

TIBETAN BULLETIN

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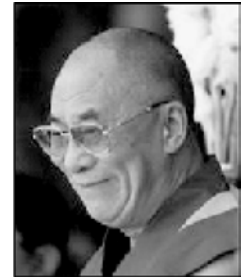
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The sixth International Conference of Tibet Support Groups

Surajkund, November 5 – 7, 2010

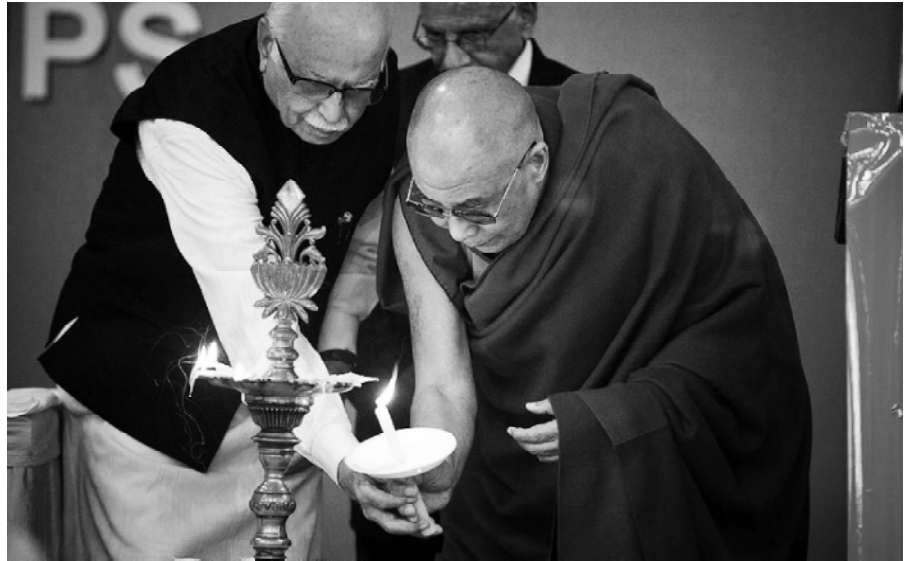
The historic village of Surajkund near India's capital city of New Delhi was host to the sixth International conference of Tibet Support Groups held from November 5 – 7, 2010.

Over 250 participants from 57 countries held in-depth discussions and exchanged ideas on broad ranging issues including the current situation in Tibet and ways to strengthen Tibet's struggle for freedom and justice.

The three-day conference convened by the Core Group for Tibetan Cause - India, and facilitated by the Department of Information & International Relations of the Central Tibetan Administration saw the participants gather for plenary sessions and working groups on political support, outreach to Chinese, human rights, and environment and development issues.

The inaugural ceremony of the conference was graced by His Holiness the Dalai Lama as the Guest of Honour and former Deputy Prime Minister of India, Mr Lal Krishna Advani, as the Chief Guest, while Kalon Tripa Prof Samdhong Rinpoche delivered the key note address.

Other guests present at the inaugural ceremony included Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago from the Phillippines; Mr Rafael Gimalov, Member of Parliament from Russia; Major (Retd.), Vijay Singh Mankotia, former Minister of Himachal Pradesh, India; Mr Javed Raza, National General Secretary, Janata Dal (United), India; Dr Yang Jianli, President of Initiatives for China; Mr T.N. Chaturvedi, former Governor of Karnataka; Mr Subhash Kashyap, former Secretary-General of the Indian Parliament; and Ms. Jaya Jaitly, a prominent socialist leader.



Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Mr L.K. Advani lighting the inaugural lamp at the sixth International Conference of Tibet Support Groups held near the Indian capital city of New Delhi

Addressing the conference, His Holiness the Dalai Lama encouraged the international community to look at the Tibetan issue from the wider aspects of ecology, culture and human rights.

Tibet being the headwaters of some of the biggest rivers in Asia, His Holiness said that the people who are directly impacted by any change on the Tibetan plateau have a right to express their concerns. Quoting the term 'Third Pole' often used by Chinese scientists to describe the Tibetan plateau's significance in global climate change, His Holiness said that preservation of Tibet's fragile ecology was in the interest of mainland China.

Describing the Tibetan Buddhist culture as a culture of peace and compassion, His Holiness explained in detail the contributions that Tibetan Buddhist culture has made in the understanding of modern sciences and in the development of humanity.

As an indication of the Tibetan struggle being a just and moral one, His Holiness while expressing his faith in

the Chinese people remarked that in 'recent years more and more Chinese have been paying attention to the Tibetan issue'.

In his address, the chief guest Mr L.K. Advani recalled his meeting with the Chinese President Mr Hu Jintao when the latter visited India in November 2006, during the course of which Mr Advani had urged the Chinese leader to create conditions in China which could enable the Dalai Lama to visit Tibet before the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Unfortunately, Mr Advani said, China missed the opportunity.

The former deputy prime minister of India urged Beijing to reach out to the Dalai Lama with the intention of a sincere and genuine dialogue while hailing His Holiness as the living embodiment of the teachings of the Buddha. Mr Advani went on to say that 'there could hardly be a more reasonable and peace-loving interlocutor for the resolution of the Tibetan issue than His Holiness the Dalai Lama'.

Mr Advani expressed his hopes and prayers that the day will come soon when 'His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people living in forced exile will be able to go back to their home land in an honourable and dignified way', and thereafter be able to build the future destiny of Tibet.

Mr Rafael Gimalov, member of the Russian parliament shared his excitement over the growing interest of the Russian people in Tibetan religion, cultural heritage and tradition. As the chairman of the Russian Parliament's Environment Committee, Mr Gimalov

expressed his concern over the ongoing ecological catastrophe on the Tibetan plateau and urged the participants to focus on the preservation of Tibetan environment and language.

During the ceremony, Mr Lal Krishna Advani released a book, '2008 Uprising in Tibet: Chronology and Analysis', compiled by the Tibetan Department of Information & International Relations.

The participants were given an update on the Sino-Tibet dialogue process by Special Envoy Lodi Gyari and Envoy Kelsang Gyaltzen in addition to an eye

witness account of the 2008 uprisings by Mr Tsewang Dhondup, who had suffered bullet injuries after being shot at by Chinese security forces during a peaceful demonstration in eastern Tibet in March 2008. A session on Tibet's environment led by Mr Gabriel Lafitte from Australia and Mr Tenzin Norbu head of Environment and Development Desk of DIIR was also held.

Following are excerpts of statements and messages delivered during the inaugural ceremony or sent to the conference and the full Statement and Action Plan adopted at the conference:

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama's speech at the inaugural ceremony of the sixth International Conference of Tibet Support Groups

Now, today because of flu, I look like a Jain monk.

Advanaji ji and my brothers and sisters, I am extremely happy to come here. As most of you know, I always talk in a frank and completely informal way. One reason for being informal is because of my poor English. I just express what I feel.

I appreciate all those speakers who expressed their deep feeling and support for our cause. Thank you very much. And also, I would like to thank the representatives from different countries who do not necessarily represent their country or government but they are the representatives of their own people. I appreciate the large number of people who have come here to participate and try to make some contribution towards the solution of the Tibetan problem.

Firstly, I want to tell you that some people when they hear about the Tibetan issue, they think it is only because of the ongoing human rights violations in Tibet. Of course these are a part of Tibet's problems but there are other aspects of the Tibetan problem too.

One aspect is about the environment. Ecologists and experts, including some Chinese ecologists, describe the Tibetan plateau as the Third Pole. The reason why

they call Tibet the Third Pole is because the effect that the Tibetan plateau has on global warming is as much as the North Pole and the South Pole. Tibet is very much related to global warming.

Also, the major rivers in Asia which give life to billions of human beings originally come from the glaciers in Tibetan areas. Right from Pakistan to Mainland China, all major rivers come from Tibet. Particularly here in India, the Brahmaputra and other major rivers also flow down from Tibet. Although the origin of these rivers is in another country but the user of these rivers are billions of Asians. So, you have the right to express your concern about Tibet's ecology. Tibet's glaciers being the ultimate source of Asia's major rivers, any change on the Tibetan plateau is a question of the survival over a billion human beings. This has nothing to do with politics.

Fortunately, I think during Zhu Rongji's time, the Chinese government eventually realised the importance of preservation of forests. Before that they had no idea about the ecology. During Zhou Rongji's tenure they gave some instructions on stopping deforestation in some areas but due to corruption deforestation is still going on.

Recently, for example, floods in Golog caused great damage. Some Chinese

wrote articles saying that the Golog floods were not a natural tragedy but a man-made tragedy. They argued that the complete deforestation in the Golog area in just a few decades, which previously had thick forests, caused this man-made tragedy. So, the preservation of Tibet's ecology is in the long run also of immense importance to mainland China. This is one aspect of the Tibetan issue.

Then another aspect of the Tibetan issue is the Tibetan culture.

Since Buddhism reached Tibet, Tibetan culture saw much development. I remember one time in response to a congratulatory letter I wrote to Moraji Desai on becoming the prime minister, he mentioned that the Indian civilisation and Tibetan civilisation are two branches of one Bodhi tree. It's very true. One great Tibetan scholar and practitioner very aptly said that till the Indian light reached Tibet, despite Tibet being a land of snow and brightness, the land remained dark. So, I describe India as our Guru and we Tibetans are Chelas or students.

I describe myself as a messenger of the ancient Indian thought of 'ahimsa'. Ahimsa is action and action depends entirely on motivation. In order to carry genuine ahimsa, the key factor is compassionate attitude. My effort to

promote compassion is actually promoting the Indian message of ahimsa.

Regarding my other commitment of religious harmony, India is the only country where all the major religious traditions live together. True religious harmony exists in India. Some mischievous people are always there, some problem here and there, that's understandable. But overall, for more than two thousand years, India has continued to remain a home for all the major religions. This is a good example for the rest of the world. In ancient times people remained isolated but now in today's modern and heavily interdependent world, where many societies are becoming multicultural, multireligious - sometimes causing problems - there is something for the world to learn from the Indian tradition.

So, around two years back, while describing those ancient Indian thoughts, I stated that I am a 'son of India'. Sometime after that, a group of Chinese brothers and sisters asked me why I called myself a 'son of India'. Then I told them, "Each cell of my brain is filled with Nalanda thought; then this physical body survived for the last fifty years on Indian dal and rice; so that is why I describe myself as a son of India". Then they understood and no further questions after that.

Regarding the Tibetan culture heritage, I think, it has been greatly influenced by the Indian spirit of harmony and mutual respect among religious traditions. One clear indication of that was the presence of a thriving Muslim community in Tibet. I think, three or four centuries ago, some Muslim traders came from Ladakh and then they settled in Tibet, I was told that the Fifth Dalai Lama provided land for them for construction of a mosque.

When I was young, some Muslims came to the Potala on an auspicious day and when I enquired about the reason for their visit, they said that during auspicious days the Tibetan Government offered them gifts. This clearly shows respect for other traditions.

Then more importantly with the advent of Buddhism from India, mainly Nalanda, the main theoretical message of interdependency, which is very similar to that of Quantum physics came to Tibet. This theory of relativity is very much useful and very much relevant in today's world. Along with the theory came the practical message of developing infinite compassion.

Although Tibetans are generally non-vegetarian but still their way of life is very much in the spirit of compassion. So, I can state that the Tibetan Buddhist culture is a culture of peace and a culture of compassion. Thus, many visitors, including many Han brothers and sisters who have some sort of a thinking power, when they visited Tibetan areas, they noticed that the people there are more jovial, more peaceful and more humble.



Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL
His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the 6th International Conference of Tibet Support Groups

Whereas, they said that Han people, when you touch they say, "Go away, go away". People have noticed these differences and now the Han Chinese have also begun to realise them.

Two years back, I had an opportunity of meeting with some Chinese scholars and writers amongst whom there were some from mainland China as well. They told me that in mainland China, the several thousand year old Chinese tradition of human values and moral ethics are being deliberately destroyed resulting in today's being China filled with

corruption and injustice. They said that society as a whole is very unhappy - only thinking about money and nothing else. They had tears in their eyes.

As far as the authoritarian and totalitarian system is concerned, sooner or later it will change - it cannot remain. But then the restoration of the thousands of years old Chinese moral ethics is very difficult. It takes a longer time to restore. So they are putting their hopes on the Tibetans to help bring back their compassion and moral ethic. When those intellectuals expressed that hope, I really felt a huge additional responsibility.

Now in the west as well - whether the individual is a believer or non-believer, whether the individual has genuine interest in religion or not - everybody now agrees that modern society,

including the education system, lacks the teachings of moral ethics. The usual belief of basing moral ethics on religious faith narrows its scope.

In Indian tradition, one school of thought called 'Chavaka', denies existence of god, existence of the Buddha, existence of next life and describes their own nihilistic view. Philosophically, many argue with their point of view and even condemn it but people who hold such view points are referred to as Rishi or sage. It goes to show that for thousands of years in this country the principle of secularism existed.

Secularism does not mean having a negative attitude towards religion but rather respecting all religions, including the non-believers. I am a Buddhist and I always talk on religious matters. I am not promoting Buddhism in other traditions or in non-Buddhist countries. Rather, I share the essence of all religions particularly that of Buddhism. I present these values of good human qualities taught by all religions in the true spirit of secularism. I have always tried to promote these secular values and a number of people have started showing real interest like the Wisconsin University, the Stanford University and the Emory University.

As far as I know, these three universities are very active in carrying some further research work on the effects of training of mind, particularly training of compassion, on the body, intelligence and behaviour. Already they have found some positive indication.

Just a few days ago I was in America and I visited these institutions. A number of scientists were showing real interest in some of the Buddhist views and techniques. I believe Buddhism can be broadly distinguished into three parts: Buddhist science, Buddhist philosophy and the third Buddhist religion. So, I made a clear distinction to the scientists that our meeting was not about Buddhism as a whole but it was about part of Buddhism that is 'Buddhist science'. Buddhist religion is for Buddhists, Buddhist science and philosophy is something universal.

I think some 30 to 40 years ago, I remember noticing one Chinese communist paper mention that the knowledge of modern science will develop and then blind faith will go away automatically. But now it seems the opposite is happening. Well-known top scientists around the world are really showing genuine interest in Buddhist science and through it in Buddhist teachings also. So, the preservation of Tibetan culture, I do not consider, is just in the interest of six million Tibetan people but it is in the interest of larger communities, firstly in Central Asia, then the whole of northern Himalaya

region, Mongolia, some parts of the Russian federation and then more importantly in China.

I usually make a distinction between Buddhism and Buddhist culture. As I mentioned earlier, Buddhism is for Buddhists but the Buddhist culture is mainly related with communities, like those Tibetan Muslims. Their religion is Islam but their way of life is very much in the spirit of Buddhist culture. So, in order to build a happy society and a peaceful society, Tibetan Buddhist culture can make some contribution.

According to some information, now the number of Buddhists in mainland China is over two hundred million. Nowadays, almost every week, some Chinese from mainland China come to see me. Some of them come with great difficulties but they do come. So, the preservation of Tibetan Buddhist culture is in the larger interest, particularly of those millions of young Chinese.

This, I want to share with some of those narrow-minded Chinese communists who only have a one-sided thought. In Tibet's case their only concern is how to keep Tibet under their control. They have no idea what is the value of Tibet's culture. So, whenever there is any sort of semblance of Tibet's unique cultural identity, they feel the fear that it might cause separation. This, I think, is short-sightedness.

Then another aspect of the Tibetan issue is that of human rights violation. Human rights violation is a symptom. We have to look at the main cause why it is taking place.

In my observation and through personal contacts, I think the Tibetan language in its huge volumes of literature, retains the most complete and richest Buddhist traditions. Scholars from the west, who have interest in Buddhism in general and particularly in Mahayana Buddhism, consider the Tibetan translation as the most reliable translation. So, naturally, any negative attitude towards Tibetan cultural heritage, including Tibetan language, causes a very uncomfortable

feeling and resentment amongst Tibetans, causing the violation of their human rights.

I want to urge those narrow-minded Chinese brother and sisters to please look in a more holistic way and from all the directions and dimensions and not just the political dimension.

More than five years ago, I met one Tibetan from Tibet who was a professional in the medical field. He told me that because of his profession, his salary was very good, accommodation also very good and regarding his children's education also very good - no need to worry. But being a Tibetan, he said that mentally some kind of an overwhelming feeling made him very unhappy. He was crying.

Chinese leaders should know that just providing houses and better facility is not the answer for solving this sort of problem. They should show respect towards Tibetan culture, let the Tibetans carry out all the preservation work, including the preservation of environment.

In the case of mining of natural resources from Tibetan areas, the local people should be consulted and a part of the profit must go to them. Then I think things will change. Otherwise, just sending more troops, more security personnel and more sophisticated weapons won't solve the problem.

