to freedom of religion. In addition, these regulations are primarily intended to advance Xi Jinping's objective of "Sinicising" Tibetan Buddhism, a process that will likely end in eradicating Tibetan identity as a whole.

In light of the deteriorating situation in Tibet, we urge the international community to strengthen the collective power and impact of their partners and allies in addressing the unlawful and tight control that the PRC government has over religious practices and teachings in Tibet, which is being enforced solely by China to maintain its authority in Tibet. The international community must press China to respect its international obligations and its own constitution in order to protect the freedom of religious belief of Tibetans, regardless of whether it interferes with or challenges the legitimacy and status of the Communist Party. So long as the PRC government fails to recognise, acknowledge and remedy its discriminatory and counterproductive Tibet policies, it would remain a challenge for the Sino-Tibet relations to improve substantially. Lastly, to address the long-standing grievances of the Tibetan community, it is imperative that the PRC government return to meaningful dialogue based on Middle-Way policy with the representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, without preconditions.

Swedish Parliamentary Delegation Expresses Solidarity with Tibetans

A group of Swedish Parliamentary Delegation-led by honourable Margareta Elisabeth Cederfelt, who visited Dharamshala to attend the 63rd anniversary of the Tibetan Democracy Day, held a press conference on 2 September 2023 to express their support for the Tibetan people.

The visiting delegation consists of honourable MPs Margareta Elisabeth Cederfelt, Johanna Hornberger, Marie Charlotte Nicholson, Maria Viktoriam Stockhaus, Alexandra Anstrell, Ann-Sofie Lifvenhage, John E Weinerhall from the Moderate Party; Hon. MPs Richard Johannes Jomshof and Björn Söder from the Sweden Democrats Party; Hon. MP Gudrun Margareta Brunegard from the Christian Democrats Party; Hon. MP Janine Sofia Alm Ericson from the Green Party and Carl Mattias and Kristina Eva Maria Bjornerstedt of Swedish Tibet Committee. The delegation were accompanied by Representative Sonam Tsering Frasi and Secretary Lobsang Choedon Samten from the Office of Tibet, London.

DIIR Secretary Karma Choeying commended the visiting delegation for attending the press conference which he said would give hope to Tibetans that they are not forgotten by the world.

MP Margareta Elisabeth Cederfelt shared that the eleven MPs in her group were from four different parties. She also spoke about her positive meeting with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and stressed on the importance of his message advocating for peace.

Lauding the exile Tibetan democracy, she said that it gave equal voting rights to everybody irrespective of their gender, age and other social classifications and similarly everybody had equal rights to stand for election.

Condemning the colonial boarding school system in Tibet by China, she urged China to give Tibetans the



MP Margareta Elisabeth Cederfelt addressing during the Press Conference held by Swedish Parliamentary Delegation in Solidarity with Tibetans.

freedom to practice their religion, culture, language and preserve their Tibetan identity. She added that the Swedish Tibetan Parliamentary Support Group was engaged in raising the issue of Tibet and writing bills.

This was followed by the MP answering questions posed by the local press personnel.

In response to a question on the Swedish government's support in welfare programmes for the Tibetan people, she said that although the Swedish government could not extend political and financial aid on the level that the USA does, however, they would see that they are able to support programmes by raising discussions on the subject with their constituencies and the Tibetan community.

On being asked to share a message for Tibetans inside Tibet, she said that the MPs understood the extent to which Tibetans in Tibet were suffering under the repressive conditions and the Tibetans are not alone in their struggle and expressed solidarity for Tibetans inside Tibet.

The press conference was hosted by the Department of Information and International Relations(DIIR).

European Buddhist Union Calls on Chinese Government to Stop Interfering in Tibetan Buddhist Affairs

In a declaration adopted unanimously during its Annual General Meeting on 24 September 2023, the European Buddhist Union (EBU) calls on the Chinese government not to interfere in Tibetan Buddhist affairs, namely the recognition of the reincarnation of high lamas, including His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama.

The EBU affirms that the selection of reincarnation of Tibetan Lamas, including His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama is the prerogative of the Tibetan people and Ganden Phodrang, which should be done in accordance with Tibetan Buddhist tradition. The EBU also urges the international community not to recognise any Lama appointed by the Chinese authority.

In addition, they also called on the Chinese government to resume dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama or His representative in order to resolve the

long-standing Sino-Tibetan conflict.

Representative Rigzin Genkhang, welcoming the timely initiative, expressed her appreciation to the EBU for endorsing His Holiness' view on the matter.

This comes on the heels of the Chinese government's recent promulgation of the "Administrative Measures for Religious Activity Venues" also known as "Order number 19" that came into effect on 01 September 2023, which will further intensify the ongoing religious repression in Tibet and elsewhere in China. This is part of a series of measures the PRC has introduced and implemented targeting Tibetan Buddhism to meet their political ends.

The EBU is an international umbrella association of Buddhist organisations and national Buddhist unions in Europe.

European Union Urges China to Uphold its National and International Obligations

During the ongoing 54th session of the UN Human Rights Council, the European Union in its statement under Item 4 reiterated its concerns about the very serious human rights situation in China, including Tibet.

The EU also highlighted the forced assimilation of 1 million Tibetan children in mandatory state-run boarding schools and the mass collection of DNA samples from the Tibetan population by the Chinese government, which they said are indicators of the dire human rights situation in Tibet.

The statement further said the EU continues to closely monitor the situation of political prisoners and called for the immediate and unconditional release of, among others, Go Sherab Gyatso, Rinchen Tsultrim and Dorje Tashi.

Representative Genkhang of the Office of Tibet, Brussels, welcomed the EU's statement expressing concern over the dire human rights situation in Tibet. She believes it's vital for the EU who plays an ever-increasingly influential role on the global stage to hold China accountable for its egregious human rights violations.



The Council of the European Buddhist Union, on the occasion of the Annual General meeting in Brussels of 24 September 2023, has adopted the following declaration:

1. We urge the Chinese government to implement Articles 10 and 11 of the Law on Autonomy of Ethnic Areas of the People's Republic of China, which guarantees the freedom of language and religion of ethnic minorities.
2. We call on the Chinese government not to interfere in Tibetan Buddhist affairs, not to dismantle Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and Buddhist statues, and not to interfere in the recognition of reincarnations of high Lamas and in the organization of monasteries.
3. We affirm that the selection of reincarnations of Tibetan Lamas, including the future 15th Dalai Lama, is the prerogative of the Tibetan people and the Dalai Lama's Office.
4. Future Tibetan reincarnated Lamas, including the Dalai Lama, should be selected by the Tibetan people according to their spiritual tradition. We urge the international community not to recognize any Lama selected and appointed by the Chinese authority.
5. We call on the Chinese government to resume negotiations with the Dalai Lama in order to find peaceful solutions that serve the common interests of both the Tibetan and Chinese peoples.

* * *

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Received at State Assembly of Sao Paulo



Sikyong Penpa Tsering at Sao Paulo Legislative Assembly

Sikyong Penpa Tsering, the democratically elected leader of the Tibetan people, received a warm reception at the Sao Paulo Legislative Assembly on 3 October 2023, greeted by President Andre do Prado and Vice President Gil Dinuz. Members of the State Assembly, including Paula Fiorilo (Worker's Party) and Rui Alves (Republicans), both of whom are members of the Committee on International Relations, also greeted the Sikyong on his first formal visit to the Sao Paulo Assembly.

The delegation accompanying Sikyong included Representative Jigme Tsering, Office of Tibet-Brasil, Walter Feldman, President of Longevidade Expo+Fórum who is also a former President of the State Assembly, Ven. Lama Rinchen Khyenrab, President, THB, Sandra Fernandes Erickson, RangZen: Movimento Tibete Livre-Brasil and Daniel Sermento, THB.

During the meeting, which lasted for more than an hour, Sikyong underscored the geo-political relevance of Tibet, highlighting its profound spiritual and cultural impact, and its indispensable role in addressing pressing environmental crises that resonate worldwide.

“Westerners refer to Tibet as the roof of

the world. Asian countries view Tibet as the water tower of Asia, and many scientists, including Chinese researchers, now recognize Tibet as the third pole,” Sikyong remarked, underscoring how Tibet was not only a political issue but an environmental concern for the entire world.

Considering Brazil's first-hand experience with intensifying climate change, evident in the frequent wildfires in the Amazon forest, Sikyong pointed out that Brazil was exceptionally well-placed to speak on climate change at a global level. He emphasized the strategic significance of both the Amazon rainforest and the Tibetan Plateau, specifically, pointing out direct co-relations of the impact the climatic conditions in the Amazon rainforest have on the Tibetan Plateau.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering appealed to the State Assembly leadership to approach their policy decisions regarding China and Chinese investment with careful consideration and responsibility. He emphasized the crucial role of democratic nations such as Brazil in advocating for global environmental security and upholding human rights and freedom when engaging with their Chinese counterparts.

Sikyong also stressed how inside Tibet, Tibetan identity remains on the precipice of extermination under President Xi Jinping's policy of sinicisation and forced assimilation of future generations of Tibetans by coercing a million of them into state-run colonial boarding schools. “At least 157 Tibetans in Tibet have set themselves ablaze in the last more than a decade hoping against hope that the international community will come to their rescue,” said Sikyong, highlighting the dire situation inside Tibet.

In the same breath, Sikyong Penpa Tsering thanked the President, Vice-President and deputies for their gracious reception for it would resonate as a “powerful message of hope” for Tibetans inside Tibet.

The President and Vice-President of the Assembly extended their congratulations to Sikyong on his inaugural visit, expressing wholehearted support for the peaceful resolution of the vexed and protracted Sino-Tibet conflict. As a House of People's Representatives, the President said the assembly remains committed to advocating for peace, dialogue, and an end to all forms of repression.

In response, Sikyong expressed his gratitude and extended a standing invitation to the State Assembly leadership and its deputies to visit Dharamshala.

Following the meeting, Sikyong visited the Sao Paulo city hall where he met with the city's human rights secretary Soninha Francine and Gilberto Natalini, Executive Secretary for Climate Change, before heading to speak at the University of Sao Paulo.

This marks Sikyong Penpa Tsering's first formal visit to Brasil.

<https://www.bod.asia>

Visiting European Parliamentarians from Austria & Germany Assure to Raise Discussion of Introducing Resolution on Sino-Tibet Conflict in Parliament

A seven-member delegation of the European Parliament from Austria and Germany, who visited Dharmashala on 6 & 7 October, sat for a press meeting with the Tibetan news media today to demonstrate their solidarity and support for the Tibetan people and their movement.

The delegation's visit to Dharmashala this time is part of an educational tour of South Asia facilitated by the Fredrich Naumann Foundation (FNF) in partnership with the Central Tibetan Administration. Their visit to the seat of the Tibetan administration in the diaspora and the successive meetings held between them and the leadership of the CTA including the Tibetan lawmakers signify a progressive step by the European Parliament in cementing a stronger relationship with the CTA.

Delegates Yannick Shetty (Member of the Australian Parliament); Dolores Bakos (Member of the Legislative

Assembly, Vienna, Austria); Dirk Bergner (Deputy Speaker of the State Parliament, Thuringia, Germany); Regina Bergner (Head of Department, Jena Municipal Corporation, Germany); Torsten Herbst (Parliamentary leader of the FDP Bundestag Group, Germany); Sandra Weeser (Member of German Parliament); Christine Aschenberg-Dugnus (Member of German Parliament) unitedly spoke about how inspired they were to witness first-hand the system of democracy adopted and implemented by the Tibetan administration in exile as they reflected the sentiments of hope and faith in Tibet's fight for freedom and justice.

When questioned about the possibility of the European Parliament following the steps of the US in passing its version of the resolution on the Sino-Tibet Conflict, the parliamentary delegation of both Austria and Germany agreed they were not as progressive as the US in passing such legislature but they assured

to raise this matter for discussion to their respective parliament.

