

Statement of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile on the occasion of commemorating the 29th anniversary of the conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama*

Today is a momentous occasion marking the 29th anniversary of the day on which the omniscient His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama, the head ornament in the domains of cyclic existence and of Nirvana including the heavenly abodes, the spiritual lord of the three realms, champion of peace in this world, the master of the corpus of all the teachings of the Buddha on this earth, the destined deity of the people of the Snowland of Tibet, the supreme Bodhisattva reigning the world emanated in human manifestation, the saviour of all the Tibetan people and their supreme leader, was conferred the most renowned of awards, the Nobel Peace Prize. And I, on behalf of the entirety of the Tibetan people in Tibet and in exile, offer my greetings and congratulations to His Holiness with a feeling of joy, faith and contentment, remembering the gratitude we all owe to Him.

The Nobel Peace Prize was instituted by Sir Alfred B Nobel (1833-1896), a Swedish chemist, businessman, inventor, and philanthropist. It was as a result of his life-long hard work that a substantial portion of his personal fortune was set aside and endowed in his name to annually honour people who had made outstanding contributions to humanity in such fields of knowledge and endeavour as literature, peace, physical science, chemistry, in medical science or physiology, and economics without any distinction of nationality. It was thus that the Nobel Peace Prize was one of the awards signed into his last will and testament by Sir Alfred B Nobel and is presented each year by tradition on the 10th of December, the anniversary of his passing away in 1896. The Nobel Prize for peace has become particularly renowned across the world for its recognition of those who have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and armaments and for the holding and promotion of peace congresses. The first Nobel Peace Prize was awarded in 1901 and since then it has been awarded 99 times as of the year 2018. And the recipients thus far have included 27 organizations and 106 individuals.

It was in 1989 that the Nobel Prize for peace was awarded to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the supreme leader of the Tibetan people. The Norwegian Nobel Committee said at that time with emphatic stress: “the Dalai Lama in His struggle for the liberation of Tibet consistently has opposed the use of violence. He has instead advocated peaceful solutions based upon tolerance and mutual respect in order to preserve the historical and cultural heritage of His people. The Dalai Lama has developed His philosophy of peace from a great reverence for all things living and upon the concept of universal responsibility embracing all mankind as well as nature. He has come forward with constructive and forward-looking proposals for the solution of international conflicts, human rights issues, and global environmental problems.”

Likewise, while accepting the prize at the award ceremony, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said: “I believe the prize is a recognition of the true value of altruism, love, compassion and non-violence which I try to practice, in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha and the great sages of India and Tibet.

“I accept the prize with profound gratitude on behalf of the oppressed everywhere and for all those who struggle for freedom and work for world peace. I accept it as a tribute to the man who founded the modern tradition of non-violent action for change – Mahatma Gandhi – whose life taught and inspired me. And, of course, I accept it on behalf of the six million Tibetan people, my

brave countrymen and women inside Tibet, who have suffered and continue to suffer so much. They confront a calculated and systematic strategy aimed at the destruction of their national and cultural identities. The prize reaffirms our conviction that with truth, courage and determination as our weapons, Tibet will be liberated.”

In carrying out all His altruistic deeds in general and especially for the promotion and revival of the globally beneficial Tibetan ethnicity and culture, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has relied solely on the method of nonviolence based on the teachings of the Buddha and on the profound values taught by Mahatma Gandhi. It is by this means that He has sought to achieve a fair outcome for the just cause of the Tibetan people. Likewise, He has at all times borne in mind the need for mutual understanding, friendship, fairness, and compassion in effectively carrying out long-term objectives designed to be beneficial to everyone while striving to settle conflicts, assuming responsibility to promote human rights, and working for the protection of the natural environment so as to ensure the realization of a meaningful state of peace in the international community. For these highly admirable noble deeds, which He still continues to remain fully committed to, His Holiness the Dalai Lama won the heart of the people across the global community and it culminated in the Nobel Peace Prize, the most acclaimed of all awards for peace, being conferred on Him.

Today is an important day worthy of being rejoiced with celebrations for people across the world who value democracy, freedom, and peace. That is why we felt it pertinent to reiterate the historical event that took place 29 years ago.

The Nobel Peace Prize for this year has been awarded to female activist Nadia Murad of Iraq and physician Denis Mukwege of the Democratic Republic of Congo. In a show of great feeling of common concern, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said in a congratulatory message to them that the award was recognition of the formidable courage, determination and resilience they had shown in the face of great adversity to help and support fellow human beings who had endured appalling pain and trauma. His Holiness commended them for having put compassion into action and further said the work they had done to restore the well-being of others in need demonstrated the strength of compassion. His Holiness also expressed his great admiration for brothers and sisters like them who had unflinchingly reached out to give comfort and protection to those in dire need of help. And He spoke of looking forward to working with them in their common effort towards making this world a better place for everyone.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama set up 'The Foundation for Universal Responsibility of His Holiness the Dalai Lama' in New Delhi in November 1990 with the fund of Nobel Peace Prize award. Through this foundation His Holiness has sought to promote universal human values across the world; to strive to ensure that people across the world coexist in a state of nonviolence and peace; to work towards realizing mutual understanding and fraternity among the different religions of this world, the rights of women as well as the rights of everyone without any gender discrimination, and the protection of the natural environment; to carry out discussions and conference between science and Buddhism; and engaged in the promotion of Tibetan Buddhism and culture, especially the Nalanda tradition on which it is based. Through these and other means His Holiness remains in continued preoccupation with the issue of Tibet in its vast and numerous aspects.