More suppression and more beating will only make the Tibetan spirit harder and harder - that's a fact. Now, 60 years have passed, their old method is now, I think, obsolete. For the last 60 years their method has failed and in future also it will fail. Now they must find a more reasonable attitude. That is what I want to share with you.

Then another aspect of the Tibetan problem is that geographically Tibet falls between China and India. India and China being the two most populous nations and both having nuclear weapons, a good and genuine relation based on mutual trust is very essential. For genuine relationship, genuine trust is

very essential - not just a few nice words. Genuine 'Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai' is really necessary and for that trust is very essential. Similarly, for China's relations with its other neighbouring states and the whole world, trust is very essential. As long as everything is state secret, then people will get more suspicious.

I always try and share with my Chinese friends and also with some other people that the 1.3 billion Chinese people have every right to know the reality. The 1.3 billion Chinese people also have the ability to judge what is right and what is wrong. Under such circumstances, censoring the reality from their own people is immoral. It creates more suspicion within their own people. When there is more distrust amongst the people then the government responds with more force, which in turn brings more fear and fear destroys trust. Once trust is no longer there, how can one develop genuine friendship? Without trust and friendship how can one develop harmonious society which Hu Jintao emphasises. Harmonious society is not like dealing with animals with a stick and giving a little bit beating to bring them closer. We are human beings. Over billion Chinese are also human beings. They cannot bring harmonious society by force but by trust and by friendship.

I have a little bit of reservation on overnight change in China or China turning overnight into a democratic system. I have this little bit of doubt because Chinese people, mainly in rural areas are uneducated and economically very poor and overall, Chinese people have never experienced genuine democracy. So therefore, big overnight change might bring too much chaos. I believe gradual change is worthwhile.

In the last few years, I have often mentioned that I am thinking of retirement and that the party as well should think of gradual retirement with grace. I am not an old anti-communist. When I visited Taiwan, I told the Taiwanese Kuomintang leaders, "Wo bu shi fan gong" - that I am not anti-communist. In response, Lian Zhan, vice-chairperson said that he is anti-



Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

His Holiness the Dalai Lama addressing the delegates at the inaugural ceremony

communist. It is not a secret. Still, as far as social economic theory is concerned, I am a Marxist - there is no question. But I am not a Leninist. Lenin and Stalin exercised too much cruelty, too much suspicion and too much control. I am totally against that.

The Chinese communist party in its early period did make some good contributions. Now, obviously many people have lost their faith. So, in Chairman Mao's case as well, in early period, I really believe he was dedicated to the well being of his people, particularly the working class people or the needy people who were underprivileged.

When I was in China during 1954-55, I met Chairman Mao several times. So, I often tell my Chinese friends that my hands have some blessings from Chairman Mao's hand. All those younger generation of Chinese, I think never had that opportunity of meeting Chairman Mao, which I had.

My speech is so long but this is a big gathering and I feel that sharing some of my experiences related with the Tibetan issue may be useful.

So, one day at a meeting with Chairman Mao, who always kept me beside him, enquired with the party workers about any criticism. The audience seemed very

intelligent. They stayed very silent. Then Chairman Mao took out one complaint letter which he had received from ordinary villagers from his own native place about the local party head. He told the meeting that there were such cases and that they must pay more attention on these.

During that meeting, on one occasion, Chairman Mao turned to me and said, "You Tibetans in the past were very strong but now you become very weak. So we have come to help you. After 20 years you will become stronger and then it will be your turn to help us".

Also, on another occasion, Chairman Mao asked me whether we have a Tibetan flag or not. I told him, "Yes, we have". Then Chairman Mao told me, "You must keep your flag beside the red Chinese national flag". So, once in a meeting with some German Tibet Support Group members in Berlin, who as usual were carrying the Tibetan flag, I told them, "When you receive any protest from the Chinese government while carrying the Tibetan flag inside Tibet then tell the Chinese officials that Dalai Lama got full permission from Chairman Mao himself to keep this flag". Although we are following Chairman Mao's advice but Tibetans who carry this flag inside Tibet are considered as a splittist.

I always tell my Chinese friends that Chairman Mao often insisted the communist party should receive criticism from others as well as be open to self-criticism. He often said that without it, the party is like a fish without water and that communism can not survive. But nowadays they are not practicing what Chairman Mao said, rather we are practicing it.

During that period, I visited a number of cities and different provinces like northern, southern and eastern provinces. At every place, we met with the local authorities and I was very much impressed with those party leaders. They were really dedicated and had real concern for the people. Later, when I was in Peking, I told one of the official attendants that I wanted to join the communist party. He said, "Wait. Better wait". I think he knew that eventually the party will get spoiled.

Then around 1956, I believe, the whole thinking become leftist. Few months ago on a BBC program about the 'power of truth' and 'power of gun', I noticed that in the early periods, communists had both the power of truth and the power of gun. But in the later periods the power of truth had gone and only the power of gun remained. So, that actually spoiled them. Any person who has full power but has no self-discipline or moral principle will get eventually spoiled and that exactly happened in China and also in most of the totalitarian regimes.

We must make every effort to bring more transparency in mainland China and stop censorship and the distorted propaganda. If things become transparent in China, with freedom of speech and eventually an independent judiciary, then the Tibetan issue can be easily solved.

So therefore, the Tibetan issue has three aspects: ecology, cultural and human rights violations in addition to its role in building a genuine relations between India and China and in rest of the world. In order for China, the most populated nation and ancient nation, to make a significant contribution towards world affairs, trust from the rest of the world is

very necessary. In the absence of trust generated by fear, China cannot take a constructive role in world affair.

Some Chinese officials consider that we Tibetans are anti-Chinese. As far as their policy is concerned, of course we complain and oppose but we never oppose the Chinese people.

One indication of this is this sixth TSG conference. More Han people are here than earlier. I think nobody gave them money to attend this conference. You all came here paying your own expenses. I know, in the last few years, many of the educated and intelligent Han Chinese people who are patriotic and love their culture, people and country, even they have come to help us. This clearly shows that our struggle is just and noble. Particularly, our approach is not seeking separation from China but rather asking for genuine autonomy.

So, in the last several years, particularly in the past two years, I have met a number of Chinese scholars, teachers, professors, writers and also students - I think nearly a few hundred of them. If you have noticed, over the last two years, while keeping with the interest of their own people in the long run, more than one thousand articles have been written by Chinese in Chinese language, supporting the middle way approach and criticising their own government policies. These are very healthy signs. This clearly shows that we are not anti-Chinese.

Another accusation from the Chinese government is that we Tibetans are trying to internationalise the issue. We have two hands and I have mentioned several times that we Tibetans have always tried to reach out to Beijing with our right hand. If there is concrete result from our extended right hand, then there is no use of the left hand. But as long as this right hand remains empty, then the left hand should reach out. There are a lot of people who show real concern about Tibet for various reasons. So, naturally we have to use their support and sympathy. If we get concrete result from our right hand, then we will say 'good bye' and 'thank you' to our left

hand. So, on the question of who is internationalising the Tibet issue, you have to decide.

Just two months back, I met one Chinese brother who had recently visited Lhasa. He told me that in front of the main cathedral in Lhasa, as usual there were many Tibetans prostrating and at the same time, soldiers of the People's Liberation Army in full uniform were performing their military drills and shouting. He said that while the Tibetans were on circumambulation, those military personnel took the opposite direction creating some sort of a deliberate resentment in the Tibetan's mind. So, this Chinese brother told me that the real splittist is the Chinese government themselves. I also think that is very true.

I always tell that Tibetans, even though they are spiritual, they love money. So that's why there are number of illegal Tibetans in different part of Europe and America and so on. Our bureau in Delhi has good trust from different embassies in Delhi. Off late, some mischievous people who get a support letter from the Bureau office after promising to return back to India forget to return back once they reach there. As a result, trust of those embassies including the United States embassy in the Delhi Bureau Office has strained. So, this year, when the new United States Ambassador came to see me, I expressed my apology regarding the behaviour of those mischievous Tibetan people.

Tibet is materially backward and so, remaining within the PRC, provided genuine autonomy and full rights to manage all our work is in our own interest as far as material development is concerned.

From one of the radio channels, I came to know that Panchen Lama and Ngabo had decided from 1987 that in the autonomous regions the official language should be Tibetan. So, this kind of idea has been there. But now, the use of Tibetan not only as the official language but even in studies at schools is reducing. So that is what I want to share with you.

Thank you.

The Statement of Kalon Tripa Professor Samdhong Rinpoche at the sixth International Conference of Tibet Support Groups

It is my great honour and privilege to welcome you to the 6th International Tibet Support Group Conference. On behalf of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), the Tibetan community in exile and the long-suffering people of Tibet, I thank you for setting aside your precious time to attend this important conference.

First of all, I would like to pay the Kashag's sincere tribute to the Tibet Support Group (TSG) movement and its outstanding work. The worldwide Tibet movement is one of the longest running, most sustained and widespread movements in the world. This movement is propelled forward by the energy and enthusiasm of all of you involved in advancing the just cause of the Tibetan people. Your sustained and concerted campaigns over the years have resulted in promoting the awareness of the Tibetan issue all over the world and kept it as a burning topic and mobilised governments and parliaments around the world to speak up for the people of Tibet.

The efforts and dedication of TSGs have inspired a new generation of committed Tibetans in Tibet. They are risking their lives to preserve Tibet's spiritual and cultural heritage by their non-violent resistance.

For these reasons, the Tibetan people are blessed by the expanding network of friends and supporters around the world. No other cause, however just, no other struggle, however long, has been blessed as the Tibetan people are by the commitment of the Tibet Support Groups for the political cause of Tibet and the Tibetan Buddhist and cultural centres for the preservation and promotion of Tibet's rich cultural and spiritual heritage.

Here I feel it is important to say a few words on the nature and composition of the worldwide Tibet movement.



Kalon Tripa Professor Samdhong Rinpoche delivering the keynote address

The nature of the entire Tibet Support Group movement is voluntary participation, inspired by love for justice, by using your own time, resources and energy with full awareness that no personal, political or material benefit, whatsoever, could be gained for your tireless and unceasing effort. Therefore, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama always says that Tibet Support Groups should not be considered as pro-Tibet or anti-China. They are rather pro-justice and anti-injustice. The Tibet Support Groups consist of multi-faceted groups of experts and professionals in the fields of human rights, environment, development, culture and religion and so forth.

Some TSGs work for the overall improvement of the human rights situation in Tibet. These include efforts to highlight cases of individual prisoners of conscience and their eventual release and documenting the atrocities committed on them. Other TSGs produce a constant stream of high quality research work on the negative impact of ill-conceived development works in Tibet, and on its culture and people. Some focus on the expanding railway line, rampant mining, indiscriminate deforestation, forced resettlement of

nomads in permanent structures on the grasslands and the growing expansion of Chinese settlement on the Tibetan plateau and their negative impact on the fragile environment of Tibet.

There is another aspect of the Tibet Support movement. This aspect is the Tibetan Buddhist centres, academic institutions for Tibetan studies and Tibetan cultural centres. These Tibetan cultural centres attract an ever-expanding circle of devout friends for Tibet in every corner of the globe, every year. This component is important for us because the activities of these centres ensure that Tibet's spiritual and cultural heritage can and will survive outside of Tibet. These centres also reflect the abiding relevance of the values of Tibetan culture and spirituality. That an expanding international civil society, beholden to no one, no government, no sovereign, flourishes is an eloquent message of the international community's recognition of the universal values of compassion and non-violence inherited by the Tibetan people from ancient India. This I feel gives us the confidence to say that with or without the Tibetan people, their culture and the values that underpin it will be cherished by the world. This is because Tibetan culture

speaks not just the language of the Tibetan people. It speaks the universal language of humanity.

The Tibetan people's movement for our cultural survival is invigorated by the fact that an increasing number of our Chinese brothers and sisters are embracing it. This appreciation of the values of Tibetan culture is growing amongst Chinese both in and outside of Mainland China. We are deeply grateful to many brave Chinese individuals and organisations in China for speaking up for the Tibetan people in the aftermath of the brutal crackdown on the widespread and peaceful protests in 2008 that called for freedom in Tibet and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to his homeland. Many of these individuals organised an open letter expressing their support for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Middle-Way policy and called on the Chinese government to stop its propaganda against Tibet and His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

In this context, a conference was held between Tibetans and Chinese in Geneva in the first week of August 2009. The final document drawn by the Chinese participants at the conference identified Tibetan culture as "a precious treasure among the many cultures of humanity... The extinction of Tibetan culture would not only be a tragedy for the Tibetan people, but ... an irreplaceable loss for the whole of humanity."

To our Chinese brothers and sisters who are participating in this conference, I would like to express the Tibetan people's gratitude for your support. Your continued support is strength of the Tibetan people's non-violent movement. Your presence here is a clear message that the Tibetan people's movement is not anti-China.

We Tibetans were overwhelmed with pride and joy when Liu Xiaobo won the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize. On the day the announcement was made, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said to the world, "I would like to offer my heart-felt congratulations to Mr. Liu Xiaobo for

being awarded this year's Nobel Peace Prize. Awarding the Peace Prize to him is the international community's recognition of the increasing voices among the Chinese people in pushing China towards political, legal and constitutional reforms."

On that day, the Kashag too issued a statement of welcome, saying that whole of China should be proud of the singular honour bestowed on Liu Xiaobo.

We Tibetans are greatly encouraged by the surprisingly positive comments occasionally made by the Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China (PRC), Mr. Wen Jiabao. There must be millions of Chinese in and outside China who are equally encouraged by their Prime Minister's comments. Premier Wen Jiabao said freedom of speech is indispensable for any country. He also said that the Chinese people's wish for freedom and democracy is irresistible. This gives us much hope.

Regardless of what these comments portend for the future of China and their consequences for the Tibetan people, at the moment the situation in Tibet is grim and getting worse. The policy pursued by Beijing with ruthlessness in Tibet is called "grasping with both hands." On one hand, the Chinese authorities pursue rapid and relentless economic activities in Tibet and on the other hand exercise an unprecedented political repression on even the mildest form of dissent. The logic here is that increasing economic prosperity in Tibet will drown any attempt to assert Tibet's separate and distinct cultural identity.

However, these attempts to throw money to solve Beijing's Tibet problem have been a spectacular failure. This is because most of Beijing's investment in Tibet has gone to infrastructure building of roads, airports, and railway network that will connect Lhasa with Shigatse and then extend to Tibet's border with Nepal. There is another extension plan to connect Dromo, Tibet's border with Bhutan and the Indian. Though the construction of roads, airports and a network of railway lines have a distinct

military implications for Tibet's neighbours, for the Tibetan people the result of easier travel to and within Tibet is devastating. There is an onrush of settlers and migrant workers to the Tibetan plateau to take advantage of the greater job opportunities in Tibet. It is these new migrant Chinese workers who are the real beneficiaries of Beijing's financial generosity to Tibet.

Tibet's greater connectivity with China has also resulted in a burst of mining activities. A hungry mining industry has come to Tibet, devouring Tibet's rich mineral resources like copper, oil and natural gas, iron ore, chromite, aluminium, potash, calcium, magnesium, lithium, gold, diamond and uranium and host of other mineral resources. Although, there is an official ban on logging, rampant deforestation is going on in eastern Tibet. These resources are carted away to feed coastal China's dynamic economic growth. All these mining activities are done by Chinese miners, contributing to Chinese population transfer onto the Tibetan plateau.

Apart from this, Tibet has the most precious resources: water, which is getting scarcer by the day. Chinese scientists refer to Tibet as the Third Pole, because the region contains the largest deposit of glaciers in the world outside of Arctic and Antarctica. Chinese also refer to Tibet as Asia's Water Tower because these glaciers feed Asia's ten river systems that have their origins on the Tibetan plateau. China's construction of numerous dams along these rivers, including the Mekong and Brahmaputra, and its south-north water diversion plan is a cause of concern to all its neighbours.

For this reason, what China does or does not do in Tibet affects not just the Tibetan people. China's actions in Tibet affect the livelihood of millions of people downstream in Asia who depend on the river waters flowing from Tibet for their day-to-day survival.

All these activities in Tibet come under Beijing's major policy called the Western

China Development Programme. The policy of exporting China's excess population to the minority regions in the west and importing the region's vast natural resources was first formulated in China's seventh five-year plan (1986-1991). This is in fact China's master plan for the minorities: to use the natural resources of minority regions to fuel coastal China economic development while pressing down the minorities by exporting China's excess population to these regions.

These days Tibetans in Tibet see their traditional way of life washed away in a flood of so-called development activities that do not meet their real needs. They see their jobs taken away by an ever increasing number of migrant Chinese workers and their future and religion held hostage by an overbearing government. They see their environment disrespected and polluted by mining and ever more dams. Politically, the government has become increasingly intrusive in the personal lives of the people of Tibet. Even the mildest expression of devotion to His Holiness the Dalai Lama lands individual Tibetans in prison. Recently, a string of Tibetan writers, singers, film-makers, environmentalists and businessmen, all of whom are perceived as pro-Chinese establishment and some of whom have been honoured as model workers by the Chinese government, have been arrested and imprisoned for their alleged links with Tibetans in the free world. Even school children are hauled into prison for their expression of devotion to Tibet's separate cultural identity.