Apart from the CTA, the delegation is set to visit various Tibetan organisations and civil society groups operating in the fields of education, health, culture, and religion to seek a deeper understanding of the diasporic Tibetan community and its struggle for the larger Tibetan cause.

Prior to the delegation's visit to Dharmashala, they met with Sikyong Penpa Tsering in New Delhi on 30 September and discussed varying matters including the challenges faced by the Tibetans in exile. Sikyong apprised them of the governance framework of the CTA and meanwhile extended gratitude to the European delegation for their support.

The European delegation met with Cabinet Ministers of the CTA, the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament, and senior officials.

Education Kalon Attends Inter-school Literary and Cultural Meet-2023 at TCV Gopalpur School

Kalon Tharlam Dolma Changra from the Department of Education, Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), attended the Inter-school Literary and Cultural Meet-2023 at Tibetan Children's Village (TCV) school in Gopalpur as chief guest, along with Directors and Principals of the participating schools on 6 October 2023.

The inaugural event began with opening remarks from the host school's Director Kalsang Phuntsok, followed by an address from the chief guest.

In her keynote speech, the Education Kalon (minister) stressed awakening the student's "discriminative faculty of mind to be able to distinguish right from wrong", and putting "others

before self" as the cornerstone of CTA's Basic Education Policy for Tibetans in Exile, together with preservation and promotion of Tibet's unique cultural heritages. She, therefore, implored the students in gathering to put efforts into studying and excelling in the Tibetan language given China's ongoing sinicisation of Tibetan children through its state-run colonial-style boarding schools that have recently drawn massive international attention.

In addition, the Kalon advised students to put aside their competitive mentality over the course of the two-day event in order to learn as much as possible from each other.

A vote of thanks was delivered by Karma Sherap Tharchin, the Principal of TCV

Gopalpur School, before concluding the opening ceremony.

The inter-school contest organised by the Department of Education was funded by Global Affairs Canada through Alinea International. This two-day meet is participated by students from eight Tibetan schools based in Northern India, namely TCV Upper, TCV Gopalpur, TCV Ladakh, TCV Chauitra, TCV Suja, Sambhota Tibetan School (STS) Petoen, STS Shimla, and STS Dolanji.

For detailed news visit:
www.tibet.net

Sixth Session of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile Begins

The sixth session (general session) of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, scheduled from 19 to 28 September 2023, commenced by extending solidarity with the Tibetans inside of Tibet with a seven-point official resolution.

With the announcement of session commencement by the Speaker, the parliament hall assembled with Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel and Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration along with his ministerial colleagues (Kalons) as well as the parliamentarians, sang the Tibetan national anthem.

In his session commencement address, the Speaker briefed the house on the undertakings of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile including parliamentarians' periodical visitation to Tibetan settlements and communities, the three rounds of Tibetan Parliament's strategic meetings, parliament's Tibet advocacy programs in different states of India, and so forth.

In addition to the preservation of Tibet's distinct culture, religion, and language, the Speaker emphasized the need of



Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel addressing the commencement of Sixth Session of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile.

expanding political campaigns with regard to the political status of Tibetans inside of Tibet, the status of the Central Tibetan Administration, and the need of outreaching Tibet's issue to the global audience.

Speaking on the grim situation inside Tibet, the Speaker informed the house of the official solidarity resolution, obituary reverence, and other business of the day. He further provided updates on the working of the Rules and Regulation Review Committee which was formed in accordance with the resolution adopted by the fifth session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile and would submit their reviewed report to the Parliamentary Secretariat by the end of Feb 2024. He also informed the house

of forming the 12th Public Accounts Committee in this session.

Finally, the Speaker ended the address with a call for unity amongst Tibetans and coordinated effort from all in resolving the Sino-Tibetan conflict.

A panel of Chairpersons and an Ad Hoc Committee were appointed in accordance with the 'Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile'.

An official obituary reference to former Tibetan Parliamentarian Tsultrim Tenzin was read by parliamentarian Geshe Lharampa Gowu Lobsang Phende. A minute of silence was then duly observed in the house to mourn for the official reference.

Parliamentarian Geshe Atong Rinchen Gyalsten presented a seven-point official resolution on solidarity with the Tibetans inside Tibet, which was supported by parliamentarian Khenpo Kada Ngedup Sonam.

Deliberating over the aforementioned resolution, parliamentarians extended their support and appreciation to the official resolution and provided feedback and suggestions.

The remaining business of the 6th session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile has been postponed due to the absence of the requisite quorum needed for the session to constitute.

The general session has been postponed in accordance with the Article 49, clause (II) of the Charter of Tibetans in exile – In case a meeting of the Tibetan Parliament had to be adjourned for more than seven days due to the absence of the requisite quorum for the purpose, the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker shall together take a decision to adjourn the meeting.

Central Tibetan Administration Celebrates 63rd Tibetan Democracy Day



Leaderships of the Central Tibetan administration, Swedish Parliamentary Delegation, and representatives of the CTA's donors arriving to the celebration.

The Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) celebrated the 63rd Tibetan Democracy Day on 2 September 2023 at Tsuglagkhang in Dharamshala with the gracious presence of a group of Swedish Parliamentary Delegation led by honourable Margareta Elisabeth Cederfelt, a member of Swedish Parliament from the Moderate Party, and the representatives of distinguished international donor organisations who were part of CTA Donor Conference.

The Swedish Parliamentary Delegation consist of honourable MPs Margareta Elisabeth Cederfelt, Johanna Hornberger, Marie Charlotte Nicholson, Maria Viktoriam Stockhaus, Alexandra Anstrell, Ann-Sofie Lifvenhage, John E Weinerhall from the Moderate Party; Hon. MPs Richard Johannes Jomshof and Björn Söder from the Sweden Democrats Party; Hon. MP Gudrun Margareta Brunegard from the Christian Democrats Party; Hon. MP Janine Sofia Alm Ericson from the Green Party and Carl Mattias and Kristina Eva Maria Bjornerstedt of Swedish Tibet Committee. The delegation were accompanied by Representative Sonam Tsering Farsi and Secretary Lobsang Choedon Samten from the Office of Tibet, London.

Also in attendance was leadership of the CTA led by Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel (17th Tibetan Parliament in Exile), Sikyong Penpa Tsering (16th Kashag), Justice Commissioner Tenzin Lungtok (Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission), Kalon Tharlam Dolma Changra (Department of Education), Kalon Dolma Gyari (Department of Security), Kalon Norzin Dolma (Department of Information and International Relations), members of the Tibetan Parliament's Standing Committee, Election and Public Service Commissioner Wangdue Tsering Pesur, Secretaries along with representatives of Tibetan NGOs and students from Dharamshala-based Tibetan schools.

The assemblage began the anniversary by singing a ceremonial Tibetan Democracy Day song followed by orations on Tibetan democracy from four students representing Upper Tibetan Children's Village and Mewoen Tsuglag Petoen school.

Expressing her honour of being part of the celebration, chief guest MP Margareta Elisabeth Cederfelt lauded the CTA's Middle Way Approach policy after Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel and Sikyong Penpa Tsering read the

statements of Tibetan Parliament in Exile and Kashag respectively. She said, "This is a pragmatic solution to safeguard the vital interests of both parties. For Tibetans, it offers the protection and preservation of the identity and dignity of the Tibetan people. For China, it means maintaining the territorial integrity of the People's Republic of China."

"We are here to learn more about Tibet and its people and to show our solidarity and support with the Tibetan people", said MP Margareta Elisabeth Cederfelt as she acknowledged the existence of an active Swedish Tibet Friendship Parliamentary group that aims to develop, maintain, and strengthen parliamentary relations between Swedish and Tibetan parliaments. "We could see an increased number of Swedish MPs who mention Tibet in debates and also write bills in support of Tibet," she added.

"I would also like to mention what China do against Tibet and its people is not acceptable." She continued, "We, as MPs in other countries, we are obliged to raise this situation. Tibet belongs to its people, and the Tibetan people should have the right to (maintain) the Tibetan culture, the tradition and the Tibetan lifestyle".

Geneva Forum 2023 Commences to Discuss Decline of Human Rights in Regions Under China

Before concluding her address, the chief guest from the Swedish Parliament commended the Tibetan democracy in exile that was envisaged and initiated by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama while she condemned China's violation of Human Rights in Tibet that resulted in unimaginable numbers of self-immolation inside Tibet. She stressed, "They have used their last power to protest against the violent authoritarian Chinese communist regime." She also disapproved of Beijing's policy of assimilating Tibetan children through government-run boarding schools that have forcibly separated approximately one million Tibetan children from their families and traditions.

During the celebration, Sikyong Penpa Tsering proclaimed the absence of cultural performances on this important occasion is to express solidarity with the government and people of Himachal Pradesh for the colossal loss caused by incessant rain. He declared a day's salary of all the CTA staff would be contributed to the Chief Minister's relief fund to show support and gratitude to the Himachal government and people.

As part of the ceremony, Justice Commissioner Tenzin Lungtok conferred awards and certificates to the recipients of this year's class 12 Gaden Phodrang and Excellence awards for their academic distinction, while Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel bestowed honorary awards to six Tibetan PhD students. A staff from the Department of Education was also presented a milestone award by the Speaker for her 25 years of service.

At the same time, Sikyong Penpa Tsering launched a book by Ven. Jigme from Kirti Monastery that explores the political life and achievements of the 11th Kirti Rinpoche, who served as the Kalon of Department of Religion and Culture from 1997 to 1999 at CTA (then called Gaden Phodrang). Sikyong also presented ceremonial scarves (khatag) and mementoes to the members of the Swedish Parliamentary Delegation and representatives of CTA's donors as a token of appreciation.

The Geneva Forum 2023, jointly organised by the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) and the Tibet Bureau Geneva, was held on 26 & 27 October 2023.

The inaugural ceremony of the two-day forum was virtually addressed by Honourable Arunas Valinskas, a Member of Parliament, Lithuania; Honourable Nicolas Walder, a Member of Parliament, Switzerland; and Honourable Kalon (Minister) Norzin Dolma from the organising department.

Tibetan MP Thupten Gyatso from Europe, Representative Sonam Tsering Frasi of Office of Tibet in London, Representative Rigzin Choedon Genkhang of the Office of Tibet in Brussels, DIIR Additional Secretaries Tenzin Lekshey and Namgyal Tsewang, and other distinguished guests including human rights experts, practitioners, academicians, activists, governments, diplomats, think tanks, civil society groups and members of the Europe V-TAG also attended the opening ceremony of the forum.

After expressing her deep appreciation to all the attendees for their participation, Kalon Norzin Dolma said, "PRC government at this time is facing legitimacy deficit in Tibet, Taiwan, Hong Kong, East Turkistan, Manchuria, Inner Mongolia and many other regions where the resistance movements and activists still persists in different forms and different degrees. And as expected out of an authoritarian regime like China, China's policy response to these persecuted groups have been one of stability maintenance. So this is crushing dissent and monopolising every means of public expression that contradicts the official CCP's position, governance and policies, and also ensuring compliance to CCP's rule and legitimacy. Therefore, it is the human rights violation in China is symptomatic of larger issues including legitimacy crises."

Over the course of the forum, an array of topics concerning the decline of Human Rights situations in regions under PRC, including the Chinese Communist Party's Sinicisation policy and transnational aggression are discussed to bring the spotlight on ground situation in regions under the People's Republic of China.

During the first session entitled "Human Rights Decline : Regions Under China", Rushan Abbas, founder and executive director of the nonprofit Campaign for Uyghurs; Dugarjab L. Hotala, Founder & Director of InterMongol Network; Dr. Xiao Qiang, Founder and Editor-in-Chief of China Digital Times; and Tenzin Dawa, Executive Director of Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy discussed the status of human rights in regions under the PRC rule.

