



TIBETAN BULLETIN

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His Holiness the Dalai Lama with House Speaker Paul Ryan and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi holding a box with a watch presented to the then ten year old Dalai Lama by President Franklin D Roosevelt during his visit to Capitol Hill in Washington DC, USA on June 14, 2016. Photo/Sonam Zoksang

Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay paying his respects to His Holiness the Dalai Lama at NED's event to honour Tibetan democracy. Photo/Sonam Zoksang



Richard Gere, Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay, Former Speaker and now North American Representative Penpa Tsering with His Holiness the Dalai Lama during his meeting with the US Congressional Leadership on Capitol Hill in Washington DC, USA on June 14, 2016. Photo/Sonam Zoksang

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4th Education Council and Advisory Committee Meeting Held

The fourth Education Council and Advisory Committee meeting began on 28 June at the Kashag secretariat hall. The education council and advisory committee is the chief decision-maker in the education system of the Tibetan schools in exile.

Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay inaugurated the meeting, which was attended by Geshe Lhakdor, Director of Library of Tibetan Works and Archives and the new Chairman of the council, along with Dr Ngawang Rabgyal, Secretary of the Education Department.

In his inaugural address, Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay emphasised the importance placed on education by the Kashag and expressed wholehearted cooperation and assistance of the Kashag towards the council to advance Tibetan education. He also recounted an advice His Holiness the Dalai Lama has made to the Tibetan public in the past. "When it comes to dialogue with the Chinese or garnering worldwide support for the Tibet issue, we are dependent on the other party's response. But regarding the education of the Tibetan people, it is something that we can and have to do it ourselves. Therefore, if we fail in education, it is solely our responsibility," Sikyong said.

Geshe Lhakdor, the new Chairman of the Education Council and Advisory Committee, in his address called for the need to inculcate moral values like warmheartedness and compassion in the education system. He lauded the hard work being put in by Tibetan teachers and school authorities, yet at the same time, urged them to do more to create a conducive learning environment.

The agenda for the two-day meeting include reviewing the resolutions passed in the last meeting, discussion on the assessment report of Basic Education

Policy, inculcating secular ethics in school syllabus, advancement of Tibetan language in Tibetan schools, implementation of English as a second language, and other issues as deemed necessary by the chairman.

The education council and advisory committee is composed of the director of Education Council, traditional and modern academic section head of Department of Education, director of Sambhota schools, education director of TCV and former principals of CST Mundgod Ms Tharlam Dolma, education officer of Tibetan Homes School, education officer of Snow lion foundation and Nepal Gangchen Schools.

Health Department Marks International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

The Department of Health, Central Tibetan Administration marked 'International Day in Support of Victims of Torture' with a play titled 'History Written in Blood' at the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts on Sunday, 26 June. The day is held annually on 26 June to speak out against the crime of torture and to honour and support victims and survivors of torture throughout the world.

The play, enacted by Tibet theater, a Tibetan dramatics association and organised by the torture and substance abuse section of the Health Department, was based on a true-story of a Tibetan, who had suffered torture inflicted upon them by the Chinese authorities. The play aimed to shed light on the tortures perpetrated by Chinese.

Mr Tsewang Ngodup, Additional Secretary at the Department of Health and Mr Dawa Rinchen, Tibetan settlement officer, Dharamshala were the two honoured guests at the play.

In his introductory speech, Mr Tsewang Ngodup explained the significance of marking the day to help restore dignity and rehabilitate the victims of torture. He also spoke about the activities of the

health department of the Central Tibetan Administration.

The United Nations International Day in Support of Victims of Torture – 26 June is held annually on 26 June to speak out against the crime of torture and to honor and support victims and survivors throughout the world. The day was selected by the United Nations General Assembly for two reasons. First, on 26 June 1945, the United Nations Charter was signed during the midst of World War II – the first international instrument obliging UN members to respect and promote human rights. Second, 26 June 1987 was when the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment came into effect.

United Nations Secretary-General Mr Ban Ki-moon has expressed support for and solidarity with the victims of torture and their families throughout the world, and underscored that torture must never be used under any circumstances, including during conflict or when national security is under threat.

"Despite its absolute prohibition under international law, this dehumanizing practice remains pervasive and, most disturbingly, is even gaining acceptance," Mr Ban said in his message on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture.

Education Department Holds Orientation Program for Summer Science Program

A two-day orientation program for Summer Science Teaching Program 2016 was held from 23 June at Nyatri Hall, Gangchen Kyishong, Dharamshala.

This program is the fifth of its kind since its inception in 2012. The orientation program was attended by nine college students of Science Stream though there are altogether 11 college students to participate in the Summer Science Teaching Program from 1 July.

China Criticised at 32nd UNHRC Session

Dr Ngawang Rabgyal, Secretary of Department of Education, being the chief guest for the occasion, addressed the gathering with his keynote speech on the importance of teaching profession pertaining to the current status of overtaking of the CTSA Schools by DoE.

He stressed the importance of moral conduct for one's meaningful and happy life through sincere social service. Highlighting the need to be aware of data based overall Education status of Tibetan community, he urged the participants to be observant of the different issues in schools and report thereby to enable necessary steps by DoE.

The five main resource persons invited for the two-day program were Geshe Lhakdor, Director of LTWA, Mrs. Dolkar Wangmo, Chief Counselor, DoE, Mr. Karma Chungdak, Director STSS, Mr. Gyaltsen, Former Sc. Education Officer, DoE and Mrs. Tenzin Choedon, Officiating Principal, Mewoen Tsuglag Petoen School, Dharmshala. Geshe Lhakdor took a session on Secular Ethics in Education and Salient features of Teacher. This was followed by an activity based session on Learning & Memory and an Interactive session on challenges of science teachers, school conditions and how to cope the challenges by Mr. Gyaltsen. He was accompanied by Mrs. Tenzin Choedon in the interactive session. There are sessions on Class Room Management by Mrs. Dolker Wangmo and Salient features of Basic Education Policy and broader meaning of Education by Mr. Karma Chungdak on the second day of the orientation program. The orientation program is basically targeted to sensitize the participants of their key role in the Summer Science Teaching program – 2016 and prepare them for teaching in various Tibetan Schools from 1 July 2016.

The program is funded by NCA and it will be concluded with collection of feedback from the participants for necessary follow up.

China was criticised severely for its failure to meet the international human rights standard by narrowing space for civil society in recent adoption of foreign NGOs law and national security laws, at the 32nd session of the United Nations Human Rights Council on 22 June.

Mr. Keith Harpar, Ambassador and US Permanent Representative of Human Rights Council while delivering statement says “We are also deeply concerned that China's new Law on the Management of Foreign NGO Activities will further narrow space for civil society and about excessive government controls on religious practices, especially those affecting Tibetan Buddhists, Uighur Muslims, and Christians.

EU has also expressed strong remarks on China's human rights violation saying that “In China, ongoing detention and harassment of human rights defenders, lawyers, journalist, labour rights defenders and their families remains a major concern. The recent adoption of the national security packages including the counter terrorist law further raises serious question about China's respect international human rights obligation.

Germany also expressed remarks aligning itself with statement of the EU saying “Germany remains deeply concern about the ongoing human rights violation throughout China in particularly in Xinjiang and Tibet.. Country's massive economic and social transition, civil society needs more space to operate freely.

Germany urges China to immediately release so imprisoned for peacefully exercising their rights including freedom of expression, freedom of association, freedom of religion and to critically review all laws contradiction country's international human rights obligation including recently adopted security laws.

Switzerland also joined hands with other countries to criticise China on

the human rights situation saying “in China, Switzerland welcome the effort made by the government for economic development and for education people or region where minorities lives.

Switzerland further showed concern about restrictions on exercising rights to freedom of religion, expression and freedom of movement for national minorities particularly Tibetan and Uyghur region.

Switzerland called upon China to guarantee fundamental rights of all individual including members of ethnic human rights minorities.

France expressed serious concern of increase in arrest of several society militants and lawyers including series of forced disappearance abroad and in Hong Kong.

France called upon China for dialogue with local power person to resolve deep underlying causes of tension in Tibet and in Xinjiang.

Czech Republic also stated that in China, the recently adopted laws on foreign NGOs threatens to further erode of civil society space. Czech Republic called on China to release human rights defenders.

Whereas Canada also strongly stated that there remain concern for China's foreign NGOs laws as it does not recognize the intrinsic value of civil society in driving innovation, promoting stability and advancing human rights. Canada called on China to bring its legal framework in compliance with international human rights norms and standard to ensure enabling environment for civil society including women rights organization.

At the session on 23 June, oral statement on Tibet was delivered by Dawa Tsultrim of the Tibet Bureau on behalf of Society for Threatened People (NGO under consultative status with ECOSOC) under Agenda Item 4 General Debate.

Sikyong Inaugurates Research Book on Traditional Tibetan Studies



Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay inaugurating the research book on Traditional Tibetan Studies, with Education Secretary Dr Ngawang Rabgyal and Director of Education Council Mr Tsering Samdup.

Sikyong and Education Kalon Dr Lobsang Sangay inaugurated a research book on Traditional Tibetan Studies, prepared by a PhD. candidate of the Education department's specialisation scheme, Mr Akhor Soepa, at Lhakpa Tsering, Gangchen Kyishong on 22 June.

The other guests at the ceremony were Education Secretary Dr Ngawang Rabgyal, Director of the Education Council Mr Tsering Samdup, Principal of Sherab Gatsel Lobling Ms Tsering Youdon, Vice Principal of Sarah College for Higher Tibetan Studies Mr Passang Tsering, Co-Director of Dolma Ling Nunnery and Institute Ven Lobsang Dechen and teachers from various Tibetan schools.

Sikyong and Education Kalon Dr Lobsang Sangay conveyed laudatory remarks on the research work prepared by Mr Akhor, and also lauded the support and assistance facilitated by Education Council of the department. "His Holiness the Dalai Lama has strongly stressed the need for young Tibetan scholars with specialisation in modern and traditional education and the education department has since initiated scholarship schemes for research and specialisation to young Tibetan students. Therefore, it is a proud moment for the education department to inaugurate the first research book prepared by a non-formal candidate of the specialisation scheme, approved and published by the Department of Education, Central Tibetan Administration."

Sikyong also commented that the research book with a traditional Tibetan content fulfills modern standard of a recognised book and recommended it as an insightful guide for the educators of Tibetan schools in exile.

Director of the Education Council Mr Tsering Samdup in his remarks, said that the 14th Kashag has outlined education as one of its top priorities and provided scholarships for specialisation and research to 44 non-formal research candidates since 2004.

The writer of the research book Mr Akhor Soepa, currently residing in New York, thanked the Department of Education for providing the opportunity and support to pursue the research and encouraged all Tibetan students to pursue the feat of specialisation in modern as well as traditional education.

Committee to Amend Tibetan Electoral Process Formed

As per the resolution passed during the 1st session of the 16th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, a committee composed of one Kalon, three members of the parliament and the chief Election Commissioner has been appointed by the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Tibetan parliament to compile recommendations to initiate reforms in the Tibetan electoral process.

As mandated by the Tibetan parliamentary resolution, the committee is comprised of Kalon Mr Karma Yeshe, Election Commissioner Mr Sonam Choephel Shosur, Tibetan Parliamentarians Mr Pema Jungney, Ven Monlam Tharchin and Mr Gyarik Thar. Kalon Karma Yeshe and Ven Monlam Tharchin has been appointed as the chairman and secretary of the new committee respectively.

The committee has begun its functions and met with Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel and Deputy Speaker Acharya Yeshe Phuntsok on Monday, 20 June to seek the Tibetan parliament's guidance and recommendations.

The parliamentary resolution to initiate

reforms in the Tibetan electoral process was proposed by Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay and Kalon Ven Karma Gelek Yuthok during the 1st session of the 16th Tibetan Parliament. Keeping in view the strong opinions and suggestions from the Tibetan public regarding the incidents that took place during the last election campaign, the resolution to initiate electoral reforms particularly with regard to the election duration, was unanimously passed by the parliament.

International Conference on Tibet Held at Hong Kong

An international conference on the "Situation in Tibet and the Future of Hong Kong" was held at The Foreign Correspondents' Club, Hong Kong on June 19th, 2016. The conference was sponsored by the Tibet Religious Foundation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, 2047 Hong Kong Monitor, and the New School for Democracy.

Answering the call at the "Finding common ground – the International Conference of Sino-Tibetan Friendship Associations 2016" (held April 22-24 in Taipei) for Sino-Tibetan conferences around the world, the participants from Hong Kong along with 2047 Hong Kong Monitor, and the New School for Democracy organized the first event in Hong Kong.

About 40 experts and scholars from Hong Kong and Taiwan, Tibetans and Tibetan movement activists shared their views on religion, human rights, culture, environmental protection and other areas of Hong Kong and Tibet. Hong Kong NGO community, Consulates in Hong Kong and the media were invited.

Edward Chin of the 2047 Hong Kong Monitor and Taiwan parliamentarian Freddy Lim (via Skype) made the opening remarks.

"I learned about the history of Tibet and the Dalai Lama and became a Tibet supporter through music when I was in high school and college." Freddy said, "There

are so many rock bands in the world that support a free Tibet.

