



TIBETAN BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CENTRAL TIBETAN ADMINISTRATION

VOLUME 17, ISSUE 6

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2013

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View of the stage during the dialogue between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and scientists in Tokyo, Japan on November 17, 2013. Photo/Office of Tibet Japan



His Holiness the Dalai Lama's visit to Vasant Valley School and the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences in New Delhi, India on December 6, 2013.



Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay met with US Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid at the Senator's office in the U.S. Capitol Building on 14 November 2013



Kalons of CTA with Mr. Roberto Pinto, President Ugo Rossi of President of the Autonomous Province of Trento

“Yesterday, I noticed two girls on crutches begging on the street, their forlorn faces reflecting their desolation. The traffic flows past such people, and it seems no one pays any attention. It's very sad. We really should make efforts to support such people. For example, here in the city I've seen the extravagance with which weddings are celebrated these days. Instead of such lavish displays of wealth, wouldn't it be more beneficial to provide a meal for the poor?” His Holiness said on Care Home for Street Children in Delhi

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Editor

Lobsang Choedak
Email: tibbul@tibet.net

Asst. Editor

Jamphel Shonu

Intern/Reporter

Tenzin Passang

Layout & Design

Tenzin Passang

Circulation Manager

Tenzin Choephel
Email: circulation@tibet.net

Tibetan Bulletin is published by:

Department of Information and
International Relations,

Central Tibetan Administration, Dharamshala- 176 215 H.P. India

Tel: +91-1892-222510 / 222457

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Sikyong Meets US Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid

WASHINGTON, DC – Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay met with US Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid at the Senator's office in the US Capitol Building on 14 November. The two leaders discussed the current situation in Tibet and the next visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Washington. "I have met His Holiness the Dalai Lama several times. He is a remarkable figure. What is happening in Tibet is very sad," said Senator Reid. The Sikyong spoke about his assumption of political leadership of the Tibetan people and the efforts of his Administration to draw attention and resolve the Tibet issue. Representative Kaydor Auktasang and the Senator's Senior Foreign Policy Advisor were also present at the meeting.

With this important meeting and an earlier meeting with Congressman Ed Royce – Chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee, the Sikyong has now met with most of the top US Congressional leaders. In his earlier visits to Washington, he met with House Speaker John Boehner, Leader Nancy Pelosi, and Senator John Kerry then Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Beautiful culture of Tibet showcased at Himalayan Festival

Tibetans showcased their beautiful culture and tradition at a day-long Himalayan festival at Shimla, the capital of northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh, on 23 November.

The festival, jointly organised by Department of Tourism, Himachal State Government and Department of Home of the Central Tibetan Administration, was aimed at promoting friendship and cultural understanding among peoples especially those living in the Himalayan regions.

Dignitaries present on the occasion include Deputy Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, Health Kalon Dr. Tsering-Wangchuk and Director of Tourism Mohan Chauhan.

The Sikyong also met two senior editorial board members of The Wall Street Journal, former Senator Joe Lieberman and Nicholas Kristoff, the Pulitzer Prize winner columnist for The New York Times. "Great chat today with Lobsang Sangay, Tibetan leader, about escalating repression in Tibet. Sad to see the oppression there," Kristoff tweeted after the meeting to his close to 1.5 million followers.

He also met with the Washington bureau chief for The Huffington Post, Maria Otero and Paula Dobriansky – the two former US under Secretaries and Special Coordinators for Tibetan Issues, key staffers of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Congress woman Zoe Lofgren with whom he discussed immigration-related issues.

In all his meetings, the Sikyong has been speaking of CAN, his Administration's commitment to the Middle Way Approach, and requesting more support for Tibet and Tibetans. CAN is the three-phased integrated approach of Consolidation, Action and Negotiations (or dialogue) that serves as a broad strategic policy road map for the current Tibetan Administration in Dharamsala.

Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh said: "Tibet is a land of religion, and is a repository of unique and beautiful culture, language and religion. It is our responsibility to take care of Tibetans living in exile and especially ensure that Tibetan children get good education. We hope and pray to god that Tibetans in exile will return to their homeland with dignity within my lifetime," he said.

Sikyong said: "We express our sincere and heartfelt gratitude to the government and people of Himachal Pradesh for their long-standing support to the Tibetan people."

Songs and dances of Tibet, Bhutan, Ladakh, Sikkim, Kinnaur and Nepal were showcased on the occasion.

Sino-Tibetan talks could take place in Iceland

Denouncing the atrocities perpetrated against Tibetans in Tibet, a group of MPs from all Icelandic political parties except Prime Minister Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson's Progressive Party have submitted a parliamentary resolution encouraging the Chinese government to resume peace talks with His Holiness the Dalai Lama's representatives, ruv.is and Iceland Review Online reported on 29 November.

The resolution urges the Icelandic parliament to highlight concerns over growing violence against and oppression of Tibetans by the Chinese government. It calls on the parliament to condemn the crackdown on peaceful protests in Tibet and insist that the Chinese government not stand in way of the UN sending a delegation to investigate human rights abuses in Tibet. Encouraging the Chinese government to initiate peace talks with the representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the MPs suggest that talks could take place in Iceland.

A statement accompanying the resolution said that many parliaments around the world have passed resolutions regarding the critical situation in Tibet. Twelve Nobel Peace winners have sent letters to the Chinese government encouraging peace talks with the Tibetan people. The MPs believe that the Icelandic parliament should take a stance, particularly given that senior officials of the Chinese government have visited Iceland on a regular basis. "We Icelanders have a moral obligation under our free trade agreement with China, which takes effect in early 2014, to highlight that we will not accept human rights violations of the kind outlined in the statement."

Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, the democratically-elected leader and political successor to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, reiterated commitment to dialogue to find a solution to the issue of Tibet within the framework of the Chinese constitution.

Tibetans mourn passing away of Nelson Mandela

Describing Nelson Mandela as an icon of peace, Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay said his struggle for justice gave hope to humanity in general and particularly to Tibetans, that justice do prevail in the end. "The history of the anti-apartheid movement and the personal story of Mandela gave hope to humanity in general and particularly to Tibetans that justice do prevail in the end," he remarked. Calling Mandela an icon of peace in the world, Dr. Sangay said "the Tibetan movement, as a whole, is inspired by the anti-apartheid movement for being non-violent and peaceful, adding that Mandela's legacy and his struggle for justice will continue."

In a letter to the family of Nelson Mandela, His Holiness the Dalai Lama expressed his deep sadness on learning of the passing away of Nelson Mandela. His Holiness wrote: "In his death the world has lost a great leader, whose steadfast and unflinching determination played a key role in securing peace and reconciliation during South Africa's transition from apartheid rule. Under his leadership South Africa was transformed through peaceful means, in the spirit of reconciliation."

His Holiness said that he will personally miss a dear friend, who he had hoped to meet again and for whom he had great admiration and respect. In his letter, His Holiness continued, "He was a man of courage, principle and unquestionable integrity, a great human being, someone of whom we can truly say, "He lived a meaningful life." I pray for him and offer my heartfelt condolences to you, the members of your family and the entire people of South Africa."

Finally, His Holiness said that although Nelson Mandela had physically departed, his spirit will go on. He expressed that the best tribute we can pay to him is to do whatever we can to contribute to honoring the oneness of humanity and working for peace and reconciliation as he did.

We aspire for your autonomy status

Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, the political leader of the Tibetan people on his arrival in Bolzano met with Dr. Arno Kompatscher, the President designate of South Tyrol on 18 November.

He said he was visiting long time friends in the autonomous provinces of South Tyrol and Trento in northern Italy. The two provinces enjoy legal autonomous status within the political structure of the Italian Republic.

Dr. Kompatscher pledged his continued support. He said he first met His Holiness the Dalai Lama as a student in 1997 and more recently during His Holiness' visit to Bolzano in April 2013.

Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay also visited Trento, the capital of Trentino autonomous province. He met with Mrs. Sara Ferrari, newly appointed Commissioner for International Solidarity of the Province of Trento and Mr. Bruno Doringatti, President of the Provincial Council of Trento.

Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay briefed Mrs. Sara Ferrari about the Telemedicine and drinking water projects financed by the Trento provincial government. He said that he had visited both the project areas in India. The telemedicine connection was inaugurated between

the Tibetan settlement in Mainpat and Telerad RXDX in Whitefield, Bangalore in late May 2013. Tibetans living in Ladakh are benefiting from the drinking water project.

During his meetings in Bolzano and Trento, Dr. Sangay said, "We are advocating to resolve the Tibetan issue through non-violence and dialogue based on the Middle Way Approach."

Sikyong said that the Tibetans are seeking genuine autonomy. The freedom enjoyed by the people of the autonomous region of Bolzano and Trento shows that autonomous status for the Tibetans within the framework of the People's Republic of China is possible.

In responding to questions about the situation in Tibet, Dr. Sangay said that the situation on the ground in Tibet wasn't getting better. He said 122 Tibetans had self-immolated in Tibet, demonstrations against mining and dam construction continue in Tibet.

"I am very concerned about the present situation in Tibet, as we continue to hear very sad news from Tibet," said Mr. Bruno Doringatti, the President of the Provincial Council of Trento. "I wish to strengthen our relationship between Trento and the Tibetan people."

French deputies urge China to end repression in Tibet

"It is now urgent that France intervene with the Chinese government to end the repressive policy towards the Tibetan minority and reaffirm its support for Tibetans in the name respect for human rights and freedom of expression that are the foundation of its foreign policy," said Deputies Jean-Patrick Gille and Noel Mamere said in a motion presented in the National Assembly on 7 December. The two deputies are co-chairs of the Study Group in the French National Assembly.

The motion called for the resumption of dialogue between the Chinese govern-

ment and envoys of the Dalai Lama to promote autonomy for Tibet within the People's Republic of China.

The motion was presented on the same day when the National Assembly received a Chinese parliamentary delegation led by Mr Wu Yingjie, Vice Governor and Deputy Party Secretary of the Standing Committee of the Chinese Communist Party of the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region.

For detailed news visit:
www.tibet.net

Brazilian Parliamentary Delegation visits Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile

A two-member Brazilian Parliamentary delegation visited the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on 4 Dec. and met the Deputy Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel and other members of the Parliament. MPs Walter Feldman and Pastor Eurico are the president and Vice-president of the Brazil Tibet Support Group respectively. During their meeting, Deputy Speaker appraised the visiting MPs about the evolution of Tibetan democracy and the critical situation prevailing inside Tibet, particularly the massive influx of Han Chinese population into Tibet. He also talked about the Chinese government's repressive policies against Tibetan people.

The Deputy Speaker urged that dialogue is the only solution to solve the Tibet issue, referring to an article published by a Hong Kong daily earlier this year, where a top Chinese intellectual has called for an open and meaningful dialogue between His Holiness and the Chinese government to solve the Tibetan problem.

DIIR Secretary Speaks to Chinese Students at Warwick University

Mr. Tashi Phuntsok, the Secretary for the Department of Information & International Relations of the Central Tibetan Administration, delivered a lecture at the University of Warwick in England. He was invited as a guest lecturer for "China in Focus", a seminar organised by the student union of the university.

Secretary Tashi Phuntsok spoke on "The Middle-Way Approach and Tibet's future". He said the Tibetan leadership in exile is firmly committed to find a solution to the issue of Tibet through the Middle-Way Approach in the interest of both Chinese and Tibetan people. He said the Middle-Way Approach, which seeks genuine autonomy for Tibet, is supported by an increasing number of governments, international bodies and general public, including Chinese people, across the world.

BBC Report: Tibetans displaced within region 'amid rampant mining'

A record number of Tibetans have been displaced in their own homeland amid rampant mining and river damming in vacated areas, according to reports. Tibetan leaders and researchers claim that this displacement has been going on over the last few years under China's nature conservation policy. The allegation comes at a time when the figure for Tibetans reaching other countries as refugees has been falling. Chinese authorities did not respond to requests for comment by the BBC.

However, China's government has previously issued strong denials that forced evictions are used in the relocation of Tibetan pastoralists.

'Land grab' "Tibetans who have come from [the region] as refugees have told us that they have seen for themselves how their pasture land is illegally grabbed and then mined for mineral resources," said Tenzin Norbu, who heads the environmental desk at the Central Tibetan Administration office in Dharamashala.

"They told us that Chinese authorities warned [via loudspeaker from a vehicle] that anyone who protested against mining would be seen as protesting against the state because China needs natural resources to develop.

"These people who managed to flee Tibet also said that Chinese officials went to each house and made them sign papers that they would not protest if there were mining activities." Researcher Jigme Norbu, who studies Tibetan nomads with the Central Tibetan Administration, said of the nearly 40 Tibetan refugees who had arrived at the Dalai Lama's office at Dharamashala in 2012, most of them were pastoralists. Tibet's spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, has been in exile since 1959

Pollution threat According to cables released by Wikileaks, the Dalai Lama told the US ambassador to India in 2009 that the focus of international commu-

nity should be on environmental issues in Tibet for the next 5-10 years, rather than the political situation.

"Melting glaciers, deforestation and increasingly polluted water from mining were problems that cannot wait, but the Tibetans could wait five to 10 years for a political solution," he was reported as saying.

And in September, a report in the Tibet Post International, which was founded by exiles, suggested the Chinese military had staged a crackdown on Tibetans who were protesting against gold mining in Yulshul County in eastern Tibet. Although no official records are available, researchers with the Central Tibetan Administration office say the number of mining sites has reached nearly 240 and that most of them are in the pastoral areas that were once home to nomads. They also say many of the mines are near the headwaters of Asia's big rivers like Yangtze, Yellow and Mekong which means their waters could run the risk of being polluted.

Long traditions Some Chinese academics have also expressed reservation on the removal of pastoralists from their native lands. "There is a need for the re-recognition of the uniqueness of traditional pastoralism and its institutional arrangements," wrote Wenjun Li of Peking University's department of environmental management in a paper she co-authored.

"The culture of traditional pastoralism has resulted from a long-term interaction with local dynamic ecosystems and social organisations. A report on the relocation of Tibetan pastoralists by Human Rights Watch (HRW) published in June this year said: "Tibetans coming from both farming and nomadic herding communities who were interviewed said that large numbers of people relocated or re-housed did not do so voluntarily and that they were never consulted or offered alternatives.