Although the constitution and autonomy law of the PRC provides the freedom to use and develop spoken and written languages of all nationalities, but these were never implemented for minority nationalities. In TAR a regulation for usage of Tibetan language was adopted in 1987, which was intentionally not implemented and gradually amended in 2002. Recently there are again indications of substituting minority language by common Chinese language that have created lot of concern and resentment among many Tibetans. We fear that this



Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

His Holiness the Dalai Lama flanked by Mr LK Advani greets the delegates

move will not only undermine the usage of Tibetan language in the long term but it may create unrest and repression. Recently another unconstitutional regulation for how to control the monasteries in Tibet was proclaimed, which is again a gross violation of religious freedom and cause of resentment and unrest.

For these reasons, the belief among Tibetans that Beijing wants Tibet but not the Tibetans is re-strengthened.

This deep resentment of the Chinese authorities' unrelenting assault on Tibet's spiritual and cultural heritage forced the Tibetan people to burst out into widespread and sustained protests throughout Tibet in 2008. As far as we know, there were 344 instances of protests all over Tibet that year alone. All were peaceful. Beijing's reaction to this peaceful protest was brutal.

Despite all this, we Tibetans remain committed to His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Middle-Way Policy of reconciliation to resolve the vexed and protracted issue of Tibet. Our determination to resolve the issue of Tibet peacefully with Beijing is reflected in the fact that in 2008 alone His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Special Envoy, Mr. Lodi Gyari, and Envoy, Mr. Kelsang Gyaltzen, met with their Chinese counterparts three times. As desired by the Chinese

authorities, the two envoys handed them a Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People. Our basic demand as spelled out in the Memorandum is that all Tibetans should come under one administration that enjoys genuine autonomy. This demand is based on the rights given to the minorities as enshrined in the constitution and autonomy law of the PRC. Unfortunately, this reasonable demand was indiscriminately rejected by Beijing. In January this year, the two envoys handed to the Chinese authorities a Note that addressed the concerns, objections and misinterpretations made by the PRC authorities on the substance of our Memorandum.

Regardless of the current attitude of the Chinese government to our reasonable and legitimate demands, we remain committed to the dialogue process and is willing to meet the concerned PRC's officials anytime, anywhere.

On this matter, I take this opportunity to express the appreciation of the Tibetan people to all the governments around the world for encouraging China to resolve the issue of Tibet through discussions with the representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Your support for the dialogue process remains a source of hope and encouragement to the people of Tibet.

It is because of the support of the people and governments around the world and the guidance and leadership provided by His Holiness the Dalai Lama that in exile we have managed to re-build and maintain a productive and cohesive community. We have managed to preserve and promote our spiritual and cultural heritage and all the institutions that underpin this heritage. We have also established an education system that is able to educate successive generations of young Tibetans who will carry forward the non-violent movement of the Tibetan people.

In exile, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has given his people the gift of democracy. The Central Tibetan Administration is now a functioning democracy, fully transparent and its elected leadership totally accountable to the elected representatives and to the people. I am also happy to report that the Tibetan community in exile is served by an increasing number of NGOs, which form the basis of a strong and growing civil society.

For me, it was a privilege to serve His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people as the first elected Kalon Tripa since 2001. I wish the next Kalon Tripa every success.

These accomplishments of the Tibetan refugees would not have been possible without the hospitality and generosity of the government and people of India. The Tibetan people owe India the survival of Tibet outside of Tibet. I take this opportunity to express the sincere gratitude of the Tibetan people to the government and people of India.

At each International Tibet Support Group Conference, you always had meaningful and in-depth discussion on the Tibet problem, exchange of useful information and ideas, strategizing the future course of action and drawing of comprehensive programmes for collective and individual actions. Therefore, all the conferences have been immensely productive and useful. Considering the fact that Tibet Support Groups are always independent of CTA, we refrain from making any proposal or

suggestion. We only cooperate with the conveners of the conference. But this time, as an exception, I would like to offer some of my personal views for your consideration. During India's independent struggle Mahatma Gandhi advised his people that constructive programmes are more important than protest or agitation. This seems to be great advice for any movement and is very much applicable for our movement as well. I wonder whether this conference can consider some constructive programmes commonly acceptable and workable by all TSGs in our movement.

I would also like to suggest all the Tibet Support Groups and dharma centres to observe one day fasting and prayer every year on one specific day all over world from 2011 onward to symbolise our solidarity and commitment to non-violence. These are only a suggestion.

Apart from the Tibet Support Groups, we also have All-Party Parliamentary Groups for Tibet that exist in various national, regional and provincial parliaments. The general conference of All-Party Parliamentary Groups for Tibet is called the World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet (WPCT) which has met five times. Recently they have set up an International Network of Parliamentarians on Tibet (INPat) with secretarial assistance from ICT Europe in the Netherlands. Therefore, you should also discuss how to establish close collaboration and networking among the Tibet Support Groups and Parliamentary Groups.

Dear friends, I would like to urge you all sincerely that the coming five years will be most crucial and critical period for the future of Tibet. Therefore, it is not a time to feel fatigue and resign. Each one of us who care for the just cause of Tibet must revitalise ourselves, sharpen our focus, consolidate our action, repackage the whole movement and a final and forceful push be given to achieve the desired result for which you all have dedicated yourselves for over five decades.

I would also like to inform you that this will be my last address as the Kalon

Tripa at an international Tibet Support Group Conference. I have been able to attend all Tibet Support Group Conferences since the second TSG conference held at Bonn in 1996. The energy and enthusiasm generated by these conferences is a source of great hope. I would like to express my personal appreciation to all individuals who are involved in this great international movement for the survival of Tibet. Once again I would like to express the sincere appreciation of the Kasahg to all Tibet supporters, old and new and those who are no longer with us. The Tibet Support Group movement will remain a lasting legacy of their tireless work for the people of Tibet.

On 3 October, the Tibetan exiles throughout the world cast their votes in the preliminary round to elect their next Kalon Tripa and Chithue that can only be called a democracy without borders. The final vote will take place in March 2011. Whoever the next Kalon Tripa will be, I trust you will extend the same cooperation to him or her.

I am immensely grateful to His Holiness the Dalai Lama for gracing this conference by His divine presence. I am also immensely grateful to respected Shri Advani-ji, the former Deputy Prime Minister and a great leader of India, who has agreed to be the chief guest at the inaugural function of this conference. Their presence has elevated this conference to the highest level. I also take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude to the Core Group of the Indian Tibet Support Groups and its chairman Dr. N.K. Trikha-ji and his team for their tireless hard work in convening this conference. We attach great significance for holding this conference in India, the second home of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and majority of the Tibetan refugees.

I conclude by praying for the continued good health and long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. May all His wishes be fulfilled.

Thank you.

Statement of Dr Yang Jianli, President, Initiatives for China

Your Holiness, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests and my dear Tibetan Brothers and Sisters:

I am honoured and humbled to speak with you today. I am honoured because I am with you whose extraordinary struggle for freedom has won worldwide respect. I am humbled because your suffering has been at the hands of a government that is largely Han Chinese of which I am a member. Yet, you reach out your hands in friendship. You hold your suffering close to your heart while keep smile on your face. The wisdom and guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama have shown a path to justice paved with peace and non-violence for all to follow. I am indeed honoured and humbled to follow the path of His Holiness and to walk with you and call each of you my brother.

The middle way approach recognises that the policies of the Chinese government against the people of Tibet are not the intention of the Chinese people. It is these policies that are the obstacles to peace and justice and not the Chinese people who suffer with you and alongside you. In recognition of this distinction, His Holiness has consistently reached out to Han Chinese in the spirit of peace and justice for all. His embrace communicates that the struggle of the Tibetan people is really a struggle for the heart and soul of all peoples living under the rule of the Chinese Communist regime.

I am here today to share with you some great events that are proving the wisdom of His Holiness' vision.

The first event is the Nobel peace prize award to Liu Xiaobo. In announcing this prize, the Nobel Committee stated, "The Norwegian Nobel Committee has long believed that there is a close connection between human rights and peace. Such rights are a prerequisite for the 'fraternity between nations' of which Alfred Nobel wrote in his will."



Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

His Holiness the Dalai Lama greets a Chinese supporter on his arrival at the inaugural ceremony

This statement clearly puts the spotlight on the policies of the Chinese government as challenge to world peace as well as to the dignity of man. The hateful reaction of the Chinese government to this award clearly shows the fear of cornered beast. The fear of a beast which is confronted with the truth that its lies and hatreds have run their course and it has nowhere to hide.

Let's hear what Charter 08 has to say.

"The Chinese government's rule has been disaster for all people of China. It has stripped people of their rights, destroyed their dignity, and corrupted normal human intercourse. So we ask: Where is China headed in the 21st century? Will it continue with 'modernisation' under authoritarian rule, or will it embrace universal human values, join the mainstream of civilised nations, and build a democratic system? There can be no avoiding these questions."

These words of truth have put Liu Xiaobo in jail. But now the Nobel peace prize has turned the light of justice on the jailer. We must all seize this opportunity to stand shoulder to shoulder to show the world that his

suffering is our suffering. We must seize this opportunity to show the world that the policies of the Chinese government are not bringing harmony and stability but rather despair and discontent.

The second event I am happy to say that the patience of His Holiness is bearing fruits among the Han Chinese. We are now seeing the treat to the people of Tibet as a threat to us all. More and more leading Han Chinese intellectuals have come to condemn the policies of the Chinese government that seek to eradicate the Tibetan language from the face of the earth. Without the Tibetan language the Tibetan culture will cease to exist. The Tibetan language, that is the soul and blood of the Tibetan culture, must be the first official language spoken in Tibet. Prejudice against a language is always discrimination against its speakers.

Cultural genocide begins with linguistic genocide. By the same token, a genuine autonomy is foremost a cultural autonomy which begins with a linguistic autonomy. The people of Tibet have every right to preserve their culture and determine their future. The Chinese people must embrace this and see to it that our Tibetan brothers and sisters can

freely express their own minds in their own mother tongue on their own land, free of fear and full of hope.

I look forward to the Nobel peace prize award ceremony when the delegation to receive the prize will be not just Han Chinese but a rainbow of peoples who share a common democratic destiny, a rainbow of languages, cultures and religions standing together to tell the world and the Chinese government that if Liu Xiaobo is subversive, then we are all subversives; if the Dalai Lama is a terrorist, then we are all terrorists.

I also look forward to hosting another Interethnic Leadership Conference that will continue to embrace diversity and make the promotion of the right to speak and preserve one's language its cornerstone theme.

We will follow the conference with cooperative actions that keep the light on the jailer and keep the pressure on the world to get this government to recognise, respect, and preserve the dignity of its people.

This can be done and it will be done. For now I live in a country, the United States, where one man had a dream that the black children of the U.S. would sit side by side with the white children. Because of the dream of this one man, black people now share in the American dream in ways that were unthinkable a generation ago.

I too have that dream that Tibetans, Uyghurs, Christians and Buddhists can live their lives, raise their children in a rainbow of diversity that will spread across the sky over our homelands, that is, diversity under universality of human rights.

This will happen if we walk together in the path of truth, peace, and justice. Let me close with a little story. Earlier this year in Dharamshala, I was in the audience with His Holiness with a group of Chinese freedom fighters. At the end of the meeting we all stood up together. I noticed that he had a pair of shoes of very good quality. I whispered to His Holiness that he had a pair of very fine shoes. Much nicer than mine. "Yes" his Holiness replied. "I will walk home in them". I replied, "Yes, Your Holiness and I will walk with you". We suddenly found ourselves embracing each other.

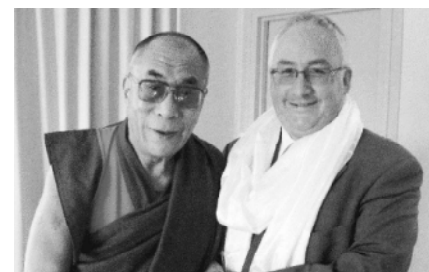
Now is the time for us to embrace one another as we walk together united in our diversity and toward our common goal of peace, justice, and freedom. The Time has come.

Thank you.



Peter Slipper, MP, Deputy Speaker, Australian Parliament, said: "... I understand that the aims of the conference are to offer an opportunity and platform to all Tibet support groups to meet and exchange views and experiences with each other and with the Central Tibetan Administration in order to forge a more effective means of supporting the cause of Tibet. I would like to congratulate you on organising this conference so that supporters of Tibet can contribute towards a solution of the Tibet issue satisfactory to the both His Holiness and Tibetans at home and in exile ..."

Bob Brown, Australian Greens Senator for Tasmania, said: "... Please convey my support to the organisers and participants of the conference in their efforts to create a more unified campaign for greater recognition of Tibet and for their inclusion of Chinese supporters to their cause. Australian Greens members of parliament will continue to recognise His Holiness the Dalai Lama as the accepted spiritual leader of Tibetans around the world and to urge the leaders of other parties to meet with him and acknowledge the human rights and political situation in Tibet..."



Michael Danby, Federal Member of Parliament for Melbourne Ports and Chair, All-Party parliamentary Group for Tibet, said: "... Our group would have liked to send a representative to the conference, but due to parliamentary and other duties unfortunately this was not possible. In Australia, as I think is the case in other countries around the world, the Tibetan cause can at times be a lonely one. Due to Chinese Government pressure, support for Tibet tends to be narrow and limited. A large conference such as this one which brings together groups from around the world is a great affirmation of the true depth and breadth of support for Tibet ..."

The Surajkund Statement and Action Plan on Tibet

Adopted by the Sixth International Conference of Tibet Support Groups

Surajkund, India

November 5-7, 2010

Statement

The Sixth International Conference of Tibet Support Groups was held at Surajkund in the north Indian state of Haryana from 5 to 7 November 2010. It was convened by the Core Group for Tibetan Cause - India, the apex coordinating body of the Tibet supporters in India, and facilitated by the Department of Information & International Relations of the Central Tibetan Administration.

The conference was attended by 258 participants from 57 countries and consisted of an opening ceremony, five plenary sessions and working groups on political support, outreach to Chinese, human rights, and environment and development issues.

During the inaugural ceremony, His Holiness the Dalai Lama was the Guest of Honour and the former Deputy Prime Minister of India, Mr. Lal Krishna Advani, the Chief Guest, while the Kalon Tripa, Prof Samdhong Rinpoche, delivered the key note address.

Other international guests present at the inaugural ceremony included Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago from the Philippines; Mr Rafael Gimalov, Member of Parliament from Russia; Major (Retd.), Vijay Singh Mankotia, former Minister of Himachal Pradesh in India; Mr. Javed Raza, National General Secretary, Janata Dal (United), India; Dr. Yang Jianli, President of Initiatives for China, T.N. Chaturvedi, former governor of Karnataka; Subhash Kashyap, former Secretary-General of the Indian Parliament; and Ms. Jaya Jaitly, a prominent socialist leader.

The purpose of the conference was to take stock of efforts in finding a negotiated solution to the Tibetan issue,



Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

His Holiness the Dalai Lama addressing the inaugural ceremony of the sixth International Conference of Tibet Support

discuss the current situation in Tibet and outline ways for the Tibet groups throughout the world, including Tibetan NGOs and Tibetan associations, to strengthen their work in the light of new developments in China and Tibet.

The previous conferences of Tibet Support Groups have been held in Dharamsala in 1990, in Bonn in 1996, Berlin in 2000, Prague in 2003, and Brussels in 2007. A special TSG conference was also held in India in 2008.