“I’ve also been inspired in recent years by Hong Kong pro-democracy movement, inspired by the courage of the young people in Hong Kong. And I hope that the new government in Taiwan as well as the new parliament will be more supportive for those oppressed people.”

Professor Joseph Cheng of the Hong Kong New School for Democracy hosted VIP Speakers session: China Human Rights Lawyers Concerned Group executive committee member John Clancy on “Human rights situation in China and why Hong Kong should be concerned about Tibet”, Tenzin Namdak of the Welfare Society for Tibetans in Taiwan on “the suppression of the Tibetans under the Xi Jinping Administration”, editor in chief of “The Sky Above Tibet” Hui-chuan Lu on “striving for sustaining Tibet”, Taiwan National Chengchi University Professor Lee Yeau-tarn on “adhere to the core values of Taiwan, Hong Kong and Tibetans”, Students for a Free Tibet – Taiwan executive member Cheng Kai-Jung (Karen) on “the history of the democratic Taiwan — a story of a freedom-loving nation”.

In the Q&A session, the questions were centered around “How Tibetans lost their homeland”, “how to learn from the failed experience”, and how to deal with the future of Hong Kong.

The conference highlighted the reality of the situation in Tibet today and the way China’s policies have departed from the terms of the 17 Point Agreement, which was the basis of the “one country, two systems”.

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Finance Kalon Karma Yeshi Inaugurates Photo Exhibition

Kalon Karma Yeshi of the Department of Finance, Central Tibetan Administration on 15 June inaugurated a photo exhibition cum contest at Tibet Museum, organised by In Frame. In Frame is a photography project initiated by Mr Kalsang Jigme, a young Tibetan photographer, to draw the attention of Tibetan youth towards the skill and art of photography. The photo exhibition is open from 15 – 21 June 2016.

In his inaugural remarks, Kalon Karma Yeshi lauded Kalsang Jigme’s effort to highlight the art of photography in the Tibetan community and urged the Tibetan public to support him in his endeavors.

“It is the era of photography. People don’t have time to read long articles like in the past. People prefer photographs and other audiovisual mediums to gain information these days. Therefore, I appreciate this initiative,” he said.

Kalon Karma Yeshi also expressed the importance of following up on the project. “Good beginnings are not enough. It is more important to follow it up to make it really meaningful in the long distance,” he added.

Kalsang Jigme, in his remarks, said that the In Frame project is his small contribution towards the Tibetan community to promote professionalism and to preserve the rich Tibetan culture through the lens of a camera. “Through these exhibitions, we can create more awareness regarding our Tibetan issues to the world,” he said.

He also explained the three goals of his venture: an annual photo exhibition and contest, a photography magazine and a digital picture library containing historical and contemporary images.

Kalsang Jigme is an alumnus of Tibetan Homes Foundation, and studied photography at Pearl Academy, New Delhi.

16th Tibetan Parliament Holds Its First Session

The 16th Tibetan Parliament-in-exile held its first session from 1 - 3 June. The session resolved to maintain unity of the three traditional provinces of Tibet and uphold its cultural values and morality.

In his concluding remarks, Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel lauded the members of the Parliament – new and old – for their wholehearted participation in the discussions and recommendations to improve the administrative functions of the Central Tibetan Administration.

He also gave a brief overview of the proceedings that took place during the 1st session, and strongly appealed everyone to maintain unity and morality, urging the public to refrain from expressing divisive remarks particularly on social media.

The session passed three resolutions of official mourning – for 144th Tibetan self-immolator Sonam Tso, former parliamentarian Mr Gonpo Dorjee and Tibet supporter Mr Marco Panella. The parliament also passed a resolution of solidarity with the sufferings of the Tibetans inside Tibet and expressed admiration for their peaceful resistance to Chinese government’s oppression.

One of the most important functions performed by the 1st session of the 16th Tibetan Parliament was the approval of the Kalons nominated by Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay for his Kashag. As per guidelines enshrined in the Charter for Tibetans in exile, the Tibetan Parliament approved all the Kalons nominated by Sikyong following a majority vote held on the floor of the house.

Another salient feature of the 1st session was the extensive discussions held on Tibetan election-related issues and a resolution to amend the Tibetan electoral rules and regulation in consultation with the public.

Shugden Protester Penalised for Assault on Senior Citizen in US

According to the Tibetan Association of Boston, a US district court based in Boston, Massachusetts, has issued a restraining order and a monthly penalty against a Shugden protester for physically assaulting a senior citizen. The verdict was announced by the Cambridge District Court on 23 May 2016.

Lobsang Gyaltzen aka Dowa Gyakpa, a protester who was part of a Shugden mob, has pleaded guilty in a case of unlawful assault over Mr Ngawang Norbu Sherpa, a senior citizen.

The accused has allegedly assaulted the victim during His Holiness the Dalai Lama's visit to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) on 31 October 2014.

The judge issued a restraining order against the abuser Mr Lobsang Gyaltzen, ordering him to stay a certain distance away from Mr Ngawang Norbu Sherpa, the victim, and also prohibited the abuser from contacting the victim either directly or indirectly through proxies. The judge further ordered the abuser to make an immediate payment of 90 US Dollars to the district attorney and another 50 Dollars every month for one year to District Administration, failing which the abuser could face additional charges.

Tibetans in Amchok Protest Illegal Mining at Sacred Mountain

Over a hundred Tibetans protested a Chinese mining project at a holy mountain in Amchok town, Sangchu county, Kanlho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (incorporated into China's Gansu Province), on 31 May 2016.

In a footage of the protest posted on Youtube, local Tibetans are seen confronting Chinese police at the mining site with banners calling for 'Prevention of mining at Amchok Gong-ngon Lari'.

A day after the protest, on 1 June the

local Chinese authorities deployed heavy armed forces at the holy site, tightened surveillance in the town and imposed severe restrictions on communication to outside world.

Gong-ngon Lari mountain has been regarded as a sacred holy site by the Tibetans in Amchok township for generations. The local Tibetans have expressed concerns over the exploitation of their land, destruction of environment and dismissal of their religious faith.

Chinese government owned mining companies have accelerated extraction of copper, gold and silver in Tibet in the last two decades. The extraction takes place without regard to the local environment and areas of religious significance. Tibet is also rich in other resources including lead, zinc, molybdenum, asbestos, uranium, chromium, lithium and much more.

Local Tibetans have been protesting these mining operations that are being carried out in complete violation of the laws on environmental protection stipulated in the Chinese constitution. However, the protests are often met with intensified surveillance, severe repression and detentions.

TIPA Celebrates 'Unity' on its 57th Founding Anniversary

The Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA), the premier institute of Tibetan dance and theatre, celebrated its 57th founding anniversary with the annual summer festival of Yarkyi, themed 'Unity' on 28 May.

Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay, the democratically re-elected political leader of the Tibetan people, graced the occasion along with other guests including Mr Kargyu Dhondup, the Chief Justice Commissioner, Mr Penpa Tsering, Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament and Mr Gurusharan Singh, Liaison Officer and many others.

After observing a minute's silence in solidarity with the self-immolators in Tibet, Mr Wangdue Tsering, Director of

TIPA gave a brief account of the Institute and its historical milestones.

The chief guest Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay congratulated former and present members of the Tibetan premier institute for their extraordinary achievement. "The Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts has not only been instrumental in preserving Tibetan culture of theatrical arts, it has also become the global representation of Tibetan culture and identity. The unique culture of Tibetan art and opera has been passed from generation to generation in Tibet."

"Therefore, I express my gratitude to all the former and present members of the Institute who has contributed in preservation and promotion of Tibetan dance and culture," he said.

"Artistes in Tibet are braving high risks to challenge China's censorship of Tibetan music and to protect Tibetan culture against their efforts to sinicise Tibetan people and culture. I commend the artistes inside Tibet for their courage and indomitable spirit."

Sikyong further congratulated the participants of Yarkyi 2016. The contest was categorised into one solo performance from the two houses; Gyalu and Ngonpa house, two regional dances each and a play themed 'Unity'. Ngonpa house headed by Lharik Drakpa and Tenzin Jampa won the solo performance and play categories while Gyalu house headed by Tenzin Choenyi won the dance categories. Ngonpa house was the overall winner of the Yarkyi 2016.

Sikyong Condoles Demise of Mr Marco Panella

Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay expressed his profound condolences at the demise of Mr Marco Panella, a long-time Tibet supporter and a close friend of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people.

Mr Panella passed away on 19 May at the age of 86 after a prolonged battle with cancer.

Full Text of Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay's Speech at the Swearing-in Ceremony

Today, on this occasion of my swearing-in for the second term of Sikyong, we are all blessed with the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama gracing the ceremony as the Chief Guest. With many prostrations, I express my eternal gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama for accepting our humble request. His Holiness has assured us of his long and healthy life. The Kashag pledges to strive fully in realizing the aspirations of the Tibetan people in his lifetime.

Similarly, I would also like to thank all Tibetans in exile for giving me the opportunity to serve for a second term. I swear to serve to my fullest capacity with all sincerity. All Tibetans irrespective of provincial, regional or religious biases share the same aspiration. With this spirit of our oneness as brothers and sisters, I hope that Tibetans in and outside Tibet will continue to extend their support and solidarity in my effort.

In the recent election of the Sikyong and Chithue, there have been a series of unfortunate events that went counter to the Tibetan tradition of humility and good conduct. This has greatly saddened and disappointed His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We ceaselessly beg His Holiness the Dalai Lama for his forgiveness. We all firmly pledge not to repeat these misconduct in future. Likewise, I strongly urge all Tibetans to avoid divisive affiliations and stand strong in unity and harmony. Also efforts will be made to reform the rules and regulations related to election in consultations with the Election Commission of the Central Tibetan Administration.

I sincerely appreciate and express my gratitude to my colleagues in the 14th Kashag who had collectively worked with full dedication. Similarly, I also thank all the civil servants who are responsible for daily administrative work of the Central Tibetan Administration.

The coming 15th Kashag will continue the many tasks started by the 14th

Kashag based on the founding principles of Unity, Innovation and Self-reliance. Efforts will be made to introduce new projects wherever and whenever necessary in order to improve political and administrative efficiency.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has recently pointed out the weaknesses in providing welfare and preventive healthcare to poor Tibetans in our exile community. Two committees have been set up to find out the root causes for these setbacks and come up with effective courses of action for the future.

Our society has seen that a small section of Tibetans propitiating Dholgyal, used by outside forces, had misused the name of religion and made baseless allegations against His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The 15th Kashag will not hesitate to confront such behavior.

The Middle Way Policy as envisioned by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and adopted unanimously as a policy by the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile will continue to be the official policy. We are committed to make efforts towards the holding of talks between the envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the representatives of the Chinese government and resolve the issue of Tibet peacefully during His Holiness the Dalai Lama's lifetime.

Supreme sacrifices have been made by Tibetan brothers and sisters for the cause of Tibet. Since 2009, 144 Tibetans had self-immolated. Their sacrifices will not go in vain. I stand in solidarity with and express my sincere appreciation for the patriotic fervour that continues to burn in Tibet in all Tibetan hearts particularly the monastics, the scholars and writers, the teachers and students, the singers, the farmers and the nomads. In order to exercise the right to administer internal affairs and be the masters of our own areas, I urge the youths in Tibet to put maximum efforts in their studies.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has time

and again advised us to hope for the best and prepare for the worst. Therefore, I had proposed the strategy of five-fifty. In the next five years, it is clear that we must put maximum efforts in achieving genuine autonomy for all Tibetans based on the Middle Way Approach. However, in case, we have to continue our struggle for many years, we need to strategize in order to strengthen and sustain our cause for the next 50 years. We have to protect and preserve our unique Tibetan identity and tradition. We need to build self-reliance in the Tibetan world, in both education and economy. Five-Fifty is a strategy for success. In five years we can achieve genuine autonomy or in the next fifty years China will gradually change for the better. Either way we will gain basic freedom.

I deeply thank the Government and people of India for providing generous help and assistance to the Tibetan people during a most critical time. Similarly, I express sincere gratitude to the governments, the parliamentarians, the organisations and the individuals who have stood with Tibet. The issue of Tibet is not only an issue for the six million Tibetans, but a cause that stands for justice and peace. I therefore hope that you will continue your support for the cause of Tibet all the way to its successful resolution.

For our compatriots in Tibet, we are with you and we will meet soon.

Finally, I pray for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the immediate resolution of the issue of Tibet. May all his wishes be fulfilled. Above all, may the day for the union of Tibetans inside and outside Tibet come soon.

SIKYONG
May 27, 2016

Note: This is a translation of the Tibetan statement. Should any discrepancies arise, please treat the Tibetan version as final and authoritative.

Dr Lobsang Sangay Sworn in for a Second Term as Sikyong in Front of His Holiness the Dalai Lama



Sikyong-elect Dr Lobsang Sangay taking the oath of office from Mr Kargyu Dhondup, the Chief Justice Commissioner as His Holiness the Dalai Lama looks on, 27 May 2016.

Dr Lobsang Sangay was sworn-in for a second term as Sikyong in front of His Holiness the Dalai Lama at Tsuglagkhang on 27 May. The ceremony was attended by thousands of Tibetans and Tibet supporters including Shri R K Khriemey, MLA and Advisor to the chief minister of Arunachal Pradesh.