CURRENT HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN TIBET

Introduction

Human rights have become a major issue in Tibet since the Chinese invasion. Political repression, cultural assimilation, economic marginalization and environmental destruction are rampant; while arbitrary detention, sentencing, disappearances, interrogation and torture of Tibetans who dare to speak up for their rights have become common. Today, Tibetans inside Tibet are not free to practice their religion. Furthermore, due to strict government measures aimed at annihilating distinct Tibetan cultural identity, the Tibetan language is gradually being phased out as a language of instruction.

Although the Chinese constitution provides for freedom of speech, press, assembly, association, demonstration (Article 35) and religious belief (Article 36), the Chinese authorities have denied these rights to Tibetan. The result of which is a pervasive atmosphere of undeclared martial law in Tibet today.

The worsening human rights situation in Tibet is documented in various global reports, including the annual US Report on Human Rights 2012. The report states that under the banner of maintaining 'social stability' the Chinese authorities have employed various policies which repressed and violated fundamental human rights of Tibetans. The report also highlighted the denial of 10 official requests for diplomatic access to the Tibetans Autonomous Region between May 2011 and December 2012.

Spate of Self-Immolation Protests

In the absence of freedom for conventional forms of protest, Tibetans have resorted to self-immolation. Since 2009, 123 Tibetans have self-immolated. 105 of them have died on the scene or shortly thereafter, whereas the whereabouts and condition of 16 of the surviving self-immolators are unknown. All the self-immolators have called for "freedom in Tibet" and "return of His



A view of some of the many Chinese military convoys arriving in Driru county in Nagchu Prefecture (incorporated into Tibet Autonomous Region) to crackdown on Tibetans.

Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet". The Chinese authorities have responded to these self-immolation protests with further repressive policies; including heightened restrictions in Tibetan inhabited areas, detention and sentencing of friends and relatives of self-immolators and dismissing the self-immolation as an "act of terrorism incited by the 'Dalai Clique'".

To date over 30 Tibetans have been sentenced to varying prison terms over the self-immolation protests.

A 32 year-old Dolma Kyab, husband of fatal self-immolation protestor Kunchok Wangmo, was sentenced to death on 15 August 2013 for allegedly killing his wife. Expressing his concern over the series of self-immolation protests in Tibet, William Hague, British Foreign Secretary, appealed the Beijing government to commute Dolma Kyab's death sentence and conduct "free and fair trial".

In January 2013, Lobsang Kunchok, 40, a monk of Kirti monastery was sentenced to death with two years reprieve and his nephew Lobsang Tsering to 10 years for alleged involvement in self-immolation protest in Ngaba. In a press statement released on 1 February 2013,

Human Rights Watch said "the ongoing prosecution of people linked with self-immolation appears to be about stifling dissent and laying blame on others for this tragedy" and urged China to respond to the grievances and human rights violations that bring tragic form of protest. "Sentencing someone to death for allegedly inciting someone else to commit suicide is neither just nor respectful of the right to life" said Sophie Richardson, China director at Human Rights Watch.

The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay also urged the Chinese authorities to promptly address the longstanding grievances that have led Tibetans to take desperate form of self-immolation protest, in a statement released on 2 November 2012. She said she was disturbed by "continuing allegations of violence against Tibetans seeking to exercise their fundamental human rights of freedom of expression, association and religion," and emphasized the "reports of detentions and disappearances, of excessive use of forces against peaceful demonstration, and curbs on cultural rights of Tibetans." She also urged China to consider 12 outstanding requests by various UN Special Rapporteurs and allow independent and impartial monitors to visit and



Smoke billowing in the background due to teargas shells fired by armed police on local Tibetans in Garchung Village.

assess the actual situation in Tibet.

Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have called upon the Chinese authorities to address the underlying grievances of Tibetans by carrying out a comprehensive review of the human rights situation across the Tibetan plateau. Such an initiative would be undertaken with an aim to end legal and policy restrictions that breach human rights in the region.

Freedom of Religious Belief and Practice

For centuries, Tibetan Buddhism has been a core element of Tibetan culture. The Chinese government has instituted consistent repressive policies against the practice of Tibetan Buddhism with intense regulation and control over religious institutions. This has been demonstrated through “patriotic education”, state propaganda and other political campaigns that are fundamentally opposed to basic tenets of Tibetan Buddhism, including rhetorical attacks on Tibetan religious leaders.

Monks are forced to pledge their allegiance to the Chinese government and denounce His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Possessing photo of His Holiness the Dalai Lama is illegal. Tibetan monasteries and nunneries are required

to hang portraits of Chinese communist leaders and the Chinese national flag under the nine measures or Nine Must-Haves campaign.

Panchen Lama, one of Tibet’s most revered religious leaders, has been missing since May 1995. Three days after the Dalai Lama named six years old Gedun Choekyi Nyima as the 11th reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, the Chinese authorities abducted Gedun Choekyi and his family, and instead, appointed Gyaltzen Norbu as their Panchen Lama in November 1995. He was not seen since then.

Additionally, to tighten control over the religious practice in monasteries, the government controlled Democratic Management Committee (DMCs) has taken over the administrative role of abbots, traditional heads of monastery. Reportedly, the Chinese government has so far established Monastery Management Committees in 1,787 monasteries since November 2011.

In March 2012, Human Rights Watch reported that in a shift from the policy of monastic self-rule, “every monastery in Tibet [will be] under the direct rule of government officials who will be permanently stationed in each religious institution,” indicating the extent to which the Chinese government aims to control

the practice of Tibetan Buddhism.

Freedom of Opinion, Expression and Information

At present, Tibet is virtually closed and foreign journalists are barred from visiting restive regions. All communication channels, including internet and phone lines are inaccessible or being strictly monitored in regions where protests have occurred. A recent news segment featured on 9 October 2012, by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, demonstrates this when their film crew was expelled from a Tibetan region where self-immolation took place.

Any independent information or expression other than the Chinese government viewpoints are restricted and considered “subversive”. Tibetans who speak to foreign reporters, share information regarding protests through mobile phones or e-mail are charged with “leaking state secrets” and are given lengthy prison sentences. An article published on 3 October 2012 in *The New York Times* confirms this by reporting the sentencing of two Tibetan teenagers to lengthy prison terms. They were charged with leaking news of self-immolation protests to “outside contacts”.

The London-based freedom group Index on Censorship has reported a peculiar instance of restriction on online freedom of expression. On 6th July 2012, on the birth anniversary of Tibetan spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the authorities in Karze (Ch: Ganzi) prefecture reportedly disabled text messaging and internet access for two days.

Tibetan writers, bloggers, singers, teachers, documentary filmmakers and environmentalists are especially targeted since the 2008 Beijing Olympics Games, a year during which over 342 protests took place across the Tibetan plateau. Websites of exile Tibetan media organizations cannot be accessed from Tibet. Discussion forums and blogs, such as Sangdhor.com and Rangdrol.net have been blocked since 3 February 2012.

Besides official state media, information received from sources outside Tibet are considered offensive and violators are subject to imprisonment. In a move to clampdown on access to information through various foreign radios and television, the Chinese authorities launched a massive crackdown by eradicating satellite dishes and other equipments used by Tibetans in Malho (Ch: Huangnan), Kanlho (Ch: Gannan) Karze (Ch: Ganzhi) and other Tibetan inhabited areas in eastern Tibet. As reported by Radio Free Asia, the Chinese authorities in Malho (Ch: Huangnan) prefecture have seized and burned hundreds of satellite equipments used by Tibetans to listen to Radio Free Asia and Voice of America programs.

A 22 year- old monk Lobsang Tashi from Kirti monastery, and a 25 year old layman Thubdor, who disappeared for over nine months were sentenced to seven years imprisonment by the Intermediate People's Court in Barkham (Ch: Ma'erkang) on 18 September 2012 for allegedly "leaking news from inside Tibet to outside contacts". Both of them are serving their sentences in a prison in Mianyang city, Sichuan province.

Reporters Without Borders has urged China to respect the rights of the Tibetan people as guaranteed in the Chinese constitution; including freedom of religion, expression and assembly; to allow unfettered access to international media, foreign diplomats and UN independent experts to all Tibetan restive regions; and to provide detailed information on those Tibetan protesters and intellectuals who have been sentenced to imprisonment.

Freedom to Use and Develop the Tibetan Language

Tibetan language plays a crucial role in the preservation of Tibetan culture and distinct Tibetan identity. Schools run privately by Tibetan individuals to teach Tibetans language and culture face severe restrictions. The Chinese authorities often present their concept of bilingual education as a progres-

sive education policy that confirms their commitment to protect minority cultures and languages. However, in Tibet Autonomous Region, bilingual education has generated 'subtractive' bilingualism where Tibetan children are taught only Chinese language, neglecting Tibetan language. As reported by Human Rights in China, an international Chinese NGO, minority children have limited opportunity to become fluent in their own language. Tibetan language is increasingly restricted to homes, reducing scope in public sphere (schools, universities and job market) to master one's native (Tibetan) language. Former Special Rapporteur on Education, Ms Katarina Tomasevski in a mission report on China urged that "an education that would affirm minority rights necessitates full recognition by the majority, of the worth of minority languages and religions in all facets of life. Otherwise, education is seen as assimilationist".

Violation of Rights of Tibetan Nomads

For centuries, Tibetan nomads and herders have lived successfully with their herds following their centuries-old traditions and keeping mobile lifestyle. However, the current forced 'villagization' policy in the name of development undermines the inherent skills of nomads, restricts their mobility, and raises serious concerns about the long-term socio-economic impact of removing nomads from their traditional form of livelihood without adequate planning.

The implementation of 'Restore Grassland Policy' has adversely affected the lives of millions of Tibetan nomads. The forced resettlement of nomadic herders under different name tags such as 'ecological migration' and 'comfortable housing projects' are in violation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the 1992 Convention on Biodiversity, documents ratified by People's Republic of China.

Professor Olivier De Schutter, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to

Food, had visited China in December 2010. He raised strong concern about the resettlement policy after physically witnessing the condition of newly settled drogpas (Tib: nomads) and herders in concrete camps. On 6 March 2012, he reiterated deep concern about displaced nomads living in the "new socialist villages" at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva.

Mr. Schutter said that "the resettlement policies were failing because since March 2011, 25 Tibetans have self-immolated in protest against the policies that are implemented in this region. He said 18 of the 25 who burned themselves were actually herders forcibly resettled in the new socialist villages. This I have to say is not compatible with the idea that these would be I quote 'very popular polices'".

Moreover, Tibetan people have no say against the government hydropower projects that are displacing them from their ancestral lands. Those who are worst affected by such displacements are either illiterate or live under a "climate of fear". People don't raise their voice out of fear; those who do are often convicted of political motivation.

Conclusion

Human rights situation in Tibet is deteriorating and requires urgent international intervention. The series of self-immolation in Tibet sends an unequivocal message to China to re-assess its Tibet policy and fulfill Tibetan aspiration and call for greater freedom.

The Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) based in Dharamshala (India) calls upon the international community to urge the People's Republic of China to immediately stop the ongoing "patriotic re-education" and "strike hard" campaigns in monasteries and nunneries; allow free and unrestricted access to Tibet by international media, journalists, observers, UN mandate holders and respect the rights of Tibetans to live in dignity, and address their underlying grievances through dialogue-the only viable path towards a long-term sustainable solution to the current situation.

Tibet Issue Raised in Australian Senate on Rights Day

Raising the issue of Tibet in the Senate on World Human Rights Day on 10 December, Australian lawmaker from Tasmania, Lisa Singh, urged the international community to commit to act on behalf of Tibetans suffering human rights violations under the Chinese rule.

Below are excerpts from Senator Lisa Singh's statement:

My commitment and support for human rights from work and activities before becoming a senator and my time in this place have continued my resolve to stand up for a just and humane world free of discrimination and for equality. One example of that comes from my involvement with the Australia Tibet Council.

I had the privilege last year of travelling to Dharamshala in India, which is the exiled capital of Tibet. This experience gave me an undeniable insight into the desperate plight of Tibetans and to understand more fully the human rights abuses taking place in our global community. I had the pleasure this evening of joining some of the Tibetan community here in Australia in Parliament House to recognise the struggles that continue for their families and friends living in Tibet.

It was on 22 October 2013 that the UN Human Rights Council reviewed China's human rights record as part of their universal periodic review. This was the second review for China and it allowed for a review of the recommendations and pledges made by China during the 2009 session as well as encompassing a review of the overall human rights record of China. Sadly, from all reports the overall human rights situation in China, particularly in Tibet and also against the Uygur people, has continued to deteriorate over the last four years. I take this opportunity to highlight the important region of Xinjiang in China where the native Uygurs continue to fight religious intolerance and discrimination.



Lisa Singh (R) joined with the local Tibetan community and supporters for Tibetan people on 10 March 2013 to mark the anniversary of the 1959 Tibetan National Uprising.

Labelled as terrorists, their plight has become increasingly difficult. Repressive policies and the continuous suppression of fundamental human rights are causing immense suffering. Tibetans have peacefully struggled and held hope of obtaining freedom of religion, freedom to celebrate their culture and language, and freedom of expression. Since China's first UPR in February 2009, Tibet witnessed its very first self-immolation by a young 20-year-old monk by the name of Tapey.

This act of desperation was Tibet's first in its 60-year continuous suppression of human rights. Tapey should never have lost his life. He should never have had to resort to such an act. In 2009 the loss of his life was already one too many, and since that time there have been many more. I wish I could report that his life was the only one taken by self-immolation, but they have continued to increase since 2009 and a confounding 122 cases have been confirmed to date. This is no small number and it clearly shows the desperation and repression of those in Tibet. In what is another constraint to human rights, recent reports confirm friends and relatives of self-immolators are now being subject to sen-

tencing by Chinese authorities for alleged association with the self-immolators.

Tibet's spiritual leader, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, has travelled the globe seeking compassion and peaceful solutions for his country in exile. This year I once again had the privilege to meet His Holiness here in Australia. His struggle for liberation of Tibet has always strongly opposed the use of violence. His Holiness understands the power of universal responsibility for all things and through his leadership he has actively pursued peaceful solutions to human rights abuses.