The second session entitled "Silencing Voices: China's Assimilationist Policy and Crackdown on Defenders" was panelled by Benedict Rogers, Co-founder and CEO of Hong Kong Watch; Dr. Emile Dirks, Research Associate at Citizen Lab; and Lhadon Tethong, Director of the Tibet Action Institute. The third-panel session on the theme "Development or Neo-Colonization? Tibet and Regions under China" was presided over by Professor Dibyesh Anand, Head of the School of Social Science at the University of Westminster; Dr. Martin Mills, Director of the Scottish Centre for Himalayan Research; and Dr. Gyal Lo, a Tibetan activist and Educational Sociologist.

The speakers of the fourth-panel session on the theme "China's Global Footprints: Surveillance and Transnational Repression" included Yaqui Wang, Research Director for China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, Freedom House; Josh Rogin, Foreign Policy Columnist at The Washington Post; and Dr Tenzin Lhadon, Research Fellow at Tibet Policy Institute.

Statement of Kashag on Sixty-third Anniversary of Tibetan Democracy Day



Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the 16th Kashag, Central Tibetan Administration, reading the statement on 63rd Tibetan Democracy Day.

Today, as we celebrate the historic occasion of the sixty-third anniversary of the Tibetan Democracy Day, on behalf of Tibetans both in and outside Tibet, the Kashag submits our deepest obeisance to His Holiness the Great Fourteenth Dalai Lama for democratizing the system of Tibetan polity. The Kashag would also like to extend our sincere greetings to the distinguished guests—the Swedish parliamentary delegates—Honourable MPs Margareta Elisabeth Cederfelt, Johanna Hornberger, Marie Charlotte Nicholson, Maria Viktoriam Stockhaus, Alexandra Anstrell, Ann-Sofie Lifvenhage, John E Weinerhall from the Moderate Party; Hon. MPs Richard Johannes Jomshof and Björn Söder from the Sweden Democrats Party; Hon. MP Gudrun Margareta Brunegard from the Christian Democrats Party; Hon. MP Janine Sofia Alm Ericson from the Green Party and Mr. Carl Mattias and Ms. Kristina Eva Maria Björnerstedt of Swedish Tibet Committee. We would also like to extend a warm welcome to the delegates of the CTA's Donor Conference from different parts of the world. On this occasion, we would also like to send our hearty greetings to all Tibetans, both in and outside Tibet, as well as to the supporters of Tibet and Tibetan people spread across the globe.

The Kashag's last two statements issued on Tibetan Democracy Day briefly touched upon how His Holiness the Dalai Lama has instilled and conferred a culture of democracy among the Tibetan people over the years. These statements also provided a general overview of the development of the three pillars of democracy within the Tibetan administration. Today, we shall delve briefly into the phases of evolution of the constitutional history of Tibet.

When we look back into the history of our legal system, we had the Laws of Two Penalties and Five Approaches during the reign of Nyatri Tsenpo, the first king of Tibet; Ten Divine Virtues and 16 Codes of Conduct during Emperor Songtsen Gampo; and the Five Codes and Five Laws during the Tibetan imperial period. The period of disintegration of Tibet witnessed some deterioration in our legal system. The reign of Sakya adopted the best practices of then prevailing Mongolian laws, followed by The 15 Legal Codes during the reign of Phagmodrupa, The 16 Legal Codes during Depa Tsangpa and The 13 Legal Codes during the Gaden Phodrang. Thus, Tibet throughout its history had evolved its own national laws, religious laws and laws governing

human conduct.

After coming into exile, His Holiness the Dalai Lama promulgated the Constitution in 1963 which initiated major reforms in the traditional administrative structure and introduced a system of check and balance amongst the three pillars of democratic governance. While upholding the core values of our traditional temporal and religious legal codes, such as compassion, justice, equality, non-violence, and environmental consciousness, the Constitution also safeguarded the fundamental rights and freedoms of the people. Moreover, this Constitution laid the essential groundwork for the adoption of the Charter of the Tibetans-in-Exile in 1991 by the democratically elected members of the 11th Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies.

From 1960 to 1990, before the adoption of the Charter of the Tibetans-in-Exile, the deputies served as members of both the Assembly of the Tibetan People's Deputies (ATPD) as well as the Standing Commission of the National Assembly. Half-yearly and yearly work assembly meetings of both central and local civil servants as well as representatives from all settlements were convened by the ATPD to discuss and deliberate upon all issues concerning administration and public welfare. These meetings provided a platform for the representatives of people at the grassroots level to participate extensively in the decision-making process of the administration. Between 1972 to 1974, the rules and regulations governing the functioning of the Election Commission, the Public Service Commission and the Tibetan Freedom Movement were also formulated. A high-level National Committee comprising of Kalons, MPs and senior civil servants was formed to discuss and decide on important national matters. All these developments laid a robust foundation for ultimately realizing a democratic system of governance within the exile community.

A Special Tibetan People's Meeting was

convened in Dharmshala from 11 to 17 May 1990, which was attended by 369 people. Members of the Kashag, members of the ATPD, senior civil servants, representatives of various Tibetan Buddhist traditions, Tibetan NGOs, people's representatives from various Tibetan settlements and representatives of the newly-arrived Tibetans from Tibet participated in this meeting. At this historic meeting, His Holiness the Dalai Lama dissolved the Kashag (Kalons appointed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama) and the 10th Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies. As authorized by His Holiness, this special meeting elected three Kalons to the interim Kashag. His Holiness urged the meeting to discuss and propose any necessary democratic reforms. Subsequently, 14 important resolutions were passed at the meeting, which paved the way for the establishment of the Tibetan Justice Commission and the expansion of the strength of the Tibetan Parliament to 10 MPs from each of the three traditional regions of Tibet, two each from the four sects of Tibetan Buddhism and native Tibetan Bon religion as well as three MPs nominated by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Furthermore, a five-member Constitution Drafting Committee was constituted.

Assuming its role as the Constituent Assembly, members of the 11th Tibetan parliament and the constitution drafting committee discussed and deliberated upon the draft Charter on 30 May 1991. On 31st May, following the election of the officiating Speaker and Deputy Speaker, the Rules and Regulation of Parliamentary Procedure and Conduct of Business was adopted. After intensive discussions on the content of draft Charter from 3 to 13 June 1991, all the sitting MPs signed the Charter of the Tibetans-in-Exile on 14 June 1991. His Holiness the Dalai Lama assented the Charter on 28 June 1991.

Over the last 35 years, the Charter has undergone 35 amendments. Over 85% of them are related with the qualifications, election processes and responsibilities of the dignitaries of the three pillars

of Tibetan polity: Kashag, Parliament and Supreme Justice Commission. About fifteen of these amendments were specifically related to the Kashag, including six which were made after 2011.

If we look at the legislative accomplishments, eleven legislations were passed within just two years of the adoption of the Charter. These include: Rules and Regulation of Parliamentary Procedure and Conduct of Business; Rules and Regulations of the Standing Committee of the Tibetan Parliament; Administrative Rules and Regulations of Central Tibetan Administration Rules; Rules and Regulations of the Public Service Commission; Exile Tibetan Rules and Regulations on Raising funds, Annual Budget and Financial Management; Rules and Regulations of Regional Tibetan Freedom Movement Committee; Rules and Regulations of Tibetan Voluntary Contribution and Other Contributions Act; Rules and Regulations of the Office of Auditor General; Rules and Regulations of the Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat; Rules and Regulations for the Allotment of Staff Quarters and Retired Staff Quarters; and Rules and Regulations for the Presentation of Excellency Award to the Outstanding Staff of CTA.

Between 1995 to 2015, within a span of twenty years, fifteen rules and regulations were adopted, including six related with the privileges and benefits of the dignitaries. For instance, Tibetan Parliamentarian Housing Rules (1995); Tibetan Parliament Speaker's Relief Trust Fund Rules (1997); exile Tibetan Electoral Rules (2000); the Central Council of Tibetan Medicine Act (2003); six different rules and regulations related to the salaries, allowances and privileges of Justice Commissioners, MPs, Sikyong, Kalons and the heads of the three autonomous bodies (2004); Settlement Housing and Land Use Regulations (2005); the act regulating the Council of Tibetan Religious Affairs (2009); Daily Allowance and Other Entitlements of the Members of Local Tibetan Assembly Rules (2010); rules on collecting general donation (2011);

rules on officialization of the works of non-standing committee members of Tibetan parliament (2015). However, since 2015, no new legislation has been passed.

Among the rules and regulations mentioned above, the act regulating the council of Tibetan Religious Affairs, remains unimplemented, whereas certain others have gradually lost their effectiveness.

The rules and regulations of the Tibetan Public Service Commission saw the highest number of amendments (26 times), followed by the exile Tibetan Election Rules (20 times), and the Allocation of Staff Quarters and Retired Staff Quarter Rules (19 times). The parliament has already endorsed the bill put forth by the 16th Kashag, aiming to standardize workforce demarcation within the Tibetan administration and establish structured criteria and prerequisites for special appointments. Once again, the Kashag is preparing to introduce a new bill during the upcoming session of the Tibetan parliament. This proposed bill aims to introduce additional amendments to the rules and regulations of the Public Service Commission, with the goal of enhancing the overall structure of the Tibetan workforce and fostering uniformity in their privileges and benefits. Similarly, in alignment with the amended articles of the Charter, we are currently engaged in a thorough review of the regulations that oversee our electoral processes. The parliament has already granted approval to our proposed bill, which aims to enlarge the residential quarters for our entry-level civil servants. This bill also includes provisions to address any conflicting perspectives that might arise during the allocation of staff accommodations. To secure long-term sustainability of Tibetan settlements, the Kashag has initiated measures to enable the internal transfer of land and housing among Tibetans. Additionally, provisions have been established for individuals residing abroad; if they occupy their settlement residences for a minimum of one month within every two-year period, they will retain their house and land rights and

will not be required to relinquish them to the administration.

In yet another advancement in our legal system, as per Article 67 of the Charter, which empowers the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission (TSJC) to establish its own rules of procedure and codes of law, the Judiciary Code, Civil Procedure Code, and Evidence Code of the TSJC were formulated in 1996.

In accordance with the provisions outlined in the Charter, additional regulations governing the operations of our Election Commission, Public Service Commission, and the Office of the Auditor General were developed. Similarly, the Kashag has also established a series of administrative rules and regulations. These rules and regulations are continuously undergoing revision to adapt to the evolving needs of the times. Furthermore, as per Article 82 of the Charter, which empowers the Local Tibetan Assembly to create its own rules and regulations governing local activities, a total of 39 local assemblies have enacted their respective rules and regulations.

These rules and regulations have established a strong legal groundwork for the administration and its financial

management, the entitlements of dignitaries and civil servants, as well as the rights and liberties of the populace. These regulations have not only bolstered the effectiveness of all aspects of our democratic governance but have also safeguarded the rights and freedoms of our people.

In the Guidelines for Future Tibet's Polity and Basic Features of its Constitution promulgated in 1992, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has stated that "Personally, I have made up my mind that I will not play any role in the future government of Tibet, let alone seek the Dalai Lama's traditional political position in the government." Consequently, in 2011, His Holiness devolved all his political and administrative authority to the elected leadership.

Last year, on the Democracy Day, the Kashag appealed to constitute a charter review committee, and finally, the Parliament's newly constituted Charter Review Committee has commenced its work. We, the Kashag, have also submitted our proposals. We earnestly hope that both the committee and the Parliament will give due consideration to the insights and opinions received extensively from the general population,

including the civil servants of the CTA.