As the ceremony began, Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay prostrated before His Holiness the Dalai Lama and presented a ceremonial Tibetan scarf as a token of gratitude for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's leadership and guidance over the last 50 years.

Several monks then recited a prayer of blessing to inaugurate the auspicious event, followed by serving of traditional Tibetan tea and sweetened rice to the gathering.

Mr Kargyu Dhondup, the Chief Justice Commissioner of the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission, then rose up to administer the oath of office to the Sikyong elect.

As Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay took the oath of office, the public burst out in cheerful applause, followed by congratulatory greetings by the two justice commissioners and the Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament.

Sikyong then delivered his inaugural

speech, pledging to continue the 15th Kashag's tasks based on the 14th Kashag's founding principles of unity, innovation and Self-reliance.

"Today, on this occasion of my swearing-in for the second term of Sikyong, we are all blessed with the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama gracing the ceremony as the Chief Guest. With many prostrations, I express my eternal gratitude to His Holiness the Dalai Lama for accepting our humble request. His Holiness has assured us of his long and healthy life. The Kashag pledges to strive fully in realizing the aspirations of the Tibetan people in his lifetime," Sikyong began.

"Similarly, I would also like to thank all Tibetans in exile for giving me the opportunity to serve for a second term. I swear to serve to my fullest capacity with all sincerity. All Tibetans irrespective of provincial, regional or religious biases share the same aspiration. With this spirit of our oneness as brothers and sisters, I hope that Tibetans in and outside Tibet will continue to extend their support and solidarity in my effort," Sikyong said.

Offering apologies to the moral shortcomings of the people witnessed during the election campaign, Sikyong said: "In the recent election of the Sikyong and Chithue, there have been a series of unfortunate events that went counter to the Tibetan tradition

of humility and good conduct. This has greatly saddened and disappointed His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We ceaselessly beg His Holiness the Dalai Lama for his forgiveness. We all firmly pledge not to repeat these misconduct in future. Likewise, I strongly urge all Tibetans to avoid divisive affiliations and stand strong in unity and harmony."

Sikyong condemned the Dolgyal followers for making baseless allegations against His Holiness the Dalai Lama in the name of religion and expressed the 15th Kashag's commitment to confront these matters.

He also lauded the sacrifices of the self-immolators and the Tibetans inside Tibet, expressing his solidarity and assuring the Central Tibetan Administration's committed efforts to resolve the issue through the Middle Way Approach.

He further outlined a five-fifty strategy for success, explaining that Tibetans can achieve genuine autonomy in the next five years or China will gradually change for the better in the next fifty years.

Sikyong concluded his speech by expressing his gratitude to the state and central government of India for their continued support and His Holiness the Dalai Lama for his blessings and guidance.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, in his keynote address, spoke about the rich cultural and religious traditions of Tibet and the need for a holistic education of Tibetan children.

"Tibet is called the roof of the world. Similarly, the rich Buddhist culture and tradition of Tibet is also one of the best traditions in the world," His Holiness said, explaining that his statement is not borne out of loyalty but through reason.

"Over the years I have met numerous people, including scholars, scientists, politicians and spiritual leaders. In my interaction with these people, I have

come to realise that the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, derived from the Nalanda tradition of India, is among the best, primarily because it is based in scientific analysis and logical study.”

“Many Buddhist traditions trace their root to Nalanda. However, Tibetan Buddhism seems the only one, which contains the purest essence of the tradition. It is truly a universal treasure, which the Tibetan people have preserved for centuries,” His Holiness said.

His Holiness also emphasised the importance of preserving Tibet’s script and linguistic traditions. “The Tibetan language is the only language wherein the pure essence of the Nalanda tradition is preserved. Therefore, it is extremely important to study and preserve it,” His Holiness said.

Speaking on the Tibetan struggle, His Holiness said that the most important aspect of the Tibetan movement should be to fulfill the aspirations of the majority Tibetans who continue to remain inside Tibet. And emphasised that the Tibetan movement should be based solely on the principle of non-violence.

“I have worked wholeheartedly for the Tibetan cause for over 57 years. However, I have devolved my political responsibility to an elected leadership since 2011 but I will continue to work for Tibet’s culture and religion,” His Holiness said.

His Holiness further noted that Tibetans have been relatively successful in exile. “As Sikyong rightly pointed out, with our hard work and the generous assistance of the Indian and other foreign governments and organisations, we Tibetans have reached a stage where we are unique among equals. But it doesn’t mean we can get complacent,” His Holiness said, calling for concerted effort to resolve the Tibet issue.

At the same time, His Holiness lamented the negative campaigns that took place in the lead up to the final Tibetan general elections. “I was pained to see the degradation of morality and the overtones of regional loyalty during

the election campaign. It is very unfortunate,” His Holiness remarked.

“The unity of the three traditional provinces of Tibet is of primary importance. Despite the passage of time, we have preserved our traditions and culture based on this unity of the three provinces for thousands of years. Therefore, we should do away with this warped sense of loyalty to regions and move on as one,” His Holiness said.

“Moreover, we are all followers of the Buddha. We should be embarrassed of what we have done during the election campaign. I don’t blame the majority. However, there are some fringe elements within the community who take pleasure in dividing the society on regional lines,” His Holiness noted, urging the Tibetan leaders, staff, and public to keep unity of Tibetan people in mind.

His Holiness further called for a renewed emphasis on holistic education for Tibetan children. “There are over 1.5 lakh Tibetans in exile. We should not just be satisfied with a successful livelihood. We should focus on a holistic education of our children,” His Holiness said.

“Despite the great heights that modern education has reached, it is still inadequate when it comes to inner values. It is obvious when you see that most criminals and anti-social elements are quite advanced in modern education. Moreover, the prevalence of social ills like corruption, dishonesty are a result of the lack of moral principle in modern education,” His Holiness asserted.

His Holiness then extended his greetings and concluded his address by urging, “If you consider me your friend, please pay attention to what I have said.”

His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s address was followed by a photo opportunity for the media of Sikyong and His Holiness the Dalai Lama together.

The ceremony concluded with a cultural performance by the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts.

Sikyong Proposes Five-Fifty Strategy for Second Term

Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay has proposed a strategy of five-fifty for his second term in office.

The strategy calls for a renewed effort in the Tibetan people’s struggle to seek genuine autonomy in the next five years while strategising to strengthen and sustain the Tibetan movement over the next fifty years.

“His Holiness the Dalai Lama has time and again advised us to hope for the best and prepare for the worst. Therefore, I had proposed this strategy of five-fifty,” Sikyong said in his speech, in front of over two thousand guests and Tibetan public.

“In the next five years, it is clear that we must put maximum efforts in achieving genuine autonomy for all Tibetans based on the Middle Way Approach. However, in case we remain in exile and have to continue our struggle for many years, we need to strategise in order to strengthen and sustain our cause for the next 50 years,” he explained.

“We have to protect and preserve our unique Tibetan identity and tradition. We need to build self-reliance in the Tibetan world, in both education and economy,” Sikyong added.

“Five-Fifty is a strategy for success because we can either achieve genuine autonomy in the next five years or China will gradually change for the better in the next fifty years,” Sikyong said, explaining that if Tibetans are able to survive, strengthen and sustain the Tibetan administration in the next 50 years, it will be able to restore basic freedom of the Tibetan people owing to the change that will definitely take place in China.

To make the strategy a success, Sikyong said the 15th Kashag would make efforts in the international forum and in India as well as among Tibetans to create awareness about the Middle Way Approach.

16th Tibetan Parliament Approves Kalons of 15th Kashag



Members of the 15th Kashag. From Left: Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay, Kalon Mr Ngodup Tsering, Kalon ven Karma Gelek Yuthok, Kalon Mr Sonam Topgyal, Khorlatsang, Kalon Mr Phagpa Tsering, Kalon Mr karma Yeshe and Kalon Mr Choekyong Wangchuk.

The 16th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile approved the Kalons of the 15th Kashag nominated by Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay on 1 June, the first day of the first session of the new parliament.

Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay has retained former education Kalon Ngodup Tsering in his new Kashag. All other six members are first time Kalons, though some of them have worked in the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) as secretaries.

The Kalons nominated by Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay are Mr Ngodup Tsering, former Education Kalon in the 14th Kashag; Ven Karma Gelek Yuthok, former Secretary of the Kashag Secretariat; Mr Sonam Topgyal Khorlatsang, former Secretary of Home Department; Mr Phagpa Tsering, former Secretary of Department of Security; Mr Karma Yeshe, former member of Tibetan Parliament; Mr Choekyong Wangchuk, former member of Tibetan Parliament and Ms Tenzin Dhardon Sharling, an incumbent member of the present 16th parliament.

Members of the 16th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile approved all seven names proposed by the Sikyong through a

majority vote.

As per the rules and regulations of the Central Tibetan Administration regarding election of Kalons, if there is even a single objection to a Kalon proposed by Sikyong, a majority vote is required on the floor of the house to deliver a verdict of approval.

Since all seven nominees did not have unanimous backing of the house, voting had to be carried out.

Among the seven new Kalons of the 15th Kashag, former education Kalon Ngodup Tsering was reinstated with 29 votes.

Kashag Secretary (Kadrung) Ven Yuthok Karma Gelek, who got 37 votes, is the lone monk in the cabinet.

Former Tibetan Parliamentarian Mr Karma Yeshe got 27 votes. Other candidates who were also approved include former Home Secretary Khorlatsang Sonam Topgyal, Mr Phagpa Tsering, former secretary of security department, Mr Choekyong Wangchuk, former member of the 15th Tibetan Parliament while Ms Tenzin Dhardon Sharling is the lone female face in the

cabinet.

However, Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay had to officially withdraw the name of Ms Tenzin Dhardon Sharling from the 15th Kashag on the third and final day of the 1st session of the 16th Tibetan Parliament.

The withdrawal of her name from the 15th Kashag was necessitated as she falls short of the age limit required to be a Kalon as enshrined in Article 29(2) of the Charter for Tibetans in exile. The minimum age requirement for one to be appointed as Kalon is 35.

Ms Tenzin Dhardon Sharling was born on 23 September 1981; therefore she is three months short of being 35.

Meanwhile, Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay has temporarily taken the additional charge of Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) from 3 June 2016, according to a circular issued by the Kashag Secretariat.

For detailed news visit:
www.tibet.net

NED Honours Tibetan Democracy by Presenting a Citation to Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay



Sikyong greeting His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the event hosted by NED to honour Tibetan democracy.

The National Endowment for Democracy (NED) presented a citation to Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay on 15 June to recognise and honour the democratic accomplishments of the Central Tibetan Administration, as envisioned by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The citation – a framed copy of the US preamble on one side and an excerpt from the Central Tibetan Administration’s preamble on the other side – was presented to Sikyong by Mr Martin Frost, Chairman of the Board of Directors, NED, in the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and other notable friends of Tibet including Leader Nancy Pelosi, Mr Richard Gere and senator Diane Feinstein.

“It’s the vision of His Holiness the Dalai Lama that we Tibetans have followed and implemented to establish a democratic system in exile,” Sikyong said as he accepted the citation. “This recognition and honour of Tibetan democracy will send a strong message of hope to the Tibetans inside Tibet and a message of solidarity to the Tibetan political prisoners,” he added.

Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay also spoke about the evolution of Tibetan democracy from the early years of Tibetan exile when His Holiness emphasised the formation of a democratic administration in the 1960’s to the year 2011 when His Holiness devolved all his political authority to an elected leadership.

“His Holiness was 24 when he lost his country in 1959. In 1960, after coming into exile, His Holiness visited a group of Tibetan road construction workers at Dalhousie. His Holiness told the Tibetan crowd that we must have a modern democratic government,” Sikyong recalled.

“His Holiness was barely 24 at the time when he lost his country, but even at that tender age, he had a vision for democracy in exile. A democracy without borders. And in 1960 itself, Tibetans elected members of the parliament and the Tibetan parliament was formed,” he said.

He further underscored the strength of Tibetan democracy by highlighting the representation of women in the Tibetan Parliament, the highest lawmaking body, and the space for open discussion and debates on the issues facing Tibet.

He also explained the difficulties contained in the paradox ‘democracy in exile’. “Academically speaking, democracy in exile is seemingly impossible. Because when you are an exile community, you should be united in one goal i.e. to return to your homeland. In such a scenario, one leader is what you focus on. But in a democracy, you ought to have more than one leader, you got to have freedom of speech and instead of a single goal, you got to have diversity. So in an academic sense, there is a contradiction between exile and democracy,” he noted.

“However, we Tibetans have successfully implemented and embraced the concept of democracy in exile, as per the vision and guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. As a result, the Central Tibetan Administration that we have set up, as chairman Martin Frost rightly said, is perhaps one of the most successful refugee organisations in the world now,” Sikyong asserted.

Mr Martin Frost, Chairman of NED board of Directors, in his remarks, expressed the admiration that the organisation have for the leadership provided by His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the Tibetan people. He also spoke about the success of the Central Tibetan Administration and its commitment to democracy.