Today is the 24th anniversary of the conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness. In 1989 the Norwegian Nobel Committee declared His Holiness worthy of this prestigious prize. I believe, and I am sure many will agree, that his leadership through non-violent action and spiritual guidance to the Tibetan people is most commendable and worthy of global recognition.

During his acceptance speech the Dalai Lama spoke of cultivating a universal responsibility and said: I believe all suffering is caused by ignorance. People inflict pain on others in the selfish pursuit of their happiness or satisfaction. Yet true happiness comes from a sense of brotherhood and sisterhood. We need to cultivate a universal responsibility for one another and the planet we share.

These words are valuable and worth reflecting on, particularly today as we mark Human Rights Day and celebrate the anniversary of the establishment of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Today as we acknowledge Human Rights Day we should acknowledge the ongoing struggle of those living in Tibet. We should not only acknowledge but also commit to act on their behalf.

Lithuanians remember Tibetan freedom struggle

Commemorating the World Human Rights Day on 10 December, at the Tibet Square Park in Lithuania's capital Vilnius was turned into a symbolic cemetery to remember Tibetans' painful struggle for freedom and keep alive their culture and identity. Rows of placards were placed in the park bearing the name, age of all those Tibetans who have sacrificed their lives by setting themselves on fire.

One of the initiators of the campaign, Robert Mažeika, a spokesman for Tibet Support Group underscored the importance of constantly putting the spotlight on the issue of Tibet. He said the last few years in Tibet, which witnessed self-immolations protests by 124 Tibetans from February 2009 – December 2013, was one of the most tragic in the history of Tibet. "As we commemorate the International Human Rights Day today, we want to honour the Tibetans who have sacrificed their lives for a brighter future of Tibet and freedom," he said.

Speaking on the occasion, Dalia Kuodytė, president of the Parliamentary Relations with Tibet Group, noted that the Tibetan freedom struggle and history of Lithuania has a lot in common. "In 1953, the last Lithuanian partisan was killed and the armed resistance for Lithuanian freedom has finished. Some people in today's independent Lithuania bold to say that they died needlessly... Today, we are gathered here to testify that sacrifice of The Great Heroes of Lithuanian history is important to us, and that their victims was not meaningless, as it is not meaningless very painful today's Tibetan victims," said D.Kuodytė.

Vytis Vidūnas, a lecturer of Vilnius University and member of Tibet Support Group, noted that over the past few years, the situation in Tibet has deteriorated very sharply and getting worse every day, it witnessed unremitting acts of self-immolation by young Tibetans on Tibet future.

UN must hold China's human rights record to highest level of scrutiny

As China has been elected to the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) on 12 November, the UN member States must hold China's human rights record to the highest level of scrutiny.

China accepted the principle of 'Universality of Human Rights' initially in its National Human Rights Action Plan 2009-2010 and subsequently in its national report for the Universal Periodic Review 2013 which was held last month.

However, China has failed in implementing the past commitments with regards to human rights, with the political, economic and cultural repression of Tibetans becoming more conspicuous than ever. With the latest self-immolation by a 20-year-old Tibetan monk having taken place in Pema county in Golog prefecture in northeastern Tibet (incorporated into China's Qinghai Province) yesterday, the Tibetans inside Tibet are sending an unequivocal message to the world about the situation on ground in Tibet. The number of self-immolations as a form of political protest has risen to 122.

The Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) is deeply concerned by the alarming ongoing human rights violations perpetrated by China. China has persistently failed to meet its own self-imposed international pledges.

As referred to by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay in November 2012, human rights transgressions include:

>Economic exploitation of Tibetan land, including population transfer of Chinese workers into Tibetan territory.

>'Patriotic Re-education' campaign in Tibetan monasteries, forcing members of the monastic community to espouse unwavering loyalty to the Communist Party and denounce their spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

>Forced resettlement of Tibetan herders without economic, education and health prospects.

China also claimed to have "earnestly fulfilled its obligations under the human rights conventions it has acceded to," while pledging its co-operation with the Human Rights Council. Again, these assurances are in sharp contrast with the State's persistent history of non-cooperation with human rights mechanisms, including:

>Arbitrary detention, ill treatment and torture of Tibetan detainees; acts which violate both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture. There are 988 known political prisoners in Tibet today.

>Failure to facilitate a visit to China by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay.

>Refusal to respond to 12 outstanding requests for official visits to China by UN Special Rapporteurs on various human rights issues.

>Refusal to implement recommendations made by the Committee against Torture, the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racism, and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food.

In view of the above concerns, the Central Tibetan Administration strongly urges UN member States to hold China accountable for its ongoing human rights abuses and prior commitments. It calls for the highest level of China's human rights performance now that it has become a member of the UN Human Rights Council.

For detailed news visit:
www.tibet.net

Canada urges China to resume dialogue with Tibetans

Canada's Ambassador to China raised concerns on the situation in Tibet during his visit to Tibet, foreign minister John Baird said, underscoring that Canada has consistently called for an end to the prosecution and persecution of people for the practice of their religious beliefs.



John Baird, foreign minister of Canada/File photo/Credit: Alex Wong/Getty Images

Ambassador Guy Saint-Jacques' visit to Tibet from 24-29 September came against the backdrop of a wave of tragic self-immolations by over 121 Tibetans to protest against the Chinese government's policies of political repression, economic marginalization, environmental destruction, cultural assimilation and denial of religious freedom in Tibet.

In February this year, Tibetan political leader Dr Lobsang Sangay urged the Canadian ambassador to visit Tibet to investigate religious repression and causes which are pushing Tibetans to resort to drastic forms of protest, including self-immolations. The Tibetan political leader also testified before the Subcommittee on International Human Rights of the Canadian Parliament on the deteriorating situation in Tibet on 26 February.

Ambassador Saint-Jacques met with provincial and local officials to discuss developments in Tibet, including the human and religious rights situation, during his visit to Lhasa and Shigatse prefecture in the Tibet Autonomous Region.

"Canada's Ambassador to China recently had the opportunity to visit Tibet and raise concerns directly with officials," foreign minister John Baird said during the third Annual John Diefenbaker Defender of Human Rights and Freedom

Award ceremony in Vancouver on 31 Oct. "I certainly know that Canada's 22nd prime minister, Stephen Harper, is absolutely committed to protecting and promoting human rights at home and abroad. Human rights, freedom, democracy and the rule of law are core Canadian values that this government is proud to uphold and celebrate," Mr Baird said.

Amid tragic self-immolations by Tibetans to protest against the Chinese government's continued occupation of Tibet, Canada joined the world governments and parliaments urging the Chinese government to find a lasting solution to the problems in Tibet through dialogue.

"Canada encourages China to give full consideration to the traditions and culture of the Tibetan population in a manner that will help ease tensions. We call on China to lift restrictions on access to the affected areas for the diplomats, media and other observers. We urge China to engage in substantive and meaningful dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives in working toward a peaceful resolution of outstanding issues that is acceptable to both sides,"

Foreign Minister John Baird said last December 2012.

US Ambassador Urges China to Engage in Constructive Dialogue with His Holiness

DHARAMSHALA: In his 2013 International Human Rights Day statement on 10 December, the US Ambassador to China, Mr Gary Locke, urged the Chinese leadership to engage in constructive dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama or his representatives to resolve tensions in Tibet.

"As Ambassador, I have witnessed China's rich diversity first hand. I have also seen cases where heavy-handed policies deny basic freedoms to ethnic and religious minorities, including ethnic Uighurs, Tibetans and Mongolians, undermining the trust that binds diverse societies," he said in a statement posted on the website of the US Embassy in Beijing. "The United States calls on the Chinese government to protect the fundamental freedoms of all its citizens



US Ambassador to China Gary Locke addresses the membership of the American Chamber of Commerce in China and the US-China Business Council at the Westin Chaoyang Hotel on 20 September 2011 in Beijing, China

without discrimination. We also urge China's leaders to engage in constructive dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives, as a means to reduce the tensions," he said.

The ambassador welcomed China's recent decisions to end the re-education through labour system and to strengthen the rule of law. He expressed hopes that China's leaders will soon bring substance to the notion that certain inalienable rights pertain to all citizens.

Three Canadian MPs raised the issue of Tibet in the parliament after they met His Holiness the Dalai Lama's new representative



Conservative MP David Sweet sits with His Holiness the Dalai Lama's new representative for North America, Kaydor Aukatsang, before a meeting about Tibet on Parliament Hill Dec. 4, 2013. (Matthew Little/Epoch Times)

Mr. Irwin Cotler, MP (Liberal Party of Canada), said: "I am pleased to join with other parliamentarians in welcoming Mr. Kaydor Aukatsang to Ottawa today, the new representative to North America of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, our distinguished honorary citizen.

The painful plight of Tibetans, where more than 120 from all sectors of society have self-immolated, is the ultimate cry of protest and witness against the ongoing persecution and repression. Political repression, cultural assimilation, social discrimination, economic marginalisation, environmental destruction and lack of religious freedom are the primary factors driving Tibetans to self-immolation.

Tibetans value democracy, freedom, religious liberty, and the rule of law, while adhering to non-violence in the pursuit of genuine autonomy, pursuant to the Chinese constitution. Regrettably, while Chinese President Xi Jinping

speaks of transparency and the rule of law, the repression of political dissent, the silencing of independent media, and the criminalization of innocent Tibetans intensifies.

These actions shame a superpower that is a trustee of a great Chinese civilization and heritage. We urge the Chinese authorities to respect that great heritage, respect the rule of law, and see the Dalai Lama as a solution for a just and lasting peace for China and all Tibetans.

Ms. Peggy Nash, MP (New Democratic Party), said: "Mr. Speaker, Tashi Delek. I rise today to welcome to Ottawa the new representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for North America, Kaydor Aukatsang. I would also like to welcome the 17 Tibetans who arrived over the weekend through the Tibetan resettlement project. They are the first of 1,000 Tibetans who will relocate to Canada through this program. Tibetans face religious and cultural oppression in their homeland. In Canada they also

face unacceptable delays in family reunification. In my riding of Parkdale—High Park, I have seen people wait as long as nine years to reunite with loved ones.

This resettlement program shows great promise, but clearly, we do need a fair and more efficient immigration system. Today I hope all members of the House will join me in wishing a heartfelt welcome to Mr. Aukatsang and the participants of the resettlement program. Mr. David Sweet, MP (Conservative Party of Canada), said: "Mr. Speaker, the human rights tragedy in Tibet continues under the watchful eye of the Chinese authorities. Reports out of Tibet are that yet another monk set himself ablaze in November. This sadly brings the total to 122 in Tibet who have self-immolated.

Imagine what it must take to set oneself on fire as a means of protest. The circumstances are clearly getting worse, but we do not hear much about it, because journalists are prevented from reporting from the Tibetan areas in China.

We in the Parliamentary Friends of Tibet continue to shine the international spotlight on the worsening situation. That is why some members of the House heard directly from Mr. Kaydor Aukatsang here on Parliament Hill earlier this afternoon.

Mr. Aukatsang is His Holiness the Dalai Lama's representative in North America and is part of the Central Tibetan Administration, the government in exile. He updated us on the developments and reiterated the Dalai Lama's call for peace and for the Chinese leadership to engage in meaningful dialogue with the Tibetan people. Time is of the essence. The world is watching.

Testimony of Kalon Dicki Chhoyang of the Central Tibetan Administration before the Italian Senate's Extraordinary Commission for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights

Rome - 5 December 2013

President Senator Luigi Manconi, Commission members, I thank you for this opportunity to testify before the Senate's Committee for the Protection of Human Rights on behalf of the Tibetan people.

Tibet's association with Italy dates back to 1716, when Tuscan Jesuit Ippolito Desideri arrived in Lhasa, the capital of Tibet. He was the first European to have successfully studied Tibetan language and culture. This connection endures to this day with Italy providing a second home to Tibetans who have sought political refuge. Many Italian cities and towns including the great City of Rome have also honored His Holiness the Dalai Lama as an honorary citizen.

In expression of support, the Italian Chamber of Deputies unanimously adopted a resolution on 8 February 2009 calling on the People's Republic of China to engage in dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Envoys to resolve the Tibet issue. It also called for an immediate end to repression in Tibet and on the Italian Government to promote a monitoring initiative on human rights violations in Tibet at the United Nations. Similarly, the Italian Chamber of Deputies' Committee for Foreign Affairs passed a resolution on 8 February 2012, reiterating the above recommendations to the Italian government. We thank you for these gestures of solidarity.

Today, I come to you to report on the state of Tibet – the daily struggles of Tibetans inside Tibet trying to maintain their dignity under the iron fist of repression, and the continuing efforts of those of us living in freedom, working to preserve Tibetan culture in exile until we can return home. I am proud to say that the Tibetan spirit is strong. Through the visionary leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for all



Kalon Dicki Chhoyang of the Central Tibetan Administration before the Italian Senate's Extraordinary Commission for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in Rome on 5 December 2013.

these years, our issue remains alive, our hopes remain buoyant. The rule imposed on us by Beijing may be tough, but the Tibetan people are tougher still.

As you know, in 2011, His Holiness the Dalai Lama took a historical decision and devolved his political responsibilities to the elected leadership of the Central Tibetan Administration. This decision was the critical final step in the realization of his vision of a democratic governance institution for the Tibetan people. Further, this achievement sends a clear message to Beijing that leadership of the Tibet freedom movement has been entrusted to a younger generation. China is calculating that the Tibetan cause will fade when the current Dalai Lama passes away. This will not happen. We remain determined to finding a peaceful resolution to the situation in Tibet through the Middle Way Approach which seeks genuine autonomy within the framework of China's constitution. In 1950, when the Chinese People's Liberation Army came to Tibet, they promised Tibetans a 'socialist

paradise.' After more than 60 years of misrule in Tibet, there is no socialism, just colonialism; there is no paradise, only tragedy. News from our homeland is replete with tales of destruction including Tibetan language and environment, disappearances, discrimination, detention, imprisonment, torture and extrajudicial killing. The current number of known political prisoners in Tibet today is estimated to be as high 1,204. This year alone over 254 Tibetans were imprisoned. 22 Tibetans have been sentenced to life imprisonment since 2008.