The conference participants:

Reiterated their position that His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration are the legitimate representatives of the Tibetan people;

Expressed their deep admiration for the unwavering determination and commitment to nonviolence of the Tibetans in Tibet despite the increasingly stringent controls being exercised by the Chinese authorities;

Recalled the courage of the Tibetan people who voiced their grievances and expressed their aspirations through public demonstrations throughout Tibet in 2008;

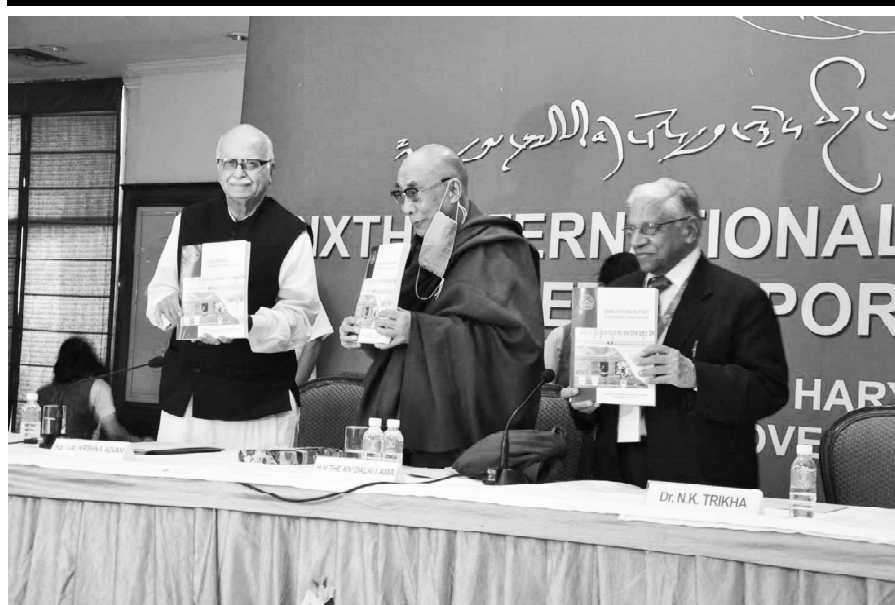
Demanded that the Chinese Government let the world know the whereabouts of the Panchen Lama and release him as well as all Tibetan political prisoners;

Expressed their appreciation to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Kalon Tripa Samdhong Rinpoche, whose addresses during the inaugural session have greatly motivated the participants. The conference expresses its appreciation of Kalon Tripa's many years of leadership and assistance to the TSGs;

Welcomed the reiteration by Indian leader Lal Krishna Advani at the conference of the Indian support to Tibetan aspirations irrespective of how the India-China relationship develops;

Applauded the extraordinary and continued support rendered by the government and the people of India to the Tibetan people, which has enabled them to establish a firm foundation for the preservation and promotion of Tibetan identity in exile;

Committed to work together to forge a strong international coalition that will pursue a common strategy for alleviating the plight of the people of Tibet and ensuring a political solution to the Tibetan issue, consistent with their



His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Mr L.K. Advani and Dr N.K. Trikha releasing the book, '2008 Uprising in Tibet: Chronology and Analysis' at the conference

United Nations recognised right to self-determination;

Welcomed the increased participation by Chinese delegates in the conference and regarded this as a measure of the growing understanding and support among the Chinese people about the reality of the Tibetan people and the Chinese people's future role towards creating a solution;

Welcomed the noticeable increase in delegates from Southeast Asia;

Welcomed the democratic election process that is currently underway to

elect the Kalon Tripa (Prime Minister) and members of the Tibetan Parliament by Tibetans in the free world. We fully support the International Network of Parliamentarians for Tibet's initiative to facilitate and ensure that international election observers are invited to monitor the Tibetan election process in Nepal. We remain particularly concerned about Nepalese authorities' interference in the Tibetan election process in October 2010. We urge the Nepalese Government to respect the Tibetan people's right to participate in their democratic process;

Appreciated the sympathy and support of the people and Government of Nepal

towards the humanitarian needs of the Tibetans-in-exile so far, as well as, expressed serious concern about the changing attitude of the Government of Nepal towards the Tibetan refugees in recent times;

Expressed condemnation of China's continued abuse of the human rights of the Tibetan people in general, including its violation of China's own constitutionally-mandated rights, its violation of international treaty obligations concerning the Tibetan people's religious and monastic administration, and its violation of the Tibetan people's rights to use the Tibetan language as the medium of instruction in the education system. The Tibet Support Groups resolved to closely monitor the situation and develop appropriate actions to highlight these abuses and make China respect these rights;

Expressed concern that the People's Republic of China's ill-conceived developmental activities in Tibet are negatively affecting the fragile ecology with grave implications for the region and the world as a whole and demanded that these activities be stopped forthwith;

Resolved to make the protection of the Tibetan environment a central part of campaign work for the coming years;

Urged the governments of conference participants, as well as the United Nations and other international agencies, to recognise His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government-in-Exile as the legitimate representatives of the Tibetan people and take tangible action towards a political solution in Tibet, reminded the governments and parliaments, including the European parliament, of their past commitments to support Tibet and urged them to take effective steps to fulfill them;

Agreed, therefore, to the following Surajkund Action Plan to focus attention of Tibet Support Groups on a number of areas of major importance.



Representatives from 57 countries listen attentively to His Holiness the Dalai Lama

ACTION PLAN

POLITICAL SUPPORT

I. OBJECTIVE: To build up Tibet as a constituent issue in parliaments and governments.

We will develop a training program and resource materials to support the creation of a broader network of Tibet Groups capable of advocating in local and national governments on the Tibet issue. Tibet Groups will be encouraged to participate in coordinated Lobby Days to build relationships and support. We will liaise with the International Network of Parliamentarians for Tibet, involve Tibetan Parliamentarians and officials in our outreach, and coordinate closely with Tibet Groups already engaged in advocacy in governments.

II. OBJECTIVE: To build support for fulfilling the aspirations of the Tibetan people for His Holiness the Dalai Lama to visit in Tibet.

We recognize the deep desire of the Tibetan people to have His Holiness the Dalai Lama to visit them, and firmly believe that His Holiness is a positive force for bringing about a peaceful resolution of the Tibetan issue. Therefore, we will launch a campaign towards fulfilling the aspirations of the Tibetan people for His Holiness the Dalai Lama to visit Tibet based on the

fundamental rights of freedom of movement, of association, of religion and of free speech.

HUMAN RIGHTS

I. OBJECTIVE: To reverse the Chinese Government's efforts to weaken the status of the Tibetan language.

We will create and sustain international outrage at policy decisions intended to weaken if not eliminate the Tibetan language in Tibet, through a campaign that uses a variety of new and creative communication channels to educate and persuade key audiences who can influence the Chinese Government. The campaign will also use methods to convey to Tibetans inside Tibet the worldwide support for their right to use and enjoy their own language.

II. OBJECTIVE: To increase awareness of human rights abuses in Tibet through a simple grassroots campaign.

We will wear, and encourage others to wear, a white armband on Wednesdays with the word "TIBET" on it. Everyone who wears the armband will become an ambassador for Tibet as people ask why we are wearing the armband. We will publicize the campaign through a variety of means, including at the Kalachakra in Washington D.C. In July 2011.

ENVIRONMENT & DEVELOPMENT

OBJECTIVE: Create an alliance with effected communities and build public awareness at the grassroots level in order to stop the damming of the Mekong/Zachu River.

Using people to people connections at the local and village level, we will help build the capacity of communities to challenge damming projects on the Mekong/Zachu River in Tibet. We will create greater understanding of the ways in which decisions affecting rivers in Tibet produce significant consequences in China and other countries. As the campaign takes root we will consider expanding it to address other rivers flowing from Tibet.

CHINESE OUTREACH

OBJECTIVE: To foster greater understanding between Chinese and Tibetan people through the exchange of personal stories and experiences.

We will open up channels of communication by using personal stories to highlight issues and concerns that Chinese and Tibetan people share, such as the environment, freedom of speech and religion, etc. We will create positive and simple messages to initiate conversations and then create spaces for the conversation to continue, including in local cultural events, friendship groups, and in on-line spaces such as Common Ground.



Growing from strength to strength: Participants of the sixth International Conference of Tibet Support Groups huddle for a group photo

Address of Kalon Tripa Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche at the closing ceremony of the sixth International Conference of Tibet Support Groups

Venerable monks and nuns, Honourable Mr. Kanwal Sibal, the chief guest of this session, other dignitaries on the dais and friends of humanity and friends of Tibet in this hall.

I am not going to bore you anymore because for the last three days you have had enough talking and discussion. But I have been asked by many people to say something because in the inaugural session I chose not to read my lengthy statement due to time restraints. I thought, since the statement was circulated, you would kindly go through it if you wished. If you don't wish, then my speaking also does not have much meaning. So, therefore, I left it up to you but due to several reasons, I have been asked to say a few words at this session.

If you have read my statement, you will find that I have discussed about the nature of the Tibet support movement. I have stressed that this movement was not caused by a mobilisation or request from the Tibetans. Rather, it was all voluntary participation. People themselves chose to join this group to work for Tibet with their own time, with their own resources, with their own capability, professionalism and expertise.

There are different expert groups which have joined this movement. I have also mentioned that this movement has been able to sustain itself for the last 51 years which is a very unique thing. You all have sustained the Tibet Support Group movement without any expectations of political or material or personal gains whatsoever but on the contrary you have had to face numerous inconveniences and difficulties. In spite of that, you are able to sustain the movement only because of your pure intention and love for justice and love for human dignity. So, therefore, we greatly appreciate your continued support.

For quite some time, people were concerned about the lack of younger

generation in the TSG movement, but that concern has proved to be a waste. This international conference is being attended by more than 250 delegates from 57 different nations and countries and the majority are in the youth group. This is very encouraging.

This movement is not going to disappear due to a lack of interest among the younger generation. I met several of the participants who are from the students' groups and also a great deal of young people who are in their late teens, in this congregation and we are very much encouraged by this.

Then I also touched on the stand of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) and His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We are not seeking separation from the People's Republic of China (PRC). We are just seeking the sincere implementation of the constitutional provisions of National Regional Autonomy enshrined in the constitution of the PRC and its Autonomy Law.

Many of my friends suggested to me that it is useless to talk about the constitution. They reasoned that in China, the communist government does not respect nor implements the constitutional provisions but rather the decision of the party is supreme which does not need any constitutional background.

It is true that the constitutional provisions have not been implemented by the PRC authorities until now. In spite of that, PRC claims to be a nation governed by the rule of law and the constitution of the PRC says that the constitution is the supreme law which needs to be abided by each citizen of the PRC, including the minorities.

Taking that phrase as a true statement, we are just clinging on to the constitution. We have chosen to ask for our rights within the constitutional framework of the PRC and we are not giving up this commitment until the Tibet issue is

resolved. Moreover, until now, we have had the overwhelming majority support of the Tibetan people for this middle-way approach. So, my administration is pursuing this policy with full confidence and with the full belief that we have the mandate of the Tibetan people inside Tibet as well as in the diaspora.

Of course, we are committed to a democratic system and if people change their minds then the policy will definitely change. Until now, we have had the support of the overwhelming majority for this policy and hence we are pursuing it. But this is only a statement. I know, among the Tibet Support Groups, there are many groups who do not agree with our policy. That is your freedom and we, of course, consider you as a genuine and sincere Tibet Support Group. Whether you agree with our policy or not, that is immaterial, but your commitment for the well being of the Tibetan people is what makes you a Tibet Support Group.

In the past, I have attended the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th International Tibet Support Group conferences, which were financially, administratively and technically supported by the Friedrich Naumann Stiftung of Germany, during which I always said that the CTA will not make any suggestions as all of the Tibet Support Groups are independent and voluntary by nature. We are not supposed to ask you to do this or not to do that. But this time, in my statement, I ventured into offering some suggestions.

During the independence movement of India, Mahatma Gandhi said over and over again that in the course of years, the freedom movement will be divided into two divisions - constructive work and agitation work. If you lack behind or suffer in agitation, it will not make much difference but if you are failing in constructive work, then it will cause great damage to the freedom movement.

I consider this as a great advice for every freedom movement. We also must think

how we can do constructive work to achieve justice for the Tibetan people, apart from demonstrations, letter writings, agitations and other campaigns. I do not suggest any particular constructive work as this is for you to find out and for you to decide if you agree with my suggestion. I only suggest that we must think what constructive work is suitable for the Tibetan movement.

Then, I also suggested that why not we chose one day in a year, apart from the usual commemorative days such as 10th March, during which all the Tibet Support Groups, all the religious centres, and all the academic centres related to Tibet all over the world shall observe a day of silence or fasting and prayer. On that day, each year, every corner of world shall mark a prayer for the PRC authorities to have wisdom and also pray for the suffering people of not only Tibet but also all the people in the PRC and all those people who are suffering under the autocracy of totalitarian regimes apart from the PRC.

We must also pray for those people who are torturing other people and those who are suffering under their hands. We should pray for everyone. That I think will make a significant result. These were the two suggestions that I made in my keynote address.

Then, I also mentioned that this will be my last participation with you as a functionary of the CTA. Your cooperation with me for the last 10 years has been greatly valued and you must continue this support for whosoever my successor is. Your continued support and collaboration is extremely important for the future.

May I also remind you that this is not the time to feel fatigued or to be resigned - the important time has come. The world is passing through a great critical moment and it is not only for the Tibetan people alone. The PRC's hegemony and expansionism in financial and political power and many other areas is becoming more and more clear to the world. In the beginning, the PRC was considered an inexhaustible market; therefore, everyone tried to appease PRC and also supported its totalitarian regime for the convenience of the multinational companies. Now, this trend or illusion is gradually disappearing.

The reality of a controlling power, which is spreading not only inside the PRC but in the African world, in the Latin American world and in the neighbourhood of the Asian continent is now threatening the entire humanity. We have been talking about this for the last 50 years, but now, people are beginning to realise this reality.

Apart from that, the change of leadership inside China and the growing consciousness of freedom and democracy inside China, both are gaining momentum. Of course, change of leadership is coming through the years but the awareness and spirit of freedom, equality and justice within the mind of Chinese people has been growing very rapidly. And for the last two to three years it has been really noticeable. Therefore, the coming few years would be immensely important for everyone, for the world, for the humanity, of course for the Tibetans and for the other minorities within the PRC.

So, these are few things which I have tried to submit to you. Of course, I am not imposing anything. If my view points are unacceptable, then, most welcome. If there is something that you can ponder upon then think for yourself.

I am immensely grateful to the Core Group and its chair person Dr. N.K. Trikha for actively helping us in organising this great conference in India. I attach a very special importance in holding this 6th International Tibet Support Group meeting in India. You may call me a superstitious person but whatever it maybe, this has its own significance. Therefore, I am grateful to the Core Group of the Indian Tibet support groups and all other participants.

As I mentioned before, the conference coincides with the Diwali festival which was not intentional but happened by accident. When fixing the dates, the convener said that His Holiness must attend the inaugural session and when we asked His Holiness' private secretary, he told us that His Holiness would be passing through Delhi on 5th of November for his visit to Japan and that it was a good timing. So, we fixed that date and after some time we were reminded that it

falls on Diwali. Immediately, we tried to change the date as Diwali is not suitable for the convenience of our Indian participants. We tried to change the date but the Hotel people told us that we will not be refunded any money that we had already deposited and that there was no accommodation after this date. So, we were compelled to go by it.

But the day before the actual inauguration on Diwali day, I thought that this was not only due to our ignorance. The date might have something significant behind it.

Our colleague had explained about the Diwali festival and he said that the Diwali festival always comes on the 29th day of the 9th month of the Tibetan lunar and solar combined calendar. The day always falls on a no-moon day and the 29th day of the 9th month is considered to be very very important for the Vajrayan practitioners that always marks the beginning of a Sadhana relating to Tantra. So, I thought this was not just coincidence but rather it might have some more reason.

I also touched upon the point that we are proud of being under the dynamic leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The Tibet movement, with whatsoever provocations and difficulties it might have, we Tibetans, not only in the diaspora but also inside Tibet are committed to complete nonviolence.

This movement is considered to be a model of alternative movement in the face of violence and terrorism. Therefore, you all should think that this significance should not be forgotten and we must try to strengthen it.

I am grateful to all the participants, I am also grateful to many senior people - Venerable Lama Lobsang ji who, despite being unwell chose to attend this session to show his solidarity. I am grateful to Mr. Kanwal Sibal for taking time to bless us.

With these words, I once again thank you and I am very much grateful to all of you and through you I send my gratitude to every single individual who cares for Tibet and who cares for humanity.

Looking for a place called home

*By His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama,
and John Cruickshank, publisher of the Toronto Star*

“Exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience,” the late Palestinian scholar Edward Said once wrote. “It is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted.”

Today, nearly 50 million people around the world live in exile from their homes, displaced by conflict, persecution or natural disaster. And this tragic number is growing daily.

More than 27 million of these people have been uprooted and relocated within their own countries. Others have sought shelter across foreign borders among strangers.

In refugee camps where violence breeds as quickly and fiercely as disease, many lead lives of wasted talents and blighted dreams.

The Toronto Star is dedicating today’s special edition to the plight of these exiles and will chronicle the history and courage of displaced persons, including the 4,000 Tibetans who live in the Greater Toronto Area.

We believe that the worst of the problems we face today: violent conflict, the despoliation of nature, poverty, hunger, religious and ethnic persecution are man-made problems which can only be resolved through human effort, understanding and the development of a sense of brotherhood and sisterhood. We need to cultivate a universal responsibility and a universal empathy for one another.

Star reporters and editors acting on behalf of generous readers have learned a little about this very directly in Haiti during the terrible months since the devastating earthquake there. Several Star staff members have become personally

involved, arranging schooling and basic medical care for children who have lost homes and families.