“The Tibetan diaspora numbers about 1,50,000. The emergence of this strong, unified, tolerant and educated community didn’t happen by chance. And its success was neither predetermined nor guaranteed. To survive as a community in exile, it’s a challenge in the best of circumstances. But the Tibetan community under the leadership of His Holiness the Dalai lama and the Central Tibetan Administration has thrived.”

“The Tibetan diaspora, once housed mainly in the camps and settlements of India, is now global. Even after six decades of exile, Tibetans have retained a distinct sense of identity and community. There are many reasons to honour the Central Tibetan Administration but principal among them is the establishment of an effective and representative government. The CTA has grown significantly for the last 60 years. At the core of the CTA is a commitment to democratic values and institutions, electing members of parliament since 1960’s and directly electing the Sikyong since 2001,” he said.

“This recognition by NED is a symbol of our democratic solidarity with the Tibetan people,” he added.

Statement of Special Representative Mr Kelsang Gyaltsen at Panel on China's New Law on Counter-Terrorism and Its Impacts on Minorities

I take this opportunity to thank you and all the members of the ICT family for the wonderful great work you are doing in support of the Tibetan people and His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The Tibetan people are presently undergoing the most difficult and challenging time of their history. In fact, the struggle of the Tibetan people is not just a struggle for human rights and basic freedoms but it is a struggle for the very survival as a people with its own distinct culture, language, religion and its own distinct civilisation and identity. We Tibetans are, therefore, deeply grateful to you all for your enduring support, solidarity and friendship in the times of our greatest need and challenge.

I also wish to thank our host the Clingendael Institute for facilitating this discussion. It has been my impression and experience that nowadays it is getting more difficult to find hosts for such discussions in Europe. Tibetans, and I am sure our Uighur brothers and sisters, too, have been feeling increasingly the long reach of Beijing's strong arm even here in Europe. It is, therefore, very encouraging that this event is taking place at such a prestigious institute. Thank you very much for your hospitality.

Coming back to the topic of our discussion and its impact on minorities in China, I believe it is important at the outset to differentiate how Beijing views dissent and protests in Tibet or in Eastern Turkestan and dissent and protests in other parts of China. Protests by Tibetans and Uighurs are officially characterized as "antagonistic" and a threat to national security. This policy effectively de-legitimizes any form of dissent and protest. Moreover, the Chinese government conflates legitimate protests in these areas with separatism or terrorism.

In this environment dissent and grievances are not seen simply as expressions of discontents with local or state policies that might be redressed. They are seen rather as threats to the stability of the regime and the nation. This development is well documented in

the recent report by Human Rights Watch highlighting the diminishing tolerance by authorities for forms of expressions and assembly protected under international law. The report further points out an increase in state control over daily life, increasing criminalization of non-violent forms of protests, and disproportionate responses to local protests as well as the growing number of activities and issues targeted for repression in Tibetan areas.

Against this background I have difficulties to imagine how the new law on counter-terrorism can further deteriorate an already alarming situation in Tibet.

I, therefore, believe the question how members of the international community should react to China's apparent willingness to talk about terrorism is of great importance. This opens also a general discussion about the best or most appropriate ways and means of dealing with China.

If we look at the past decades of China we can see clearly that there has been an oscillating pattern of political opening and tightening. This pattern reveals that there have long been two contending schools of thought within the CCP and its leadership: those that favour measured political liberalization managed by the Party versus those who staunchly resist it and seek to maintain a wide variety of repressive controls over society.

It is, therefore, obvious that the aim of Western governments' policy should be to encourage the reform-minded Chinese leaders and to strengthen their position. In the 1980s and 90s His Holiness the Dalai Lama often counselled Western politicians and parliamentarians "not to isolate China but to engage her". But he also warned them at the same time "not to spoil the Chinese leaders and government" in the course of engagement. In the field of economy China herself would wish to join the mainstream of the world economy and you should welcome her. But as a member of the world democracy it would be your responsibility to see that China eventually joins also the main-

stream world democracy. On this you must be principled, firm and consistent.

In this spirit on international initiatives on counter-terrorism the international community should make the observance of international human rights standard a requirement for Beijing's collaboration. As Human Rights Watch had recommended no government should agree to increase information sharing, training, or other cooperation with China until China commits to international standards.

With regard to policy vis-à-vis China in general within the Western world there has been a dominant school of thought led by Henry Kissinger & Co. on dealing with China. This school of thought stipulates as a principle that no "loss of face" of the Chinese leaders or government should be risked in interacting with China. Most Western governments so far have followed the doctrine of this school. Consequently, today's China is to a considerable degree the result of this international policy towards China over the past decades. The result is that today's China is more authoritarian than she has ever been since the times of the Cultural Revolution (maybe with the exception of the brief period between 1989–1992 after the Tiananmen Square massacre).

It is, therefore, time to have a hard and critical look at the China policy of the past decades. China seems to be once again at a crossroad. There are a number of respected China scholars who are of the view that the present hard-line policy under Xi is just simply unsustainable. They see the 19th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party in 2017 as of crucial importance for the future course of China. In this context, I strongly believe that the attitude of the international community can impact significantly in which direction the pendulum of political shift in China will swing.

These scholars also conclude that among the most acute challenges for the Chinese government to manage are the increasingly unstable border regions of Tibet, Xinjiang, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Tibet and Eastern Turkestan they consider as highly unstable. Hong Kong and Taiwan less so, but all have real potential for major confrontation with Beijing.

Against this background it is my belief that the Chinese government cannot continue for long to evade seeking a negotiated resolution to the issue of Tibet. The spirit of resistance in Tibet has never been stronger. In the forefront of this resistance are Tibetans who are under the age of 30. This is a clear indication that this resistance is going to stay for a long time to come until and unless it is resolved peacefully through dialogue.

It is, therefore, not an impossible task to forecast what the future may hold for Tibet. It seems there are only two likely and possible scenarios.

The positive scenario is there is the resumption of direct contact and dialogue between the representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Chinese leadership and an honest and robust effort in finding common ground in resolving the issue.

The other scenario is tragic and unfortunate and consists of yet another cycle of ruthless repression on the one hand and more radicalised resistance on the other hand.

In this context I have no doubt that the attitude of the international community has a bearing on which scenario eventually will play out.

As a Tibetan, who has been living in Europe for decades and who has come to greatly value and cherish the culture and ideals of Europe, I continue to entertain great hopes that European governments in general and the European Union in particular will play an important role in encouraging and facilitating a process by which Tibet and China move towards dialogue and reconciliation. This will set a timely and much needed example in these times of violence that non-violent movements can succeed and be successful. This signal will go a long way in encouraging and promoting a global culture based on non-violence, dialogue and reconciliation.

US President Barack Obama Meets His Holiness the Dalai Lama



President Barack Obama greets His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the entrance of the Map Room of the White House on June 15, 2016. Official White House Photo by Pete Souza

US President Barack Obama met His Holiness the Dalai Lama in the Map Room of the White House on 15 June 2016, despite stiff objections from the Chinese government.

During the meeting, His Holiness the Dalai Lama expressed his condolences to the President over the Orlando shooting tragedy and emphasised his commitments to promote compassion, empathy, and respect for one other.

According to a press release issued by the White House, President Barack Obama emphasised his strong support for the preservation of Tibet's unique religious, cultural, and linguistic traditions and the equal protection of human rights of Tibetans in China. The President lauded His Holiness the Dalai Lama's commitment to peace and nonviolence and expressed support for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's "Middle Way" approach.

The President encouraged meaningful and direct dialogue between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his representatives with Chinese authorities to lower tensions and resolve differences.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama stated that

he is not seeking independence for Tibet and hopes that dialogue between his representatives and the Chinese government will resume. The President and His Holiness the Dalai Lama agreed on the importance of a constructive and productive relationship between the United States and China.

The President also welcomed His Holiness the Dalai Lama's leadership on climate change issues, and expressed support for his efforts to raise awareness of the importance of limiting global warming, including to protect the Himalayan glaciers and the environment on the Tibetan plateau.

This is the fourth meeting between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and President Barack Obama at the White House. The last three meetings took place at the White House in February 2010, July 2011 and February 2014.

President Obama also offered a special welcome to His Holiness during a public appearance at the National Prayer Breakfast in February 2015, describing him as an inspiration to speak up for the freedom and dignity of all human beings.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Four-Day Teaching at Osaka, Japan



A view of the stage at the Osaka International Convention Center, venue for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's teaching in Osaka, Japan on May 10, 2016. Photo/Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

His Holiness the Dalai Lama conducted a four-day teaching on Shantideva's *A Guide to the Bodhisatva's Way of Life* (Tib: *Chodjug*) at the Osaka International Convention Center from 10 - 13 May.

The text of the teaching consists of ten chapters dedicated to the development of Bodhicitta (the mind of enlightenment) through the practice of the six perfections. Shantideva was an 8th century Indian Buddhist scholar on the Madhyamaka (Middle Way) philosophy of Nagarjuna.

At least 2700 devotees attended the teaching, which was conducted primarily in Tibetan with simultaneous translations in Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Mongolian, Russian and English languages.

Before commencing the actual teaching, His Holiness the Dalai Lama greeted the audience, applauding their keen desire to learn Buddhist teachings. His Holiness explained that it is more important to study and analyse the texts rather than praying and according sanctity without understanding the essence of these texts.

"The Buddha himself has encouraged his disciples to investigate his teachings rather than accepting it out of blind faith. So we should do that," His Holiness said. His Holiness also spoke about global responsibility and the sense of oneness that we should cultivate to transform the

21st century into a century of dialogue and peace.

"The last century was spent on wars and bloodshed. However, we should make efforts to transform this century into a century of dialogue," His Holiness said, expressing optimism that younger generations are on the right path towards change.

"I met several young people including Africans and Arabs from Muslim countries recently at Dharamshala as part of an event organised by USIP. These people have faced so much misery due to destruction caused by war in their respective countries. And yet, they have risen up and organised themselves to help others in their villages. This is really encouraging," His Holiness said.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama further spoke about his three main commitments in life, namely universal responsibility through promotion of human values; promotion of religious harmony; and the preservation of Tibet's rich cultural heritage.

Speaking about universal responsibility, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said he considers himself as one among the seven billion human beings. "All human beings are the same. Irrespective of whether we are believers or non-believers, we all want happiness and do not want suffering. Moreover, all

humans have experienced mother's love. Therefore, basic human nature is compassionate and we should utilise this compassion to foster genuine trust and friendship among ourselves for a better and healthier life," His Holiness said.

"If you differentiate others on the basis of nationality, identity or status, you are secluding yourself from the rest and you will be all alone. It is a time of interdependence. So we should reach out to others more," His Holiness added.

Explaining his second commitment, His Holiness said that all major religious traditions of the world emphasise love, compassion and affection, despite some philosophical differences such as the notion of a creator deity which is not prevalent in Buddhism.

"Yet, all major world religions have the same potential to create good human beings," His Holiness said, expressing sadness at the same time, of recent incidents where some Buddhist monks have been involved in violence against others.

His Holiness said his final commitment is to work for the preservation of Tibet's rich cultural and religious heritage including the Tibetan language. "It is imperative to study and preserve the Tibetan language because the purest lineage of the Nalanda tradition have been preserved in the Tibetan language only. So, Tibetan language is of extreme importance to not just the Tibetans but also to the world," His Holiness said.

His Holiness then started the formal teachings of the text, completing three chapters before concluding for the day. His Holiness advised that his explanation will extend over the next four days and that it should be regarded as an opportunity to study and learn, not just to receive blessings out of blind faith.

His Holiness concluded the teachings on 13 May and returned to Dharamshala in India on 14 May.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Three-Day Teaching for Tibetan Youth

His Holiness the Dalai Lama gave a three-day teaching on Domthonpa's *A Tree of Faith – A Self-Exhortation from Book of Kadam* for Tibetan youth at Tsuglagkhang. The teaching was attended by thousands of students from TCV Upper, Lower, Gopalpur, Suja, Chauntra, Sherab Gatsel Lobling and students from various universities in India and abroad.

Before the teaching began, a group of students of Tibetan Buddhism performed a dialectic debate on 'Modern science and Buddhist science' in the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and various Buddhist scholars inside the main temple Tsuglagkhang.

"The traditional Tibetan method of dialectical disputation is the most effective form of learning and mind training. The wisdom acquired from contemplating and debating is far more effective and impressionable to the mind than the wisdom acquired from strictly listening," His Holiness has repeatedly emphasized debating practice in Tibetan schools.

His Holiness recalled the renowned scholars of Pramana and their contributions in developing the study of logic and Pramana in Tibet. "I offer highest respect and devotion to the great learned masters of Nalanda, and the great Santaraksita and Kamalasila who composed the major treaties Pramana Tattva-Samgraha and its commentaries. The Pramana-shastra is an indispensable part of Buddhist studies."

"Tibetan Buddhism both the sutra and tantric traditions originate from the an-



His Holiness the Dalai Lama during the three-day teachings for Tibetan youth at Tsuglagkhang.



Students engaging in debate at the start of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's three day teaching for Tibetan Youth at the Main Tibetan Temple in Dharamsala, HP, India on June 1, 2016. Photo/Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

cient Nalanda Buddhist tradition, making it the most comprehensive form of Buddhism. Secondly, the best interpretation of the Nalanda Buddhist tradition is preserved only in the Tibetan language. Therefore, Tibetans especially the youth should study the Tibetan Buddhist philosophy, views and tenets as a 21st century Buddhist and acquire faith through wisdom and knowledge."