Political repression, cultural assimilation, economic marginalization and environmental destruction continue in occupied Tibet. The new railway line from Beijing to Lhasa is exporting our natural resources and importing more Chinese migrants. Today, around 70 percent of private-sector firms in Tibet are owned or run by Chinese, and more than 50 percent of government officials are Chinese. Yet, approximately 40 percent of Tibetans with university and

high school degrees are unemployed.

Education -- In matters of education, we are extremely concerned about the substitution of Tibetan with Mandarin as a medium of instruction in Tibet. Language is the most important attribute of a people's identity. Tibetan is the primary means of communication, the language in which our literature, our spiritual texts and historical as well as scientific works are written. The implementation of this new educational policy has resulted in large Tibetan student protests calling for the Chinese government to live by its motto "equality of nationalities" through equality of language.

Religious freedom - Buddhism is a way of life for the Tibetans and is closely linked to our identity. The suppression of freedom of religious belief and practice takes several forms including the Chinese Communist Party running monasteries through so-called "management committees". "Patriotic re-education" sessions during which monks/nuns are forced to denounce His Holiness the Dalai Lama and pledge allegiance to the Party have become the daily routine - this has been one of the key triggers for the wave of self-immolations.

The Tibetan plateau has some of the largest deposits of fresh water outside the two poles. It is the source of many of the Asia's major rivers, including the Brahmaputra, Indus, Sutlej, Salween, Mekong, Yangtze and Yellow River, these rivers flow into China, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Burma, Thailand, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. These river systems and their tributaries sustain the lives of millions of people in the Asian continent. For millennia, the Tibetan people have served as the guardians of the plateau, its rivers and environment. China's policies, however, are creating potential disasters. For one, they are forcibly removing Tibetan nomads, the land's traditional stewards, from the grasslands, while at the same time promoting mining and

deforesting. According to UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Mr. Olivier De Schutter's report dated 20 January 2012, stating Chinese sources, that in the Tibet Autonomous Region, the Chinese government has provided "comfortable housing" for 1.43 million people (300,000 families), as targeted in its 2006-2010 Five-Year Plan, and announced that another 185,500 families (about 880,000 people) are expected to move into new homes by 2013 as part of the continuation of its sedentarization and rehousing of the Tibetan rural population.

The authorities in Qinghai province reported in March 2011 that they had built 46,000 settlements between 2009 and 2010, and planned to build 25,000 more for 134,000 families. A chief aspect of the policy regarding herder communities, and one that upsets many Tibetans is its impact on Tibetan culture. Another concern is that without adequate long-term planning as to how they will subsist after being made to abandon their traditional way of life, the negative social impact in these communities is beginning to be felt with rising incidence of crime and alcoholism.

Once vacated by nomads, Tibetan land is open for exploitation by Chinese companies. Tibet is rich in natural resources, including gold, copper and water (for hydro-electric power). Mining companies and damming operations have replaced farmers in many areas. Tibetans are protesting against the consequences of these environmentally damaging projects which are being implemented without proper local consultation and environmental/social impact assessment. Changes in Tibet's ecology could have negative effects far beyond the plateau. Temperatures are rising faster on the plateau than the global average. Glaciers are melting. Water flows and monsoon patterns are more variable. At the same time, China is undertaking massive dam construction on these major rivers. Additional projects to divert waters to China's drought-ridden areas could have major

consequences for downstream nations like India, Bangladesh, Cambodia and Laos whose livelihood depends on rivers that flow from Tibet.

Another important threat is the massive influx of Han Chinese into the Tibetan areas. The demographic transfer has marginalized and assimilated the Tibetan people in their own homeland. This has not only adversely affected the socio-economic conditions of Tibetan people, but it has also disrupted the fragile ecological balance on the roof of the world.

Self-Immolations - Just 2 days ago, on 3 December, another self-immolation took place in Meruma town in Ngaba, Eastern Tibet. Since February 2009, 123 Tibetans have committed self-immolation in Tibet. Sadly, 105 have died. Such form of political protest is unprecedented in Tibetan history. This number includes Tibetans from all walks of life - men, women, monks, nuns, nomads, farmers and students. They include Tibetans from all regions of Tibet U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo including the capital city of Lhasa. Their universal aspirations are His Holiness the Dalai Lama's return to Tibet and freedom for Tibetan people. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has visited Italy over 25 times since 1973. During these visits, thousands of Italians have met and heard His Holiness the Dalai Lama. But, that right is denied to Tibetans inside Tibet.

The Central Tibetan Administration does not support or encourage self-immolations. His Holiness the Dalai Lama's position has also been clear and consistent on any form of drastic action. He has always appealed to the Tibetans not to resort to such desperate acts. As Buddhists, we consider life sacred, yet in the absence of conventional space for protest, Tibetans are left with few options to send an unequivocal message to the world that Chinese policies in Tibet are clearly failing. The Tibetan Administration feels a moral responsibility to speak on their behalf so that the world may understand their actions. Rather than looking into the root causes be-

The rule imposed on us by Beijing may be tough, but the Tibetan people are tougher still.

hind the self-immolations, the Chinese authorities have criminalized the self-immolators and resorted to the blame game by accusing His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan exile community as instigators. This has gone as far as preventing families of the self-immolators from holding proper traditional funeral rites for the latter.

The Tibetan Administration has invited the Chinese government to come to Dharamsala and visit our offices for any evidence supporting their baseless allegations. In reality, both the blame and solution lies with Beijing. The self-immolations are Tibetan people's protest against misguided policies. Beijing has the power to change the situation on the ground by reviewing its policies in Tibet to reflect the wishes of the people and responding peacefully to civil expression of discontent. Here are a few examples to illustrate the current situation: In the past year, the Ngaba Court sentenced to death, without due process, two Tibetans accused of involvement with a self-immolation incident - Lob-sangKunchok on 31 January 2013 and Dolma Kyab on 15 August 2013.

On 24 June 2012, a 17-year-old girl, Jigme Dolma protested in Kardze county center in Eastern Tibet. She called out for the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, freedom for Tibetans, and Tibetan political prisoners release. The Chinese security forces beat her. She was hospitalized for two months. Then, she was sentenced to three years imprisonment.

On 6 July 2013, the indiscriminate firing upon Tibetans by Chinese security forces with 11 Tibetans being shot upon and 16 beaten for celebrating His Holiness the Dalai Lama's birthday in Tawu, Eastern Tibet.

On 3 September 2013, Dayang a 68-year-old Tibetan man was sentenced to two years and five months imprisonment. He had called for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's return and freedom for Tibetans during a cultural show in Tschu Township in Driru County, Nagchu in Central Tibet. On 28 September

2013, in the run up to the Universal Periodic Review of China at the UN Human Rights Council, the Chinese security forces cracked down heavily on local Tibetans in Mowa Village in Driru County (Central Tibet) refusing to raise the Chinese national flags on their rooftops. The Chinese authorities detained a total of 17 Tibetans.

A few days later, on 6 October 2013, again in Driru County, the Chinese security forces are said to have shot and wounded at least 60 Tibetans who were demanding the release of a villager who had led protests against Chinese orders to hoist the flag. Two days later, the Chinese security forces shot dead four Tibetans. At least 50 were injured on October 8. The stand-off continues to this day.

Middle Way Approach - I would like to conclude today's statement by re-iterating Tibetan people's firm commitment to non-violence and dialogue. We do not view the Chinese nation and people with malice, but with respect. Tibetans with their distinct culture have lived alongside our Chinese brothers and sisters for thousands of years. The Central Tibetan Administration strives for a resolution to the situation inside Tibet through the Middle Way Approach which seeks genuine autonomy within the framework of the Chinese constitution. We have formulated this vision through two documents: the "Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy For the Tibetan People" and "Note on the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People." Both documents were presented to the Chinese government in 2008 and 2010 respectively. T

he documents outlines "11 basic needs" for which Tibetans wish genuine autonomy: 1) Language, 2) Culture, 3) Religion, 4) Education, 5) Environment Protection, 6) Utilisation of Natural Resources, 7) Economic Development and Trade, 8) Public Health, 9) Public Security, 10) Regulation on population migration and 11) Cultural, educational and religious exchanges with other countries. We see in the new Chinese leadership of President Xi Jinping, an

opportunity for countries like Italy, with extensive experience with regional autonomy, to engage with China and share its successful experience.

Tibetans have subscribed to non-violence and democracy for these many decades as a reflection of our deeply-held beliefs and value system. As governments and the international community constantly speak of peaceful conflict resolution, the strength of those convictions is being tested when the moment comes to publicly support steadfast non-violent political movements such as Tibet.

We seek the support from friends like you who believe in freedom, who believe in democracy, that the Chinese government ought to enter into dialogue to solve the issue of Tibet peacefully.

Finally, we request the Italian Senate to recommend to the Italian Government to request the following to the Chinese government to

- Engage in dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Envoys to resolve the Tibet issue on the Middle Way Approach, which seeks genuine autonomy within the framework of the Chinese Constitution.
- Immediate end to repression in Tibet
- Guarantee the use of Tibetan as a medium of instruction in Tibetan areas
- Suspend the forceful settlement of Tibetan nomads

And request the Italian Government to

- Engage with the Chinese government on the issue of regional autonomy

I express once again our appreciation to the members of the Italian Senate who are here today and who have been long-term friends of Tibet and its people. I urge you at this critical time to help us realize the aspirations of the Tibetan people. As we see justice prevail in different parts of the world, so it should be for Tibet with your support.

Thank you

5 December 2013

Statement of the Kashag on the 24th Anniversary of the Conferment of Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama of Tibet

On behalf of the 6 million Tibetans, the Kashag pays its deep reverence and humble respects to His Holiness the Great XIV Dalai Lama of Tibet on this special occasion of the 24th Anniversary of the conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The Kashag also extends its warmest greetings to fellow Tibetans, friends and well-wishers all over the world.

On this day in 1989, His Holiness the Dalai Lama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his consistent resistance to the use of violence in his people's struggle for basic freedoms. The Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness the Dalai Lama catapulted the Tibetan struggle to greater international visibility. His Holiness the Dalai Lama's global stature directly and positively impacted on the image of the Tibetan people and fundamentally strengthened the Tibetan cause. Tibet became synonymous with non-violence and justice.

This day is also observed as World Human Rights Day, to celebrate the proclamation and adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations in 1948 as the common standard to measure the freedoms to which all peoples and nations should live. Unfortunately, even after 65 years of proclamation there is not much for Tibetans to celebrate given the deteriorating human rights condition in Tibet.

China continues to negate the principle of the universality of human rights by violating the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Tibet is still under occupation. It continues to suffer from political repression, economic marginalization, social discrimination, environmental destruction and cultural assimilation. Worst is the mass Chinese migration to Tibet which has turned Tibetans into second-class citizens in their own homeland. Living under such a repressive environment, with no space for conventional methods of protest, Tibetans from all walks of life are forced to take drastic measures to



express their outrage and despair. Just a week ago, Mr. KunchokTsetan, only 30 years old, self-immolated and died. Despite our repeated appeals not to do so, 123 Tibetans have self-immolated in Tibet since 2009. 123 is neither simply a number nor a list of names. They are human beings just like any one of us who will wish to live a complete life, if given a choice. China cannot deny the blatant human rights violations which are the causes for the self-immolations.

Recently in Driru, Nagchu, Tibetans refused to hoist the Chinese national flag. They were shot at and 4 of them were killed. Many were detained. The situation in the area continues to remain tense. Instead of seeing His Holiness the Dalai Lama as the solution, he is labeled an arch enemy. Chen Quanguo, the Party Secretary of the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) threatened to silence His Holiness the Dalai Lama's voice and ban his own people inside Tibet from hearing his message. Similarly, the voice of their own Nobel Peace Prize winner, Liu Xiaobo, is silenced as he is currently imprisoned in China.

The deteriorating human rights situation inside Tibet is being criticized and castigated in the US State Department Human Rights Report, Amnesty In-

ternational Report and Human Rights Watch Report. The Freedom House ranked Tibet among the 'worst of the worst' in civil rights and political liberty in its *Freedom in the World Report 2013*

In the recent United Nation Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review of China, 12 nations including Japan, Australia, Iceland and Canada expressed their concern over China's human rights violations. Among others, New Zealand called on China to resume two-way dialogue to resolve the Tibet issue.

The Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) remains committed to the Middle-Way Approach and reiterates that dialogue is the most realistic approach and the only way to find a mutually beneficial solution to the Tibet issue. The Middle-Way Approach neither seeks separation from the People's Republic of China nor "high degree of autonomy", but Genuine Autonomy for all Tibetan people under a single administration. This is consistent with both the National Regional Autonomy Law and the Constitution of the People's Republic of China. The CTA does not use the term "Greater Tibet." The three traditional provinces of U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo have always been essential parts

of Tibet that covers the entire Tibetan plateau. They share not just the same geography and topography but also culture, language and religion. Division of Tibet into several provinces of China is a clear violation of Chinese laws and of Article 4 of the Constitution which recognizes the right of minority nationalities to practice regional autonomy “in the areas where they live in concentrated communities” and to “set up organ of self government for the exercise of power of autonomy.” 99% Uyghurs live in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and 95% of Zhuangs live in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. Tibetans living in one concentrated community are divided into different provinces with less than 50% in the TAR while the majority is incorporated into neighboring Chinese provinces as Tibetan autonomous prefectures and counties.

Tibet constituting one-fourth of China is not a recent political creation but a natural outcome of Tibetans inhabiting the Tibetan plateau for thousands of years. The fact that Tibet constitutes one-fourth of China should not be a concern for the Chinese government because one-fifth of China is already established as Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and one-eighth as Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. Moreover, Genuine Autonomy for all Tibetans is not geographically specific, but administratively specific, aiming for actual implementation of Chinese laws in the areas to empower Tibetans to become masters of their own affairs.

For all these reasons, the moderation and pragmatism of the Middle-Way Approach has attracted support and recognition among intellectuals, parliamentarians, leaders and individuals, including Chinese scholars, writers and Chinese Buddhists. Since 2011, more than 6 different countries have passed resolutions and motions in support of resumption of dialogue between the envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the new Chinese leadership. More than 16 foreign ministries, spokespersons and individual parliamentarians have urged China to resolve the Tibet

issue. On this occasion, the Kashag would like to thank all these countries and others for supporting our cause. We take this opportunity to thank, above all, the Government and people of India for their generosity and hospitality all these years. Our words of thankfulness cannot fully express our profound feelings of gratitude towards India for its generosity.