The experience in Haiti has shown how complex such aid giving is in a precarious community where many thousands are displaced and many critical human services unavailable.

Canada has a long and honourable tradition of accepting refugees.

In 1971, Canada under the leadership of then prime minister Pierre Trudeau started accepting Tibetan refugees. The first 228 refugees arrived in March of that year. Since then, the Canadian Tibetan community has grown to now number about 5,000, most of them in Ontario, including 4,000 in the Toronto area.

Canada has a record of accepting refugees that is among the best in the western world. It generally accepts more than 25,000 refugees a year.

The need for countries around the world to accept refugees is great.

As António Guterres, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, told the UNHCR’s annual meeting this month the world is seeing the creation of a number of quasi-permanent, global refugee populations brought about by never-ending conflicts.

Some 6 million refugees for whom UNHCR is responsible live in “protracted situations,” which UNHCR defines as one where at least 25,000 people of one nationality have been in one asylum country for at least five years.

Nearly 80 per cent of the world’s refugees are in developing countries, which themselves are struggling to deal with their own internal social, economic and political problems.

Guterres has rightly appealed for countries to expand their resettlement programs. He estimates 800,000 of the most vulnerable refugees must find shelter in a third country. However, barely 10 per cent of those found new homes in 2009.

As more and more countries try to close the door to this growing wave of refugees, people become more frantic to find safe haven.

One consequence is that they turn to human smugglers. For a heavy price, they are driven or walked through hostile territory and across foreign borders. Or they are crammed onto aging and often-leaky boats, sometimes drowning or starving in their desperate efforts to reach safety. In recent years, some of those refugee-laden boats have landed on Canadian shores.

Together, we must find solutions to the problems that lead to these vast refugee populations. But we must do so while opposing the use of violence and instead seek peaceful solutions based upon tolerance and mutual respect.

No matter what part of the world we come from, we are all basically the same human beings. The same is true with displaced persons. They all seek happiness and try to avoid suffering. They have the same basic human needs and concerns. All of us human beings want freedom and the right to determine our own destiny as individuals and as peoples.

And that is why we must speak out on behalf of refugees everywhere in the world, who are the “voiceless” amongst the inhabitants of the Earth.

What they are seeking, ultimately, is a place called home.

That is human nature.

Re-published from The Toronto Star October 23, 2010 edition.

Chinese leaders need bold vision and courage to resolve the issue of Tibet

by Lodi Gyaltzen Gyari

In this op-ed re-published from the South China Morning Post, Special Envoy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Kasur Lodi Gyaltzen Gyari, expresses hope that the present Chinese leadership will seize the opportunity and have the courage to confront the difficult truths of contemporary Tibet, reflecting the kind of boldness of vision shown by Deng Xiaoping and Hu Yaobang.

I have spent much of the past three decades representing His Holiness the Dalai Lama in talks with Chinese leaders. Through these many years of intermittent dialogue, I have sought to make the Chinese leadership understand the will of the Tibetan people and the vision of His Holiness in finding a common road to peace and reconciliation.

Over the years, I have also witnessed a drastic change in the nature and structure of Chinese leadership - from the sweeping boldness of the Deng Xiaoping era to the statesmanship and broad-mindedness of Hu Yaobang, to the institutional constraints and lack of assertiveness in recent years.

When there was a visionary leadership, we could see that China was able to take steps that helped preserve the unity and integrity of the country, promoting the interests of all its citizens and creating a positive international image.

The attitude of the Chinese leadership to the Tibetan issue has a direct bearing on the building of a harmonious society in China and its image on the world stage.

As part of my work I have tried to understand the reasons behind the current attitude of the Chinese leadership, and can think of three possible mindsets. The first one is the view that China is rising and all ethnic peoples need to modify their individual aspirations to fit in with this new identity.

The holders of this viewpoint in China seem to disregard and undermine the distinct identity of the Tibetan people. Beijing seems to mistake the artificial



stability in Tibetan areas as a sign of Tibetan acquiescence. But this is not the quiet of complacency or contentment. Rather, it is the silence of growing desperation and bitterness - the kind that multiplies under repressive conditions. It is, frankly, the kind of silence in which the seeds of future violence and instability are sown.

The second mindset is that if the Chinese authorities are successful in improving economic conditions in the Tibetan areas, the Tibetan people's concerns will be addressed and the whole issue will go away.

This is, again, a very narrow approach to resolving the Tibetan problem. The economic marginalisation of the Tibetan people is a reality that the Chinese leadership needs to address, given that official statistics place the Tibetans at the low end of the scale of economic development.

However, as Chinese scholars and experts on the Tibetan issue know, Tibetans have a high regard for their distinct culture, which has made a positive contribution to the development of the new China.

This cultural and spiritual identity needs to be given space to flourish and prosper among the Tibetan people. That cannot be achieved solely through economic development, however well intentioned it may be.

Economic integration without any respect and sensitivity for their culture will lead to more resentment by the Tibetan people. This was the clear message that the Chinese authorities should have received from the 2008 protests all over the Tibetan areas.

The third mindset is that China should wait until the passing away of the present Dalai Lama, when the Tibetan

issue will naturally disappear. This thinking is based on the belief that a leaderless and disoriented movement would fragment into pieces and eventually become irrelevant.

This is a misplaced mindset for many reasons, and very counterproductive to China's own future. Those who subscribe to this view do not understand that fragmentation today no longer means irrelevance; it means radical unpredictability and vastly greater risk. Far from fading away, the Tibetan political movement will reinvent itself in the absence of the current, Fourteenth Dalai Lama, and become something far more complex and unmanageable in the process.

It is disheartening to see just how far China's leaders have drifted from the early days of bold reform. The leaders I came to know in the early 1980s shared a conviction about their historic role in bringing about the difficult transition that was needed in post-Mao China. Leaders like Hu Yaobang understood that the greatness of China's future lay in the responsible actions of its leaders to conduct the necessary groundwork for true stability. Hu called for courageous policies relating to Tibet. Because he was open and honest, dared to act, dared to face reality and dared to

bear responsibility, he won the hearts of the Tibetan people.

It is my hope that today's leaders will seize the opportunity and have the courage to confront the difficult truths of contemporary Tibet, reflecting the kind of boldness of vision shown by Deng and Hu.

"China's leaders have a historic choice to make: will they steward China towards a peaceful future in which Tibetans finally find a sustainable home within such a modern Chinese state? Or will they look the other way as the seeds of alienation are sown, with negative consequences for the distant future?"

For our part, we have formally clarified His Holiness' position in the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People, presented at the Eighth Round of talks in November 2008. Through the Memorandum and the related Note, presented in January this year, we have stated in clear and

definitive terms that we seek only genuine autonomy within the framework of the People's Republic of China, its constitution and its laws.

We have made it abundantly clear that we will respect the People's Republic of China's core interest of sovereignty and territorial integrity, including respecting the authority of the central government and adhering to the regional, national autonomy system.

But the central government must also fully respect the legitimate rights of the Tibetan people to maintain our distinctive and unique identity, as this is our core interest.

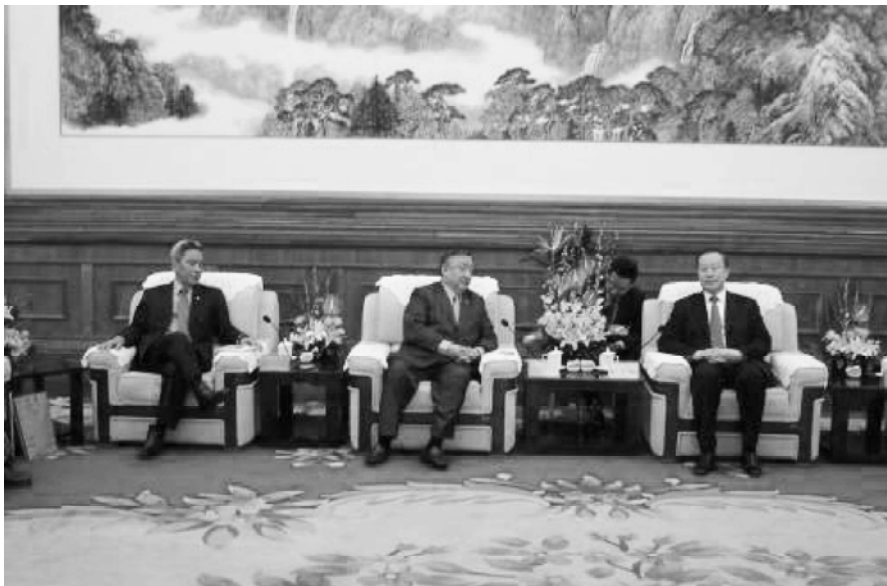
The Chinese leadership needs to take responsibility and make a serious commitment to finding a real solution to the issue of Tibet. The urgency of that responsibility is all the more palpable because of the uniqueness of this current window of time. Never before has there been a Tibetan leader like His Holiness, who has so firmly and persistently pursued such a challenging and treacherous path to achieve visionary change for the Tibetan and Chinese peoples.

The PRC proclaimed itself a multi-ethnic state with all nationalities having equal power and rights, rather than a state where a majority has political dominance over the minority.

China's leaders have a historic choice to make: will they steward China towards a peaceful future in which Tibetans finally find a sustainable home within such a modern Chinese state? Or will they look the other way as the seeds of alienation are sown, with negative consequences for the distant future?

I know His Holiness the Dalai Lama has chosen the right side of history. I can only hope China's leaders will see fit to do the same.

-Lodi Gyaltsen Gyari is the Special Envoy of the Dalai Lama and head of the Tibetan negotiations team in the talks with the Chinese leadership



DIIR/CTA

Special Envoy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Kasur Lodi Gyari, with Envoy Kelsang Gyaltsen during their 9th round of meetings with Vice Chairman of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference Du Qinglin on January 30, 2010

Human Rights Watch's report on the 2008 Tibet uprisings

Human Rights Watch, the New York based leading human rights group has said in a report that Chinese forces used disproportionate force against peaceful, unarmed protestors and acted with deliberate brutality to suppress protests two years ago in Tibet.

The report, “I Saw It with My Own Eyes’: Abuses by Security Forces in Tibet, 2008-2010,” is based on more than 200 interviews with Tibetan refugees and non-Tibetans, as well as fresh, not previously reported, official Chinese sources. Studying in detail numerous eyewitness testimonies, the report confirms a broad range of abuses committed by Chinese security forces both during and after the March 2008 protests, including using disproportionate force in breaking up protests, proceeding to large-scale arbitrary arrests, and brutalising detainees.

The report suggests that contrary to government claims, Chinese security forces opened fire indiscriminately on demonstrators in at least four separate incidents, including in one area of downtown Lhasa on March 14.

The 73-page report accuses the security forces of engaging in ‘a pattern of deliberate brutality’ against the protesters, and then systematically torturing detainees in prison while seeking evidence that exiled spiritual leader the Dalai Lama was behind the uprising. Despite the lack of any evidence, China continues to blame His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the exile Tibetan diaspora for inciting the uprisings.

The report further says that in order to cover up the activities of the security forces, the Chinese government has kept the Tibetan plateau locked down for the past two years, dispatching massive numbers of troops across all Tibetan-inhabited areas. Since the March 2008 uprisings, the Chinese government has

need for immediate international action, the report said that violations continue till date, including disappearances, wrongful convictions and imprisonment, persecution of families, and the targeting of people suspected of sympathising with the protest movement.



CHINA

“I Saw It with My Own Eyes”

Abuses by Chinese Security Forces in Tibet, 2008-2010

HUMAN
RIGHTS
WATCH

Reacting to the report, China’s foreign ministry spokesman, Qin Gang, in a statement to The Washington Post in Beijing, accused the Human Rights Watch of ‘always having prejudice towards China’.

Human Rights Watch is one of the world’s leading independent organizations dedicated to defending and protecting human rights. For 30 years, Human Rights Watch has worked tenaciously to lay the legal and moral groundwork for deep-rooted change and has fought to bring greater justice and security to people around the world.

Following are the Summary and the Key Recommendations as they occur in the Report. To read the entire report visit: <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2010/07/22/i-saw-it-my-own-eyes>

expelled journalists and foreign observers from the Tibetan plateau and rejected all calls for independent investigations into the protests, including those from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UN special rapporteurs.

The report concluded that the scale of human rights violations was far greater than previously believed and that the Chinese forces broke international law—including prohibitions against disproportionate use of force, torture, and arbitrary detention, as well as the right to peaceful assembly. Signaling the

Summary

More than two years after protests—the largest and most sustained in decades—erupted across the Tibetan plateau in March 2008, the Chinese government has yet to explain the circumstances that led to dozens of clashes between protesters and police. It has not addressed how its security forces responded to the unrest—including allegedly using lethal force against Tibetan protesters, and abandoning Lhasa’s city-center to protesters and looters for several hours on March 14. Nor has it revealed the fate of hundreds

of Tibetans arrested during the protests, or disclosed how many it has detained, sentenced, still holds pending trial, or has sentenced to extrajudicial forms of detention, such as Re-education Through Labor (RTL).

This report, the first comprehensive examination of the crackdown, is based solely on official Chinese sources and eyewitness accounts that Human Rights Watch gathered in more than 200 interviews with Tibetans between March 2008 and April 2010. It finds that the scale of human rights violations related to suppressing the protests was far greater than previously believed, and that Chinese forces broke international law—including prohibitions against disproportionate use of force, torture and arbitrary detention, as well as the right to peaceful assembly—despite government claims to the contrary. It also reveals that violations continue, including disappearances, wrongful convictions and imprisonment, persecution of families, and the targeting of people suspected of sympathizing with the protest movement.

Such tactics are unlikely to resolve, and may even aggravate, the longstanding grievances that prompted the protests in the first place, undermining prospects for long-term stability in the region. China urgently needs to investigate the protests and their aftermath, and open the region to media and international monitors. It also needs to examine the conduct of its security forces, which eyewitnesses consistently say used disproportionate force; deliberately brutalized and mistreated Tibetans detained for suspected involvement in the unrest; and deprived detainees of minimum guarantees of due process of law, including formal notification of where, or why, they were held.

China has rejected an independent inquiry into the March 2008 protests and their causes, and has made serious efforts to conceal details of its related security operations. It maintains a heavy security presence in the region, including intense police surveillance, and severely

limits domestic and cross-border movement by Tibetans. It also dramatically curtails communication between Tibetans and the rest of the country: those caught trying to pass information about China's suppression of the protests have been treated as state security offenders and received sentences of up to life in jail.

China has also barred foreigners—including many media organizations—from freely travelling in the region, further preventing investigation into allegations of brutality and abuse. Over the past two-and-a-half years, the government has allowed only a handful of tightly-scripted tours for select foreign media and diplomatic delegations. China has refused to admit UN human rights rapporteurs and—with some rare exceptions—foreign diplomats and, despite a long history of abuses in its detention system, continues to block the International Committee of the Red Cross from visiting its prisons, arguing the government-controlled Chinese Red Cross fulfills this mission. There are no known public Chinese official reports about prison conditions in Tibet.

The commander of the paramilitary People's Armed Police (PAP) has maintained that security forces acted legally—and that “none of the means ... adopted there have exceeded the constitutional rights of the armed forces or international law”—while the Chinese government also insists its forces adhered to international practice when dealing with the protests, exercising “extreme restraint” as they did so.

This characterization seems to be accurate in a few cases when security forces apparently exerted control when they faced large gatherings of Tibetan residents or monks. At times, such groups posed genuine threats to public order, especially in Lhasa on March 14 and in several incidents where protestors targeted official buildings, police stations, vehicles, and Chinese-owned shops. But in most cases there is just too little information about the precise sequence of events to know if

protestors became violent only after the police cracked down on peaceful protests or before the security forces intervened. Official accounts and media reports compiled by Human Rights Watch acknowledge specific protests in at least 18 county-level areas in the Tibet Autonomous Region, and Qinghai, Gansu, and Sichuan provinces over two weeks. China's Xinhua state news agency acknowledges more than 150 incidents between March 10 and March 25. In Lhasa alone, 21 people were killed and several hundred injured during the March 14-15 time period according to government figures.

The Chinese government has a duty to provide public order, thoroughly investigate incidents of violence, and punish perpetrators. But it must do so according to international law, and is obligated to respect basic human rights standards governing the use of force even when dispersing public protests—universal standards laid out in the United Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials.

At least two factors complicated the task of maintaining public order for China's security forces. One is China's prohibition of all forms of religious or political protests, even if they are peaceful. This meant local authorities could not be flexible in accommodating peaceful assembly and procession, and all gatherings were immediately treated as severe disruptions to social order that had to be suppressed as rapidly as possible.