His Holiness further stressed upon educating moral and human values to young students through academic curriculum.

"The 21st century has become a century of scientific and technological advancement at the cost of humanity. The new generation should shoulder serious responsibility in solving human problems through transforming human attitude, without resorting to violence and killing. It is high time to act as one single human family and cultivate love and compassion in our families, workplaces, societies and the world at large."

Citing a research conducted by a scientist-friend, His Holiness explained that the Buddhist concept of non-violence and compassion is scientifically proven valid.

"It is scientifically proven that the basic human nature is love and compassion and the basic human need is desire for

happiness. In that sense, a believer or a non-believer, both as humans possess the basic nature of love and compassion. We should thus work on cultivating these positive attitudes to create a compassionate and happier humanity."

His Holiness then introduced the four noble truths and Buddhist concept of interdependent arising. "The entire Buddhist philosophy is based on the concept of tendrel. The concept of interdependent arising is unique to Tibetan Buddhism. According to tendrel, everything arises because of conditions and interdependency."

His Holiness concluded the first day's teaching with a recitation of prayer for the Spreading of Ecumenical Buddha's Teachings, a True Melodious Song of the Sage.

On the final day of teaching, a group of senior TCV staff lined up to make offerings to His Holiness, which included images of enlightenment and 113 copies of a prayer to Amitayus, the Buddha of Longevity.

His Holiness smiled, folded his hands and said:

"We'll meet again next year."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Teaches Shantideva's Bodhicharyavatara at Tsuglagkhang



His Holiness the Dalai Lama receiving traditional Indian offerings on his arrival at the Main Tibetan Temple at the start of a three day teaching for Indian Buddhists in Dharamsala, HP, India on June 7, 2016. Photo/Tenzin Choejor/OHHDL

A mixed audience of about 7000 awaited His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the Tsuglagkhang, the Main Tibetan Temple on 7 June. They comprised 450 people from the Himalayan Region, mostly Lahaul & Spiti; 350 members of the Young Buddhist Society (YBS), from UP, Bihar and Rajasthan; 30 from Tamil Nadu and 400 from other parts of India. They were joined by 1700 foreigners from 78 countries, 1500 Tibetan monks and nuns and 3500 members of the Tibetan public.

This series of teachings has been requested and organised by members of the Nalanda Shiksha, a group of Indian friends who have studied with eminent teachers from all authentic living Buddhist traditions. They declare an avowed interest in keeping alive in India today the practices of listening, contemplation and meditation that were an integral part of the Nalanda tradition. They have organized four previous opportunities for His Holiness to teach—in Dharamsala in 2012 and 2013, in Mumbai in 2014 and in Sankissa in 2015. At their request His Holiness has taught from two significant Indian treatises: Kamalashila's 'Stages of Meditation' and Shantideva's 'Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life'. The Nalanda Shiksha professes a commit-

ment to work for the entire Buddhaddharma and its authentic traditions and teachers, without bias to any specific school or lineage.

Once His Holiness had taken his seat on the throne, Indian monks of the Pali tradition chanted the Mangala Sutta in Pali. Next, on behalf of the Nalanda Shiksha, Veer Singh announced an intention to present His Holiness with a set of offerings, derived from Indian traditions of hospitality, including water to drink, water to wash the feet, flowers, incense, light, perfume, food and music. Trays bearing these substances were then brought forth in a short procession. His Holiness remarked:

"We make these kinds of offerings in tantric rituals too. These offerings remind us that Buddhism is an Indian tradition. And in India today we have both people for whom Buddhism is their longstanding heritage and others who have adopted it anew, among them followers of Dr Ambedkar.

"Buddha Shakyamuni lived in India and what he taught was subsequently preserved in great learning institutions like Takshashila, Vikramashila and Nalanda. When the Tibetan Emperor Trisong Det-

sen invited Shantarakshita to Tibet in the 8th century CE, he brought the Nalanda tradition to the Land of Snow. Tibetans have been custodians of this tradition for more than 1000 years. We can say that historically you Indians were our teachers, but since then, we the disciples have kept the tradition alive. So, it stirs special feelings in me to be able to share it with you now."

His Holiness mentioned that something that distinguishes India, the Land of the Aryas, is that all the world's major religions have flourished here for 1000 years. There are the indigenous traditions like the Samkhya, Jain and Buddhist traditions, and they have been joined by Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. He said this is where we can find all these traditions living together in mutual respect and as such is a model for others to follow. He observed that India's contemplative traditions, including Buddhism, possess ancient understanding of the workings of the mind that continue to be relevant and of interest today.

His Holiness emphasised that while some religious traditions are theistic and stress the existence of a creator god, others are non-theistic and instead focus on causality, the law of cause and effect. Nevertheless, they all convey the same message of the importance of love and compassion and the need to protect these qualities with tolerance, contentment and self-discipline. These are traditions that have been of benefit in the past, are of benefit now, and will continue to be of benefit in the future. They may assert different philosophical points of view, but all foster the practice of love and compassion. For this reason it is important to promote inter-religious harmony amongst them.

"The Buddha's unique teaching," His Holiness added, "the Four Noble Truths is based on the law of cause and effect and ultimately leads to lasting happiness. He asserted the existence of neither a creator god nor an inherently existent self. Those who came after him

like Nagarjuna and Asanga and their followers wrote explanatory treatises in Sanskrit. In due course, the words of the Buddha translated into Tibetan came to comprise the 100 volumes of the Kangyur and the translations of those treatises made up the 220 volumes of the Tengyur.

“It was on the basis of these volumes that study of the Five Major Sciences: the inner science of Buddhist doctrine and practice, language, logic, medicine and arts and crafts and the Five Minor Sciences of grammar and so forth were maintained. My tutor taught me Sanskrit grammar, but now that knowledge has dissolved into emptiness.”

During a short break, His Holiness invited the audience to ask questions and the first was about death. His Holiness observed that impermanence was referred to in the first discourse on the Four Noble Truths. He said there is subtle impermanence, which refers to the momentary change, and coarser impermanence that is manifest when a flower blooms, withers and dies. He said it is useful to reflect on the fact of death every day as part of your spiritual practice. He mentioned that it is a routine part of tantric practice to visualize the process of death, the eight stages of dissolution every day, which may serve as some preparation for the actual event. He concluded:

“Death is a part of life; we should accept that.”

Another questioner wanted him to talk about a monk’s robes and he explained that generally they should be blue, red or yellow, but not black or white. Red is a more practical colour for a cold climate like that of Tibet, whereas monks in Thailand, Sri Lanka and Burma wear saffron coloured robes. Whatever the colour, the robes are supposed to be made of patches or pieces of cloth. Monks are permitted one set of robes that they may think of as belonging to them. If they have any more they should think of them as belonging to the community. Similarly, there are 13 articles a monk may possess and there is a procedure for blessing them.

Concerning relations between the Himalayan Region and the Nalanda Tradition, His Holiness said:

“I received important teachings from masters from that part of the world. From Khunu Lama Rinpoche I received transmission and explanation of ‘Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life’ and from Geshe Rigzin Tenpa I heard Je Tsongkhapa’s ‘Golden Rosary’. These days there are about 400 monks from the region studying in our monastic institutions. Many of them will become teachers.

“Vasabandhu said that the teaching of the Buddha has two aspects: scriptures and realizations. Only through study and practice will we preserve them. In relation to the scriptures that entails giving and listening to discourses and in relation to realization it means engaging in practice of the Three Trainings. People from the Himalayan Region should study and practise as well as they can. This means not only the monks, but the nuns and lay-people too.

“When we say ‘I take refuge in the Three Jewels, we need to understand what the Three Jewels are; what their causes are. And our understanding needs to be supported by reason.”

Turning to Shantideva’s ‘Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life’, His Holiness repeated what Khunu Lama Rinpoche had told him, which was that since Shantideva composed it in the 8th century CE, there had been no greater text on generating the awakening mind

of bodhichitta. He said:

“Shantideva’s sources were Nagarjuna’s ‘Precious Garland’ and ‘Commentary on the Awakening Mind’, which is a commentary on a chapter of the Guhyasamaja Tantra. Nagarjuna’s sources for how to generate the awakening mind include the ‘Array of Stalks Sutra’ and the Perfection of Wisdom Sutras.

“After the Buddha attained enlightenment he remained silent thinking that no one else would understand what he had discovered—his profound insight into emptiness. Eventually he taught the Four Noble Truths, their 16 attributes and the 37 Aids to Enlightenment in public. A more thorough explanation of emptiness he gave to a select group at Vultures’ Peak. So of the three Turnings of the Wheel of Dharma, the first dealt with the Four Noble Truths, the second with the Perfection of Wisdom and the third with Buddha nature and the nature of the mind.”

His Holiness said he would not read everything in the book, but would try to shed light on what it has to say about method and wisdom and the two truths. He said that things do not exist in the way they appear and our misconceptions about this are what give rise to our negative emotions. He pointed out that we can counter our tendency to self-cherishing by cultivating a concern for others. He noted that although Chapter 9 of the ‘Guide’ deals with emptiness, to understand it properly requires reading and studying other books too.



Indian Buddhists from the Himalayan region making traditional offerings at the start of the first day of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s three day teaching for Indian Buddhists at Tsuglagkhang.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Spends the Morning on Capitol Hill and the Afternoon with ICT



His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay with members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Capitol Hill in Washington DC, USA on June 14, 2016. Photo/Sonam Zoksang

It was a bright summer morning on 14 June as His Holiness the Dalai Lama drove down Washington's broad and leafy avenues to the heart of government on Capitol Hill. He was met on arrival by old friends House Democrat Leader Nancy Pelosi and Senator Patrick Leahy, who escorted him to a meeting with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Later walking to Nancy Pelosi's office meant crossing the rotunda—currently undergoing renovation. The area was filled with visiting members of the public who fell respectfully silent in their surprise at seeing His Holiness.

Meeting with the US Congressional Leadership, His Holiness said:

“Congress has expressed staunch support for our cause. We are not seeking independence because we don't want to enter into confrontation with our Chinese brothers and sisters. However, Chinese documents reveal that in the 9th century independent Tibetan, Chinese and Mongolian empires flourished. What we seek now is a mutually beneficial solution to the problems between us. Buddhism in both China and Tibet derives from the Nalanda tradition, but the transmission to Tibet was far more comprehensive

and is therefore worth preserving. We are also concerned about the ecology of the Tibetan Plateau.”

Indicating Dr Lobsang Sangay sitting beside him His Holiness said:

“The Sikyong here has just been re-elected for a further five years. We Tibetans in exile are implementing Democratic principles to show the leaders in Beijing what democracy is about.

“We consider Tibet to be occupied land, yet we are still not seeking independence. However, at the same time it is a reality that Tibet is not a part of China. Please continue to give us your support. We very much appreciate it.”

His Holiness concluded his address with a summary of his three commitments to the spreading awareness of basic human values as a source of genuine happiness, the promotion of respectful inter-religious harmony and the protection of the Tibetan people's identity, as well as the culture, language and environment of Tibet.

Speaker Paul Ryan and House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi hosted a bipartisan lunch for His Holiness. Mrs

Pelosi said in a statement.

“Our bipartisan luncheon with Speaker Ryan is a tribute to the deep respect His Holiness enjoys on both sides of the aisle for the message of peace, compassion and responsibility he brings to the world. Every time His Holiness visits the Capitol, he reminds us that ‘change comes through action,’ and that Congress must do our part to help the Tibetan people in their fight to preserve their language, culture and religion.”

In his brief address, His Holiness said:

“Both houses of the American government are a source of hope and inspiration. The Speaker is young and able and I've known Nancy Pelosi for many years; our friendship is unchanging. As I have said before, our supporters are not so much pro-Tibet as pro-justice.”

In the afternoon, His Holiness attended a meeting with members of the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT), which, founded in 1988, works to promote human rights and democratic freedoms for the people of Tibet. Richard Gere, the Chairman of ICT, told His Holiness that he wanted to talk to him about how he became the man he is and he replied:

“I arrived in Lhasa at the age of five and about two years later began my studies with memorization. I was a sharp-minded but relatively lazy student. When I was 16 the People's Liberation Army crossed into Eastern Tibet and the then Regent passed political responsibility to me. In 1954 I went to China where I met almost all the top leaders of the Chinese government. In the five or six months I spent in Beijing I think I must have had 30 meetings with Chairman Mao. I learned about Marxism and was attracted to ideas of socialism and internationalism.

“When I came to India in 1956, the experience was quite different. India was open where China was a closed society. With Nehru's encouragement I returned

to Tibet, but in 1959 escaped to India as a refugee. Nevertheless, this gave me the opportunity to meet all kinds of different people.

“In Tibet I thought that Buddhism was best. I’m a student of the Nalanda tradition making extensive use of logic and reason, cultivating a healthy scepticism. In exile I’ve come across many followers of other religious traditions who have dedicated themselves to others’ well-being on the basis of their faith. All our religious traditions include the practice of love and compassion, therefore it’s proper to regard them with respect.