The Kashag upholds that the rule of law stands as a cornerstone in guaranteeing equality and justice, which are the embodiment of democratic values. For those of us who believe in the democratic principle of ultimate power residing in the hands of the people, a nation's trajectory of progress depends upon the active participation of its citizens in shaping and implementing the CTA's fundamental objectives and public policies. Even though we have made remarkable achievements over the years, our aspiration for freedom in Tibet remains unrealized. Hence, the Kashag would like to reiterate our appeal to stand united in the face of challenges.

On this occasion, we would like to take this opportunity to convey our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all the supporters for your unwavering support for the just cause of Tibet and its people. We look forward to your continued solidarity and friendship.

In conclusion, we pray for the long life of His Holiness the Great Fourteenth Dalai Lama and the perpetual flourishing of His Holiness' endeavours and fulfilment of all His noble aspirations.

Statement of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on 63rd Tibetan Democracy Day

It was on this 2nd day of September in 1960 that the fruit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's gift of the excellence of the democratic system of government to the Tibetan people was realized with the establishment of the Tibetan parliament which was made up of elected representatives from all the three provinces as well as the religious orders of Tibet. And so, on this universal calendar day in the Tibetan Royal Year 2150, when we mark the 63rd anniversary of that momentous occasion, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, with the humility of a profound gratitude to His Holiness, wishes to extend its greetings and good wishes to all the Tibetan people, governments and parliaments that have extended support

for Tibet and the Tibetan people, to the Tibet support groups, as well as to the entirety of the public in the international community that aspire peace, fairness and truth.

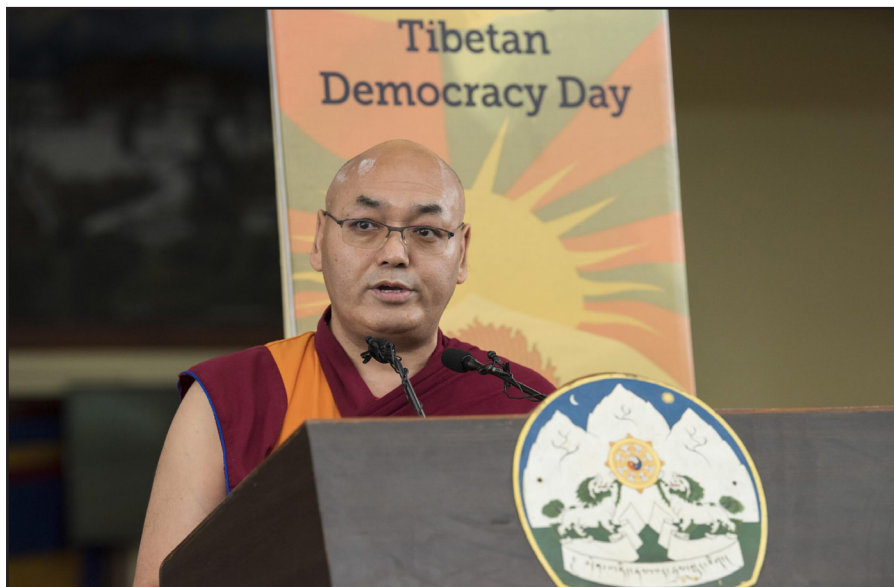
The democratic system of government is based on a political ideology that does not differentiate people on the basis of the question whether a person is strong or weak, rich or poor, male or female, or on the basis of their race or lineage, and so forth with regard to their status in society. Rather, it postulates the founding of a society in which everyone is seen as equal, viewed through the prism of the generality or commonality of everyone. Such a system is seen as being based on an ideology that

reflects the primacy of the will of the people. It does not bear saying that in the records of the histories of many nations, people have had to make many great sacrifices for the purpose of finally realizing the establishment of a system of government that is based on this great ideology. However, in the case of the Tibetan democracy, we never felt the need to strive for realizing or achieving the present system of democracy, it was bestowed upon us by our pre-eminent leader, His Holiness the Great Fourteenth Dalai Lama, on the basis of the importance He attached to His great foresight and concern for the wellbeing of His people.

Immediately on assuming political and

spiritual leadership of Tibet in 1950, His Holiness embarked on a quest to modernize the system of working of the Tibetan society, for which purpose He newly established in 1952 a reform office. But before this office could work out its full order of plans of action, Communist Chinese invaders launched an armed aggression on Tibet and soon overran the entire territory, thus creating a huge obstacle to the implementation of His reform agenda. However, as soon as He reached the holy land of India in exile, His Holiness, in tandem with the establishment of a Tibetan government in exile, oversaw the establishment in 1960 of the Tibetan parliament with its members elected by the Tibetan people. In 1961, He publicized a document outlining the salient features of a democratic constitution for a future free Tibet. He followed it up, in 1963, with the proclamation of a democratic constitution for a future free Tibet. This was followed, in 1991, by His Holiness taking further action to transform the Tibetan parliament into a true legislative body. Pursuant to this development, His Holiness, on the 28th of June in 1991, granted His assent to the Charter of Tibetans in exile following its adoption by the 11th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile. His Holiness thereby transformed the Tibetan government in exile into a charter-based body which functions in accordance with a modern democratic system. Further, in the year 2001, a major step was taken in continuing the development of Tibetan democracy with a decision for the Kalon Tripa being elected directly by the Tibetan people. Later, in the year 2011, His Holiness transferred to the leadership elected directly by the Tibetan people the entirety of His political and government powers to make them effective representatives who have a mandate to serve the interests of both those living in Tibet and in exile. And so, we owe a debt of gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama that the Central Tibetan Administration has today become a fully functioning government system within a democratic framework in every aspect.

Although we have been refugees over the last more than six decades, the leaders



Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel of the 17th Tibetan Parliament in Exile, Central Tibetan Administration, reading the statement on 63rd Tibetan Democracy Day.

of Tibetan government in exile or the Central Tibetan Administration are being directly elected by the Tibetan people in diaspora, like the major independent and progressive democratic countries. Similarly, the local bodies under the CTA, scattered all over the world also exercise democratic electoral system in appointing their representatives – such as the members of the Local Tibetan Assemblies, a section of the Tibetan Settlement Offices, and members of the Regional Tibetan Freedom Movement. Besides, the manner of taking decisions in these bodies is subject to the democratic procedure of majority vote. These bear ample testimony to the gradual progress and development of Tibetan democracy achieved through the meticulous process of refinement in the way a goldsmith tests the purity of gold with regard to the system of Tibetan democracy, its basic framework, and in the manner of the people's participation in it since His Holiness the Dalai Lama granted to the general Tibetan populace the noble gift of democracy. And so, when in future, the just cause of Tibet prevails and the fortunate era of sunshine dawns on Tibetan people being able to return to their homeland, the best contribution we can make in the exchange of experiences with those who had remained in Tibet would obviously be the democracy that we practice in exile.

Among the numerous features of the democratic system, one of the more important is the guaranteeing of respect for basic human rights and adhering to the rule of law. There is no person who does not consider his personal freedoms and rights to be important. In the same way, it is equally important that the freedoms and rights of other people, and likewise, their desire to be governed by rule of law, should also be respected. This, while, no doubt, being true, is also fundamental for maintaining harmony in society. In particular, what Tibetans living in exile need to bear in mind is that during their period of living as refugees in foreign countries, they should value the opportunity they enjoy of their freedom and equality by directing their efforts towards the realization of a system of Tibetan democracy which is characterized by attributes of a modern democratic system as well as ethical values rooted in Tibetan culture more than ever before. This has become vital.

When it comes to talking about the situation in Tibet today, it does not bear mentioning that not only are the Tibetan people living there deprived of their democratic freedoms, they also lack even the most fundamental of human rights recognized and proclaimed by the United Nations Organization. Pursuing a series of hard line policies during the past many decades, the Communist

Chinese government has subjected the Tibetan people to all manners of hardship on successive occasions that affected every aspect of their day-to-day living conditions. And this was not all. It has even been engaged in implementing a policy to obliterate without a trace the linguistic heritage, religion, culture, traditions and customs, natural environment and so forth which are the defining characteristics of the Tibetan people and their nation. This entailed the indiscriminate arrest or forcible taking away of Tibetan people on false incriminations, their detention and imprisonment, beating and torture, and all others sorts of ill-treatment which continue to be rampant to this day. The government of China is presently engaged in a policy to forcibly assimilate more than a million Tibetan children in boarding schools which has been especially set up for this purpose. This was the reason why recently, on the 22nd of August this year, the Department of State of the United States government announced the imposition of visa sanctions on a section of Chinese leaders involved in this policy. The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile welcomes this action from the United States government. Still, it bears emphasizing that the situation wherein the government of China continues to carry out a policy to Sinicize the Tibetan people, religion, culture, and nation and to trample on the human rights of the Tibetan people in Tibet remain an abiding cause for great anxiety.

On the 10th of August in 2023, three United Nations human rights experts – the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders Ms. Mary Lawlor; the Special Rapporteur on freedom of assembly and association Mr. Clément Nyaletsossi Voule; and the Special Rapporteur on human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment Mr. David Boyd – issued a joint statement. This statement questioned the government of China for its long term imprisonment of nine Tibetan environment activists whose names it mentioned. “If China is committed to tackle the impacts of

climate change, it should refrain from persecuting environmental human rights defenders and release all nine immediately,” the experts said. The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile wishes to express its appreciation to these United Nations human rights experts. Along with it, we wish to appeal to the United Nations as well as governments across the world to pressure and appeal to the government of China to grant freedom to the people in Tibet to engage in initiative and activities on issues of respect for their religious, cultural, linguistic, and fundamental human rights.

As the current, 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile nears the end of the second year of its term, its members have undertaken visit and inspection tours to the settlements and other areas where Tibetan people have settled, for which purpose settlement destinations were allocated to them at the start of the parliamentary term. Along with undertaking their visits and inspections, the members have, as and when occasions arose, spoken to the Tibetan public about the noble activities and services being undertaken by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and developments in political activities; they also inspected the state of wellbeing of the Tibetan public. By these means, the members of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile have acted, and continue to act, as a sort of bridge between the Tibetan public and their administration. Also by these means, a significant number of grievances and problems of the Tibetan public have been solved.

A large number of political activities of various types have been undertaken, and continues to be undertaken, by the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile for furthering the fundamental cause of Tibet. These include, and have included, lobbying for support for the Tibetan struggle in a number of countries, with focus on members of parliament of India and other countries, leaders of governments in their respective countries, Tibet support groups and their members through meetings and making of requests for support through various programmes, and also by means of organizing a meeting of the World

Parliamentarians’ Convention on Tibet. In order to ensure further improvement in the parliamentary conduct of the members of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, a number of training and strategy meetings were held on successive occasions. Local Assemblies in the Tibetan settlement areas are also important institutions within the democratic framework of the Tibetan people living in exile. Hence, in order to further and improve success in their functioning, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile has undertaken, and continues to undertake, programmes to impart training to the members of the Local Tibetan Assemblies at their various locations from time to time. This year, a new initiative was launched, and continues to be carried out, to spread awareness of the issue of Tibet among the Indian youths in different states of the country, with the main focus being on college and university students, for which purpose visit allocations of states were made for the members of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile. To sum up, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile wishes to apprise the Tibetan public about the activities it has undertaken, and continues to undertake, to the best of its means, directed at efforts to realize the just cause of Tibet and towards overcoming the grievances and solving the problems of the general Tibetan public.