We also thank the Tibet Support Groups and individual supporters all over the world for their voluntary and steadfast support for all our endeavors. In his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, His Holiness the Dalai Lama stated, “The prize reaffirms our conviction that with truth, courage and determination as our weapons, Tibet will be liberated.” Furthermore, His Holiness the Dalai Lama on September 22, 2013 reassured all Tibetans by categorically stating that he would live a very long life and see the day when the Tibet issue is resolved through the Middle-Way Approach.

We must all remain united and dedicate ourselves to fulfill the auspicious words of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Tibet’s cause and its struggle for human rights will triumph. The strength and perseverance of the Tibetan people will never diminish. Non-violence and peace are a universal aspiration not only for us, but for all humanity. The success of the Tibetan struggle will be a success of non-violence and peace.

So, our beloved brothers and sisters in Tibet, though your suffering is unbearable and seems endless, the only certainty in life is change. Things never stay the same forever. Though we remain separated by political force, we will never stop working to be reunited with basic freedoms and with His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Tibet.

Finally, the Kashag and Tibetans everywhere wish His Holiness the Dalai Lama continued good health. My all his wishes be fulfilled.

Thank You!
The Kashag
December 10, 2013

Kalons meet leaders in Europe on World Human Rights Day

Five Kalons of the Central Tibetan Administration attended the celebrations with members of the Tibetan communities and supporters in different parts of Europe. Religion and Culture Kalon Pema Chhinjor, Home Kalon Dolma Gyari, Finance Kalon Tsering Dhondup, DIIR Kalon Dicki Chhoyang and Heath Kalon Dr Tsering Wangchuk joined the Tibetan communities and supporters in Belgium, Italy, Paris, the Netherlands and Germany respectively.

On the International Human Rights Day on 10 December, Kalon Dolma Gyari met with Mr Valerio Cattaneo, the president of the Regional Council of Piedmont Region and Mr Gianpiero Leo, the president of the Regional Association for Human Rights and Tibet and other councillors of the assembly. Mr Bruno Mellano and Mrs Rosanna Degiovanni of Radical Party accompanied Kalon Dolma Gyari. During their meeting, President Valerio Cattaneo expressed the solidarity with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people.

Kalon Gyari also met with Mr Silvio Magliano, the Vice-President of the Municipality Council of Torino city. She met President Mrs Gianna Gancia of the Province and Mayor of Cuneo Municipality Mr Federico Borgna. They both expressed support for His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people.

In France, Kalon Tsering Dhondup met Patrick Bloche and Andre Gattolin, members of French Parliament. He underlined the need for a co-ordinated and unified approach among the various French Tibet support groups towards raising the issue of Tibet at national and international forums.

He underscored the importance of the preservation of Tibetan culture and language during his meetings with members of the Tibetan community based in France.

Statement of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on the 24th Anniversary of the Conferment of Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama of Tibet



Today is the 24th anniversary of an outstandingly momentous occasion when His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the supreme protector and guide to all Tibetans in Tibet and in exile; and a champion of peace in this world, received the universally acclaimed Nobel Peace Prize. On this unique day, I, on behalf of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile, offer my greetings and congratulations with the deepest obeisance of body, speech and mind to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. His continuing deeds of unreserved generosity for the benefit of all sentient beings everywhere remain beyond anyone's capacity to repay.

On the World Human Rights Day of 10 December 1989, when His Holiness the Dalai Lama was presented the especially renowned Nobel Peace Prize, all the Tibetan people in general, and, in particular, all people across the world who covet democracy, freedom, and peace exalted him and expressed elation, reverence and admiration for His outstanding deeds. It was therefore a unique day of perfect, joyous occasion apt for such celebrations. His Holiness the Dalai Lama

has ensured the survival and preservation of the fine culture of the religiously inculcated land of Tibet which in turn has its source in the pristine ideals of the unrivalled Buddha Shakyamuni.

By this means, His Holiness has guided the Tibetan people on the path of peace and non-violence in this highly degeneration afflicted world with a great commitment to turn the land of Tibet into a zone of peace. He also embarked on the great and noble deed of striving to resolve the dispute between Tibet and China on the basis of a nobly conceived, mutually beneficial middle way proposal. And on the basis of enhancing the moral ethics, which constitutes the foundation on which rests the aspiration of all living beings who desire to achieve happiness and to avoid suffering, His Holiness has striven to promote environmental protection and religious harmony, to resolve wars and disputes, and so on. For these enormous deeds of unfathomable importance which He has carried out, and continues to carry out, with a sense of universal responsibility for the purposes of helping to

bring peace in this world, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has been greatly praised by all the discerning people everywhere and was honoured with the Nobel Peace Prize. He has undertaken these tasks with a sense of joy for the purposes of ensuring benefits to all sentient beings. Hence, as rightly honoured with recognition as a great champion of world peace, His Holiness continues with untiring efforts across the barriers of time and geography to carry out his secret body, speech, and mind deeds of unfathomable benefits to mankind.

I therefore take this opportunity to offer countless thanks of enormous gratitude to Him. Today is also an important day observed as the World Human Rights Day. Recently, on 22nd October, the human rights situation in China was the subject of the 17th Universal Periodic Review session of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations, which is located in the Swiss city of Geneva. At that time, representatives of a section of the member countries of the council urged China to take meaningful steps to be implemented for the purposes of improving the human rights situation in Tibet. In particular, the representatives of Canada, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, New Zealand, Switzerland, the United States, The United Kingdom, Iceland, Japan, Poland, and Australia made it clear that the human rights situation in Tibet was continuing to worsen considerably and expressed serious concerns over the development.

They made emphatic criticisms over the Chinese government's ongoing disregard for the religious and cultural rights and freedom of speech of the people of Tibet. Besides, they offered specific recommendations on the ways in which the government of China should ensure the protection of the rights of the ethnic minorities, including the Tibetan people, and urged that these be acted upon.

The government of China has thus far nothing positive to show in terms of ac-

accomplishments in the area of human rights. Besides, it is common knowledge everywhere that the government of China continues to implement a policy of an extremely brutal and merciless repression that grossly violates the human rights of the people not only in China itself but also, especially, in the ethnic minority areas such as Tibet.

Nevertheless, in efforts it made recently to rejoin the Human Rights Council of the United Nations, the government of China gave undertakings to implement, all the international human rights instruments and to respect the rights of the ethnic minorities within the People's Republic of China. It was for these assurances that China again became a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council. It is only to be expected, therefore, that China will remain true to its promises. I therefore take this opportunity to ask China to implement its promises and also urge the international community to closely scrutinize China on this issue.

The government of China routinely speaks about the importance of harmony, stability, and so on. Nevertheless, in an article titled "Ensuring the Security of Tibet's Ideological Realm with the Spirit of Daring to Show the Sword," which was published recently on 1st November in an official party journal as well as carried by other Chinese government publicity channels, which was in keeping with his official comments, Mr. Chen Quanguo, the Chinese Communist Party General Secretary of Tibet Autonomous Region, said: "We should thoroughly expose and criticise the Dalai Clique's reactionary scheme of the so-called 'Middle Way', 'Greater Tibet' and 'high degree of autonomy'.

We should educate and guide cadres and ordinary people of various ethnic groups to separate Tibetan Buddhism from the fourteenth Dalai Lama, and separate the fourteenth Dalai lama from the title of the Dalai Lama so that they will consciously make a clear break from the fourteenth Dalai Lama's clique. Their standpoint on

the important political principles like the anti-separatist struggle should be thereby rendered firm and made highly consistent with standpoints of the Central Party Committee. We should try our best to enable the voices and images of the Central Party Committee to be heard and seen in the vast territory of over 1.2 million square kilometres, and prevent voices and images of hostile forces and the fourteenth Dalai Lama's clique from being heard and seen."

However, what he has said in that article and his comments in it have absolutely no historical or factual basis. It is a futile attempt on his part to mislead the ordinary Tibetan people and to widen sense of resentment between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples. Such talks are easily vanquished by the power of truth and are not at all believed or supported by anyone. There is therefore no need for us to make a point-by-point rebuttal of his claims.

As regards the relationship between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Tibetan Buddhism, the connection between him and his Dalai Lama reincarnations, and so on, an atheist government which does not even believe in rebirth has no power to make comments and in any case cannot know how to comment. Every respect and not in keeping with the transformations that have taken place in modern human society.

There is no trace of the moral ethics, nor a slightest whiff of the virtuous traditions and culture of the great ancient Han Chinese people remaining in this government. This represents an enormous loss to the people across the world and, especially, to the entire 1.3 billion people of China today. We have taken to heart the wishes, the well being, and the urgency of the situation in Tibet highlighted by the indomitable courage shown by the people there in protesting against the government of China, displaying selflessness in struggling for the greater Tibetan cause.

Given this urgency, the Tibetan Parliament in Exile has, for the purposes

of ensuring a speedy resolution of the Tibetan issue and, in particular, to address the serious hardship and critical situation being faced by the Tibetans in Tibet, initiated a campaign last year. Keeping in view the local circumstances from place to place, the Tibetan parliament in Exile has carried out that campaign to lobby support for the Tibetan cause through meetings with government leaders and parliaments, as well as with important public figures and with the general public, including in India. This remains a continuing series of campaign actions.

Recently, a delegation of member of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile, led by the Speaker, toured five countries of Europe from 3 to 25 November.

The delegation visited Belgium, France, Holland, Germany and the United Kingdom to especially lobby for the Tibetan cause. And we plan to carry out more such activities for the remaining term of the 15th Tibetan Parliament in Exile. Including the government and people of India, our appeals for support for our just cause from governments, parliaments, and likewise, from the general public have received attention, sympathy, solidarity and high levels of support.

And I take this opportunity to express heartfelt thanks and gratitude to them all. At the same time, I also strongly appeal to them to continue to render even greater support to us in future.

Finally, I pray that His Holiness the Dalai Lama continue live for a hundred aeons, that all His wishes be fulfilled with spontaneity, that the just cause of Tibet prevails with utmost urgency so that the Tibetans in Tibet and in exile be happily reunited.

The Tibetan Parliament in Exile

10 December 2013

For detailed news visit:
www.tibet.net

Desperation in Tibet

[The New York Times]
By the Editorial Board
29 November 2013

On Nov. 11, Tsering Gyal, a 20-year-old Tibetan Buddhist monk, set himself on fire in China's Qinghai Province. Mr. Gyal's death brings the number of Tibetans who have self-immolated since 2009 to 123. Letters some have left and eyewitness accounts of dying words leave no doubt about the cause of these horrible deaths: anguish over Chinese repression.

Tibet has suffered spasms of violence at different points in its history since China took over in 1950 and the Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhists, fled the region in 1959. But the current wave of self-immolations is a new and tragic trend. Many Tibetans feel forcibly estranged from their language, culture and religion by repressive Chinese policies that have intensified since a wave of protests engulfed the region in 2008. These policies include replacing the Tibetan language with Chinese as the language of instruction in schools; sending some 21,000 Chinese party officials into Tibetan monasteries to keep an eye on monks; forcing monks to denounce the Dalai Lama; banning the display of the Dalai Lama's photograph; having a heavy armed police presence in Tibetan towns, villages and around monasteries; closing monasteries; and clamping down on demonstrators with arrests and shootings by police officers.

China blames the Dalai Lama for the self-immolations. But the Dalai Lama has condemned them. In fact, many fear that unless preparations begin to ease Tibetans' feelings of estrangement while the 78-year-old Dalai Lama is still alive, Tibetans may resort to more violent forms of protest when his tempering presence is gone.

After President Xi Jinping assumed power last year, there was hope that China might retreat from its hardened stance toward Tibet. The sweeping reforms pledged recently during the Communist Party's plenum meeting

show his willingness to tackle domestic challenges. He should move now to ease some of the most damaging policies on Tibet.

China also should resume negotiations with the Dalai Lama, which broke off in 2010. Without these steps, the Tibet Autonomous Region and the neighboring provinces of Sichuan, Qinghai and Gansu, where many Tibetans live, will remain troubled territory, unable to participate fully in China's economic development.

Don't Forget Tibet

By Mary Kissel
[The Wall Street Journal]

China's Communist Party leadership announced a 60-point reform plan last week which moves the country toward a more open and liberalized economy. But if Beijing's treatment of Tibet is any indication, constraints on political freedoms won't be loosened anytime soon.

Exiled Prime Minister Lobsang Sangay visited The Journal's offices recently to discuss the situation, which has worsened since Tibetans rose up to protest the Beijing Olympics in 2008. Since then, Beijing has sent waves of Han Chinese to effectively colonize the region, cracked down on religious expression, detained supporters of the Dalai Lama, and even "installed CCTV cameras" in small villages, Mr. Sangay says.

More ominously, China has also tightened security along its border with Nepal, a mountainous area which has long served as the primary escape route for Tibetans to Nepal, and ultimately, to Dharamsala, India, the home of the Tibetan government-in-exile.

"Before 2008, 3,000 to 5,000 people fled via Nepal annually," Mr. Sangay says, but now it's "less than 1,000." Chinese security officials even pursue Tibetans in Nepal and are training that country's security officials, Mr. Sangay notes. Repatriated Tibetans face interrogation, imprisonment or torture upon

their return.

Tibetans have reacted to the crackdown by self-immolating, a practice Mr. Sangay calls "horrific." Since February 2009, 123 people have died in this manner, with the latest victim a 20-year-old monk named Tsering Gyal, who passed earlier this month. On his deathbed he expressed support for "the unity of Tibetans inside and outside of Tibet, and said it was his hope that Tibetans can remain united and protect and uphold the Tibetan language," Radio Free Asia reports.

"In 2008, the majority of the protesters were monks," Mr. Sangay says, but now protests are "region-wide" and include "lay people" and "students." He emphasizes that Tibetans want autonomy, not secession, and he remains open to dialogue with China's leaders, a process that's been frozen since January 2010. Meanwhile the Dalai Lama continues to call for peaceful protest. Given the circumstances, it's unclear how long Tibetans will heed that advice.

Letter: Dalai Lama's inability to attend Mandela's memorial was shameful

Montreal Gazette

Nelson Mandela's memorial was attended by world leaders representing democratic, socialist and communist values including a couple of dictators. All were welcomed to South Africa with timely visas.