“Since my childhood I’ve had a curiosity about science and technology. When visiting hydroelectric plants in China my tutors were bored, but I was fascinated. Chairman Mao noted this and at our last meeting commented that I had a scientific cast of mind, adding that religion was like opium. I think that if he were here today he might still say that about religion that is confined to faith alone, but he might also recognise the scientific aspect of the Nalanda tradition.”

His Holiness remarked that as a refugee in India there was no longer any formality or protocol to follow, which made him more confident. This confidence was reinforced by his practice of altruism and understanding of dependent arising.

Richard Gere asked what he considered were the prospects for Tibetans when he

arrived in India in 1959. His Holiness replied that they arrived in April and one of the first priorities was to move Tibetans to cooler places in the mountains. However, road building was the only work available. He said he envisaged settlements where communities could be created to ensure Tibetans survived as a people.

He recalled that soon after taking responsibility, in 1952, he had set up a reform committee, but the Chinese put obstacles in its way because they wanted to see reform in their terms.

When Gere asked what missed opportunities there had been over the years, His Holiness told him:

“Almost none. In the ‘60s some officials began to doubt whether it had been right to escape, but once the Cultural Revolution broke out they realized it had been the right decision. The way I take decisions is first to discuss things among my human colleagues. I discovered in Tibet that where officials could be overly discreet, servants like the sweepers were generally much more frank and straightforward. Generally I seek a wide range of opinion and I’ve also employed ‘mystical methods’ to confirm the decisions we’ve reached. Still, I don’t think any decisions have been taken that should have been different.

“In 1973 I visited Europe for the first time and began to talk about the need

for global responsibility. I entered into discussions with scientists. At about the same time I began to encourage classical studies in our nunneries and this year will see the fruit of that when the first nuns are awarded Geshe degrees.

“I began to realise that knowledge of the mind and emotions was something that could be of benefit to the wider world. Considering that the literature translated into Tibetan in the Kangyur and Tengyur collections could be categorized as dealing with science, philosophy and religion, I have requested that scientific and philosophical materials from them be gathered, compiled and now translated into other languages.

“I’ve also observed that existing education needs to be improved with greater focus on human values and inner peace. As a Buddhist monk I spend five hours a day in prayer and meditation. Prayer is of value to the individual, but on its own is not an effective way of bringing about a better world. We need to take action instead.”

When Richard Gere asked about the prospects for dialogue with Chinese authorities, His Holiness told him:

“The last meeting was in 2010. Since then the Chinese side has made clear they have little interest in dealing with our organization. Some reports say that after the 2008 crisis Hu Jintao was advised never to let the Dalai Lama come back. Since we’ve waited 57 years, we can wait a little longer. The determination of the people of Tibet is undiminished.”

“You have a lot of friends here,” Richard Gere said, “who are committed to helping Tibetans inside and outside Tibet. How can we help you?” His Holiness responded:

“In whatever way you can, try to contribute to my three commitments: spreading awareness of human values, promoting inter-religious harmony and protecting the culture, language and natural environment of Tibet. I appreciate your help—thank you. Please keep it up.”



Richard Gere, Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay, Former Speaker and now North American Representative Penpa Tsering with His Holiness the Dalai Lama during his meeting with the US Congressional Leadership on Capitol Hill in Washington DC, USA on June 14, 2016. Photo/Sonam Zoksang

His Holiness Participates in the Grand Opening Ceremony of Dieu Ngu Buddhist Temple in Westminster, California

On 19 June, the second day of weather forecast warnings about hot weather, His Holiness the Dalai Lama started the day by meeting 400 members of the Tibetan Association of Southern California in the cool of his hotel.

He said:

“We’re passing through the most difficult period in the last 2000 years of our recorded history. We used only to quarrel among ourselves to the detriment of the entire three provinces of Tibet, but now we’re facing a life or death struggle for our culture and identity. This may be the fruit of our karma, yet among Tibetans in exile as well as those in Tibet, our spirit remains strong. Amongst other exiles we stand out due to the courage and dedication of our people. The report says you are teaching your children Tibetan. That’s good and it’s good to teach them about our religion too.

“From an archaeological point of view, Tibetans are an ancient people. Stone Age tools found in Amdo are estimated to be 30,000 years old; artefacts in Chamdo are 7000 years old, while others found in Ngari are 10,000 years old. What matters now is that for more than 1000 years we’ve had our own writing. Today, it is the best vehicle for conveying the thoughts of the masters of Nalanda—something to be proud of.

“Trisong Detsen had a Chinese mother, so he could have brought Buddhism to Tibet from China. Instead he chose to go to the original source and invited Shantarakshita to come from India to Tibet. Despite his age, with the help of Guru Padmasambhava, who overcame inner and outer obstacles, he established Samye. The Chinese Hoshangs suggested that there was no need to study, but Kamalashila made clear the importance of study, reflection and meditation, an approach we’ve adopted for the last 1000 years.

This is why we shouldn’t just keep the Kangyur and Tengyur on the altar out of respect. There also used to be a custom of carrying the volumes on our shoulders round in procession around the fields to protect the harvest from calamity. But books are to be studied and read. I’ve been urging nunneries and ritual monasteries to engage in study of the classics for 40 years and this year we’re going to award fully qualified nuns the Geshe degree. I visited one of the settlements in Bhandara, Madhya Pradesh, where school children debated before me. They were good and I asked who had taught them. It turned out their teacher was a nun. She’d trained them well. So nuns will become Geshe-ma, but there is still work to do on the Gelongma question. Some Western feminists seem to think it is something I can decide, but it’s beyond my authority. Matters of Vinaya can only be decided by scholars within the monastic community.

“In Dharamsala and Ladakh there are now Dharma study groups among lay-people. Earlier this year after my medical treatment in Rochester, I visited Deer Park in Madison. I recommended that it becomes a more broadly based centre of learning, where the knowledge of the workings of the mind and emotions that we have in our tradition can be combined with the work on emotions of people like Paul Ekman and his daughter to the wider benefit.”

His Holiness ended by suggesting that change in China is inevitable. He introduced the former speaker of the Assembly of Tibetan People’s Deputies, Penpa Tsering, as his next representative in North America. He encouraged his listeners to be happy.

His Holiness was welcomed on arrival at Dieu Ngu Buddhist Temple with traditional umbrellas and music. Everyone stood for the playing of the Tibetan, Vietnamese, American and Buddhist anthems, followed by a minute’s silent meditation. In his speech the Abbot Ven

Thich Vien Ly voiced the hope that the temple would contribute to peace and happiness in the world. He expressed gratitude to Ven Tenzin Dhonden for making His Holiness’s visit possible. Mayor Tri Ta mentioned that at his suggestion the city of Westminster had become a city of kindness. Congressman Alan Lowenthal said that it was a joy for him to be part of the Grand Opening Ceremony, while Sen. Janet Nguyen looked forward to the Temple being a refuge of compassion and kindness.

His Holiness was invited to give the keynote address:

“Respected fellow monks and nuns, brothers and sisters, once more we are gathered together under the hot sun. I am just a student of Buddha Shakyamuni’s teachings, particularly those of the Nalanda tradition. I am happy that you have been able to construct this temple. Some of you are refugees like me. I admire the way you Vietnamese keep up your culture and traditions. I’ve seen this in other parts of the world too and I appreciate it. The US is the leading nation of the free world and you’ve come here in search of a better life. The US government and local people have extended their hands to help you.

“However, the only way to preserve the scripture and realization of the Buddhadharma is through study and practice. We need to read and study the scriptures and apply the Three Trainings in practice. There is no other way. We have to pay attention to what the Buddha has already taught. I am nearly 81 years old, but I still consider myself a student. The ancient Indian traditions that cultivated the practices of shamatha and vipashyana developed a profound understanding of the workings of the mind and emotions. How to tackle the destructive emotions and cultivate those that are positive is something we can share with the world today. Therefore, I suggest you consider making this temple a centre where anyone can learn about the mind and emo-



His Holiness the Dalai Lama reciting consecration prayers during the Opening Ceremony of the Vietnamese Dieu Ngu Buddhist Temple in Westminster, California on June 19, 2016. Photo/Jeremy Russell/OHHDL

tions and where members of other spiritual traditions can meet and get to know one another.”

Within the temple His Holiness recited auspicious verses while tossing handfuls of flower petals into the air. There was resonant chanting in Vietnamese. The Tibetan monks present recited the LamRim prayer and the Heart Sutra, followed by the Mangala Sutta in Pali and further recitations in Korean.

His Holiness began a short talk with a verse of homage to Buddha Shakyamuni. He mentioned how pleased he was to see so many brothers and sisters from other Buddhist traditions present. Holding up a Tibetan bell in the Vietnamese chant-master’s possession, His Holiness remarked that it should be accompanied by a vajra that symbolizes compassion, while the bell represents wisdom. He pointed out that the sound of the bell is made neither by the clapper nor the rim alone. The bell only rings when they come together.

“We recited the Heart Sutra,” he said, “which is a concise rendering of the Perfection of Wisdom teachings that explain emptiness. The Sutra says that the five aggregates are also empty of inherent existence, a declaration of the selflessness of phenomena in addition to the selflessness of persons. The essence of the Heart Sutra is that ‘all the Buddhas

who perfectly reside in the three times, relying upon the perfection of wisdom, become manifest and complete Buddhas in the state of unsurpassed, perfect and complete enlightenment.’ Realization of emptiness directly complemented by the awakening mind of bodhichitta is the basis of the perfection of wisdom.

“What is emptiness? ‘Form is empty; emptiness is form.’ If we investigate and analyze form, we won’t find anything inherently existent. It exists in dependence on other factors. Appearance and emptiness complement each other. During the first Turning of the Wheel of Dharma the selflessness of persons was taught, but during the second Turning the selflessness of phenomena, the five psycho-physical aggregates that are the basis of the person, was also revealed.”

His Holiness answered questions from the audience and after lunch spoke to a gathering of Vietnamese youth about using their intelligence, cultivating warm-heartedness and the benefits to themselves of developing compassion. He stressed the need for self-confidence, but that it should be wise not blind. He added that trust is the basis for friendship and trust grows when you act out of concern for others. He said:

“We are all the same as human beings. I am nothing special. I am a student of Buddhist philosophy and for people who

know nothing I can be a teacher, but among top scholars I am a student. The purpose of the Perfection of Wisdom teachings is to put an end to destructive emotions such as anger. It’s effective to seek the basis of anger and investigate whether anger has any benefit. Destructive emotions are rooted in ignorance that is a distortion of reality and only understanding of emptiness can counter it.”

Asked what youth can do to stand against violence in the world, His Holiness spoke of the young people from countries torn by conflict who he had recently met in Dharamsala and how their determination to take action had impressed him. A young man who admitted he’d been to jail for trespass told His Holiness how much he had learned from his teachings and how pleased he was to meet him. His Holiness told a young woman who asked if he would be the last Dalai Lama and wouldn’t that leave a spiritual gap to fill that the Buddha’s teachings have flourished for 2600 years without a reincarnation of the Buddha.

Finally, a small boy asked what His Holiness had wanted to be when he grew up and his little sister wanted to know how he’d become famous. His Holiness replied that he’d been chosen as the Dalai Lama when he was four years old and he’d had no choice. But later he’d found that having the name Dalai Lama could be useful in trying to help other people, so that’s what he tries to do.

At the Geden Shoeling Center nearby, His Holiness said he’d known the founder, Khensur Rinpoche, Lobsang Jamyang for many years and was happy to come to his center. He said that Buddhism remains relevant today and that the Nalanda Tradition in particular encourages the use of reason and intelligence. He recommended that the center become somewhere that people who are not necessarily Buddhist could come to learn.

He suggested that another project that the center could take on would be the translation of key volumes of the Kangyur and Tengyur into Vietnamese.

Sooner or later China will change: Tibetan PM-in-exile

By Vishal Gulati, IANS



Tibetan political leader Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay

Tibetan Prime Minister-in-exile Lobsang Sangay, who took the oath of office for his second consecutive term here on Friday, is hopeful that sooner or later China will change for the better.

He believes in Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama's dictum: "Hope for the better, but prepare for the worst too".

"The issue of the dialogue between the envoys of the Dalai Lama and Chinese representatives is delicate and sensitive," Sangay told IANS in an interview here.

"However, it's clear that there is no lack of effort on our part on restarting the dialogue under the guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama," said the 48-year-old Harvard-educated elected head of the Central Tibetan Administration.

He replied in affirmative when asked: Are you expecting some changes in the mindset of the Chinese over granting greater autonomy for Tibetans?

"I remain hopeful that sooner or later, China will change for the better."

Sangay was re-elected on April 27 after defeating his only rival, Penpa Tsering. He polled about 57 percent of the 58,740 votes cast across the globe on March 20.

It was the second election since the Dalai Lama stepped down as head of the

government-in-exile in 2011.

Since then, the significance of the prime minister's post has gone up.

About on the ongoing deadlock over talks between the Dalai Lama's envoys and the Chinese since January 2010, Sangay said: "It's evident that we must put maximum efforts in achieving genuine autonomy for all Tibetans based on the middle-way approach".

"However, as advised by His Holiness the Dalai Lama time and again, we must hope for the better but prepare for the worst. We may have to continue our struggle for many years. Therefore, it's critical that we are able to sustain our cause"

A confidant Sangay believes in dialogue.