The second factor is the government's immediate characterization of the unrest as a conspiracy orchestrated by the Dalai Lama, or (later) by what it refers to as the Dalai “clique,” which threatened the territorial integrity of the People's Republic of China and warranted a “people's war” and “life and death struggle.” This instantly raised the stakes, although the Chinese government has not factually substantiated its assertions. Instead, most of its “evidence” regarding such alleged subversion is drawn from the

public positions of Tibetan exile organizations and other pro-Tibet groups, which have sought to mobilize popular opinion to end Chinese rule in Tibetan areas, or win Tibetans substantial political autonomy. Such statements and activities are protected under international human rights law, even though Chinese domestic law considers them to be a crime against state security.

Similarly, while the government has attributed the protests to an alleged conspiracy by “hostile foreign forces” it has failed to provide evidence that would cast doubt on the most straightforward explanation for the protests: That Tibetans aimed to express their opposition to Chinese policies that place them at a socio-economic disadvantage, and threaten the survival of their distinctive culture and way of life.

Key Recommendations

To the Chinese Government:

- a) Release all Tibetan detainees against whom no charges have been brought, or who have been detained for exercising their right to peaceful expression.
- b) Release accurate information on all those detained, released, and formally arrested in the aftermath of all protests on the Tibetan plateau, including in Gansu, Qinghai, Sichuan, and Yunnan provinces.
- c) Release accurate information on all those injured or killed by security forces.
- d) Release accurate information about the events that led to incidents of violence.
- e) Investigate all cases of enforced disappearances and unlawful arrests in the aftermath of the protests on the Tibetan plateau. Discipline or prosecute as appropriate all those implicated in these violations.
- f) Allow independent monitoring groups to check the veracity of reports received by Tibetan organizations

abroad of shooting incidents across Tibet, as well as the accuracy of lists of reported casualties.

g) Ensure that all prosecutions in connection with the protests are conducted in strict compliance with international due process standards.

h) Open prisons and places of detentions where Tibetans are detained to international monitors, including the International Committee of the Red Cross.

i) Immediately stop the practice of enforced disappearances. Sign and ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and enact national legislation that gives force to its provisions.

j) Ensure that all arrests are carried out in accordance with international law and promote transparency on detention. To this end:

i. Ensure that all persons detained by security forces are held at recognized places of detention, and that arresting officers identify themselves and present official identification.

ii. All places of detention should be required to maintain records regarding every detainee, including the date, time, and location of arrest, the name of the detainee, the reason for detention, and the specific unit or agency responsible for the detention. The records should be available to detainees’ families, counsel, and other legitimately interested persons. All transfers of detainees should be reflected in the records.

iii. In accordance with international and national law, detainees should promptly be brought before a judge and informed of the reasons for arrest and any charges against them. The family should be informed promptly of the arrest and location of the detainee. Any persons detained by the security forces must be allowed contact with family and unhindered access to legal counsel of their choice.

To the United Nations:

a) The United Nations should press China to honor the offer it made before the Human Rights Council in March 2009 to invite him “at a time mutually convenient to both sides.” of the Chinese authorities for a visit and specifically request to visit the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) and Tibetan Autonomous Areas in Qinghai and Sichuan provinces.

b) The High Commissioner on Human Rights, Navanethem Pillay, as well as the Special Rapporteurs and Working Groups on Torture, Enforced Disappearances, and Independence of Judges and Lawyers, should reiterate their interest in visiting the region to assess the situation.

To the International Community and China’s International Partners, in particular the US government, the European Union, India, UK, France and Germany:

a) Urge the Chinese government to: account for every person detained in connection with the protests; vigorously investigate incidents where security forces have used lethal or disproportionate force; put an end to “disappearances” and unlawful detentions; and discipline or prosecute the perpetrators of abuses.

b) Extend full and active support to the international investigation into the Tibetan protests led by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

c) Urge the Chinese government to review the official policies and practices in Tibetan areas which contributed to unrest.

d) Stress, when seeking cooperation with China on counterterrorism efforts, that the threat of terrorism cannot be an excuse to persecute or curtail the human rights protections of specific ethnic groups.

The Statement of the Kashag on the Twenty-first Anniversary of the conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama

On this occasion of the twenty-first anniversary of the conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Kashag, on behalf of the Tibetan people in and outside Tibet, would like to pay our utmost respect and greetings to His Holiness.

His Holiness, who besides being the foremost proponent of the principle of non-violence around the globe by applying the philosophy of dependent origination and non-violence as shown in the teachings of the Buddha, has guided the Tibetan struggle for justice onto to the path of non-violence making it different from other national struggles in the world. His Holiness has also shown, both in principle and in practice, that all global conflicts can be solved through a non-violent approach. These qualities made His Holiness the most suitable recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Thus, when His Holiness accepted the prize in 1989, it increased prestige and the value of the already esteemed Nobel Peace Prize. At the same time, it has also created a widespread awareness about and interest in the just cause of Tibet around the world. Since the award was an inspiration and the trust in the non-violent method and an outstanding recognition of the Tibetan struggle for justice, we commemorate it with highest respect and fondness. On this special occasion, if the Tibetan people in and outside Tibet can reaffirm their genuine pledge for the non-violent path based on trust and understanding, then this occasion will constitute a meaningful celebration.

An important development that we should be happy about and proud of is the conferment of this year's Nobel

Peace Prize to Mr Liu Xiaobo, a prominent Chinese democracy and human rights activist, who is currently in prison in the People's Republic of China. On behalf of all the Tibetan people, we would like to congratulate Mr Liu Xiaobo, and commend the Nobel Committee for taking this decision without bowing to the Chinese government's pressure.

Although this day is also celebrated as World Human Rights Day, it is a matter of sadness that no one has, thus far, been able to protect human rights enough to be celebrated. Moreover, the first decade of the 21st century is over and yet looking at the fact that a number of Nobel laureates are either in prison, under surveillance or in exile shows the state of human rights today.



Students of Mevon Peton School, Ghangkyi perform a Tibetan song praying for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the Tsug-la Khang, Dharamshala on December 10, 2010

However, the Kashag is saddened by the Chinese authorities appalling behaviour of not releasing Mr Liu Xiaobo from prison and keeping his wife under house arrest. The Kashag strongly condemns these actions. Since the values and aspirations of all the Nobel laureates are well known around the world, keeping a few individuals in prison cannot lock up their thoughts, principles and aspirations. It is a fact of life that the authoritarian rulers who try to control people's thought by force and suppression are the most ignorant of human beings.

These days the advanced nations in the West and the countries in the East who blindly follow the West use many beautiful slogans such as democracy, freedom, equality and human rights, but in actual practice they all appear empty words devoid of any meaning.

At present, a large number of people including Tibetans in Tibet are living with constant fear and torture under the oppressive regime of the People's Republic of China, denied even their fundamental human rights. Sadly, it has been amply proven that no powerful nations or organizations have either the

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DOCUMENTATION

A Nobel for China

by Sherab Woesser

The most coveted seat at this year's Nobel Peace Prize ceremony remained empty. Only a photo of Liu Xiaobo adorned the Oslo City Hall as the world celebrated the exemplary life of China's foremost democracy activist. His defining absence put the People's Republic of China in a disagreeable league of nations along with Nazi Germany, Soviet Union and Burma, to have barred a laureate from receiving the honour since the awards were established in 1901.

For Liu Xiaobo, December 10, 2010, World Human Rights Day was yet another dark long day of his 11-year prison term. Jailed in the Jinzhou prison in the north-eastern province of Liaoning, the 54-year-old Liu has become the first Chinese citizen to receive this recognition.

Liu who had earlier been labelled as a 'mad dog' by the communist authorities began his career as a professor at Beijing Normal University, although he was eventually banned from teaching. Very early in his career, his radical opinions and sharp comments on official doctrines prompted what many in ideological and literary circle termed as the Liu Xiaobo Shock or Liu Xiaobo Phenomenon.

Soon he was touring Europe and America as a visiting scholar at several universities, including the University of Oslo, the University of Hawaii, and Columbia University. He was in the US when the student movement broke out in Beijing in 1989. While many in China were seeking visas for safer havens, Liu returned home to take part in the demonstrations. On the eve of the massacre, he launched a hunger strike to protest the imminent repression by the People's Liberation Army and as dawn approached on June 4, 1989, Liu stood with the few hundred students in Tiananmen Square amidst the bloodied



Heiko Junge/AFP/Getty Images

Nobel Committee Chairman Thorbjørn Jagland looking at the empty chair reserved for the Nobel Peace Prize winner Liu Xiaobo, December 10, 2010. According to news reports, since the award ceremony, the Chinese words for 'empty chair' have been banned on the Chinese Internet and some bloggers who have used the phrase or posted images of empty chairs have had their sites blocked.

streets left by the authorities' brutal crackdown. With troops surrounding the last protesters, Liu and a handful of fellow intellectuals negotiated a peaceful evacuation of Tiananmen Square with the army, saving many innocent lives.

The government wasted little time in tightening the noose around Liu. He was sent to prison for two years for publicly defending the student-led democracy movement in June 1989. Then in 1996, Liu was sentenced to three years of re-education through labour for questioning the role of the single party. Boldly fighting for peace, democracy and human rights through the decades, Liu was denied permission to travel abroad on many occasions while his Internet connection and phone line were severed at times.

Liu's ideals for an equal civil society find resonance in the document, "Twelve Suggestions on Dealing with the Tibetan Situation" which he and other Chinese

scholars released following the 2008 Tibetan Uprisings. In the letter, Liu wrote that if China 'wishes to avoid the partition of its territory, it must first avoid divisions among its nationalities by eliminating animosity'.

Liu appealed the leaders to 'hold direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama' and expressed hope that the 'Chinese and Tibetan people will do away with the misunderstandings between them'.

Charter 08

On December 8, 2008, hours before the online release of Charter 08, Liu, one of the leading initiators of the manifesto demanding path-breaking political reforms was arrested.

Inspired by Charter 77, circulated by Czechoslovak dissidents in 1977, Charter 08 called for 19 changes including amending the constitution, independent legal system, legislative democracy and

guarantee of human rights. The Charter pointed out that China remained the only large world power to still retain an authoritarian system, stripping its people of their rights, destroying their dignity, and corrupting normal human intercourse. The Charter warned that the current system ‘has become backward to the point that change cannot be avoided’.

Liu spent nearly a year in prison before being formally charged with subversion on December 12, 2009. He was sentenced on Christmas Day 2009 to 11 years in prison on charges of subverting state authority, for posting outspoken articles online and for helping draft Charter 08. Some suspected the Chinese authorities had chosen that day for the one day trial because most people in the West would be on holiday, and not notice.

Nobel recognition

By incarcerating Liu Xiaobo, the Chinese government inadvertently became the most formidable nominee for Liu. The Norwegian Nobel Committee in its committee statement on the Nobel Peace Prize 2010 released on October 8, admitted that ‘the severe punishment’ meted out to Liu had made him ‘the foremost symbol of this wide-ranging struggle for human rights in China’.

Pointing out that China was in ‘breach of several international agreements to which it is a signatory, as well as of its own provisions concerning political rights’, the Statement declared that the Committee had decided to award the Nobel Peace Prize for 2010 to Liu Xiaobo for ‘his long and non-violent struggle for fundamental human rights in China’.

On learning the news, Liu Xiaobo said: “I dedicate this prize to the lost souls of June 4th.” His paying homage to those who died in the Tiananmen Square massacre brought to life the sacrifices made by hundreds of students in June 1989 and gave global recognition to the ongoing struggle for democracy and a free civil society in China.

At the actual ceremony in Oslo, where Liu Xiaobo was represented by an empty chair, world leaders, royalties, diplomats,

activists and Hollywood stars gave standing ovations, celebrating the courage of the bespectacled pro-democracy activist. The resounding thunder of claps that filled living rooms and convention halls the world-over was the definitive clarion call of support that the free world has for all those who are struggling to make the People’s Republic of China free and accountable to its people.

In his compelling speech calling for the release of Liu Xiaobo, the Chairman of the Nobel Peace Prize Committee, Mr Thorbjørn Jagland said, “He (Liu Xiaobo) has done nothing wrong. He must therefore be released! The human rights activists in China are defenders of the international order and the main trends in the global community”.

Hailing Liu as someone fighting ‘for all of us’, Mr Jagland expressed regret at the Laureate’s absence while making clear that ‘this fact alone shows that the award was necessary and appropriate’.

Encouraging China to take criticism as an opportunity for improvement, the Chairman argued that for all the strength that China is currently showing, the communist government’s weakness finds clear expression in the sentence on Liu.

While congratulating Liu Xiaobo on the Peace Prize and extending the committee’s best wish to China, Mr Jagland conveyed what many strongly believe the world over that Liu’s views will in the long run strengthen China.

Beijing burns

China responded, as predicted, to the Nobel Committee’s decision and the ensuing international media attention in the only way it knows how to – by playing victim, censoring information and further tightening its iron grip.

Charging Liu Xiaobo as ‘a criminal who violated Chinese law’, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson unabashedly warned that the Nobel committee’s decision would ‘bring damage to two-way relations’ between Norway and China.

Quick on arm-twisting, China immediately cancelled its ministerial level meeting with the Norwegian government and quashed a planned cultural exchange programme with Norway.

With rhetoric redolent of the Maoist era, China’s propaganda machinery worked overtime to paint Liu as a traitor and officially labelled the Nobel committee’s decision as a plot by Western enemy forces to contain China.

Xinhua, the official news agency, attacked the Nobel committee for honouring the ‘convicted Chinese criminal Liu Xiaobo’ while China’s Global Times said that the decision was aimed ‘at humiliating China’.

Speaking to Reuters, Nicholas Bequelin of Human Rights Watch rubbished China’s burlesque saying that the portrayals of the ‘West’s attack on China’ were a tried and tested technique of the Chinese government to deflect criticism and appeal to nationalist sentiment.

In the glare of the whole world, China kept Liu’s wife, Liu Xia under house arrest and severed all her contacts with the outside world. Liu’s supporters were suppressed while any support for Liu was smothered on the streets and censored over the Internet.

Navi Pillay, the United Nations human rights chief, while reiterating the call for Liu’s release confirmed that the UN had received reports of ‘at least 20 activists being arrested or detained and more than 120 other cases of house arrests, travel restrictions, forced re-educations and other acts of intimidation’ by the Chinese government in the weeks following the Nobel Committee’s decision.

Following an order issued by the Propaganda Department of the Communist Party of China (CPC), forbidding the Chinese media from reporting the Nobel Committee’s decision, TV and radio stations, newspapers and websites completely ignored what was probably one of the most historic news events of modern day China.

Sina and Sohu, two of China's most prominent news websites carried no reports on Liu while Baidu, China's leading search engine gave a list of blocked web pages when typed-in the Laureate's name.

Broadcasts of foreign satellite TV stations were taken off-air as soon as they mentioned Liu's Nobel while scores of foreign reporters were turned away by the police when they tried to approach Liu's home in Beijing.

Reporters Without Borders termed the government's censorship as a 'disgraceful act' and further reported that it was impossible in China to send an SMS message containing the characters for Liu Xiaobo or Nobel Prize.

One world, One dream?

China was the toast of the town two years ago as it played a dubious host to the Olympic Games. Countries and conglomerates fell over each other to bask in the communist glory in the hope that it will wash away a little of their own sins of favouring base economic gains over human rights. China tried to use the Games to whitewash the CPC's six decades of foul play and in a bid to announce its arrival as a peace and harmony loving country raised the slogan 'One world, one dream' for the Olympics.

Yet, that concept of universalism remains as farfetched in China today as it was in 2001 when China was inducted as a full-fledged member of the World Trade Organisation.

Human Rights Watch, in a press statement on October 8, attested that Liu's imprisonment was part of 'wider political hardening in China which began in the run-up to the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games'. Implicating China for imposing "long prison terms on high-profile dissidents on baseless state secrets or 'subversion' charges" the rights group reported 'expanded restrictions on media and Internet freedom, and tightened controls on lawyers, human rights defenders, and nongovernmental organisations' since the much celebrated Games.



Getty Images

Protesters gather to voice support for jailed Chinese Nobel peace laureate Liu Xiaobo (pictured at R with wife) in Hong Kong on January 1, 2011

An editorial in Taiwan's Liberty Times noted that China's hardening stance on human rights and censorship reduced the Western world's long-held expectation of China's economic growth bringing democracy to wishful thinking.

Will the Nobel matter?

No doubt, the entire Nobel episode has done irreparable damage to China's claim of being a responsible power. The PRC not only chose to leave the chair empty but also left empty many hearts, hopes and expectations.

Declaring that the Nobel recognition to a jailed Chinese was a 'good thing for China's future', Antonio Chiang in the Apple Daily wrote, "This prize is like plunging Beijing's head into cold water, reminding China that it still has a long way to go in winning international respect".

Beijing suffered a major defeat over the Nobel battleground for soft power. An editorial in the South China Morning Post aptly pointed out that a 'confident China surely must have room for dissent and debate'.