The Tibetan democracy being practiced by us in exile is the result of a vision long held by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and is based on the foundation of truth and fairness, and of ethical conduct. It is therefore established on the recognition of the values of democracy, on the foundation of which we have continued to pool whatever capabilities we possessed to cumulatively enrich it with our experiences in our pursuit of the democratic way. Nevertheless, it bears pointing out that from the start of the year 2020 following the outbreak of the Covid-19 global pandemic in the central Chinese city of Wuhan, the entire world got plunged into hardship and suffering, engulfed by its spread. This had a great deleterious effect on our Tibetan community in exile too,

including the fact that the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile was unable to hold its regular session in accordance with the laws and rules governing it. But now, following an agreement reached during the 5th session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, resolution No. 2023/17/5/5 was adopted under which a Rules and Regulation Review Committee made up of five members of the Parliament was constituted. The mandate of this committee is to review the laws, and the rules and regulations of the Central Tibetan Administration, and submit its report and recommendations to the Parliamentary Secretariat by the end of Feb 2024. As such, the committee is already fully immersed in carrying out this task. The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile remains hopeful that by means of this approach, greater clarity will be achieved in carrying out its works in accordance with the laws and the rules and regulations governing the conduct of its business and affairs.

It is solely on account of the kindness of and the debt of gratitude we owe to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the unsurpassable leader of the Tibetan people, that there has been a groundswell of assistance and support for Tibet and the Tibetan people from governments, parliaments, organizations and associations, as well as private individuals from countries across the world, including especially India, the United States of America, and across Europe. To all of them, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile takes the opportunity provided by this occasion to express its immense gratitude.

Finally, we pray that His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama, the refuge of the Tibetan people for this life as well as hereafter, and our unsurpassable leader, may continue to live for ten thousand eons; that, on this basis, all His great and noble desires may be seen fulfilled with spontaneity and without obstacles; and that the noble path of Tibetan democracy may continue to develop and progress and, on that basis, the just cause of the Tibetan people may definitely prevail in all speediness.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Bestows Avalokiteshvara Empowerment on Third Day of Teachings for Taiwanese



His Holiness the Dalai Lama engaging in preparatory ritual for the Avalokiteshvara Empowerment on final day of teachings requested by Taiwanese.

The brilliant light of the rising sun streamed through the Tsuglagkhang on the morning of 4 October 2023 as His Holiness the Dalai Lama arrived to give a Chenrezig empowerment. He smiled and gently waved to disciples and well-wishers, took his seat, and immediately began to conduct the procedures preliminary to giving the empowerment. Meanwhile, the ‘Heart Sutra’ was chanted first in Chinese and then in Tibetan.

When he was ready His Holiness addressed the gathering.

“Today the main disciples here at the Thekchen Chöling Tsuglagkhang are our Dharma friends from Taiwan. Buddhism has flourished in Tibet, Mongolia and China for hundreds of years. When I visited mainland China in 1955, I saw many Buddhist temples and monasteries. Tibet, China and Mongolia also have special links with Avalokiteshvara.

“Chinese Communists have narrowly suppressed Buddhism in Tibet, but in China today interest in Buddhism is growing once again. At the same time Avalokiteshvara’s blessings

continue to shine over Tibet. What is important to recognise is that whether we are religious or not, we all need to have warm heart. We need to regard others with affection. Avalokiteshvara is the deity of compassion and people throughout the Himalayan region are virtuous and warm-hearted because of their connection to him.

“I’m known as the 14th Dalai Lama, and I’ve had a karmic connection with the people of Tibet for many lifetimes. Today, I’m going to give a short Avalokiteshvara empowerment. Although there have been huge changes in Tibet, China and Mongolia, because of the connection with Avalokiteshvara, we tend to say the six-syllable mantra from an early age.

“These days there’s a lot of talk about peace in the world, but to bring it about as many of us as possible need first to achieve peace of mind.

“Living in human communities as we do, we need to have a warm heart. As children we benefit from our mother’s care and affection. After giving birth to us she nurtures us with loving

kindness. This experience leaves a strong impression on us. It is from this that we learn that we too can be loving and compassionate towards others. My Dharma friends I urge you to cultivate a warm heart.”

His Holiness explained that all eight billion people on this earth are the same in not wanting suffering and wishing to be happy. He observed that cultivating the awakening mind of bodhichitta leads to peace of mind. It also brings about a balance in the body and so contributes to our physical health. Those of us who pray to Avalokiteshvara pay attention to compassion. Reciting the six-syllable mantra—Om mani padme hum—helps us cultivate compassion within.

Revealing that he meditates on bodhichitta from the very moment he wakes up in the morning His Holiness added that he combines that thought with insight into emptiness. He cited verses from ‘Entering into the Middle Way’ from which he takes inspiration.

Thus, illuminated by the rays of wisdom’s light, the bodhisattva sees as clearly as a gooseberry on his open palm that the three realms in their entirety are unborn from their very start, and through the force of conventional truth, he journeys to cessation. 6.224

Though his mind may rest continuously in cessation, he also generates compassion for beings bereft of protection. Advancing further, he will also outshine through his wisdom all those born from the Buddha’s speech and the middle buddhas. 6.225

And like a king of swans soaring ahead of other accomplished swans, with white wings of conventional and ultimate truths spread wide, propelled by the powerful winds of virtue, the bodhisattva would cruise to the excellent far shore, the oceanic qualities of the conquerors. 6.226

His Holiness mentioned that King Songtsen Gampo was blessed by

Avalokiteshvara. He married a Chinese princess but was also concerned to preserve and strengthen Tibetan culture. He arranged for a Tibetan written script to be devised, which meant that when Shantarakshita came to Tibet in the following century, he recommended that Indian Buddhist literature—the words of the Buddha and the treatises of subsequent masters—be translated into Tibetan.

His Holiness noted that the essence of the advice contained in that literature deals with cultivating a good heart.

“I’ve faced many difficulties in my life,” he conceded, “but none of them have disturbed my peace of mind. I think that what scientists say about having a good heart being good for your health and well-being is true. Bodhichitta not only fulfils our own goals, it fulfils the goals of others. If you can cultivate it day and night, you’ll surely find peace of mind.”

At the start of the empowerment His Holiness offered a ritual cake to the local spirits as a way of including them in the proceedings. He gave the Bodhisattva Vows, relying on Terdag Lingpa’s way of doing so, followed by the Tantric Vows. He then guided the congregation through a series of empowerments including the Vase Empowerment, the Crown Empowerment, the Secret and the Word Empowerments. Having completed them he gave the subsequent permissions,

culminating in the permission to benefit others. This prompted him to recite the verse from Shantideva’s ‘Entering into the Bodhisattva Way’ that expresses his core aspiration.

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.

“Having received this empowerment,” His Holiness averred, “please do as the principal deity has advised,” which means to say keep the pledges and commitments. The Chinese disciples chanted the prayer for His Holiness’s long life composed by his Tutors that has been translated into Chinese.

As His Holiness got up from his seat, he recited two verses of dedication:

Just as the brave Manjushri and
Samantabhadra too
Realized things as they are,
I also dedicate all these merits in the best way
So that I may follow their perfect example.

I dedicate all these roots of virtue
With the dedication praised as the best
By all the Buddhas who appear in the three times
So that I might perform the noble
Bodhisattva’s deeds.



Members of audience making mandala mudra as a gesture of offering to His Holiness the Dalai Lama during the Avalokiteshvara Empowerment on final day of teachings requested by Taiwanese.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Inaugurates Khamgar Druk Dharmakara College



His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the inaugural ceremony of Khamgar Druk Dharmakara College.

Smiling friends and well-wishers thronged the street as His Holiness the Dalai Lama set off for Tashi Jong on 27 September 2023 while the early morning sun shone out of a cloudless sky. The entire Gyutö Monastery turned out to line the road to greet him as he passed. Likewise, at Gopalpur, on the way to Palampur, a group of masked Tashi Shölpa dancers headed a long line of students, teachers and staff from the nearby Tibetan Children's Village (TCV) school. Many of them held white silk scarves in their hands. All of them looked delighted to see His Holiness.

Arriving at Tashi Jong, the entire community were waiting in their best clothes, joyful smiles on their faces, to welcome him. His Holiness was able to drive right to the steps of the new assembly hall. At the door he cut the ribbon to symbolically open the main academic building of the new Khamgar Druk Dharmakara College. At the head of the hall he lit an inaugural lamp before a large statue of the Buddha.

His Holiness ascended the throne and

took his seat. As Khamtrul Rinpoché offered a mandala, His Holiness wore the red Drukpa Kagyyu hat. There were offerings of representations of the body, speech and mind of the Buddha while a prayer for His Holiness's long life composed by his tutors was chanted. Tea and sweet rice were served.

One of the Khenpos welcomed His Holiness, referring to him respectfully as the incarnation of Avalokiteshvara and master of the entire teaching of the Buddha. He greeted all the guests and dignitaries with "Tashi Deleg."

In his report, given in Tibetan, Khamtrul Rinpoché again addressed His Holiness as master of the entire teaching of the Buddha and champion of peace throughout the world. He thanked him for accepting the invitation to inaugurate this new centre of learning today.

Rinpoché explained that the first Khamapagar Monastery was founded by the first Khamtrul Rinpoché with branches in Dergé and other parts of Kham. The great Fifth Dalai Lama

encouraged him. Subsequent Dalai Lamas, including the Seventh, wrote to the Khamtrul Rinpoché to acknowledge their work to preserve the Dharma. Later, the 13th Dalai Lama also encouraged the Khamtrul Rinpoché who was his contemporary to continue to serve the Dharma and sentient beings.

"Just as previous Dalai Lamas looked after the Khampagar Monasteries," Rinpoché requested, "I appeal to Your Holiness to look after us too."

He mentioned that the Fourth Khamtrul Rinpoché, Tenzin Chökyi Nyima, founded a centre of learning in Chamdo that was called Chilling Göñ to which he invited a teacher from Namgyal Monastery. Later, Rinpoché's predecessor, the Eighth Khamtrul Rinpoché Dongyud Nyima invited scholars from Dzogchen and Kathog Monasteries to teach the monks.

Here at Khampagar, a Sakya Khenpo Rinchen and Khenpos from Tibet have been invited to teach. As the number of students grew the need arose to

build larger facilities which has led to the establishment of this Khamgar Druk Dharmakara College. Rinpoché declared that the Institute follows the Nalanda Tradition and attracts students from across the Himalayan region.

He concluded by voicing a wish for everyone's well-being, praying that His Holiness's aspirations may be fulfilled and that he live a long life.

Kishori Lal, the local Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) described the inauguration of the Institute as a very special occasion. He recalled in the 1960s Tibetans began to live in Chaurtra, Bir and Tashi Jong. Since then, the Government of India and of Himachal Pradesh have given them what help they could. Indeed, the present Chief Minister has recently repeated this offer of assistance.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering, President of the Central Tibetan Administration, praised His Holiness's inauguration of the Khamgar Druk Dharmakara College. He noted that some of the past students who become Khenpos have taught at the monastery, others have dedicated their lives to practice, while yet others have gone back to Tibet to teach. He mentioned a conference that the CTA is organizing next year, which he hopes teachers and students from Khampagar will attend. He also remarked that in south India several scholars who have received Geshé degrees are now working towards PhDs at the Dalai Lama Institute of Higher Studies under the auspices of the University of Bangalore.

Speaker Khenpo Tenphel offered praise and gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the establishment of this college. He cited Vasubandhu's advice that the proper way to preserve the Buddha's teachings is through study and practice. He acknowledged the great contribution that the past and present Khamtrul Rinpochés have made to this venture.

"My dear Dharma friends," His Holiness began, "I'm happy to be able to address you all. Today, the Tibetan

Buddhist Tradition, which has been restricted by communist Chinese forces in Tibet, is flourishing because of the strong faith of the Tibetan people. This Dharma tradition has neither declined, nor become diluted, because you have all worked hard. Today, there is growing interest in our knowledge and traditions among Buddhists in China as well as scholars and scientists in other parts of the world. Scientists in particular are interested in what we have to say about the workings of the mind and emotions and the nature of reality.

"We combine practice of the awakening mind of bodhichitta with an understanding of emptiness. Things appear to have an independent existence an identity that cannot be found when we search for it. Therefore, we say that things only exist by way of designation.