"We remain committed to the middle-way approach and reiterate 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," he said.

"The Chinese leadership should adopt a policy that keeps up with the ground reality," added Sangay, who did his

early education from a refugee school in Darjeeling and studied law from Delhi University before moving to Harvard for his doctorate.

His priorities in his second and last five-year stint would be to resolve the issue of Tibet, besides making efforts to introduce new projects wherever and whenever necessary to improve political and administrative efficiency.

Asked about the possible shape and size of his new Kashag (cabinet), he replied diplomatically, saying the most suitable candidates would be inducted, irrespective of their experience or gender.

According to him, the coming 15th cabinet will also continue the many tasks started by the previous cabinet based on the founding principles of unity, innovation and self-reliance.

Sangay reiterated: "We are ready to have dialogue with China anytime and anywhere."

In his first stint, Sangay toured the globe trying to build up support for the Tibetan cause.

European Council President Donald Tusk told Chinese premier Xi Jinping during a press conference last year that the Tibet issue should be resolved through dialogue.

In 2011, the White House released a press statement after President Barack Obama met with the Dalai Lama, applauding the middle-way approach.

The Dalai Lama has lived in India since fleeing his homeland in 1959. The Tibetan administration in exile is based in this northern Indian hill town.

For detailed news visit:
www.tibet.net

Inner Peace? The Dalai Lama Made a Website for That

The New York Times

The Dalai Lama, who tirelessly preaches inner peace while chiding people for their selfish, materialistic ways, has commissioned scientists for a lofty mission: to help turn secular audiences into more self-aware, compassionate humans.

That is, of course, no easy task. So the Dalai Lama ordered up something with a grand name to go with his grand ambitions: a comprehensive Atlas of Emotions to help the more than seven billion people on the planet navigate the morass of their feelings in order to attain peace and happiness.

“It is my duty to publish such work,” the Dalai Lama said.

To create this “map of the mind,” as he called it, the Dalai Lama reached out to a source Hollywood had used to plumb the inner workings of the human psyche.

Specifically, he commissioned his good friend Paul Ekman — a psychologist who helped advise the creators of Pixar’s “Inside Out,” an animated film set inside a girl’s head — to map out the range of human sentiments. Dr. Ekman later distilled them into the five basic emotions depicted in the movie, from anger to enjoyment.

Dr. Ekman’s daughter, Eve, also a psychologist, worked on the project as well, with the goal of producing an interactive guide to human emotions that anyone with an Internet connection could study in a quest for self-understanding, calm and constructive action.

“We have, by nature or biologically, this destructive emotion, also constructive emotion,” the Dalai Lama said. “This innerness, people should pay more attention to, from kindergarten level up to university level. This is not just for knowledge, but in order to create a happy human being. Happy family, happy community and, finally, happy humanity.”

The Dalai Lama paid Dr. Ekman at least

\$750,000 to develop the project, which began with a request several years ago.

“‘When we wanted to get to the New World, we needed a map,’” Dr. Ekman recalled the Dalai Lama telling him. “‘So make a map of emotions so we can get to a calm state.’”

As a first step, Dr. Ekman conducted a survey of 149 scientists (emotion scientists, neuroscientists and psychologists who are published leaders in their fields) to see where there was consensus about the nature of emotions, the moods or states they produce, and related areas.

Based on the survey, Dr. Ekman concluded that there were five broad categories of emotions — anger, fear, disgust, sadness and enjoyment — and that each had an elaborate subset of emotional states, triggers, actions and moods. He then took these findings to a cartography and data visualization firm, Stamen, to depict them in a visual and, hopefully, useful way.

“If it isn’t fun, it’s a failure,” Dr. Ekman said. “It’s got to be fun for people to use.”

Stamen’s founder, Eric Rodenbeck, has created data visualizations for Google, Facebook and MTV, as well as maps showing climate change and rising oceans. But he said the Atlas was the most challenging project he had ever worked on because it was “built around knowledge and wisdom rather than data.”

Not surprisingly, getting scientists to reach a unified understanding of human emotions was difficult.

Dacher Keltner, a professor of psychology at the University of California, Berkeley, also counseled Pixar on establishing and depicting the emotional characters for “Inside Out.” He has even advised Facebook on its emoticons.

While Dr. Keltner took part in Dr. Ekman’s survey, the two are not in com-

plete agreement on the number of core emotions. Dr. Keltner said that the findings the Atlas was based on were not without flaws, but that he saw the project as a good step.

“The survey questions could have allowed for more gray areas,” he said. “But it’s important to take stock of what the scientific consensus is in the field.”

Dr. Ekman emphasized that the Atlas was not a scientific work intended for peer review.

“This is not a science project,” he said. “It is a visualization for what we think has been learned from scientific studies. It’s a transformative process, a work of explanation.”

Whether science project or tool for self-enlightenment, the Dalai Lama wants to keep religion out of it.

“If we see this research work as relying on religious belief or tradition, then it automatically becomes limited,” he said. “Even if you pray to God, pray to Buddha, emotionally, very nice, very good. But every problem, we have created. So I think even God or Buddha cannot do much.”

The Dalai Lama said he hoped the Atlas could be a tool for cultivating good in the world by defeating the bad within us.

“Ultimately, our emotion is the real troublemaker,” he said. “We have to know the nature of that enemy.”

The Dalai Lama said he had been encouraged by President Obama’s reaction to the project when he told him about it in India.

“Obama seems, I think, to show more interest about our inner value,” he said. “In the past, compassion was something of a sign of weakness, or anger a sign of power, sign of strength. Basic human nature is more compassionate. That’s the real basis of our hope.”

Dalai Lama: Must not see all Muslims as Terrorists after Orlando

Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama on Monday called the massacre at a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida, in which 50 people died, a “very serious tragedy,” but said it was wrong to see all Muslims as potential terrorists.

Asked in an interview with Reuters about U.S. Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump’s reiteration of a call after the shooting for a ban on Muslims entering the country, the Dalai Lama said the billionaire businessman was entitled to his opinion.

However, he added that if he had a chance, he would ask Trump “What’s his reason? More detail.”

The Dalai Lama said that in every religious community, including Buddhist ones, “there are some mischievous people.”

“But you cannot generalize,” he said. “Some individual Muslims may carry out some terrorist activities, but better we should not say ‘Muslim terrorists.’ I think that’s wrong.”

Fifty people, including the gunman, the U.S.-born son of Afghan immigrants who had declared his allegiance to Islamic State militants, were killed in the attack at the Orlando nightclub on Sunday morn-

ing. It was the worst mass shooting in U.S. history.

Trump and his Democratic rival Hillary Clinton are at odds over how to respond to such attacks, with the latter warning against demonizing Muslims and calling for tougher gun safety measures.

Speaking earlier at Washington’s U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP), the Dalai Lama said that by nature, women were more compassionate and if more world leaders were female, “there may be less trouble, less violence.”

“Of course, some ladies, females, are exceptional,” he added. “Equally, some males are very compassionate.”

Asked by Reuters if it was time for a female leader in the United States, he said, “that’s up to the people of this country,” although he added that past female world leaders such as India’s Indira Gandhi, Israel’s Golda Meir, Britain’s Margaret Thatcher and Germany’s Angela Merkel had set good examples.

Asked if he would meet President Barack Obama during his three-day visit to Washington, the Dalai Lama said it was “not finalized, but some friends say he may meet me.”

Obama met the Dalai Lama when the

latter visited Washington in 2014 and vowed “strong support” for Tibetans’ human rights, angering China which sees the spiritual leader as an anti-Chinese separatist.

Asked how Beijing (Peking) might respond this time, the Dalai Lama said: “I don’t know – you should ask them. I think in Peking, we cannot as of now generalize. In Peking there are different views. Some people there have a more realistic view. Some are more hardline, which is more narrow-minded.”

At the start of the USIP event, the Dalai Lama called on the audience to observe a moment of silence for the Orlando victims.

“Yesterday, very serious tragedy, Orlando. So let us (say) some silent prayer, OK,” he said, while adding afterwards: “Although, one Buddhist monk grows quite skeptical about the effects of prayer.”

Real change, he said, required serious action, including better education, to ensure more compassion and tolerance in the world, and it was important not to lose “determination or courage.”

“Then on top of that, some prayer is OK, no harm,” he said.

White House Press Release on President Obama’s Meeting with His Holiness the Dalai Lama

The President accepted the Dalai Lama’s condolences for the shooting in Orlando, Florida on June 12 and commended the Dalai Lama for his efforts to promote compassion, empathy, and respect for others. The President and the Dalai Lama discussed the situation for Tibetans in the People’s Republic of China, and the President emphasized his strong support for the preservation of Tibet’s unique religious, cultural, and linguistic traditions and the equal protection of human rights of Tibetans in China. The President lauded the Dalai Lama’s commitment to peace and nonviolence and expressed support for the Dalai Lama’s “Middle Way” approach.

The President encouraged meaningful and direct dialogue between the Dalai Lama and his representatives with Chinese authorities to lower tensions and resolve differences. In this context, the President reiterated the longstanding U.S. position that Tibet is a part of the People’s Republic of China, and the United States does not support Tibetan independence. The Dalai Lama stated that he is not seeking independence for Tibet and hopes that dialogue between his representatives and the Chinese government will resume. The President and the Dalai Lama agreed on the importance of a constructive and productive relationship between the United States and China.

The President welcomed the Dalai Lama’s leadership on climate change issues, and expressed support for the Dalai Lama’s efforts to raise awareness of the importance of limiting global warming, including to protect the Himalayan glaciers and the environment on the Tibetan plateau.

Middle-Way to Remain Official Policy of CTA: Lobsang Sangay

By Varinder Bhatia, Indian Express

Dr Sangay, who has led the 150,000-odd Tibetan diaspora since 2011 when the Dalai Lama relinquished his political power, won more than 57 per cent of the almost 60,000 votes polled.



Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama, poses for a photograph with Lobsang Sangay, who was sworn in as Prime Minister of the Tibetan government-in-exile for the second five-year term in Dharmshala, India, Friday, May 27, 2016.

The re-elected political leader of Tibetans in exile – Sikyong (Prime Minister of Tibetans in exile), Dr Lobsang Sangay on Friday declared that the “Middle Way” policy proposed by the 14th Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso, will remain as the official policy of the Central Tibetan Administration.

Dr Sangay, who has led the 150,000-odd Tibetan diaspora since 2011 when the Dalai Lama relinquished his political power, won more than 57 per cent of the almost 60,000 votes polled. He was sworn in, here on Friday as the exiled Tibetans’ Prime Minister for the second consecutive term of five years. The Speaker and Deputy Speaker will be sworn-in on May 31, while the other ministers shall take oath on June 1.

While delivering his inaugural address during a grand ceremony, in Dharamshala, Dr Sangay praised India for being a “perfect host” and said, “Among the refugees, Tibetan community might be the most successful and self-reliant community across the globe”.

While addressing the gathering, Lobsang Sangay also requested Chinese government to resume dialogue with the “envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama” so that the issue of Tibetan cause

can be resolved amicably.

“The Middle Way Policy as envisioned by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and adopted unanimously as a policy by the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile will continue to be the official policy. We are committed to make efforts towards the holding of talks between the envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the representatives of the Chinese government and resolve the issue of Tibet peacefully during His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s lifetime”, Sangay said.

After the “negative” campaign by candidates for the post of Sikyong (prime minister) in the Tibetan Parliament in Exile (TPIE), both Lobsang Sangay and former Speaker of the TPIE were rebuked by the state oracles. Even the Dalai Lama had expressed his displeasure over the functioning of CTA in April, this year.

During his address after taking oath as the Sikyong, Lobsang Sangay also sought Dalai Lama’s forgiveness. “In the recent election of the Sikyong and Chithue, there have been a series of unfortunate events that went counter to the Tibetan tradition of humility and good conduct. This has greatly saddened and disappointed His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We ceaselessly beg His Holiness the Dalai Lama for his forgiveness. We all firmly pledge not to repeat these misconduct in future”, Sangay said.

“The Kashag (Cabinet) pledges to strive fully in realizing the aspirations of the Tibetan people in his lifetime”, Sangay added.

Referring to the self-immolation incidents inside Tibet, Sangya said, “Supreme sacrifices have been made by Tibetan brothers and sisters for the cause of Tibet. Since 2009, 144 Tibetans had self-immolated. Their sacrifices will not

go in vain. I stand in solidarity with and express my sincere appreciation for the patriotic fervour that continues to burn in Tibet in all Tibetan hearts particularly the monastics, the scholars and writers, the teachers and students, the singers, the farmers and the nomads”.

On the occasion, Sangay also announced another policy to be implemented by him during his second term, the policy, titled – five-fifty.

“His Holiness the Dalai Lama has time and again advised us to hope for the best and prepare for the worst. Therefore, I had proposed the strategy of five-fifty. In the next five years, it is clear that we must put maximum efforts in achieving genuine autonomy for all Tibetans based on the Middle Way Approach. However, in case, we have to continue our struggle for many years, we need to strategize in order to strengthen and sustain our cause for the next 50 years. We have to protect and preserve our unique Tibetan identity and tradition. We need to build self-reliance in the Tibetan world, in both education and economy. Five-Fifty is a strategy for success. In five years we can achieve genuine autonomy or in the next fifty years China will gradually change for the better. Either way we will gain basic freedom”, Sangay said expressing hope that the exiled Tibetans shall surely be able to go back to Tibet during the lifetime of the Dalai Lama.