The frantic efforts of China to take-on the world's opinion with its ginormous propaganda machinery, instead gave wind to the embers of the Liu Xiaobo

Phenomenon. The balding Liu Xiaobo became the new face of resistance against suppression of speech and abuse of power. Analysts say that this heroic symbolism will give a new lease of life and serve as a huge source of encouragement to those struggling for political reforms within China.

For countries feeling the uneasy weight of China's economy, this award serves as an inspiration to stand up to Chinese bullying. The government of Norway and the Nobel committee by not allowing themselves to be intimidated by China's threats have restored the pride of the 1.3 billion citizens of China to strive for their rightful place in the world.

But most importantly, this Nobel peace Prize provides the PRC leadership with an earnest opportunity to rethink and review their failing policies.

Ironical as it is, Tunisia and Egypt were among the unenviable list of countries that gave a miss to the Nobel ceremony, bowing to China's pressure.

If the PRC wants to avoid similar overwhelming waves of mass protests that swept across its allies, then listening to reformists like Liu Xiaobo would be the first good steps.

Apolitical policy or systemic war on culture?

by Bhuchung D. Sonam

Forcing Tibetan students to study in Mandarin Chinese is, in essence, a 'cultural crackdown' – an attack on the root of Tibetan culture and identity. This policy also implies that Tibetan language and culture are 'backward'.

At 8 am on 19 October, thousands of Tibetan students in Rebkong, northeastern Tibet, took to the streets to demand 'freedom of language.' They were protesting the decision taken during a meeting on 12 October by the Provincial Communist Party and Amdo (Qinghai) provincial government to replace Tibetan with Mandarin Chinese as the medium of instruction at educational institutions.

Peaceful protests by Tibetan students have, meanwhile, spread to other Tibetan areas and Beijing, where 400 students from the Minorities University participated in a solidarity march. On 21 October, more than 3000 students in Golok, eastern Tibet, also protested against the new language policy. Tibetan students in exile and their supporters are also lobbying initiatives around the world, particularly in Belgium, Holland, Poland, Germany, Switzerland and in many places in the US and India. Students and teachers in East Turkestan (Xinjiang) have shown strong support for the Tibetan students. These moves, however, have not been taken well by the powers-that-be. At around 10:30 on the morning of 22 October, Chinese authorities detained more than 20 students in Chabcha in Amdo, northeastern Tibet.

The intent behind this seemingly apolitical policy of the Chinese authorities is summed up in a letter that was signed by at least 133 teachers from various schools in the region, and submitted on 15 October to the Amdo provincial government. 'If both the spoken and written language of a people die, then it is as if the entire population of that people has died and the people have been decimated,' the teachers maintained. An appeal signed by 27



AP Photo/Free Tibet

Tibetan students march in protest on the streets of Rebkong in the Amdo region of eastern Tibet in October this year. Reuters reported that at least 1000 students took part in the protests against plans to use Chinese as the medium of instruction for all subjects in schools.

Tibetan writers living in exile also clearly express this concern: 'As Tibetan writers, we consider language as the core identity of the Tibetan people. The survival of our identity depends on our language and to destroy a language is to destroy people and their identity.'

Since the Chinese occupation of Tibet, the Communist Party's outlook towards Tibetan language and religion has been one of suspicion and fear. The Tibetan people's traditional way of life and outlook towards the world is inextricably linked with Buddhism, which in turn is firmly linked with Tibetan language. The entire corpus of Buddhist canons and thousands of commentaries by Buddhist scholars down the centuries are available only in Tibetan language. This shared culture binds Tibetans into a unified

entity giving them a sense of national identity. This unifying power, however, is seen as a threat to Beijing's rule and its survival in Tibet. Consequently, for over half a century, the Chinese rulers have hammered down on Tibetan religion, language and identity. The Communist Party of China has even involved itself in controlling and manipulating the selection of reincarnations of Tibetan lamas – the spiritual teachers and leaders of Tibetan Buddhism.

In 1951, after the so-called 17-Point Agreement on 'the peaceful liberation of Tibet' was forced onto Tibet, 600 Tibetan children were sent to the Central Institute of Nationalities in Beijing to be educated as cadres and teachers. This was one of the first steps taken to win over the trust of the Tibetans. In Tibet,

meanwhile, the occupying Chinese authorities introduced propagandist education in schools. The late Professor Dawa Norbu remembered how mathematics was taught using examples such as, 'I have five eggs. I offer three to the People's Liberation Army. How many have I left?' In her book, *Education in Tibet: Policy and Practice since 1950*, Catriona Bass states that during the Cultural Revolution, 'all concessions to culturally specific education for China's nationalities were abolished; the political nature of education during this period meant that it consisted almost entirely of launching attacks on traditional Tibetan culture, the prime target being the Tibetan language.'

While authorities relented a little in the early 1980s, whatever little was gained at the time was soon overshadowed by hardline policies under Chen Kuiyuan, the then-firebrand party boss in Tibet, who said that Beijing 'must improve political and ideological work in schools'. As such, mass political indoctrination as a tool of social control through ideological education, which was initiated at that time, persists to this day in schools and monasteries. This lays bare the state's underlying goal of fostering political loyalty, alongside its attempts at instilling an ideology of the 'unity of the motherland' and 'opposition to splittism' among Tibetan children.

In January 1996, Chen stated at an internal meeting that Tibetan nationalism was rooted in Tibetan religion, and that Tibetan religion was in turn rooted in Tibetan culture and language. Since 1997, Beijing has been forcefully using Chinese as a medium of instruction for Tibetan children in the 'Tibetan Autonomous Region' (TAR). Even Tibetan students seeking admission into the University of Tibet in Lhasa are required pass an entrance exam in Mandarin Chinese. Thus, Beijing's fundamental education policy in Tibet has been to win over the loyalty of generations of Tibetans through mandatory education in Chinese while consistently marginalising the Tibetan language. This has a clear historical



The student protest rallies quickly spread to other areas of northeastern Tibet. Seen here are students from four schools in the town of Chabcha marching to a government building on October 22, 2010, chanting slogans for the freedom to use their own language

precedent in Manchuria, which was occupied by China after the Qing dynasty collapsed in 1911. The Chinese authorities banned teaching of Manchu as a language during the same year. As a result, though the current population of Manchu under China is nearly 10 million, fewer than a hundred people can speak the Manchu language. Many scholars believe that oral Manchu will disappear within the next decade.

The recent education policy that the Chinese authorities announced in Amdo clearly follows Beijing's eradication of Manchu language and the compulsory introduction of Chinese as a medium of instruction in schools in the Tibetan Autonomous Region. If left unchecked, China will succeed in wiping out Tibetan language – and, thereafter, what is today thought of as Tibetan identity will not be far behind. The late Tibetan professor, Dungkar Lobsang Trinley, remarked that 'all hope in our future, all other developments, cultural identity, and protection of our heritage depends on this [Tibetan language]. Without educated people in all fields, able

to express themselves in their own language, Tibetans are in danger of being assimilated.'

It is not an overstatement to warn that the survival of Tibet as a nation and the Tibetans as a culturally distinct people depends in a large part on its language. China's policies to destroy Tibetan language are clear attacks on the root of Tibetan identity. Drawing inspiration from thousands of Tibetan students inside Tibet who are asserting their right to study in their own language, and Tibetan writers and intellectuals languishing in Chinese jails for speaking their minds, action must be taken before the language of Tibet meets the same fate as Manchu.



Students at the Beijing National Minorities University showed solidarity with the students in Tibet and protested against the Mandarin language education policy

Inclusive growth vs Reform politics

by Sherab Woeser

Wen Jiabao, the soon to retire Premier of the world's second largest economy raised many eyebrows and hopes when he publicly – barring China's 1.3 billion public – spoke of the urgent need of political reforms in communist China.

30 years after the then helmsman Deng Xiao Ping heralded economic reforms in what was to make China's communist party the most successful capitalist conglomerate the world has ever known, Wen Jiabao's nonchalant statements were welcomed by governments and reformists alike.

Wen, without proposing any concrete reforms, ignited debate with a series of speeches and a Time's magazine cover story interview, in which he argued that the mainland's political system must evolve to ensure continued economic growth. His remarks inspired liberals both within and outside the party, with one elite group of retired party elders issuing an open letter to the national legislature calling for freedom of press and an end to censorship, a stark reference to the state media's censorship of Wen's outspoken remarks.

The most widespread and open political debates since the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacres coupled with the impending change of guards at Zhongnanhai in 2012 inspired many to hope that the Fifth Plenum of the 17th CPC Central Committee held in Beijing from October 15 to 18, 2010 would be different.

The secretive annual meeting, scheduled to debate the new five-year economic blueprint covering the 2011-2015 period had sparked speculation about what was on the table following



All nine members of the Politburo standing committee seen here attending the Fifth Plenary Session of the 17th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in Beijing. From left to right: Zhou Yongkang, Li Keqiang, Li Changchun, Wen Jiabao, Hu Jintao, Wu Bangguo, Jia Qinglin, Xi Jinping, and He Guoqiang

Wen's monologues and the Nobel Committee's decision to award Liu Xiabo with this year's peace award.

But despite expectations, a communiqué released at the closing of the party plenum made only one passing reference to political reform – that the party would make 'active but steady' efforts to promote 'political restructuring' – giving scant indication that those efforts would move beyond nominal changes in the party's internal bureaucracy. With no new political reforms emerging from the talks, political analysts concluded that there was little to suggest that there would be any real change in the way the country is run.

Zhang Ming, a professor of political science at Renmin University speaking to the South China Morning Post dismissed the communiqué saying that such 'routine statements' without any elaboration were 'nothing new' and had 'appeared in every important party and government document in the past'.

Instead, the vaguely worded document focused on exploiting 'strategic opportunities' to 'maintain stable and relatively fast economic growth' that has powered China's global ascendance.

The uneven boom in China's economy over the past three decades has created a huge and disturbing economic gap with millions of struggling urban poor and lagging development in the vast countryside. China's domestic policy challenges have been further aggravated by endemic corruption, rising housing prices, high unemployment rate and inflation that touched a high of 5.10 percent this November. Making matters worse, the share of gross domestic product generated by domestic spending in China has fallen steadily to nearly 35 percent, far lower than that of most developing nations.

Thus the committee's promise to undertake a broad economic transformation in the next five years with emphasis on domestic consumption are

clear signals of Hu and Wen once again playing the social welfare card diverting attention from the calls of more democratic and transparent governance. Hu's latest catchphrase of 'inclusive growth that leaves no one behind' in addition to his much abused slogan of 'harmonious society' have taken the steam out of hopes for political reform which invariably provides the essential groundwork for any economic restructuring.

The lack of discussion on relaxing the Party's tight grip on fundamental human rights at the plenum and the language of the communiqué, analysts say are clear signs that the current leadership as a whole is in no mood for any dilution of power.

Beijing Science and Technology University professor Hu Xingdou speaking to AFP expressed regret that the plenum failed to 'come up with something aimed at good governance' as many people had imagined.

Notably, the Party also used the plenum to dismiss speculations of intra-party differences by showing a united face in the form of elevating Hu's heir apparent Xi Jinping to the post of vice chairman of the Central Military Commission.

Xi, a provincial governor emerged on the grand stage out of relative obscurity in 2007 when he was appointed to the all-powerful nine-man Politburo Standing Committee. Up-till then, better known for courting his second wife – a celebrity folk singer, Xi has risen steadily up the ranks working as party leader in the wealthy eastern provinces of Fujian and Zhejiang and briefly in Shanghai after the party leader there was dismissed for corruption.

Xi's journey to the top - tracing a similar track that Hu took a decade ago - is seen by many as a victory for the 'princelings' in the party. These sons and daughters of communist elders, with the tacit blessings of former leader Jiang Zemin, who is believed to still wield considerable influence behind



Andy Wong/Associated Press

Hu Jintao makes way for Xi Jinping, his heir apparent

the scenes, have secured themselves entry into the country's elite, boasting degrees from top universities. Observers note that Xi pipped Li Keqiang, Hu's personal choice and surfaced as a compromise candidate acceptable to both Hu and Jiang.

"Hu's latest catchphrase of 'inclusive growth that leaves no one behind' in addition to his much abused slogan of 'harmonious society' have taken the steam out of hopes for political reform which invariably provides the essential groundwork for any economic restructuring."

Xi is the son of Xi Zhongxun, a onetime revolutionary guerrilla and deputy prime minister who fell out of favour with the party after he openly criticised the government's actions during the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre. Xi senior is also credited with the spectacular success of China's first free-market economic zone, Shenzhen and is said to have mentored the current crop of China's leaders such as Hu and Wen.

Generally considered popular with foreign dignitaries, crown prince Xi has been described by former U.S. Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson as 'the kind of guy who knows how to get things over the goal line'. Former Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew characterised Xi as a 'person with enormous emotional stability who does not allow his personal misfortunes or sufferings affect his judgment'.

Yet precious little is known about the political leanings of Mr Xi. Believed to favour market-oriented economic reforms, a New York Times article reported that China witnessed greater clampdown on liberal intellectuals, the Internet and nongovernmental organisations after Xi was put in charge of an internal Communist Party office in 2009.

Xi has remained silent in the reform debate, refraining from getting into sensitive political labelling, akin to his predecessors who stuck to their primary goal of ruling with an unyielding iron fist. There is little to expect why Xi will also not follow their footsteps.

Thanks to Wikileaks, all we know for sure of Mr Xi is that he is a fan of Hollywood war movies and despises the usual Chinese Kung-fu razmataz. That much for a man who might soon be deciding the interest rates of your loans or the price of your next pair of jeans.

Chinese writers on Tibet

We are introducing a new section titled "Talking China" to offer space for review and analysis of the independent opinions of Chinese scholars, writers, activists and journalists on the issue of Tibet. Featuring unedited articles, the Editorial Team hopes that this section will serve to strengthen the historical relation between the Tibetan and Chinese people.

China and Tibet: The true path

by Wang Lixiong

The recent troubles in Tibet are a replay of events that happened two decades ago. On 1 October 1987, Buddhist monks were demonstrating peacefully at the Barkor - the famous market street around the central cathedral in Lhasa - when police began beating and arresting them. To ordinary Tibetans, who view monks as "treasures", the sight was intolerable - not only in itself, but because it stimulated unpleasant memories that Tibetan Buddhists had been harbouring for years (see Tubten Khétsun, *Memories of Life in Lhasa Under Chinese Rule* [Columbia University Press, 2008]).

A few angry young men then began throwing stones at the Barkor police station. More and more joined in, and then they started fires, overturned cars and began shouting "Independence for Tibet!" This is almost exactly what was witnessed in Lhasa on 14 March 2008.

The fundamental cause of these recurrent events is a painful dilemma that lives inside the minds of Tibetan monks. When the Chinese government demands that they denounce their spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, monks are forced to choose between obeying (which violates their deepest spiritual convictions) and resisting (which can lead to loss of government registry and physical expulsion from monasteries).

From time to time monks have used peaceful demonstrations to express their anguish. When they have done this, an insecure Chinese government, bent on "annihilating unstable elements" in the "emergent stage", has reacted with violent repression. This, in turn, triggers violence from Tibetans (see Robert Barnett & Shirin Akiner, *Resistance and Reform in Tibet* [C Hurst 1994]).

In the recent decades, the Chinese government's policy for pacifying Tibet has been to combine the allure of economic development on the one hand with the threat of force on the other. Experience has shown that this approach does not work (see "Skewed gains", *Economist*, 10 April 2008).

The most efficient route to peace in Tibet is through the Dalai Lama, whose return to Tibet would immediately alleviate a number of problems. Much of the current ill-will, after all, is a direct result of the Chinese government's verbal attacks on the Dalai Lama, who, for Tibetan monks, has an incomparably lofty status. To demand that monks denounce him is about as practical as asking that they vilify their own parents.

It should be no surprise that beatings of monks and closings of monasteries naturally stimulate civil unrest; or that civil unrest, spawned in this way, can turn violent.

The solution within

Why aren't these simple truths more obvious? Phuntsog Wanggyal, a Tibetan now retired in Beijing who for years was a leading communist official in Tibet, has observed that a doctrine of "anti-splittism" has taken root among Chinese government officials who deal with religion and minority affairs, both in central offices in Beijing and in Tibet. These people, having invested their careers in anti-splittism, cannot admit that the idea is mistaken without losing face and, they fear, losing their own power and position as well (see Isabel Hilton, "Ditch the tatty flag of nationalism", *Guardian*, 12 April 2008).

Their ready-made tag for everything that goes wrong is "hostile foreign forces" - an enemy that justifies any kind of harsh or unreasoning repression. When repeated endlessly the originally vacuous term "anti-splittism" does take on a kind of solidity. Careers are made in it, and challenging it becomes impossible.