"As a Buddhist monk, the moment I wake in the morning I summon up my understanding of bodhichitta, a sense that others are dear and close to us, as well as the wisdom understanding emptiness. What I find is that the more altruistic you are, the more you feel at ease. Bodhichitta gives rise to peace of mind.

"If you are filled with anger and jealousy, you won't be happy. These emotions are rooted in a self-centredness and self-cherishing that can lead to harm and the outbreak of war. Compassion and bodhichitta, on the other hand, are a source of peace.

"I have studied Buddhist scriptures since I was a child and worked to integrate what I learned within. As Buddhists liberation and enlightenment are our goal. People readily talk about peace in the world, but it will only be established when we develop peace of mind within. When we gain a clearer understanding of the workings of the mind and emotions, we learn how much we need love and compassion in the world. More and more people are coming to appreciate this."

His Holiness remarked that all Tibetan Buddhist traditions, Nyingma, Sakya,

Kagyü, Geluk and Jonang combine the use of logic with an understanding of the Middle Way or Madhyamaka view. He observed that all are the same. They may use different terms, but all Tibetan Buddhist traditions focus on love and compassion and in today's world it's time to share these values with everyone. This is something to keep in mind.

He noted that Tibetans have lost their country and with it their freedom, but they have found they have friends around the world who recognise that Tibetans are a calm and peaceful people. This is because the Buddhadharma is not about performing rituals or playing musical instruments, it's about achieving peace of mind. Jetsun Mila was a true practitioner. He didn't play a drum and cymbals, he meditated on bodhichitta and emptiness as he practised in silence.

"Our mothers give birth to us. They shower us with love and affection—something we should not forget. As we grow up, we should remember the love and affection we've learned from our mothers and employ them in relation to others. If you cultivate love and compassion, when you leave this life, not only will you be able to go peacefully, but it will have a positive effect on your next life. This too is something to keep in mind.

"I've been asked to read the 'Eight Verses for Training the Mind'. The author, Geshé Langri Thangpa was an incredible practitioner of bodhichitta throughout his life. This is a text I recite to myself every day as part of my meditation on compassion and emptiness. I use these eight verses to invoke bodhichitta and lines from Chandrakirti's 'Entering into the Middle Way' to focus on emptiness. "Preserving the Dharma is not like keeping a possession safe, it's about keeping the teachings in mind. The Buddha realized the nature of things as they are and bodhichitta is the essence of what he taught.

"The first and second verses of the eight advise us to see ourselves as the lowest amongst all. The third warns us not let ourselves be carried away by

our emotions. The fourth recommends that we should not let our love and compassion lapse in relation to those who are rough and rude. The next verse stresses the importance of peace of mind. We must use mind-training to transform ourselves. This is how I practise, and I encourage you to do so too.

“The sixth verse refers to the practice of ‘tong-len’, giving and taking, while the following verse counsels us to remain kind even to those who are rough.

“My Dharma friends, monastics shouldn’t be like worldly people, they

should maintain three trainings—to be calm, peaceful and relaxed. That’s all for today—thank you.”

Sponsors and others who had contributed to the creation of the college were able to approach His Holiness who presented each with a statue of the Buddha. Khamtrul Rinpoché gave certificates of gratitude to those who had worked on the building.

Khenpo Lobsang Sangpo offered words of thanks. Addressing him once more as master of the entire teaching of the Buddha and champion of peace in the

world, he thanked His Holiness for inaugurating the college and for the teaching he had given. “We thank you from the depth of our hearts and pray for your long life,” he concluded.

His Holiness and other guests were invited to a delicious lunch, after which he set out to return to Dharamsala. As he passed through Gopalpur, the TCV children lined the road once more, beaming with joy, so pleased to see him, and calling out “Tashi Delek” in greeting even to those in the cars at the end of the convoy.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Attends Long Life Offering Ceremony in Dharamshala

On 25 October 2023, His Holiness the Dalai Lama was offered prayers for his long life by students, staff and former students of the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics, as well as members of Sera Jé Hardong Khangtzen, the Tibetan Chamber of Commerce and the Lha Ngam Phun Sum (Lhatse Dzong, Ngamring Dzong and Phuntsoling Dzong) regional organization.

The peaks of the Dhauladhar mountains shone against the empty blue sky as His Holiness drove through the gate to his residence and into the temple courtyard. A group of Tibetan women sang to him in greeting. As he disembarked from the golf-cart he was offered the traditionally welcoming ‘Chema Changphu’. He took a pinch of one and a taste of the other.

As he walked to the lift and then, as he made his way round the temples, His Holiness’s face was full of joy as he waved to members of the crowd, both those close by as well as others further away. Inside the temple he touched brows in mutual respect with the Ganden Tri Rinpoché. As His Holiness took his seat the congregation bowed in homage.

The ceremony, which began with the recitation of a praise to the Buddha, was presided over by Ganden Tri Rinpoché and Kewtsang Rinpoché. They were

joined in the front row by Lamas belonging to several other Tibetan Buddhist traditions. Among the guests were Tagtsag Kundelling Rinpoché, Guru Tulku Rinpoché, Lochen Rinpoché and the acting head of the Jonang tradition.

Next came a recitation of ‘Clouds of Ambrosial Blessings’, Trulshik Rinpoché’s invocation of the series of incarnations of Avalokiteshvara in Tibet. Today’s proceedings followed the ‘Long-Life Ceremony of White Tara of the Wish-Fulfilling Wheel’ by the Great Fifth Dalai Lama. They were the

culmination of seven days preparation during which monks recited prayers and repeated mantras to bless the symbolic substances that would be offered. The text included repeated offerings and requests that the ‘life of our glorious, sacred Lama’ be prolonged.

At a certain point Ganden Tri Rinpoché came forward to present His Holiness with the long-life wand. Then, longevity mantras were recited and a food offering in the form of a large ritual cake was presented to His Holiness, who took a token portion.



The assemblage offering long life prayers to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

A 'Prayer to the Dharma Protectors of Tibet', composed by His Holiness, was recited. This was followed by an elaborate mandala offering which Ganden Tri Rinpoché presented with a formal request to His Holiness to live long.

Next were offered representations of the body, speech, and mind of the Buddhas, the vase, the symbols [of the Buddhas] of the five noble families, long-life nectar and pills, the seven royal emblems, the eight auspicious symbols, the eight auspicious substances, and so forth. As this was going on, a long procession of people belonging to the four patron organizations passed through the temple carrying a large array of gifts and offerings.

While the prayer for His Holiness's long life composed by his two tutors Kyabjé Ling Rinpoché and Kyabjé Trijang Rinpoché was recited, representatives of the four patron organizations approached the throne to pay their respects. His Holiness gave each a white silk scarf and a red protection ribbon, often accompanied by an affectionate pat on the head.

After the chanting of a prayer for His Holiness's long life by Jamyang Khyentsé Chökyi Lodrö, Kewtsang Rinpoché presented a final mandala offering to His Holiness in gratitude for his having accepted today's prayer for his long life.

During the recitation of a prayer for the ecumenical spread of the Buddha's teachings, the 'tsog', the heap of food that had been consecrated as part of the ceremony, was distributed among the congregation.

Proceedings concluded with the chanting of the 'Prayer of the Words of Truth', prayers for auspiciousness and verses of dedication. His Holiness emerged from the temple smiling and waving to jubilant friends and well-wishes as he walked down the side of the temple to the lift, and then, on the level of the courtyard, to the golf-cart that would carry him home.

China's Nomenclature Aggression, Erasing Tibet from the World Map

- by Dr Tsewang Gyalpo Arya

Chinese Communist party leadership has acquired a new vile passion to wipe off Tibet from the people's memory and the world map. To this effect, in order not to invite the international community's ire, it used the Chinese and foreign academicians' shoulders to shoot the gun. China organized the 7th Beijing International Seminar on Tibetan Studies last month. The South China Morning Post (SCMP) notes that the official China News Service reports that the "seminar was attended by more than 320 scholars, including over 40 from outside mainland China." Whatever the outcome, Chinese academicians' discussion on how the word "Tibet" is misleading and how it should be replaced by "Xizang" and justification of the Chinese boarding schools for Tibetan children are widely circulated and reported in China! This paper will examine why the CCP is after this renaming game to eliminate Tibetan identity and how continued international silence will embolden China's wolf warrior diplomacy to go ahead jeopardizing peace and stability around the world with impunity.

WHY TIBET TO XIZANG?

Even after more than seventy years of brutal occupation and forced indoctrination, Tibetans remained resilient and the Tibet issue is still alive and robust in international forums. China realized this strong Tibetan identity based on the language and its religious culture and Tibet as a land as the unifying force challenging China's efforts to gain full control over Tibet through its Sinicization policy. The past few years global commotion and instability due to the Coronavirus pandemic followed by the Russian invasion of Ukraine have kept the world preoccupied; China took full advantage of this opportunity and unleashed cultural revolution-like repression in Tibet and other occupied regions. Destructions of Tibetan monasteries, religious statues, prayer

wheels, and flags; closure of Tibetan schools and forcing Tibetan children into communist boarding schools; and taking DNA samples of Tibetans happened and are happening even now.

China has gained full control over Tibet and the Tibetans physically through its ignominious brutal measures, but the Tibetan spirit of freedom has not been vanquished. Despite China's fierce propaganda to portray old Tibet as a cruel feudal polity and H.H. the Dalai Lama as a demon, it has not won the much-needed moral authority and trust of the Tibetans to rule Tibet. China has now adopted cartographic and nomenclature aggressions to distort history and rewrite it to go along with its false narrative and assertions.

Wang Junzheng, popularly known as "the butcher of Xinjiang Uyghur for his brutality in the region", is among the party leaders pushing this policy to replace Tibet with Xizang in all official documents. Since his joining as the Party Secretary of the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region in October 2021, he unleashed the policy to eradicate Tibetan identity and culture, even to the extent of banning the usage of the word "Tibet". He ordered the government offices and media to use Xizang instead of Tibet in all official documents and communication to confound the international community and the younger generation of the existence of Tibet as a nation. He is among the top lists in the U.S. sanctions against Chinese authorities responsible for human rights violations in the Chinese-occupied territories.

A CLOSED SYMPOSIUM

Judging from the proceeding of the 7th Beijing International Seminar on Tibetan Studies held on August 14-16, it was a closed symposium and the purpose of the symposium was to further this policy to erase Tibet from the world

and extol developments in the region to legitimize the communist occupation of Tibet. It has been shown as if the inspiration came from the academicians and scholars attending the seminar. Foreign scholars on China's white list are invited and made accomplices to this heinous conspiracy to virtually abduct Tibet from the world scene. Tibetan scholars from India and abroad have not received any notice or invitations to attend the symposium.

China analyst Mr. Kunga Tashi, based in the U.S., in his recent video News 108th issue, said that the Beijing International Seminar on Tibet was first held in September 1991 and the purpose of the symposium as per their official document is noted as "To expose the true face of the Dalai clique and their dark feudal society and to inform the international community of the CCP's glorious contribution in liberating Tibet and introducing democracy." So, we could well surmise what to expect from the seminar. How such a purpose or theme fits as an international seminar on Tibetan studies is anyone's guess. It is just another propaganda gimmick aimed to mislead and confuse the international community. No wonder the United Front Work Department (UFWD) is publicizing the seminar's outcome frantically through its official WeChat account.

This "Beijing International Seminar on Tibetan Studies" should not be confused with the International Association for Tibetan Studies (IATS) which was first held in 1979 in England, and the latest 16th conference was held in 2022 in Prague, Czech Republic. Unlike Beijing's symposium, the IATS is an independent body where scholars are free to present their papers and express their opinions freely. Many say that China instituted the Beijing International Seminar on Tibetan Studies only to Challenge the International Association of Tibetan Studies and to circulate its propaganda through pretentious academic and scholarly meetings.