However, Dalai Lama, the only person in the world who best represents Mandela's values of peace and reconciliation, evidently was not extended an invitation for political reasons.

How outrageously shameful! During the memorial service, we heard from a selected few world leaders spewing the same hollow rhetoric. In my opinion, Dalai Lama would have offered the most meaningful eulogy to Mandela.

Did the world already forget Mandela's message?

An exclusive interview with the Dalai Lama

By Amy Kazmin
[Financial Times]

‘I always pray the Chinese leadership should develop more common sense’

I arrive in Dharamsala, the Indian home of Tibet’s exiled spiritual leader the Dalai Lama, groggy after an overnight train journey from New Delhi and a two-hour drive into the Himalayas. The weather is grey and drizzly but the mood is festive as crowds flock to Tsuglagkhang Temple, where the Dalai Lama is giving a three-day public teaching on a 14th-century Buddhist text about the path to enlightenment. Stopping briefly at my hotel, I hear the voice of the world’s most famous Buddhist monk echoing over loudspeakers from the temple nearby. Typically when he speaks to audiences in English, the Dalai Lama is light-hearted, chuckling in the midst of sentences. But today the 78-year-old, who fled to India in 1959, nine years after China’s People’s Liberation Army occupied his homeland, is speaking in his mother tongue. His tones are hushed and serious, though gentle.

Soon, I am among Tibetan refugees, Indians and westerners – the devoted and the curious – thronging towards the temple through an alley strewn with reminders of Tibet’s discontent under Chinese rule. A huge banner – emblazoned “Sacrifice of Life for Tibet” – honours more than 100 Tibetans who have immolated themselves in the past two years in despairing, solitary protests in their repressed homeland, many using their final moments to call for the Dalai Lama’s return.

Photos of each – with their names, ages and dates when they set themselves ablaze – are surrounded with images of flames. Another banner has grisly photos of Tibetans allegedly shot by police in China’s Sichuan province while celebrating the Dalai Lama’s birthday on July 6. A black marble triangle is en-



graved with the words “Tibetan National Martyrs Memorial” and a museum details Chinese human rights abuses.

But politics is not the sole offering. A Tibetan man in a Brazilian football jacket is selling the Dalai Lama’s books, including his *Beyond Religion: Ethics for a Whole World* (2011). A monk from the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives appeals for donations to translate and preserve sacred Buddhist texts. A flier touts “Tibet Power Healing”, promising to “free your mind from stress and worry” in 30 minutes of “Chakra Healing”. A table is laden with lemon tarts, brownies and carrot cake.

Inside the temple, the 14th Dalai Lama, revered by many Tibetans as a living god and a manifestation of the Bodhisat-

tva of Compassion, sits atop an elevated throne, a large golden Buddha behind him and a sea of humanity around him. Maroon-robed monks, shaven-headed nuns, weathered elders fingering prayer beads and families with children in traditional dress, as if for a school pageant, sit cross-legged on the floor. Those without a direct view watch their spiritual leader on flat-screen TVs.

Foreigners, including Americans, Europeans, Koreans and Japanese, round out the crowd of thousands, a reminder of how the Dalai Lama – who went into exile as the virtually unknown leader of an isolated country – has become a global household name, with more than eight million Twitter followers and celebrity acolytes such as the actor Richard Gere. Analysing the “Song on the

Stages of the Path to Enlightenment,” the Tibetan spiritual leader offers a taste of the universalism that has made him a popular prophet for a secular age. He urges avoidance of Buddhism’s 10 specified non-virtuous acts – killing, lying, stealing, divisive talk among them – but then observes that shunning such actions is not exclusively Buddhist.

“If people are Christian, it can be a Christian practice; if they are Muslim, it can be a Muslim practice, and if they are Buddhist, it can be a Buddhist practice,” he says. “I respect other traditions for the help they bring their followers.” At noon, he ends the day’s session, apologising, “I feel exhausted if I teach too long.” Leaning on two aides, the Dalai Lama follows a monk – who carries a brass bowl of billowing incense – down a flight of stairs to the temple courtyard, where a car waits to ferry him to his adjoining residence. He blesses a few devotees and eases into the car. Then, the vehicle pulls away, and His Holiness is gone.

...

A few days later, I am walking across the temple courtyard, now peopled by vigorously debating monks and children playing under parents’ watchful eyes. I am bound for the Dalai Lama’s home, hoping to talk to the Nobel Peace Prize-winner not about spirituality but something more temporal – the plight of China’s restive Tibetan population, and its prospects for greater religious and political freedom under Xi Jinping, China’s new leader.

A security clampdown across Tibet has prevented a replay of the mass protests that swept the Tibetan plateau in March 2008. But the recent wave of self-immolation hints at despair below the surface of apparent Tibetan quiescence. Communist authorities swiftly remove all traces of these suicides – and those disseminating information about them face harsh punishment. But the immolations have caught global attention and appear to be rattling Beijing’s leaders.

In June, Jin Wei, an ethnic minorities scholar at the elite Central Party School, urged Beijing to take a “creative” new

approach to Tibet, and talk with the Dalai Lama, normally reviled by Communist authorities as a “jackal in monk’s clothing”.

Her groundbreaking appeal was published in a Hong Kong magazine, suggesting high-level backing. But a leading Politburo member has subsequently sought to squelch speculation of a change in tack, vowing to deepen the crackdown on what he calls “the Dalai clique”. More recently, a government white paper endorsed Beijing’s “correct” policies in Tibet, saying Beijing’s approach had brought economic development and political progress to a “backward, primitive state”.

I have been warned the Buddhist cleric may not be keen to answer political questions. In March 2011, the then 75-year-old declared he was retiring from active politics. Within months, LobsangSangay, a 43-year-old Harvard legal scholar, was installed as the head of Tibet’s exile administration, after an election within the 150,000-strong refugee community.

But Tenzin Gyatso cannot so easily cast off his political role. A farmer’s son, he was recognised as the 14th incarnation of the Dalai Lama at just two years old, swept off to study Buddhist philosophy and enthroned as Tibet’s spiritual and temporal leader at the age of 15. Today, he remains the living embodiment of Tibetan aspirations for dignity, and cultural and religious freedom – a role no elected official can easily fill. Beijing’s blustering rhetoric against him only reinforces that sense of where true power lies.

...

In the flower-lined drive of his hilltop home, the Dalai Lama, looking sprightly and fresh, is welcoming about 20 visitors in a receiving line, held regularly when he is in Dharamsala. Among the Tibetans are a wheelchair-bound monastery cook; a family immigrating to America; an epileptic teenager; and a couple whose 12-year-old daughter died in an accident. After he goes inside, I am taken to a receiving room, where the Dalai Lama stands at the door. He

warmly takes my hand and, holding it, guides me inside to a sofa, settling into a chair next to me. His two private secretaries – both secularly educated laymen – and a translator are also in attendance. Unsure how to start an interview with a Bodhisattva – a person believed to have attained enlightenment but who postpones nirvana to help others – I begin as I do with most interviews, by presenting my business card.

Tibet’s spiritual leader studies my name, repeats it several times and turns to his aides to ask where I am from. “California,” I say. “But the name is eastern European. Polish. Jewish.” He chuckles. “Chosen people,” he says. “We are chosen people too – by Avalokiteshvara (the Buddha of Compassion) – but we suffer a lot.”

The Dalai Lama has an abiding interest in how Jews maintained their faith and culture over 2,000 years in exile. But my interest is whether the six million ethnic Tibetans on the Tibetan plateau – who are facing intense pressure to assimilate into Chinese society – will see their suffering ease, or end, soon. I ask how he interprets China’s conflicting signals – calls for change and simultaneous crackdowns.

“Like many other people – confused,” he says, laughing. Then he offers his take on the “eras” of Communist China: Mao’s era of excessive, “unrealistic” ideology; Deng Xiaoping’s introduction of “capitalism to a socialist country”, Jiang Zemin’s shift to allow the Communist party to represent wealthy businessmen and intellectuals, along with the working class; and finally Hu Jintao’s pursuit of a “harmonious society” amid widening social and economic fissures.

“Judging these events, [we see] the same party – totalitarian system – has the ability to act according to new realities,” he concludes. Yet Hu’s quest for a harmonious society “more or less failed”, he says. “The method to promote harmony [was] through tight control and relying on use of force. That is the mistake. Logically, harmony must

come from the heart ... Harmony very much based on trust. As soon as use force, creates fear. Fear and trust cannot go together."

"What do you think?" His Holiness suddenly asks the FT photographer clicking away. "You are listening; therefore, I am asking. This is common sense, isn't it? Even an animal, if you show genuine affection, gradually trust develops ... If you always showing bad face and beating, how can you develop friendship?" So does the Dalai Lama believe China's leaders may be more willing to negotiate with him over conditions in Tibet than in the past?

Beijing has long accused him of covertly seeking independence for about one-quarter of China's land mass, despite his insistence that he only wants autonomy for ethnic Tibetans within China. Hardliners believe Tibetan religiosity, identity and resistance to Beijing will fade once the ageing monk leaves the scene.

"I am optimistic," he says. "Whether they love me or not, the Tibetan problem is there." He laughs. "It's not only the Tibetan problem, but it's the problem of the People's Republic of China. They have to solve this. Using force failed. So they must now carry out a policy to respect Tibetan culture and Tibetan people."

It's a far cry from the Dalai Lama's bleak mood when the FT interviewed him in 2008, after protests had swept Tibet. Then, the Nobel laureate mourned his waning influence over a younger, angrier generation. Today, he seems relaxed and confident, insisting he can convince most Tibetans – even independence advocates – to accept Chinese rule if genuine autonomy is granted.

"I have some moral authority among Tibetans. I can use it to persuade those Tibetans who want to separate," he says. He suggests China's leaders have far greater need of him than he of them. "Talk with Chinese government for my interest? No," he says. "I am just a monk. Major portion of my life is

already gone. Remaining 10, perhaps 15 years, I can manage. I have a lot of friends in Europe, America, Canada." Again, he laughs. "I consider myself a citizen of the world." In reality, the Dalai Lama's world is shrinking, as China uses its economic clout to isolate him. East Asian countries – even those that once received him, such as Buddhist Thailand – are now too terrified of upsetting Beijing to permit him on their soil. Japan is the lone exception. The year-long deep freeze of Beijing's diplomatic relations with the UK after David Cameron's 2012 meeting with the Tibetan leader was a warning to other western governments.

I ask if the international failure to take a stronger stand on Tibet reflects global leaders' moral bankruptcy. "It's a reality," he says. Later he explains, "my main interest is not meeting leaders. If I have some political agenda, then it is important to meet leaders. In most cases, my visits to the west are for promotion of human values and religious harmony."

... The Dalai Lama has another constituency he increasingly wants to reach, one which some critics say is long overdue: China's opinion-makers and the Chinese public. Every week, 10 or 20 Chinese citizens make the arduous journey to Dharamsala to see the Buddhist monk their government so deeply despises. Others snap up his books – many of which have been translated into Chinese – on overseas trips.

"These days, we are meeting with many Chinese – intellectuals, writers, students and retired officials," he says. "I have met thousands in the last few years. I am trying for closer understanding of what we want, what we are thinking. It's very helpful."

If he could return to Tibet, I ask, what would be his priorities there? I hope for a hint of personal nostalgia – or perhaps the first outlines of a policy agenda. The answer reflects his mastery of the Buddhist philosophy of non-attachment. "Nothing special," he says. "Rest of my life, two things – promotion of human

values, and promotion of religious harmony – until my death, I am committed. Regarding Tibet, political side, I have already retired. Preservation of Tibetan culture, I am fully committed. I consider Tibetan culture a culture of peace, non-violence, compassion. It's really worthwhile to preserve."

Coming from a Jewish tradition, I wonder whether the essence of Tibetan Buddhism can be preserved outside Tibet. The Dalai Lama has overseen the re-establishment of major Tibetan monasteries in India, and Tibetan Buddhism has ever more western adherents. Can't the essence of the faith flourish in exile? He is sceptical. "Difficult. For preservation of Tibetan Buddhism – Tibetan Buddhist culture – the main responsibility is on the shoulders of six million Tibetan people."

Most young monks in India's Tibetan monasteries were born in Tibet, not exile. But since the 2008 unrest, China has clamped down on the Tibet border, and just a few hundred Tibetan refugees reach India each year now. Tibetan monasteries are struggling to find novices, and increasingly looking to other Tibetan-influenced Himalayan regions, such as Bhutan and Ladakh. But the Dalai Lama does not see non-Tibetans as filling the void. "Different language. Completely different culture. Not easy," he chuckles.

I turn to Tibet's wave of self-immolations. Beijing has accused the Dalai Lama of instigating the suicides, and his statements walk a fine line: neither encouraging, nor condemning them. I ask if his refusal to appeal to Tibetans to stop the immolations can be construed – as Beijing claims – as tacit endorsement?

... The Dalai Lama seems upset. "If I created this, then I have the right to say, 'No, don't do,'" he says forcefully. "This is their own creation: Tibetan people – inside Tibet. These people, I consider my boss. I am carrying their wish. I am not demanding, 'You should do this, you should not do this' ... The causes of these things are created by

hard-line officials. They have the responsibility. They have to find ways to stop this.”

I wonder if he ever rues going into exile, and whether Tibet’s story might have played out differently if he had stayed with his beleaguered people? “There is one clear example: the Panchen Lama,” he shoots back. “The Panchen Lama remained there. What happened?”

Born in 1938, the 10th Panchen Lama, the second-highest-ranking lama in Tibet’s spiritual hierarchy, originally supported Chinese rule but grew highly critical of its destruction of Tibet’s religious institutions, economy and social fabric. In 1962, aged 24, he presented China’s top leaders a petition detailing Communist mistakes in Tibet. Initially he won concessions but was later purged as an “enemy of the Tibetan people” and spent 14 years in prison and house arrest. After his release, he kept pushing China’s leaders for cultural relaxation and moderate policies in Tibet, until his death in 1989.

“Many messages from Tibet – verbal messages, written messages, some old people, ask me, ‘Please come back, the sooner the better,’” the Dalai Lama says. “But sensible people – writers, students, some retired officials – express that they prefer I should live in a free country. They feel, ‘We have one representative in a free country.’ That is their message.