Besides various spiritual leaders of the Tibetan monasteries across the world, officials of Himachal Pradesh government and district administration of Kangra were also present on the occasion.

For detailed news visit:
www.tibet.net

At Tibetan PM's swearing-in, Dalai Lama Cautions Against Sectarian, Regional Divide

Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama on Friday, 27 May pointed towards the negative campaigns that took place in the lead up to the Tibetan general elections held in March, cautioning the community-in-exile against sectarian divide.

He was speaking at the swearing in of Tibetan Prime Minister-in-exile Lobsang Sangay, who took the oath of office for his second term as PM. At the event, Sangay said he hoped that the half-a-century old "Tibet issue will be resolved peacefully" during the "lifetime of spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama".

"The danger of regional and sectarian divide loomed large during the elections. I was pained to see degradation of morality and overtones of regional loyalty. It is very unfortunate," Dalai Lama said in his speech at the swearing-in ceremony.

"Unity of the three traditional provinces of Tibet is of primary importance. We have preserved our traditions over

centuries and our culture is based on this unity. Therefore, we should do away with this warped sense of loyalty to regions and move on as one," he added. Being followers of Buddha, the spiritual leader said, we should be embarrassed at what happened during the election campaign.

"I don't blame the majority. However, there are some fringe elements within the community who take pleasure in dividing the society on regional lines," he noted, urging Tibetan leaders, staff and public to keep unity of Tibetan people in mind.

The most important aspect of the Tibetan movement, he further said, should be to fulfill the aspirations of Tibetans who continue to remain in Tibet and the Tibetan movement should be based solely on the principle of non-violence.

"I have worked wholeheartedly for the Tibetan cause for over 57 years," the spiritual leader said, adding that although he has devolved his political

-By Naresh Thakur, Hindustan Times
responsibility he would continue to work for Tibet's culture and religion. With our hard work and the generous assistance of the Indian and other foreign governments and organisations, the Dalai Lama said, we have reached a stage where we are unique among equals.

He further called for a renewed emphasis on holistic education for Tibetan children.

"There are over 1.5 lakh Tibetans in exile. We should not just be satisfied with a successful livelihood. We should focus on a holistic education of our children," he said. "Despite the great heights that modern education has reached, it is still inadequate when it comes to inner values."

Dalai Lama also traced the roots of Tibetan Buddhism to the Nalanda tradition of India and said it was among the best in the world, primarily for being based on scientific analysis and logical study.

34th Kalachakra to be Held from 3 – 14 January 2017

The 34th Kalachakra initiations would be held from 3 – 14 January 2017, according to a circular issued by the Kashag secretariat on 24 May 2016.

"As per the request of the Kashag, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has already announced at the Tashi Lhunpo monastery earlier this year that he will hold the Kalachakra initiations in January 2017," the circular said.

"Therefore, we would like to inform you that the Kalachakra initiations will be held at the holy city of Bodh Gaya from 3 – 14 January 2017," the circular added.

Since 1954, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has given 33 Kalachakra Initiations, including four times at Bodh Gaya in 1974, 1985, 2003 and 2012. The Kalachakra held in 2012 at Bodh Gaya drew over 200,000 devotees from across the world including about 8,000-10,000 Tibetans from Tibet.

The Dalai Lama: Why I'm Hopeful About the World's Future

- The Washington Post

Almost six decades have passed since I left my homeland, Tibet, and became a refugee. Thanks to the kindness of the government and people of India, we Tibetans found a second home where we could live in dignity and freedom, able to keep our language, culture and Buddhist traditions alive.

My generation has witnessed so much violence — some historians estimate that more than 200 million people were killed in conflicts in the 20th century.

Today, there is no end in sight to the horrific violence in the Middle East, which in the case of Syria has led to the greatest refugee crisis in a generation. Appalling terrorist attacks — as we were sadly reminded this weekend — have created deep-seated fear. While it would be easy to feel a sense of hopelessness and despair, it is all the more necessary in the early years of the 21st century to be realistic and optimistic.

There are many reasons for us to be hopeful. Recognition of universal human rights, including the right to self-determination, has expanded beyond anything imagined a century ago. There is growing international consensus in support of gender equality and respect for women. Particularly among the younger generation, there is a widespread rejection of war as a means of solving problems. Across the world, many are doing valuable work to prevent terrorism, recognizing the depths of misunderstanding and the divisive idea of “us” and “them” that is so dangerous. Significant reductions in the world’s arsenal of nuclear weapons mean that setting a timetable for further reductions and ultimately the elimination of nuclear weapons — a sentiment President Obama recently reiterated in Hiroshima, Japan — no longer seem a mere dream.

The notion of absolute victory for one side and defeat of another is thoroughly outdated; in some situations, following conflict, suffering arises from a state that cannot be described as either war or peace. Violence inevitably incurs further

violence. Indeed, history has shown that nonviolent resistance ushers in more durable and peaceful democracies and is more successful in removing authoritarian regimes than violent struggle.

It is not enough simply to pray. There are solutions to many of the problems we face; new mechanisms for dialogue need to be created, along with systems of education to inculcate moral values. These must be grounded in the perspective that we all belong to one human family and that together we can take action to address global challenges.

It is encouraging that we have seen many ordinary people across the world displaying great compassion toward the plight of refugees, from those who have rescued them from the sea, to those who have taken them in and provided friendship and support. As a refugee myself, I feel a strong empathy for their situation, and when we see their anguish, we should do all we can to help them. I can also understand the fears of people in host countries, who may feel overwhelmed. The combination of circumstances draws attention to the vital importance of collective action toward restoring genuine peace to the lands these refugees are fleeing.

Tibetan refugees have firsthand experience of living through such circumstances and, although we have not yet been able to return to our homeland, we are grateful for the humanitarian support we have received through the decades from friends, including the people of the United States.

A further source of hope is the genuine cooperation among the world’s nations toward a common goal evident in the Paris accord on climate change. When global warming threatens the health of this planet that is our only home, it is only by considering the larger global interest that local and national interests will be met.

I have a personal connection to this issue because Tibet is the world’s highest plateau and is an epicenter of global cli-

mate change, warming nearly three times as fast as the rest of the world. It is the largest repository of water outside the two poles and the source of the Earth’s most extensive river system, critical to the world’s 10 most densely populated nations.

To find solutions to the environmental crisis and violent conflicts that confront us in the 21st century, we need to seek new answers. Even though I am a Buddhist monk, I believe that these solutions lie beyond religion in the promotion of a concept I call secular ethics. This is an approach to educating ourselves based on scientific findings, common experience and common sense — a more universal approach to the promotion of our shared human values.

Over more than three decades, my discussions with scientists, educators and social workers from across the globe have revealed common concerns. As a result, we have developed a system that incorporates an education of the heart, but one that is based on study of the workings of the mind and emotions through scholarship and scientific research rather than religious practice. Since we need moral principles — compassion, respect for others, kindness, taking responsibility — in every field of human activity, we are working to help schools and colleges create opportunities for young people to develop greater self-awareness, to learn how to manage destructive emotions and cultivate social skills. Such training is being incorporated into the curriculum of many schools in North America and Europe — I am involved with work at Emory University on a new curriculum on secular ethics that is being introduced in several schools in India and the United States.

It is our collective responsibility to ensure that the 21st century does not repeat the pain and bloodshed of the past. Because human nature is basically compassionate, I believe it is possible that decades from now we will see an era of peace — but we must work together as global citizens of a shared planet.

Final Declaration of the First International Conference of Sino-Tibetan Friendship Associations in Taipei, Taiwan, 2016

In light of the continued deterioration in the state of environment, religion and culture and human rights in Tibet under the rule of Chinese government, Tibetan and Chinese associations and experts from across the globe have gathered in Taiwan for the First International Conference of Sino-Tibetan Friendship Associations in 2016.

The conference urges all to cherish the democratic experience of Taiwan and to condemn the Chinese government's suppression of Taiwan's freedom and democracy as well as its international space.

The conference reaffirms the principles and values of finding truth, environmental protection, constitutional government and dialogue. These must be considered as the fundamental values of all future endeavors also.

During this conference, more than 150 people from the world over who are concerned about Tibet have following a three-day meeting issued this common declaration:

The Common Consensus of the Conference

- According to historical facts, Tibet is historically an independent country.
- The national self-determination is an innate right of the Tibetan people.
- The realization of a genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people is integral to the constitutional transformation in China.
- While condemning the White Paper published by the Chinese Government in 2015, Tibet's Path of Development is Driven by an Irresistible Historical Tide, for distorting and negating the Middle-Way Approach, the conference supports the Middle-Way Policy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration.
- We oppose the Chinese government for

stating that the Tibet issue is an internal matter. The concern for Tibet's human rights, religion and culture, language and environment is not only a right but a responsibility of the international community.

Appeal to the International Community

- To urge the Chinese government to initiate, under the supervision of the United Nations and the international media, dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration.
- Since the protection of Tibet's environment is directly related to the environment and the future well-being of the entire humanity, we urge the international community to take collective responsibility for it.
- To constitute an independent investigative group to probe the cause of Tulku Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's death in prison and the truth behind the torture of Tibetan political prisoners and the deaths in detention centers.

Appeal to the Chinese Government

- Since the Tibetan Buddhist tradition of reincarnation is an integral part of Tibetan culture, we oppose the Chinese government's brutal intervention in the matters of recognizing reincarnation. Only His Holiness the Dalai Lama has the right to make decision on the issue of the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama.
- The Chinese government should immediately release the Panchen Lama and all other political prisoners of Tibet.
- Economic development cannot be undertaken at the expense of the destruction of Tibet's environment. The interest and opinion of Tibetan people must be taken into consideration in the decision-making process.
- The Tibetan nomadic way of life must be respected. The economic

development must not turn Tibetan nomads into environmental refugees.

- The Tibetan language must be respected and protected. The Tibetan language should be made the first official language in all public and official spheres.
- While writing the textbook of Tibetan language and history, their content should reflect Tibetan history and culture.

Appeal to the Central Tibetan Administration

- The Central Tibetan Administration, while conducting an annual survey of books published in Tibetan, English and Chinese as well as other languages, the promotion of Tibetan writing is important.
- To convene a global conference of Tibetan Buddhism in order to strengthen better exchanges and cooperation among Tibetan Buddhist centers.
- To continue organizing Sino-Tibetan meetings to conduct discussions.

Appeal to the NGO's

- On humanitarian grounds, [we] urge the cessation of the Tibetan protests in the form of self-immolation.
- Making full use of the cyberspace to promote awareness about the reality in Tibet and the ideas of freedom and democracy as well as [in reaching out to] to the Chinese people and [raising their awareness]
- To [oppose] the colonialism and the policy of cultural genocide carried out by the Chinese government in Tibet.
- To establish a liaison office for coordinating the Sino-Tibetan friendship associations across the globe and facilitating implementation of future works.

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QUOTES

“In Tibet I thought that Buddhism was best. I’m a student of the Nalanda tradition making extensive use of logic and reason, cultivating a healthy scepticism. In exile I’ve come across many followers of other religious traditions who have dedicated themselves to others’ well-being on the basis of their faith. All our religious traditions include the practice of love and compassion, therefore it’s proper to regard them with respect,” His Holiness the Dalai Lama during a meeting with members of the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) on 14 June 2016.

“In the next five years, it is clear that we must put maximum efforts in achieving genuine autonomy for all Tibetans based on the Middle Way Approach. However, in case, we have to continue our struggle for many years, we need to strategize in order to strengthen and sustain our cause for the next 50 years. We have to protect and preserve our unique Tibetan identity and tradition. We need to build self-reliance in the Tibetan world, in both education and economy. Five-Fifty is a strategy for success. In five years we can achieve genuine autonomy or in the next fifty years China will gradually change for the better. Either way we will gain basic freedom.,” Sikyong Dr Lobsang Sangay explaining his five-fifty strategy for his second term in office.

“The Tibetan diaspora, once housed mainly in the camps and settlements of India, is now global. Even after six decades of exile, Tibetans have retained a distinct sense of identity and community. There are many reasons to honour the Central Tibetan Administration but principal among them is the establishment of an effective and representative government. The CTA has grown significantly for the last 60 years. At the core of the CTA is a commitment to democratic values and institutions, electing members of parliament since 1960’s and directly electing the Sikyong since 2001,” Mr Martin Frost, Chairman of NED board of Directors, in his remarks during NED’s event to Honour Tibetan democracy.

“Congress has expressed staunch support for our cause. We are not seeking independence because we don’t want to enter into confrontation with our Chinese brothers and sisters. However, Chinese documents reveal that in the 9th century independent Tibetan, Chinese and Mongolian empires flourished. What we seek now is a mutually beneficial solution to the problems between us. Buddhism in both China and Tibet derives from the Nalanda tradition, but the transmission to Tibet was far more comprehensive and is therefore worth preserving. We are also concerned about the ecology of the Tibetan Plateau,” His Holiness the Dalai Lama during a meeting with the US Congressional Leadership on 14 June 2016.