WHAT IS TIBET

We must remember that Tibet is

composed of the three traditional provinces of U-Tsang, Amdo, and Kham. In these three provinces live the descendants of miudhung-drug, (Tib: mi'u gdung drug), the first six original clans of Tibet since the dawn of civilization on the Tibetan plateau. The name Tibet has evolved over a long period of time from Thibet, Tubbat, Tufan, Tubot, etc. Italian explorer Marco Polo has referred to Tibet as Tebet [The Early History of Tibet from Chinese Sources by S. W. Bushell. Journal of The Royal Asiatic Society. Page-436].

After the brutal occupation of Tibet in 1950, China divided the Tibetan provinces in 1965 with U-Tsang and some parts of Kham as Tibet Autonomous Region and merged Amdo and major part of Kham with the Chinese provinces of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan, and Yunnan. China adopted this policy of divide and rule to weaken Tibetan unity and distort Tibetan geohistory. Now, by removing the word Tibet from the official documents, the CCP wants to deceive the international community that there is nothing called "Tibet" and the Tibet issue; it is only Xizang, Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan, and Yunnan, and these are all Chinese provinces!

This is a very despicable colonial policy to wipe out the historical existence of Tibet as a land and nation and Tibetans as a distinct race. Prof. Wang Linping of Harbin Engineering University's College of Marxism has said "The use of Tibet had seriously misled the international community over the geographical scope of the region." The United Front Work Department capitalized on the seminar's proceedings and advocated fiercely the erasure of Tibet from official documents and daily usage stating that "This geographical scope overlaps with the so-called 'Greater Tibet' that the Dalai Lama clique has long advocated for."

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF TIBET

It is a pity that the UFWD, a primary body with whom the Tibetans have been negotiating for long to resolve the Tibet issue, has not understood what exactly

comprises Tibet. It is clear from the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People submitted to the UFWD in October 2008 that Tibetans have been seeking genuine autonomy for all the Tibetans living in the three provinces of traditional Tibet. The memorandum has not said or asked for anything greater or lesser Tibet than the traditional three provinces of Tibet, i.e. U-Tsang, Amdo, and Kham.

In fact, the nomenclature "Greater Tibet" came from the old Chinese name for Tibet "Tufan and Tubod" around the Tang Dynasty in the 7th century. This was how ancient Tang China referred to Tibet in those days. Xizang came up only during the Qing dynasty to refer to western Tibet only. Thibet, Tubbat, Tufan, and Tubod are all holonyms of Tibet, and Xizang is just a meronym created by the Qing regime (1644-1911 A.D.). So, the nomenclature of Tibet far precedes and predates the Chinese word Xizang.

NOMENCLATURE AGGRESSION

Lian Xiangmin, Vice Director of the China Tibetology Research Centre in Beijing, has said the use of Xizang would be in line with a proposal approved by the United Nations in 1977 and State Council Guidelines from 1978 to use pinyin for Chinese place names in English. This may be so as far as the usage of pinyin is concerned, but this does not allow China to go on erasing the colonized territories' nomenclature and replace it with Chinese pinyin. It is illegal and immoral on the part of the occupying force to change the name of places it forcefully occupied. This is what Russia has done in Ukraine. China renamed 15 places in the Indian territory of Arunachal Pradesh and continues to create skirmishes from time to time. India has strongly objected to this new form of Chinese aggression.

Japanese Senkaku Island, which was reverted to Japan in 1972 under the Okinawa Reversion Agreement between the United States and Japan, was not an issue around that time. China started claiming the Island later and renamed the Island "Diaoyu" only after the mid-

1950s. This is the CCP's one of the many devious tactics to claim neighboring territory by positing a non-issue matter as a disputed issue at first through nomenclature aggression followed by fierce verbal claims and then by military threats and forced incursions.

Scott Harold, Washington-based senior political scientist with the RAND Corporation research group has, in his interview with the VOA said, "I think the Chinese view is that part of narrative warfare, part of shaping a narrative about what a conflict is about, is wrong-footing or putting your adversary or rival claimant or disputant in a position where they are disadvantaged, and China holds an advantage."

CCP'S BLATANT LIE

China's 2019 white paper on defense said, "Since its founding 70 years ago, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has never started any war or conflict. No matter how it might develop, China will never threaten any other country or seek any sphere of influence. Peace is a common aspiration of people all around the world."

Had China's above assertion been true and genuine, the world today would have been more peaceful, friendly, and civilized. But what China has done since the founding of the CCP is an open secret. Brutal occupation and repressions in Tibet, Southern Mongolia, East Turkistan, the Tiananmen massacre, the 1962 war of aggression against India, and the continued border incursions are just some of the heinous crimes China perpetrated against humanity at the cost of world peace and stability. What about the ongoing threat of invasion and military buildups around Taiwan and Indo-Pacific regions? Countries around the Southeast China Sea: Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam are constantly provoked and kept alert to push back Beijing's cranky repeated belligerent moves around the regions.

WOLF WARRIOR DIPLOMACY

Japan recently released the Fukushima plant's treated water into the ocean. This

was done following strict international standards and with the approval of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Japan demonstrated how the water has been treated before the international community. The New York Times reports that scientists, including Chinese experts invited to serve on a task force by the International Atomic Energy Agency, have said that Japan's water release would have a very low effect on human health or the environment.

So, China's strong criticism and backlash against Japan's discharge of treated water is baseless, unfounded, and unscientific. Chinese are not to be blamed, because their only source of information is the government's propaganda and the leadership wants to stoke this anti-Japanese sentiment to divert public attention from the more pressing socio-political issues at home.

China must remember how Japan and the Japanese reacted when China earned global backlash for the Coronavirus eruption from the Chinese Wuhan city. The international community owes a real genuine apology and compensation from the CCP leadership for the death of more than seven million people and the havoc and damage the Coronavirus pandemic caused around the world. It's high time that the CCP leadership listened to the aspirations of the Chinese masses and let China live peacefully with the world.

CONCLUSION

China's United Front Work Department's attempts to erase, remove, and wipe off the very word "Tibet" from the people's tongues and memories are very dangerous and objectionable. It is designed not only to put a full stop to the Tibet issue but also to wipe off Tibetan identity, language, and culture in one swipe. Around one million Tibetan children aged 6-18 are forcefully lodged in Chinese boarding schools in Tibet depriving them of freedom to learn Tibetan language and Buddhism.

China should discard this wolf-warrior diplomacy, stop threatening the neighboring countries, and join the

international community for peace in China, Asia, and the world. Democracy is inevitable, days of dictatorships are limited, and mankind will not be slaves forever. Colonialism is outdated and bound to collapse.

The international community should strongly condemn and oppose the Chinese belligerent moves and be wary of this nomenclature aggression, otherwise, a day may not be far when the world shall find most of the lands, mountains, and sea renamed by the CCP and become disputed regions!

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Opinion: China is Getting Away with Cultural Genocide in Tibet

- by Josh Rogin (*The Washington Post*)



Students in a physical education class at the Shangri-La Key Boarding School during a media-organized tour in Sichuan province, China, in September. (Andy Wong/AP)

“Genocide” is a powerful charge, often leveled at repressive regimes and warring states when they are openly mass murdering civilians. But some genocides take place slowly and methodically, without large-scale killing and outside the public’s view.

Tibetans are making a strong case that the Chinese government is attempting to wipe out their national identity — which can qualify as a type of genocide. China’s strategy depends on the world ignoring what it is doing. And, tragically, it seems to be working.

Since China invaded Tibet in 1950 (and later annexed it), Tibetan refugees have worked to defend human rights and national culture in their homeland. Led by the Dalai Lama, the movement is committed to nonviolence — to the extent that Tibetans would sooner self-immolate (159 times since 2009) than inflict harm on others.

Last week, the Central Tibetan Administration (the government in exile) and the Tibet Bureau in Geneva convened Tibetan leaders, activists and outside experts in Switzerland to confront a troubling reality: Their cause has lost visibility in a world rife with crises. At

the conference, which I attended, researchers argued that Beijing is striving to erase Tibetans’ language, culture and very existence as a group.

The latest and most egregious example of this strategy is China’s drastic expansion of residential schools for Tibetan children. Using both inducements and threats, Chinese authorities have moved three-quarters of Tibetan children inside China into what Tibetans call “colonial boarding schools,” designed to deprive them of their cultural identities and to cultivate loyalty to the Chinese Communist Party. Students are taught almost exclusively in Chinese and barred from practicing their religion.

“They are growing up to be shaped and molded to be Chinese and to think like a Chinese person before a Tibetan,” Lhadon Tethong, director of the Tibet Action Institute, an advocacy and research organization, said at the conference. “Beijing’s logic is that once Tibetans’ identity as a distinct people is wiped out, that will be the end of the collective Tibetan consciousness and there won’t be a foundation from which to advocate for Tibetan rights as a group.”

Tethong’s institute estimated in a 2021 report that at least 800,000 Tibetan students aged 6 to 18 (78 percent of the total) were living at boarding schools in Tibet. That’s compared to 22 percent of students in boarding schools in China overall. A panel of U.N. experts in January placed the current figure at “around a million.” There is also proliferation of residential preschools for Tibetan children as young as 4 and 5 years old.

So far, the international community’s response to the issue has been lackluster. Several Western governments have condemned Beijing’s use of boarding schools to assimilate minorities and the U.S. government has imposed visa restrictions on a few Chinese officials associated with the practice. Beijing’s response has been to organize highly sanitized tours for international visitors who won’t ask too many uncomfortable questions.

The boarding schools are just the latest indignity Beijing has perpetrated on Tibetans. Under the pretext of development, Chinese authorities have ravaged Tibet’s natural resources, above all water. Meanwhile, Beijing has been transferring large numbers of Han Chinese into Tibet and forcibly relocating Tibetans to dilute their population. The government is also subjecting all Tibetans to a highly intrusive surveillance and monitoring system that even collects their DNA without proper consent, according to Freedom House, which gave Tibet the lowest possible score (1 out of 100) in its latest country report.

Stephen Rapp, former ambassador for global war crimes issues at the State Department, says that Beijing’s use of boarding schools as a weapon of cultural destruction could constitute a crime against humanity, one that might even extend to genocide. Although the 1948 Genocide Convention does not specifically address culture, the

China's Repressive New Law on Religious Activity Venues: A Tibetan View

- by Tsewang Gyalpo Arya (*Bitter Winter*)

document specifies that genocide can take the form of “deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part” or “forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.”

“You can wipe out the identity of a group over several generations without killing anybody,” Rapp said. “And that can be genocide if your intent is to destroy that national group, which can be inferred from the continuous pursuit of such a policy.”

Despite growing awareness, expectations of robust international action are low. When the United Nations human rights coordinator reported last year that China's repression of Uyghur Muslims amounted to crimes against humanity, the U.N. Human Rights Council voted against conducting a follow-up investigation (thanks in part to stiff lobbying from Beijing).

In January, China will face a reckoning on human rights at the United Nations known as a Universal Periodic Review, which is conducted every 4½ years and allows member states to raise issues of concern. Tibet and its boarding schools must be high on this list. Also, international investigators should be allowed independent and unfettered access to Chinese boarding schools in Tibet.

Absent more international pushback, Beijing will conclude its strategy to stamp out Tibetan identity is succeeding. And other cruel regimes will learn that if they perpetrate a genocide slowly and prevent the information from getting out, they might be able to get away with it.

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The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leadership has announced that “Order No.19,” “Administrative Measures for Religious Activity Venues,” has started being implemented from September 1, 2023. This is another CCP's heinous and lethal move to subjugate and gain control over the religious institutions in China and the China-occupied regions of Tibet, East Turkestan (Ch. Xinjiang), and Southern Mongolia (Ch. Inner Mongolia). It is perhaps the last deadly corrosive sword used to annihilate and smear the fundamental principles of all religions with Communist ideology.

