



THE DALAI LAMA

MESSAGE

I send my warmest greetings and Tashi Delek to everyone participating in the 9th International Conference of Tibet Support Groups being held in Brussels, Belgium from February 23 to 25, 2024. The widespread interest of the international community across the world has been a major source of encouragement and support in our efforts to preserve our identity and keep the Tibetan cause alive. I therefore want to thank all of you who represent those friends and supporters that have voluntarily devoted time and resources to working for the just cause of the Tibetan people. As I often say, we consider you not as pro-Tibetan but pro-justice.

Although the global political environment has been changing rapidly, the fundamental issue of Tibet remains the same. Therefore, I would like to reiterate here some of the points I have made to this conference in the past, as well as on other occasions.

The question of Tibet is not merely a matter of justice and human rights, but is about the preservation of Tibet's unique and distinct culture, which has the potential to contribute to human development. The religious aspects of Buddhism may be of relevance only to Buddhists, but I really feel that Buddhist science – including the science of mind – and Buddhist culture (based around compassion and non-violence) can be of great benefit to humanity, and even to those who do not practise Buddhism or follow any religion. It is also important to note that today more and more Chinese are following Buddhism.

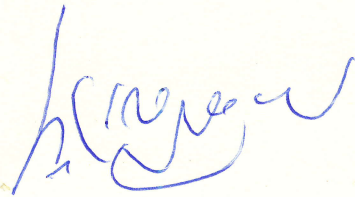
Another crucial issue is the ecology of Tibet. It is well known that the plateau provides freshwater resources to more than two billion people, who make up 30 percent of the global population. However, due to the climate crisis created by human activities, the rate of warming on the Tibetan plateau is nearly double the global average. This presents a severe threat to the region's water balance. Therefore, protection of the Tibetan environment is truly a global concern.

In 2011, I voluntarily and happily devolved my political responsibilities to the elected Tibetan leadership. Since then, I have dedicated my efforts to fulfilling four commitments: the promotion of human values; the encouragement of inter-religious harmony; keeping Tibetan Buddhist culture – the basis of our identity – alive; and creating greater awareness and interest in ancient Indian wisdom, focussing on compassion (karuna) and non-violence (ahimsa). I am sure you will join me in contributing to creating a more peaceful world.

It is my hope that before long the Chinese leadership will understand the real value of Tibet's culture of peace and compassion, which has enormous potential to contribute to enriching both China and the world at large. No matter how powerful the People's Republic of China becomes, it is important that China must earn the trust and respect of the international community in building a peaceful world.

Despite undergoing great difficulties, the faith and aspiration of our people, the majority of whom are inside Tibet, have remained undiminished. I am confident that our friends and supporters of Tibetans will continue to assist and support our leadership of the Central Tibetan Administration in its efforts to fulfil the aspirations of Tibetans. Their heartfelt wish is to live in freedom and dignity. As the Tibetan saying goes, there will be a time when the sun emerges from behind the clouds.

With my prayers and good wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be the name 'Khenpo', written in a cursive style.

February 19, 2024