“Many Chinese, particularly Chinese Buddhists, every week are now coming here. Many ask, ‘Please don’t forget us and please come back.’ I tell them, ‘Up to now, Chinese government considers me as a demon. So if a demon returns at airport, demon may well be put in handcuffs and bring to demon’s palace – prison.’” My allotted time is running out, so I turn to the question of his spiri-



His Holiness visit to Shizuoka, Japan - November 21, 2013

tual successor. In 2011, the Dalai Lama warned of potential political meddling in the search for his reincarnation after his death. But he said he could instead manifest himself as “an emanation” in another body while still alive, and such an emanation would be recognisable through “karma and prayers” or even through his direct blessing. Complex metaphysically, this suggests the Dalai Lama could pick a spiritual successor – almost certainly an adult – in his lifetime, rather than reincarnating in a child born after his death. The monk says he will make a final decision at the age of about 90, a time frame one US-based scholar has likened to “playing poker with death”.

He sees no urgency. “Judging my body, next 10 years are OK. I think, most probably, in that time there will be some change in the Chinese thinking. I always pray the Chinese leadership should develop more common sense. Wider perspective. Holistic thinking.”

If conditions do not improve, does he expect more serious unrest in Tibet? “In my lifetime, I don’t think. I met one Tibetan working for a Chinese office. Very emotionally, he told me, their

generation – age 30 or 40 – often say, ‘Until the Dalai Lama remains we have to follow his path. Once he is no longer there, we have to find various methods.’ I told him, ‘Don’t think that. We are Buddhist. We must follow non-violence.’ In our case, violence is almost like suicide ... In these self-burnings, such people could easily harm others.” He tells of a brawl in which one Tibetan stabbed another but the wounded man refused to retaliate – or even take his assailant’s money for his medical bills. “These are Tibetans – once they are determined, they can truly implement non-violence,” he says. “Clear?”

. . . With that, my time is up. I am presented with a white prayer shawl, and sent back into the streets of Dharamsala. But the next morning, the Dalai Lama’s private secretary calls. His Holiness feels he was not clear about his position on the self-immolations, I am told, and wants to better explain himself. Hours later, I am back in the residence, and the maroon-robed monk strides in.

“One word,” he says, firmly. “Those self-burnings: these people, not drunk. Not family problems ... The overall situation is so tense, so desperate, so they

choose a very sad way ... It is difficult to say, 'You must live and face these unbearable difficulties.' If I have some alternative to offer them, then I [can] say, 'Don't do that. Instead of shortening your life, please live long, and we can do this and this and that.' But [I have] nothing – no alternative. Morally, [it's] very difficult. There is no other choice but to remain silent, and prayer. Clear?"

He rises, and so do I, but he continues speaking. "Historically Tibet was an independent nation," he says. "But we must look forward and according to the reality. It is our own interest to remain within the People's Republic of China. Tibet is backward ... and also wants to modernise ... A number of Tibetans illegally went to America and Canada, not to seek spirituality but to seek dollars. Tibetans also love money. For that reason, remain in People's Republic of China. Plenty of money.

"Our main concern is preservation of Tibetan culture – culture of peace, non-violence, ultimately a culture of love, compassion. That is really relevant in today's world," he says. "Millions of Chinese also need culture of love. Once there is a culture of love, honesty and transparency [will] come. Police and death sentence will not solve these things. Only if things change here," he says, pointing to his heart.

"The very meaning of autonomy is look after your own culture," he says. "Once that is fully implemented, we are very much willing to remain within People's Republic of China ... We Tibetans are historically separate. Doesn't matter. We can live together."

My audience is over. Leaving, I walk past five Chinese men – with short-cropped hair, wearing dark, ill-fitting polyester blazers – waiting to meet the Dalai Lama. I can't help but wonder what they will say to each other, and whether a new era of Tibetans and Chinese living together harmoniously could finally be poised to begin.

Amy Kazmin is the FT's south Asia correspondent.

Schedule of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Note: Below is the public schedule of His Holiness the Dalai Lama both in India as well as abroad. Please note that for many of these events, tickets are required in order to gain entrance. People are requested to contact the organizers directly or visit the websites given below for further information on tickets. In general, most of the events in India are free where as the majority of events abroad require paid tickets. For your information, as a long-standing policy His Holiness the Dalai Lama does not accept any fees for his talks. Where tickets need to be purchased, organizers are requested by our office to charge the minimum entrance fee in order to cover their costs only. Please note that the below dates are subject to change.

January 6: His Holiness will give the keynote address at the Inaugural ceremony of the a 4-day International Conference on Bounds of Ethics in a Globalized World in the morning at Christ University, Bangalore, Karnataka, India

January 7: His Holiness will give the Presidential Address at a program with Mouna Sadhu Sathyananda Maharaj in the afternoon at Hall "E" of Codissa Trade Fair Center, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India

January 10: His Holiness will address a public meeting organized by the Bhandara Indian community in the morning in Bhandara, Maharashtra, India

on February 1: His Holiness will participate in an inter-faith conclave in the afternoon at Rabindra Bhawan organized by the LBS Publications House Inter-Faith Conclave in Guwahati, Assam, India

February 2: Public Talk in Guwahati, Assam, India His Holiness will give the First LBS Founders' Commemorative Lecture on A Human Approach to World Peace and the Individual at Nehru Stadium in the morning.

February 2: His Holiness will inaugurate the Festival of Tibetan Art & Culture in the afternoon at Srimanta Sankaradeva Kalakshetra.

February 4: Teaching in Shillong, Meghalaya, India His Holiness will give a teaching to the Buddhist community in the morning at the Polo Ground.

February 4: Inter-Faith Event in Shillong, Meghalaya, India His Holiness will participate in an inter-faith event in the afternoon at the Polo Ground.

Watch www.tibetonline.tv for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's teachings and programmes, and news on CTA and Tibet.

CTA Response to Chinese Allegation

Party Boss in Tibet Plans to Separate The 14th Dalai Lama From Tibetan Buddhism

By Tsering Wangchuk

Recently, just prior to the Third Plenum, Chen Quanguo, the current Party Secretary of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), published an article in Qiushi (“Seeking Truth”) titled ‘Ensuring the Security of Tibet’s Ideological Realm with the Spirit of Daring to Show the Sword’. He pledges to “thoroughly carry out the educational activities of comparing old Tibet with the New Tibet, instructing people of various ethnic groups to be grateful to the Party, listen to the Party and follow the Party”. Ironically, he is expressing the kind of imperialist mentality that the Communist Party criticizes and claims to fight against. In dealing with Tibetans, he vows to “educate and guide cadres and ordinary people of various ethnic groups to separate Tibetan Buddhism from the fourteenth Dalai Lama, and separate the fourteenth Dalai Lama from the title of Dalai Lama...”.

This statement shows that after 60 years of rule in Tibet, some CCP leaders are yet to understand Tibet’s intrinsic spiritual and cultural aspects. Tibetans believe His Holiness the Dalai Lama is the manifestation of Avalokiteshvara (the Buddha of Compassion). This reverence exceeds any political leverage and is not born out of greatness of the title, but the greatness of the person. It represents the Tibetans’ active participation in serving the sacred duties of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. This act of service is at the center of the Mahayana tradition of Buddhism, which predates the Communist Party in China, as well as the Marxist ideology. During the last few decades, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has been proposing dialogue with the

Chinese communist leaders, in order to find a mutually beneficial solution. Along with the Tibetan people, he has peacefully sought genuine autonomy for Tibet within the scope of the constitution of the People’s Republic of China, while advising against violence that drive other movements to militant struggles worldwide.

However, Chen Quanguo’s article will further antagonize Tibetans in Tibet. This is because his article disregards Tibetan values and imposes his perceived superior ideology. Such leftist opportunism played out in Tibet will derail any lofty proclamation like ‘Chinese Dream’. Chen Quanguo’s hardline pronouncements on Tibet are encouraged by two main reasons. One is the example shown by Hu Jintao who was catapulted from Party Secretary in TAR to the highest position in China after series of violent repression carried inside Tibet in late 80s.

More than often, Party’s hardline mood in Beijing overdrives local leaders into employing repressive means. Last April, the Central Committee of the Communist Party’s General office in China circulated a confidential memo to its Party leaders, now leaked and known as Document 9. The document details “Noteworthy Problems Related to the Current State of the Ideological Sphere” and aims to impose a “unwavering adherence to the principle of the Party’s control of media”.

The document calls on Communist leaders to “persist in correct guidance of public opinion, insisting that the correct political orientation suffuse every domain and process in political engagement, form, substance,

and technology”. It lists seven perils that could unsettle the Communist Party monopoly in China and directs its cadres to engage in an “intense struggle” against constitutional democracy, civil society, “nihilistic” views of history, “universal values,” and the promotion of “the West’s view of media”, among others. Such a hardline tendency will empower provincial leaders to carry out unwarranted repression of ethnic groups who have different values and views than the Communist Party. For instance, in Tawu (Ch. Daofu), Yulshul (Ch. Yushu) in eastern Tibet and Driru (Ch. Biru) under TAR earlier this year, local People’s Armed Police had their hands free to violently suppress Tibetans without slightest provocation. This was obviously encouraged by the mood in Beijing.

Chinese leaders in Beijing should be mindful of the implications of such policies in Tibet. His Holiness the Dalai Lama is the most authoritative person for Tibetans, with a reconciliatory intent and a path to solve the issue of Tibet. He is constantly guiding Tibetans towards non violence and compassion. Tibetans inside Tibet risk grave punitive actions by the police just in order to procure his portrait. In light of such conducive factors, the failure to reach a peaceful resolution to the Tibetan issue while the 14th Dalai Lama is healthy and active would be a devastating mistake on the part of contemporary Chinese leadership.

Tsering Wangchuk is the Press Officer of Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration. Reach him at: tibet-pressofficer@tibet.net

CTA expresses concern over China's crackdown on Tibetans in Driru

DHARAMSHALA: The Central Tibetan Administration has expressed deep concern over the continuing government crackdown on Tibetans in Driru county in Nagchu prefecture in eastern Tibet (incorporated into the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region) since the Chinese government brutally crushed the protest against its measures forcing Tibetans to undergo patriotic re-education and hoist Chinese flags over their homes ahead of its National Day on 1 October.

A huge number of Chinese officials and security forces have been deployed across the region to enforce the measures, which include forcing Tibetans to swear allegiance to the Chinese Communist Party and denounce their most revered spiritual leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Media reports say thousands of Tibetans have been arbitrarily arrested since protest erupted against the Chinese government's repressive measures, which local Tibetans described similar to those imposed during the Cultural Revolution. The Tibetans in Driru are being subjected to gross human rights abuses such as arbitrary detention, torture, unlawful imprisonment and enforced disappearance, human rights groups say.

The Chinese authorities conduct frequent raid at homes and force Tibetans to undergo 24-hour political indoctrination. A latest report coming out of Tibet say three monks of Tarmoe monastery in Nagshoe Driru county were arrested on 23 November when they on winter holiday in Lhasa. Their whereabouts and well-being remain unknown. The monastery remained shut-down after the deployment of heavy security forces there and some villages in its vicinity. Similarly, security forces have laid siege to some other monasteries like Rabten monastery and Drongna monastery. Eight monks of Rabten monastery, who have traveled to Palyul, Derge, Sershul and Serthar in Karze (incorporated into China's Sichuan Province) for study, have been arrested.

Police firing on Tibetan protesters

The security forces opened fired at peaceful Tibetan protesters who were demanding the release of a fellow Tibetan in Dathang township in Driru county on 6 October. The Tibetans gathered in front of the government office to demand the release of Dorje Draktsel, a Tibetan who was arrested from Nagchu township, apparently for his persistent advocacy of freedom and truth on the issue of Tibet. The police firing left four Tibetans dead and over 60 Tibetans injured.

The Chinese authorities cut off phone and internet lines following the incident. The shooting incident followed the arrest of over 40 Tibetans on 29 September. They were arrested when they protested against the repressive measures in Mowa village in Driru. The arrest drew strong protest from Tibetans in the neighbouring villages of Taklhay, Bahro, Lavog and Kona, who gathered in Mowa village to demand the release of the arrested Tibetans.

The police firing drew condemnation from Amnesty International, a prominent human rights group. "It is outrageous for the police to start firing on a peaceful gathering. This latest incident shows that the Chinese authorities have done nothing to rein in excessive use of force by their security forces or to increase respect for Tibetans' right to freedom of peaceful assembly," Corinna-Barbara Francis, Amnesty International's China Researcher, said in a statement on 9 October.

"Across the Tibetan region the situation remains tense, the Chinese authorities are doing nothing to improve it by continuing to deny Tibetans their most basic human rights. The daily harassment and humiliating treatment have to end," said Francis. The Chinese authorities have targeted Tibetan singers and writers in the crackdown. According to the Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy, a human rights group based

in Dharamsala, two Tibetan singers – Trinley Tsekar, 22 and Gonpo Tenzin, 25 – were arrested by the Chinese police in late November. Trinley Tsekar, a native of Serkhang village in Driru township, was arrested for distributing a DVD that contained songs he had sung on Tibetan identity, culture and language. Sources said Trinley Tsekar was a well-known singer who used to expressed the pain and suffering of Tibetan people through his songs. His family members, including his old mother, wife and two children, are deeply concerned about his well-being and whereabouts.

The other well-known singer, Gonpo Tenzin, a native of Septha Village in Shagchu Town, Diru County, was arbitrarily arrested on unknown charges in Lhasa on 30 November. Friends of the singer suspect that he might have been arrested in connection with his songs that contained lyrics calling for the promotion and propagation of Tibetan culture, literature and language. He released a special album titled "No Losar for Tibet", the title song of which became hugely popular among Tibetans. With the growing repression and relentless self-immolations in Tibet, the title song "No Losar for Tibet" touched a chord among many Tibetans who felt that celebrating Losar (Tibetan New Year) would be inappropriate given the situation inside Tibet, TCHRD reported.

In early November, over 17 Tibetans were arrested for protesting against the arbitrary arrest of Tsultrim Gyaltzen, a writer, and his friend Yougyal, in Tenkhar village near Shamchu town in Driru county.