The new decree has ten chapters with seventy-three articles and numerous sub-clauses and notes. These articles are no more than restrictive barbed wires, under the guise of national security and public safety, to obstruct and undermine the free practice of religions and religious education in the country. The ten chapters are 1) General Provisions; 2) Establishment Approval and Registration; 3) Management Organization; 4) Personal Management; 5) Management of Religious Activities; 6) Construction Management; 7) Safety Management; 8) Supervision and Management; 9) Legal Liability; and 10) Final Provisions.

Article 1 of Order19 states that the measures are formulated in accordance with the Chinese Constitution “to protect normal religious activities, and safeguard the lawful rights and interests of places of religious activity and believing citizens.”]

However, many of the articles under the ten chapters contradict article 36 of the Chinese Constitution where freedom to practice religions is theoretically granted. Therefore, the very article 1 of Order 19 is a technical faux pas at the outset. Let us look at some chapters and articles more closely.

Article 3 of the Order clearly stands out in betraying what the CCP leadership has really in mind. “Places of religious activity shall uphold the leadership of the CCP and the socialist system, thoroughly implement Xi Jinping's ideology of socialism with Chinese characteristics for the new era, abide by the Constitution, laws, rules and regulations, and relevant provisions on the management of religious affairs, practice core socialist values, and adhere to the directions of Sinicization of China's religions.”

The five major religions recognized by China are Buddhism, Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, and Taoism. Till now, China has used various means and pretentious laws to crush religious bodies in China, Tibet, East Turkestan, Southern Mongolia, and Hong Kong depending on the circumstances in the regions. Now with this Order, it aims to acquire blanket authority and justification to clamp down on any religion anywhere with impunity. Here China has very boldly and openly made it clear and mandatory for all religions to adopt “Xi Jinping's ideology of socialism with Chinese characteristics” in their respective religious discourses. This is blasphemous and totally unacceptable!

Where is religious freedom if the religious bodies are forced to assimilate and adopt the ideology of an individual or a system that does not believe in religion at all? How does article 36 of the Chinese Constitution govern this? Is the CCP leadership above the Constitution? These are some pertinent questions the CCP leadership must answer.

Chapter two of the Order, “Establishment Approval and Registration,” includes sixteen articles with more than twenty sub-clauses. It has made the establishment and registration of any monastery, temple, church, or mosque

a very fastidious and confusing task. The need to involve local and provincial religious groups, the formation of the management organization through “democratic consultation,” and the identification of member and religious teachers are all complicated tasks. The applicants are left at the mercy of the CCP cadres in the Religious Affairs Department assigned to monitor the issuance of the Certificate of Registration of Place of Religious Activity.

Article 16 states, “The places of religious activity shall not be named after churches, sects, or persons.” But it is very common, especially in Buddhism, to name a monastery or temple after some old ancient seats of learning, the school it is associated with, or its precious teachers. So, this article is a deliberate attempt on the part of the CCP leadership to harass the religious practitioners and to deter them from establishing places of worship.

Article 24 about “Management Organization” is very ambiguous, tricky, and open to abuse and misinterpretation. The purpose of article 27, stating that the members of the management organization of a place of religious activity shall be mainland residents of Chinese nationality, is confusing and irrelevant.

Article 36 states, “Places of religious activity shall establish a study system and regularly organize the personnel of the place to study the guidelines and policies of the CCP, national laws and regulations, Chinese excellent traditional culture, religious knowledge, and so on.” This article will encourage forced indoctrination inculcating the CCP’s ideology and propaganda. It is designed to legalize the CCP’s intrusion and interference in religious premises and education. It directly claims that Chinese Han culture is superior to other minority nationals’ cultures.

Article 50 states, “Places of religious activity should reflect a Chinese style and integrate Chinese culture in the architecture, sculpture, painting, decoration, and other visual aspects.”

This clearly demonstrates the CCP’s leadership’s policy to force Chinese culture upon minorities with total disregard for the latter’s religious beliefs and culture. This is an open and official declaration of Han chauvinism. The law also mentions the prohibition of building large open-air religious statues outside of temples and churches, thereby retroactively justifying the CCP’s destruction of a thirty-meter-high Buddha statue, a seven-meter-high Maitreya Buddha statue, and forty-five prayer wheels in the Drago region of Kham province of Tibet in December 2021.

The law maintains that “anyone undermining national unity and splitting the country shall be removed and that there should be a proper system of evaluating the members.” As loyalty to H.H. the Dalai Lama and promotion of the Tibetan language are considered “splittist” activities, Tibetan monks and monastic establishments are bound to face increased difficulties and repression under the new Order.

China already passed Religious Order No. 5 in 2007 to assert authority and control over the selection and appointment of the reincarnations of the Tibetan Lama in Tibetan Buddhism. The Order was implemented on September 1, 2007, to produce false and hollow religious teachers parroting communist propaganda. The current false pro-Chinese Panchen Lama is the most notable product of this policy. Now with this Order 19, implemented on the same date after 16 years, China aims to give the CCP cadres free hands to close, oppress, and crush any religious institutions not conforming to Xi Jinping’s ideology of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

According to Boston University’s 2020 World Religion Database, there are more than 288 million Buddhists, 106 million Christians, 24 million Muslims, and 6 million Taoist followers in China. From this, we can well estimate how many people’s lives will be affected by this restrictive religious law. We can also understand the fear of the CCP

leadership confronted with the number of religious believers in the land against the 98 million CCP members. However, repression and restrictive measures are not a solution. It is only by respecting the religions and cultures of the minority nationals that the Chinese authorities can win the legitimacy to rule.

Till now, minority nationals have been protesting the Sinicization of their culture and religions by the CCP leadership. But with this Order, China has made the Sinicization of religions part of its national laws and mandatory. Here Sinicization means adherence to Xi Jinping’s ideology of socialism with Chinese characteristics. International and religious communities around the world should join with Chinese, Tibetans, Uyghurs, and Southern Mongolians in rejecting this draconian and unlawful Order No. 19 decree and ask the regime to let both the Chinese and the minority citizens of China enjoy religious freedom as enshrined in article 36 of the Chinese Constitution and article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The silence of the international community would just embolden the Communist leadership to commit further atrocities against religion and profane the teachings of major religions like Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, and Taoism by mixing it with the Communist ideology. This will be a great leap backward not for China only, but for the entire human civilization.

**Dr. Arya Tsewang Gyalpo is the former Secretary of the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) and former Director of the Tibet Policy Institute (TPI). He is currently the Representative of the Liaison Office of H.H. the Dalai Lama for Japan and East Asia.*





His Holiness the Dalai Lama with Senator Dianne Feinstein and her husband Richard Blum in Dharamshala, HP, India in 1978.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Condoles Passing Away of Senator Dianne Feinstein

On the morning of 30 September 2023, His Holiness the Dalai Lama wrote a letter to James Sauls at the Office of Senator Dianne Feinstein to express his heartfelt condolences to her family on her passing away.

“She lived a full and meaningful life in the service of the American public,” he wrote, “both in her native state of California and subsequently in her national role as a Senator.

“We first met in 1978 when Richard Blum, her husband, brought her to Dharamshala. Since then, I have received her full support, from my first visit to the US in 1979 to the many initiatives she was involved in leading to the institutionalisation of United States support for Tibet. Her friendship with the then Chinese leader Jiang Zemin was helpful in that it gave us an opportunity to convey our messages of sincerity to the highest level of Chinese leadership.

“I am grateful to Senator Feinstein for her steadfast friendship and support,”

His Holiness concluded by offering his prayers.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Extends Condolences Over Demise of Senator Dianne Feinstein

Sikyong wrote, "I am writing to express our deepest condolences on the passing of Senator Dianne Feinstein, a cherished friend of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and an extraordinary stateswoman whose legacy profoundly impacted the Tibetan people and our cause".

"In September 1979, as the Mayor of San Francisco, Senator Feinstein extended the inaugural invitation to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, graciously welcoming him to San Francisco and extending upon him the key to the City. This historic invitation marked the first-ever visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the United States, a pivotal moment that fostered understanding and friendship between the people of Tibet and the United States".

"Furthermore, Senator Feinstein played a pivotal role as a co-sponsor of the Senate resolution that authorized the Congressional Gold Medal, a recognition of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's profound contributions to humanity, peace, and mutual understanding. Additionally, her co-sponsorship of the Tibetan Policy Act represented a significant milestone, outlining, for the first time, the United States' policy towards Tibet. Through this act, Senator Feinstein paved the way for robust U.S. policy initiatives on Tibet".

"Senator Feinstein's unwavering dedication and advocacy for our cause have left an indelible mark on the course of the Tibetan struggle. Once again, on behalf of the CTA and Tibetan people, we convey our deepest sympathies to Senator Feinstein's family and her well-wishers worldwide. May they find strength and solace in the memories of her remarkable life and legacy".

Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel Condoles Demise of Senator Dianne Feinstein

The Speaker wrote, "It is with great sadness to learn about the demise of your beloved mother Honorable Mrs. Dianne Feinstein. Last year during the Washington held 8th World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet, I along with the Deputy Speaker Mrs. Dolma Tsering Teykhang of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile had the opportunity to meet her in her office and had the honor to be the witness to her sense of dedication and sincerity towards the just cause of Tibet."

"She was not only the longest-serving U.S Senator from California but also the Longest-tenured female Senator in history, and the senior Democratic member of the Senate. 1979 symbolizes a monumental year for the Tibetans as it marked the first-ever visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the United States on the invitation of Mrs. Dianne Feinstein whereby fostering a friendship between the Tibetans and the United States.

She co-sponsored the Tibetan Policy Act, a ground breaking law which paved the way for robust U.S policy initiatives on Tibet and today marks the 21st anniversary of this Act. She also played a pivotal role in the senate resolution that authorized the Congressional Gold Medal, the U.S highest civilian honor to His Holiness the Dalai Lama in recognition of his earnest contribution to the betterment of this world."

"She will be remembered as one of the most dedicated and staunch senator who stood for the voiceless. Her support of Tibet and Tibetans will be valued and remembered with profound gratitude. With her demise, we have lost a great friend of Tibet and one of the towering leaders of the world."

"Tibetans around the world are with the Feinstein family and the people of the United States at this hour of grief and loss. On behalf of all the Tibetans worldwide, I extend my deepest condolences to your family on this grave day. I pay my respect to the departed soul."

TIBETAN MEDIA

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Tibetan Freedom (Official Tibetan weekly)
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Tibet Bulletin (Official Chinese bi-monthly)
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QUOTES

“There is a growing desire for change in the world, change that will see conflicts resolved peaceably, through dialogue and non-violence. The foundation of such change will be kindness, compassion and human responsibility. I believe that this goal can be achieved through education based on a deeper appreciation of the oneness of humanity. Because we are so interconnected, this is a question of the well-being of us all.” - His Holiness the Dalai Lama when congratulating this year’s Nobel Peace Prize Winner

“I’ve faced many difficulties in my life, but none of them have disturbed my peace of mind. I think that what scientists say about having a good heart being good for your health and well-being is true. Bodhichitta not only fulfils our own goals, it fulfils the goals of others. If you can cultivate it day and night, you’ll surely find peace of mind.” - His Holiness the Dalai Lama when conferring a teaching to Taiwanese devotees

“we are not against education or bilingual education but when the whole education is aimed at destroying the identity of the local population then it is a serious problem. If it continues for another 15-20 years, the whole new generation of Tibetans may not be able to speak their language, forget about Tibetan religion.” - Sikyong Penpa Tsering when speaking to The Indian Eye about his recent visit to Latin America

“There is no person who does not consider his personal freedoms and rights to be important. In the same way, it is equally important that the freedoms and rights of other people, and likewise, their desire to be governed by rule of law, should also be respected.” - Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel during the celebration of 63rd Tibetan Democracy Day
