



Statement of the Kashag on the 29th Anniversary of Conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet

The 15th Kashag of the Central Tibetan Administration expresses its deepest gratitude and bows down to our most revered leader His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet. Twenty-nine years ago, His Holiness was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of his non-violent campaign for over nearly 40 years to restore freedom for Tibetans in Tibet.

In his acceptance speech, His Holiness said, "No matter what part of the world we come from, we are all basically the same human beings. We all seek happiness and try to avoid suffering. We have the same basic human needs and concerns. All of us human beings want freedom and the right to determine our own destiny as individuals and as peoples."

His Holiness' simple, yet powerful words resonate loudly in today's political discourse and in the beliefs of many people. The young boy from the remote Taktser village in Amdo would go on to touch the hearts of millions because of his kindness and his staunch commitment to non-violence. From ordinary people to the world's most influential leaders, His Holiness' teachings are practised as a way of life and a way to achieve peace and harmony among all human beings.

At present, His Holiness devotes much of his efforts towards reviving the ancient Indian Nalanda tradition. His Holiness engages in discussion with renowned scientists to understand the working of mind and emotion and how this study can be incorporated into modern education to ensure genuine happiness for generations to come. Time and again His Holiness has stressed the importance of studying the Nalanda tradition, irrespective of differences in faith. The Central and State governments of India have fully supported this initiative for which we are grateful.

Today is also observed as the Human Rights Day, and this year the world is celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Article 1 of the UDHR declares that "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." However, the fundamental human rights enshrined in this milestone document in international human rights are trampled upon in Tibet under the oppressive Chinese Communist Party regime. Tibetans in Tibet are subjected to arbitrary detention, imprisonment, torture, and other

forms of cruel treatment. Anyone who dares to speak out on rights and freedom of religion, culture, and language face severe consequences.

The recent circular on "Reporting Leads on Crimes and Violation by Underworld Forces" issued by so-called Tibet Autonomous Region's (TAR) Public Security Bureau indicates the continuation and further restrictions in Tibet. The circular is now being implemented in the other Tibetan areas apart from the so-called TAR. The circular lists 22 activities deemed illegal by the Chinese authorities and wants the Tibetan people to report amongst which includes the protection of native language, protection of the environment and the dissemination of information on the Middle Way Approach. Tibetans involved in these 22 activities are incriminated as reactionaries, separatists and promoters of narrow-minded nationalist thinking. On one hand, the Chinese government proclaims that the door for negotiation with His Holiness the Dalai Lama is always open and on the other hand it incriminates Tibetans for advocating Middle Way Approach. This is sheer hypocrisy.

Another indication of the prevalent repression in Tibet is the travel restrictions imposed on Tibetans. The Chinese government is implementing even more restrictions on travels outside of Tibet whether it is to meet family or for pilgrimage. The government is even rescinding travel permits, revoking passports already issued and making it harder to obtain the same. Tibetans in Tibet are therefore facing severe restrictions on their freedom of movement both within and outside of Tibet.

Tibetans continue to protest non-violently against the repressive Chinese government rule. Since 2009, 153 Tibetans have resorted to self-immolation sacrificing their precious lives unanimously calling for freedom in Tibet and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. On November 4, 2018, Dupo, a young man of 23 years from Ngaba, Choejema, Jako Depa set himself alight shouting, "May the Dalai Lama live long! May we soon behold his golden countenance!" thus making clear the aspirations of the Tibetan people. The ongoing violation of the Tibetan people's fundamental rights and freedoms by the Chinese government is well documented in reports by the United Nations and other reputed rights organizations.

On November 6 China faced its third Universal Periodic Review (UPR) at the Human Rights Council in Geneva. A total of 12 members of States; Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States expressed concerns over human rights violations in Tibet, in particular over the freedom of religion and belief, freedom of expression and assembly and the imprisonment of Tibetan language advocate Tashi Wangchuk. A call for unhindered access to diplomats and UN representatives to Tibet were also made. New Zealand specially called for the "Resumption of the two way dialogue on Tibet." Therefore, on behalf of all Tibetans, the Kashag take this opportunity to express our gratitude to all the countries who spoke up for Tibet at the review and urge all freedom and justice loving people to continue to stand in solidarity with us.

In September this year, the United States House of Representatives passed a Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act, a bipartisan bill that will deny U.S. entry to Chinese officials who prohibit

entry to American citizens into Tibet. On November 28, the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously approved the introduction of the Act. The Act expresses its support for Tibetans in Tibet and challenges the Chinese government on the authenticity of its propagandist rendition of prosperity in Tibet.

Besides the gross human rights violation, the Chinese government, since its occupation of Tibet in 1949 have severely damaged Tibet's fragile environment through so-called developmental activities. To power Chinese cities, the Chinese authorities conduct excessive mining and construct many dams. These have triggered the recent twin landslides and flooding incidents along the riverbed areas of Drichu River in Jomda and Palyul, in Chamdo, Eastern Tibet and consequently the evacuation of more than 30,000 people. We therefore strongly urge the Chinese government to immediately cease these environmentally hazardous activities.

This year marks 60 years of Tibetans in exile. Tibetans should reflect on the past 60 years, take pride in achievements and take precautions from facing letdowns. We should never forget the reason we are in exile and of our common aspiration to be united with Tibetans in Tibet. We should remember the dedication, hard work and the commitments of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and our elders. We should keep in our mind His Holiness' advancing age and at this critical juncture of our cause, collectively fulfill our duties to the larger Tibetan cause with utmost dedication and sincerity.

Taking this opportunity, the Kashag would like to remember the support of leaders of various nations, parliamentarians, intellectuals, scholars, human rights organizations and Tibetan Support Groups, who with their unwavering faith in truth and justice have been steadfast in their support for the Tibetan people. In particular, we will always remember the kindness and magnanimity of the people and Government of India. India has been crucial in enabling us to preserve our identity and for ensuring the welfare of the Tibetan people in exile. For this, we extend our heartfelt gratitude.

Finally, we sincerely pray for a healthy and long life of our most esteemed leader His Holiness the Great Fourteenth Dalai Lama of Tibet. May all his wishes be fulfilled. May there be an immediate resolution to the issue of Tibet.

Kashag
Dec 10, 2018

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