As part of its ongoing crackdown in enforcing mass line policy, China has sentenced nine Tibetans to varying prison terms. Among those sentenced is Topden, a 30-year-old nomad who writes under the pseudonym Dro Ghang Gah. He was arrested on 28 October and sentenced to five years in prison on 30 November, TCHRD said, quoting sources

as saying that he was imprisoned for allegedly “keeping contacts with Dalai clique and engaging in activities to spilt the nation.” He has written a poem about the Chinese atrocities in Tibet particularly in Nagchu area in 1969 when thousands of Tibetans were starved, imprisoned and killed. The poem contains details of recent crackdown on Tibetans in Driru county including beating and continued detention of 69-year-old Dayang and protest against mining activities.

Two other Tibetans – Tenzin Rangdol, a 30-year-old layman and Kunchok Choephel, a 28-year-old monk – were sentenced to five and six years in prison respectively.

The human rights group said the identities of six others were not immediately known due to extreme government censorship and surveillance in the region.

Chinese government sensitive to political protests in Driru: US Congressional Commission

The US Congressional Executive Commission on China has released a special report on the Chinese government’s crackdown on Tibetan protests in Driru region.

“The scale of security responses to recent events in Driru, however, likely reflects Chinese government and Communist Party sensitivity toward political protests in the county. Driru’s role in the series of Tibetan self-immolations focusing on political and religious issues provides significant context for the series of detentions and protests.

UN Must Hold China Accountable its Human Rights Pledges

In view of the worsening human rights situation in Driru region, the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) based in Dharamsala has called for urgent intervention of the world leaders and human rights bodies to urge the Chinese government to end its crackdown. In October, the CTA office in Geneva has briefed the UN officials about the urgent situation in Driru. Moreover, Kalon Dicki

Chhoyang of the Department of Information & International Relations raised the issue in her testimony before Italian Senate’s Extraordinary Commission for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights in Rome on 5 December.

The deepening crackdown on Tibetans in Driru is a blatant violation of the pledges to “further protection of the rights and interests of minority ethnic groups” that China made to become a member of the UN Human Rights Council. The Central Tibetan Administration appeals to the UN member States to hold China accountable for its ongoing human rights abuses and prior commitments. It calls for the highest level of China’s human rights performance now that it has become a member of the UN Human Rights Council.

Tragedy in Tibet warrants urgent international intervention

As the number Tibetans setting themselves on fire in protest against China’s repressive rule in Tibet rises to 124, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile today said the crisis in Tibet warrants urgent international intervention to press the Chinese government to end repression and address the grievances of Tibetans.

The statement from the Tibetan Parliament came as one more Tibetan set himself on fire and another tortured to death in police custody.

“The hardline and ultra-leftist policies of the Chinese government in Tibet are the sole reasons which have led to self-immolation protest by 124 Tibetans. But instead of listening to their aspirations and change its repressive policies in Tibet, the Chinese government levelled baseless criminal charges against the family members and relatives of the self-immolators,” the Tibetan Parliament in Exile said in a statement.

Tsultrim Gyatso, 44, a well-respected monk of Achok monastery in Sangchu county in Kanlho prefecture (incorporated into China’s Gansu Province), burned himself to death on Thursday to protest against the Chinese govern-

ment’s repressive policies. He left a written note, saying that he is setting himself on fire due to the repressive policies of the Chinese government. He called for the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet, the release of Panchen Lama from prison and the well-being of the six million of Tibetans.

“The Chinese authorities especially target the Tibetan monks who work for the preservation of Tibetan culture and environment. They are immediately arrested and tortured to death,” the Tibetan Parliament said in its statement.

Geshe Ngawang Jamyang, a senior Buddhist master and scholar at Tarmoe monastery in Driru county in Nagchu prefecture, died in police custody. The Chinese authorities handed over his body to his family members on Tuesday (17 December) and warned that those who reveal information to the outside world would face death. His body was cremated at the crematorium of Sera Monastery in Lhasa. The whereabouts of two other monks who were arrested along with him remain unknown.

“One can clearly see that Tibetans are driven to commit self-immolation due to such atrocities perpetrated against them by the Chinese government across Tibet,” the Tibetan Parliament said.

It called on the Chinese government to address the grievances of Tibetans and respect their lives instead of lying and misleading the international community about the real situation in Tibet.

The Chinese authorities should immediately end arrest and torture of innocent family members and relatives of the Tibetan self-immolators and unfair sentence meted out to them, it said.

“We strongly urge the governments, parliaments and other international bodies who respect human rights, freedom and lives of Tibetans to protect human rights in Tibet and press the Chinese government to end its hardline policies in Tibet,” the Tibetan Parliament said.

Tibetan refugees dream for education come true

By Tenzin Passang

Before China brutally crushed the unprecedented peaceful protest by Tibetans across Tibet in 2008, every year, hundreds of young Tibetans embark on a dangerous exodus across the Himalayas to seek the blessings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and get education in India, the home for Tibetan refugees since China completely occupied their homeland in 1959. Those newly arrived children who are in the school going age get admission in regular schools such as Tibetan Children's Village and Homes Foundation. For those who have crossed the school going age, the Central Tibetan Administration has built a special school.

Sherab Gatsel Lobling was established in 1993 to serve the education to newly arrived Tibetan youths aged between 18 and 35. The school, currently administered by the Sambhota Tibetan Schools Society of the Department of Education, offered courses in Tibetan and English languages and maths.

The 14th Kashag restructured the curriculum by introducing orientation and livelihood Training programme. Under the livelihood training programme, skill based courses such as Food Craft, Thanka Painting, Tailoring, Computer software, Tibetan Studies (Higher learning) and Open Schooling leading to class 10 and 12th certificate are introduced.

Serta Tsultrim, a former student of the school, is serving as a member of Tibetan parliament and head of a leading cultural centre in Dharamsala. Sharing his experience of studying in Sherab Gatsel Lobling School, he applauds the service of the school in shaping the lives of newly arrived Tibetans. He says "This institution students to learn English, Tibetan, maths and vocational skills. Majority of them didn't get any opportunity to go to school in Tibet, hence it is a boon to the newly arrived Tibetans to improve their skill and showcase their calibre in both educational and vocational fields."

Dhondup, who came into exile in 2002,



Sikyong and Kalons with food craft students at Sherab Gatsel Lobling

joined Sherab Gatsel Lobling to pursue his dream to get good education. After completing his five-year education, he a B.A in Tibetan studies from the College of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarah. After completing two years of teacher training, he teaches Tibetan language in the school. "Being a Teacher, it's my duty to deliver the flow of knowledge as His Holiness always encourage sharing of knowledge and serving the society as the prime duty of every individual," he says

The students have pure commitment towards studies as they compete with other students in National Institution of open schooling. Norbu Sangpo, a student recently passed class X from NIOS and is now preparing for class XII. "I aim to pursue education to become a journalist," he says.

"The institution facilitates these students in learning English, Tibetan language as well as vocational skills. It provides Spiritual and cultural education to the students for their holistic growth and over all development. Financial support is given to the students who wish to continue higher education. Moreover the vocational training such as Thangka painting, cookery and tailoring are quite standardized, so that the students can be

benefited in the long run to be competent in the mainstream industry," Says Karma Chungdhak, Director of Sambhota Tibetan Schools Society.

The number of Tibetan refugees coming into exile has drastically decreased after the China stepped up restriction in Tibet and Nepalese border in view of the widespread protest since 2008. But Tibetans continue to risk their lives to cross the Himalayas to come into exile.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child held in Geneva from 16 September to 4 October urged China to allow Tibetan children to use and learn their language and culture in the schools. It called on China to eliminate all restrictions, including the closure of the Tibetan schools, that severely restrict the ability of the Tibetan children to learn and use the Tibetan language in schools; and to ensure that all teaching and learning materials for the primary and secondary levels are also available in ethnic minority languages and with culturally sensitive content, as guaranteed by the Chinese constitution.

The school has offered education to over 6,400 students since its inception.

(The writer works as an intern in DIIR in December 2013)

TIBETAN MEDIA

Sheja (Official Tibetan monthly)
Department of Information & International
Relations, Dharamshala-176215, HP, India
Email: sheja_editor@tibet.net
Web: www.bod.asia

Tibetan Freedom (Official Tibetan weekly)
Department of Information & International
Relations, Dharamshala-176215, HP, India
Email: tibefreedom@tibet.net
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Tibet Bulletin (Official Chinese bi-monthly)
Department of Information & International
Relations, Dharamshala-176 215, HP, India
Email: chinadesk@tibet.net
Web: www.xizang-zhiye.org
www.tibetonline.tv

Contacts for the Central Tibetan Administration

INDIA

Department of Information & International
Relations, Central Tibetan Administration,
Gangchen Kyishong, Dharamshala - 176 215
H.P., India Tel: +91-1892-222510/222457
Fax: +91-1892-224957 Email: diir@tibet.net
www.tibet.net

Bureau of H.H. the Dalai Lama, 10-B Ring Road,
Lajpat Nagar IV, New Delhi 110 024, India
Tel:+91-11-26474798, Fax:+91-11-2646-1914
Email: rep.in@tibet.net
www.tibetbureau.in

Chief Representative (South Zone), No. 7,
Sampangiramaiah Garden, Srinivagalu Tank,
Viveknagar Post, Bangalore-560047
Karnataka, India Tel:+91-080-5506842 / 5506843
Fax:+91-080-5506966
Email:chiefrep@bgl.vsnl.net.in

NEPAL

The Office of Tibet, Tibetan Refugee Welfare Office,
Gaden Khangsar, Narayan Gopal Marg-270,
Lazimpat, Ward 2, P.O.Box No. 310,
Kathmandu, Nepal Tel: +977-1-4419903/4420799
Fax: +977-1-4411660 Email: rep.np@tibet.net

UNITED STATES

The Office of Tibet, 241 E. 32nd Street, New York
NY 10016, U.S.A. Tel: +1-212-213-5010,
Fax: +1-212-779-9245
Email: rep.us@tibet.net
www.tibetoffice.org

Liaison Officer for Latin America,

241 E. 32nd Street, New York NY 10016, U.S.A.
Tel: +1-212-213-5010, Fax: +1-212-779-9245
Email: latin@tibet.net
spanish.tibetoffice.org

SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE TO EUROPE

Office of the Special Representative of H.H. the Dalai
Lama, P.O.Box CH-8036 Zurich
Tel:+41-79-349-2448 Fax:+41-43-536-2909
Email: special.eu@tibet.net
www.tibet-europe.com

SWITZERLAND

The Tibet Bureau, Place de la Navigation 10
1201 Geneva, Switzerland Tel: +41-22-7387-940
Fax: +41-22-7387-941 Email: rep.ch@tibet.net
www.tibetoffice.ch

JAPAN

Liaison Office of H.H. the Dalai Lama, Hayama
Building No. 5(5F), 5-11-30 Shinjuku Shinjuku-ku,
Tokyo 160-0022, Japan
Tel: +81-3-3353-4094, Fax: +81-3-3225-8013
E-mail: rep.jp@tibet.net
www.tibethouse.jp

UNITED KINGDOM

The Office of Tibet, 1 Culworth Street, London,
NW8 7AF, U.K. Tel:+44-207-722-5378,
Fax:+44-207-722-0362 Email: rep.uk@tibet.net
www.tibet.com

FRANCE

Bureau Du Tibet, 84 BD Adolphe Pinard, 75014,
Paris, France, Tel:+33-1-46-565-453,
Fax:+33-1-41-170-014,
Email: francebureau@tibet.net

BELGIUM

Bureau du Tibet, 24 Avenue des Arts,
1000 Brussels, Belgium Tel: +32-2-280 4922
Email: rep.be@tibet.net

AUSTRALIA

Tibet Information Office, 8/13 Napier Close,
Deakin, Canberra, ACT 2600, Australia Tel: +61-2-
6285-4046 Fax: +61-2-6282-4301
Email: rep.au@tibet.net
www.tibetoffice.com.au

RUSSIA

Tibet Culture & Information Centre,
Korn # 110, POB # 7, St. Bolshaya Novodmitrovs-
kaya - 14 Moscow 127015, Russia
Tel: +7-495-786-4362 Fax: +7-495-685-11-32
Email: rep.ru@tibet.net
www.savetibet.ru

SOUTH AFRICA

Office of Tibet, P.O. Box. 16812, Lyttelton 0140,
Republic of South Africa. Tel: +27-12-664-1193
Fax: +27-12-664-1194
Email: rep.sa@tibet.net
www.officeoftibet.com

TAIWAN

Religious Foundation of H.H. the Dalai Lama
10th Fl. 4 & 5, No. 189, Sector - 2, Keelung Rd.,
Taipei, Taiwan (ROC)
Tel: +886-2-2736-0366 Fax: +886-2-2377-9163
Email: rep.tw@tibet.net
www.tibet.org.tw



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Quotes of World Leaders and International Community on Urgent Situation in Tibet

“MEPs call on the Chinese authorities to respect the rights of Tibetans in all Chinese provinces and to take proactive steps to resolve the underlying grievances of the Tibetan population. The authorities should cease promoting policies that threaten the Tibetan language, culture, religion, heritage and environment, in contravention of the Chinese constitution and the Chinese law granting autonomy to ethnic minorities,” says the EU’s Urgent Resolution on 27 October 2011

“Calls on the People’s Republic of China to release all persons that have been arbitrarily detained; to cease the intimidation, harassment and detention of peaceful protestors; and to allow unrestricted access to journalists, foreign diplomats, and international organizations to Tibet,” US Senate Resolution on 1 February 2012

“Social stability in Tibet will never be achieved through heavy security measures and suppression of human rights,” she said. “Deep underlying issues need to be addressed, and I call on the Government to seriously consider the recommendations made to it by various international human rights bodies, as well as to avail itself of the expert advice being offered by the UN’s independent experts on human rights,” UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay on 2 November 2012

“President Barack Obama reiterated his strong support for the preservation of the unique religious, cultural, and linguistic traditions of Tibet and the Tibetan people throughout the world. He underscored the importance of the protection of human rights of Tibetans in China. The President commended the Dalai Lama’s commitment to nonviolence and dialogue with China and his pursuit of the “Middle Way” approach,” White House statement on President Obama’s meeting with His Holiness the Dalai Lama on 16 July 2011