I am a supporter of the Dalai Lama's "middle way" - meaning autonomy for Tibet in all matters except foreign affairs and national defence. This arrangement eventually would have to mean that Tibetan people select their own leaders - and that would be a major change from the way things are now. Tibet is called an "autonomous region", but in fact its officials are all named by Beijing, and are all tightly focused on their own personal interests and the interests of the Communist Party. Tibetans can clearly see the difference between this kind of government and self-rule, and there is no way that they will support bogus autonomy.

It follows - even if this is a tall order - that the ultimate solution to the Tibet problem must be democratisation of the Chinese political system itself. True autonomy cannot come any other way.

It is time for the Chinese government to take stock of why its long-term strategy in Tibet has not worked, and to try something else. The old problems remain, and they are sure to continue, perhaps in places like the "Uighur Autonomous Region" of Xinjiang, if a more sensible approach is not attempted.

Wang Lixiong is a Beijing-based writer and a signatory to Charter 08. This article was published in the Wall Street Journal in April 2008.

Tibet - Her Pain, My Shame

by Tang Donhang

For more than a decade, I have frequently entered Tibet and often stayed there for a long time, traveling or working. I have met all kinds of Tibetans, from youngsters on the streets, folk artists, herders on the grasslands, mystic doctors in mountain villages, to ordinary cadres in state agencies, street vendors in Lhasa, monks and cleaners in monasteries, artists and writers... Among those Tibetans I have met, some frankly told me that Tibet was a small country several decades ago, with its own government, religious leader, currency and military; some stay silent, with a sense of helplessness, and avoid talking with me, a Han Chinese, afraid this is an awkward subject. Some think that no matter what happened, it is an historical fact that Chinese and Tibetans had a long history of exchanges with each other, and the relationship must be carefully maintained by both sides. Some were angered by the railway project, and by those roads named "Beijing Road," "Jiangsu Road," "Sichuan-Tibet road," but others accept them happily. Some say that you (Han Chinese) invest millions in Tibet but you also got what you wanted and even more; some say you invest in the development but you also destroy, and what you destroy is exactly what we treasure... What I want to say here is that no matter how different these people are, they have one thing in common: They have their own view of history, and a profound religious belief.

For anyone who has been to Tibet, he/she should sense such a religious belief among Tibetans. As the matter of fact, many are shocked by it. Such attitude has carried on throughout their history, and is expressed in their daily lives. This is a very different value, especially compared with those Han Chinese who have no beliefs, and now worship the cult of money. This religious belief is what Tibetans care about the most. They project this belief onto the Dalai Lama as a religious persona.

For anyone who has been to Tibet, it should not be strange to see the "common Tibetan scene": Is there any Tibetan who does not worship him (the Dalai Lama)? Is there any Tibetan unwilling to hang up his photo in his own shrine? (These photos are smuggled back in from abroad, secretly copied and enlarged, not like those Mao portraits printed by the government that we Han Chinese once had to hang up.) Is there any Tibetan who wants to verbally disrespect the Dalai Lama? Is there a Tibetan who does not want to see him? Is there any Tibetan who does

"When you claim yourselves as 'saviors of Tibetans from slavery society,' I am ashamed for your arrogance and your delusions. When military police with their guns pass by me in the streets of Lhasa, and each time I am there I can see row upon row of military bases... yes, I, a Han Chinese, feel ashamed."

not want to present Khatak [white welcoming scarf] to him?

Other than those voices that the rulers want to hear, have we ever heard the Tibetans' full, real voices? Those Han Chinese who have been in Tibet, no matter if one is a high official, government cadre, tourist or businessman, have we all heard their real voices, which are silenced, but are still echoing everywhere?

Is this the real reason that all monasteries in Tibet are forbidden from hanging up the Dalai Lama's picture? Is this the reason that all work units have officials to check in every household and to punish those who hang up his

picture? Is this the reason that the government has people to stop those believers on the pilgrimage path on every religious celebration day? Is this the reason for the policy barring government employees from having their children study in Dharamsala; otherwise, they will be fired and their house will be taken away? Is this the reason that at all sensitive times, government officials will hold meetings in monasteries, to force monks to promise to "support the Party's leadership" and "Have no relations with the Dalai splitist cliques"? Is this the reason we refuse to negotiate, and constantly use dehumanizing language to humiliate him? After all, isn't this the very reason to reinforce the "common Tibetan scene," making this symbol of nationality more holy?...

Why can't we sit down with the Dalai Lama who has abandoned calls for "independence" and now advocates a "middle way," and negotiate with him with sincerity, to achieve "stability" and "unity" through him? Because the power difference of the two sides is too big. We are too many people, too powerful: Other than guns and money, and cultural destruction and spiritual rape, we do not know other ways to achieve "harmony."

This group of people who believe in Buddhism because they believe in cause and effect and transmigration of souls, oppose anger and hatred, developed a philosophy that Han nationalists will never be able to understand. Several Tibetan monk friends, just the "troublemaker monk" type that are in the monasteries explained to me their view on "independence": "actually, we may well have been ethnic Han in a previous incarnation, and in our next incarnation we might well become ethnic Han. And some ethnic Han in a previous life may well have been Tibetan or may become Tibetan in their next life. Foreigners or Chinese, men or women, lovers and enemies, the souls of the world transmigrate without end. As the wheel turns, states arise and die, so

what need is there for independence?" This kind of religion, this kind of believer, can one ever think that they would be easy to control? Yet there is a paradox here: if one wants them to give up the desire for independence, then one must respect and protect their religion.

Not long ago, I read some posts by some radical Tibetans on an online forum about Tibet. These posts were roughly saying: "We do not believe in Buddhism, we do not believe in karma. But we have not forgotten that we are Tibetan. We have not forgotten our homeland. Now we believe the philosophy of you Han Chinese: Power comes out of the barrel of a gun! Why did you Han Chinese come to Tibet? Tibet belongs to Tibetans. Get out of Tibet!"

Of course behind those posts, there are an overwhelming number of posts from Han "patriots". Almost without exception, those replies are full of words such as "Kill them!" "Wipe them out!" "Wash them with blood!" "Dalai is a liar!" - those "passions" of the worshippers of violence that we are all so familiar with.

When I read these posts, I feel so sad. So this is karma.

In the last week, after I put down the phone which cannot reach anyone on the the other end, when I face the information black hole caused by internet blockage, even I believe what Xinhua has said - strangely I do believe this part: There were Tibetans who set fire to shops and killed those poor innocent Han Chinese who were just there to make a living. And I still feel extremely sad. Since when were such seeds planted? During the gunshots of 1959? During the massive destruction during the Cultural Revolution? During the crackdown in 1989? During the time we put their Panchen Lama under house arrest and replaced him with our own puppet? During those countless political meetings and confessions in the monasteries? Or during the time when a seventeen-year-old nun was shot on the magnificent snowy mountain, just because she wanted to see the Dalai Lama?.....

Or during numerous moments which seem trivial but which make me ashamed: I was ashamed when I saw Tibetans buy live fish from Han fish sellers on the street and put them back in the Lhasa river; I was ashamed when I saw more and more Han beggars on the streets of Lhasa-even beggars know it is easier to beg in Tibet than in Han areas; I felt ashamed when I saw those ugly scars from mines on the sacred mountains in the morning sunlight; I felt ashamed when I heard the Han Chinese elite complain that the Chinese government has invested so many millions of yuan, that economic policy favors Tibetans, and that the GDP has grown so fast, so, "What else do these Tibetans want?"

Why can't you understand that people have different values? While you believe in brainwashing, the power of a gun and of money, there is a spiritual belief that has been in their minds for thousands of years and cannot be washed away. When you claim yourselves as "saviors of Tibetans from slavery society," I am ashamed for your arrogance and your delusions. When military police with their guns pass by me in the streets of Lhasa, and each time I am there I can see row upon row of military bases... yes, I, a Han Chinese, feel ashamed.

What makes me feel most ashamed is the "patriotic majority": You people are the decedents of Qinshi Huangdi who knows only conquering by killing; you are the chauvinists who rule the weak by force; you are those cowards who hide behind guns and call for shooting the victims; you suffer from Stockholm Syndrome; you are the blood-thirsty crazies of an "advanced" culture of Slow slicing and Castration. You are the sick minds waving the "patriotic" flag. I look down on you. If you are Han Chinese, I am ashamed to be one of you.

Lhasa is on fire, and there are gunshots in Tibetan areas in Sichuan and Qinghai. Even I believe this- actually, I do believe this part of the facts. In those "patriotic" posts which shout "Kill them!" "Wipe them out!" "Wash them with blood!" "Dalai is a liar!" I saw the mirror image of

those Tibetan radicals. Let me say that you people ("patriotic youth") are Han chauvinists who destroy thousands of years of friendship between Han and Tibetan people; you are the main contributors to the hatred between ethnic groups. You people do not really "highly support" the authority; rather, you people are in effect "highly supporting" "Tibetan independence."

Tibet is disappearing. The spirit which makes her beautiful and peaceful is disappearing. She is becoming us, becoming what she does not want to become. What other choice does she have when facing the anxiety of being alienated? To hold onto her tradition and culture, and revive her ancient civilization? Or to commit suicidal acts which will only add to Han nationalists' bloody, shameful glory?

Yes, I love Tibet. I am a Han Chinese who loves Tibet, regardless of whether she is a nation or a province, as long as she is so voluntarily. Personally, I would like to have them (Tibetans) belong to the same big family with me. I embrace relationships which come self-selected and on equal footing, not controlled or forced, both between peoples and nations. I have no interest in feeling "powerful," to make others fear you and be forced to obey you, both between people and between nations, because what's behind such a "feeling" is truly disgusting. I have left her (Tibet) several years ago, and missing her has become part of my daily life. I long to go back to Tibet, as a welcomed Han Chinese, to enjoy a real friendship as equal neighbor or a family member.

Tang Donhang, (born in 1965) is a poet and documentary filmmaker from Chengdu, Sichuan. She has made several documentaries in and about Tibet since the 1990s. She published the above article on her own blog (hosted outside of China), partially translated by CDT. The writer moved to Israel from Chengdu in 2005, and is currently teaching Chinese language at Tel Aviv University. This article was posted on 28 April 2008 in China Digital Times. www.chinadigitaltimes.net

Too Soon Remembering Tsewang Norbu-la 1973-2010

Monsoon 1989. The sky was lavish sending down millions of raindrops. The playground was a brown sludge. Yet we continued the football match. Almost through the half time, a goal was scored. While we were recovering from the defensive lapse, the scorer ran to the middle of ground and performed an antic that would have done Roger Milla, the Cameroonian football star, proud.



many of his classmates after many years. They spent a good part of the night recalling little details about their lives. In hindsight, this class reunion proved to be a final parting goodbye.

He was a warm human being, an amazing classmate and an exemplary colleague. May he rest in peace, May he be reborn in the Land of Snow. Tsewang-la is survived by his wife, two sons and his parents.

by Bhuchung D. Sonam

Tsewang Norbu-la was born, raised and educated in exile — initially in Bhutan and later in India at Tibetan Children’s Village School. He was one of the eighteen first-batch students who successfully graduated from Lower TCV in 1990. Later, he completed his undergrad from Punjab University and almost immediately started working for the Central Tibetan Administration.

As a student in TCV, Tsewang-la did extremely well both academically and in extra-curricular activities. His gift for language was visible even in school as he regularly scored top marks in language classes. His Tibetan calligraphy skills were near legendary in the school. The first time when I witnessed it was during a class activity when he did a big poster in flawless *dutsa*, an ornate script that left even our Tibetan teacher speechless. In 1991, Tsewang-la won the first prize for Tibetan calligraphy competition organized by the Department of Education as a part of the International Year of Tibet activities. It was no surprise.

Tsewang-la’s work at the Department of Information & International Relations can

be defined by the difficulties that we will have in finding a suitable replacement.

He aspired to give his best towards which he was persistent in his effort and meticulous in his method. He would often say the late incomparable Tendar-la, who passed away a few years ago, had had a big impact on him. *‘Tendar-la dhampa de ngai genla ngo-ney rey.* (Tendar-la was my real teacher.) He often said. It is truly tragic and a terrible loss for the exile government to lose two outstanding civil servants in too short a time.

But as it is said in the scriptures that death is like a lightening in the evening sky. No power on earth or heaven can change the course our lives. Death is, perhaps, the only thing that every human being has to confront - even the great lamas must face it one way or the other. Death is watertight. There is no escape. The rich cannot buy it. Magicians cannot do tricks on it. Hence, we must quickly recover from this tragic loss and find our footing.

Five days before Tsewang-la’s untimely demise, he had met with

Central Tibetan Administration mourns the demise of Joint Secretary Mr Tsewang Norbu, an exemplary staff of the Department of Information and International Relations who left for heavenly abode in the morning of Saturday, November 6, 2010, in Dharamshala.

Dignitaries of the Central Tibetan Administration and its entire staff congregated at the Gangkyi staff hall for an hour-long prayer service for the deceased. Thereafter, all the offices remained closed as a mark of deep condolence and respect to Mr Norbu.

Mr Tsewang Norbu began his service in CTA in 1996 at the Department of Health.

As an under secretary, Mr Tsewang Norbu joined the Translation Section of DIIR in January 2000. He was promoted to the post of deputy secretary in 2003. In October 2010, Mr Norbu was promoted to the post of joint secretary.

Mr Tsewang Norbu was born on 15 March 1973 in Bhutan.

New book release:

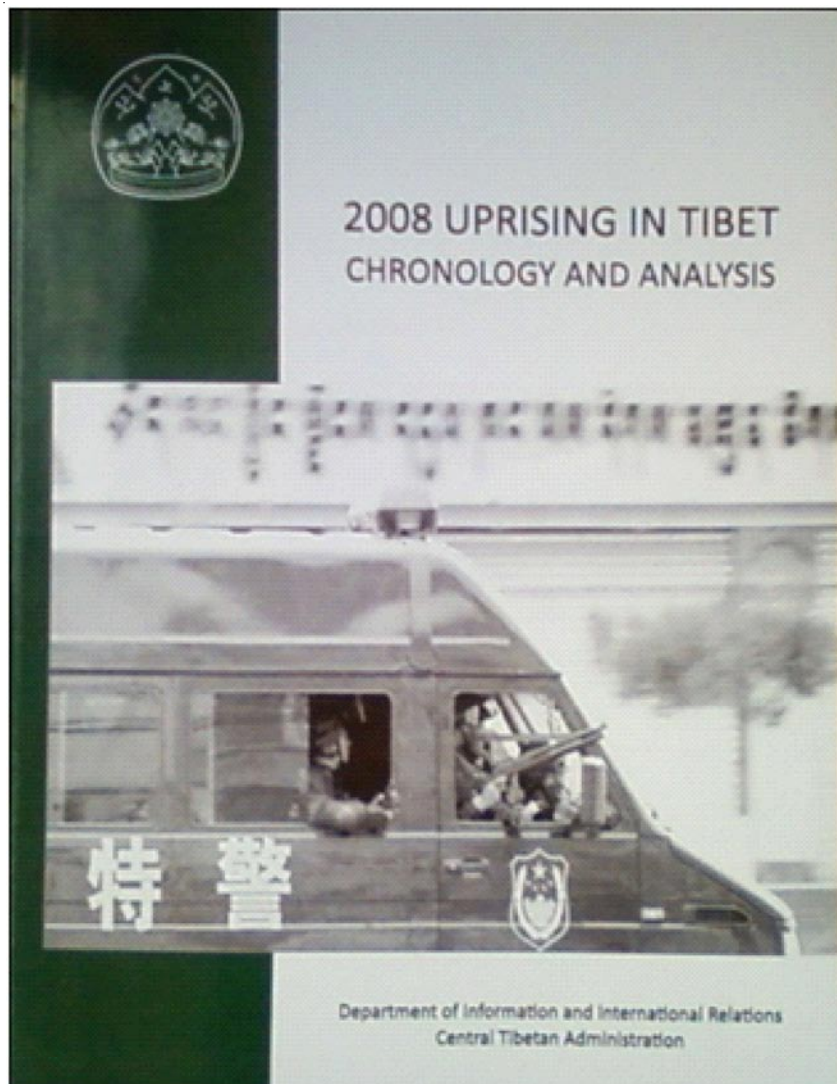
2008 Uprising in Tibet Chronology and Analysis

The Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) of the Central Tibetan Administration has come out with a most comprehensive and detailed report on the 2008 mass uprisings that swept the entire Tibetan plateau.

The book titled, '2008 Uprising in Tibet - Chronology and Analysis', was released at the opening of the sixth International Conference of Tibet Support Groups at Surajkund, Haryana, India by India's former Deputy Prime Minister, Mr L.K. Advani in the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The book has chronicled all known instances of protests, number of people killed, wounded, jailed, sentenced and disappeared during the historic 2008 uprisings with maps showing the areas of protests in the whole of Tibet.

The report offers insightful analysis of the prevalence and reasons behind these protests.



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