In His efforts to bring about the realization of an international order which would be founded on peace and which would eschew hostility, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has adopted a set of four commitments directed at bringing about happiness as the common lot of the entire humanity; fraternal relationship among the different religious traditions; the maintenance, preservation and development of the Tibetan Buddhist culture; and the revival of the noble traditions of ancient India inherited by the Tibetan people. In keeping with these commitments, His Holiness has carried out a number of eventful and profound deeds recently while visiting South India, New Delhi, and Ladakh, as well as numerous other countries that included Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, and Switzerland in Europe. More recently, His Holiness also visited the Japanese capital and cities of Tokyo, Yokohama, Fukuoka, and Kashiwa in November in this connection. It was thanks to His Holiness the Dalai Lama's enormous deeds during such visits that different religious traditions across the world have developed an appreciable depth of mutual respect and friendly relationship. Four International Buddhist Peace Conferences have been held thus far in the course of this development. A Mind & Life Institute has been established and so far a total of 33 Mind & Life Conferences have been held. In particular, the government of India's national capital region of New Delhi recently introduced a new subject called Happiness Curriculum in its schools. Likewise, at Dharamshala, His Holiness has continued to not only welcome visits by Tibetans, students of different ethnicities from countries across the world, eminent personages, youths, and ordinary masses but also afforded to them numerous counsels commensurate with today's age and time, directed at efforts to bring peace in this world, friendly relationship among different religious faith traditions, on education in general and on Tibet's language and script, Buddhist religious characteristics, and the protection of the natural environment in particular, and effort towards improvement in emotional health of every individual so as to thereby bring light to their darkness of ignorance.

In the month of December last year, an interfaith conference was held at the Jawaharlal Nehru University with the participation of leaders from the Christian, Islamic, Hindu, Sikh, Jain, Jewish and other religious faiths. While presenting to Him the Syedna Qutbuddin Harmony Prize in recognition of His outstanding efforts in building bridges and promoting peace, Syedna Taher Fakur Fakhruddin Saheb, the head of the Dawoodi Bohra community of the Shia Ismaili Muslims, lauded His Holiness the Dalai Lama for His outstanding efforts in promoting global peace and harmonious coexistence among different peoples on the basis of the recognition of the commonality of all human beings without any distinction founded on religion, race and so on. More recently, in November this year, President Mototaka Hiroike of Reitaku University in the Japanese city of Kashiwa honoured His Holiness the Dalai Lama with an honorary Doctorate of Literature degree of the university. Likewise, numerous governmental as well as private entities of various kinds in many countries have over the decades presented to His Holiness awards and honours running into hundreds. These represent support for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's efforts in the promotion of human rights, freedom, and the well-being of humanity and we, the entire people of the Snowland of Tibet, should justly feel proud of them. In order that all the wishes of His Holiness the Dalai Lama may be seen fulfilled with utmost spontaneity, we should fully carry out in a wholehearted manner His nectar-like advices delivered in pearl-like series on such diverse subjects as fairness, non-violence, endeavours for achieving peace, morality in conduct, efforts at settling disputes in a peaceful manner, being of help to all living beings, understanding the hygiene of the mind and so on. This is of enormous importance and I appeal to everyone with emphatic stress to carry them out.

Each year, the number support from places across the world for the just cause of the Tibetans keeps increasing substantially as a result of the enormity of the renown and deeds of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In the early part of November this year, the United Nations Human Rights Council in the Swiss city of Geneva held its third periodic review of China's human rights record during its 31st session. And during the review process, a total of 12 state parties – namely, Australia, Canada, Austria, Germany, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Denmark, France, and Japan – made clear their strong concern about the human right situation in Tibet in general and the situation concerning Tibet's natural environment, particularly on the freedom of religious belief, and on freedom of assembly and association which they pointed out were marked by tight restrictions. Besides, they also referred to the situation of the Tibetan language rights activist Mr. Tashi Wangchuk who had been jailed for his activism. And because restrictions imposed on the freedom of religion with regard to the study, teaching, and practice of religion of the people of Tibet were perceived by them to be particularly harsh, it was recommended that China allow a delegation of officials from the United Nations to undertake a visit to investigate the situation without imposing any kind of restrictions in the territory. In particular, they also recommended that in order to settle the issue of Tibet, China resume the mutually beneficial bilateral dialogue on the basis of the Middle Way Approach.

Recently, during His visit to Japan, members of the All Party Japanese Parliamentary Group for Tibet (APJPGT) spoke in one voice to compliment His Holiness the Dalai Lama, whom they had invited to the parliament, for all His personal efforts. They expressed admiration and high praise for him. They also made clear their strong support for the struggle for the fundamental cause of the Tibetan people. Likewise, governments of countries across the world, parliaments, as well as numerous public and private entities show ever increasing level of support for the Tibetan people's struggle. It is all too obvious to everyone that this shows that the determination of humanity is moving in the direction of democracy, freedom, fairness, and non-violence in keeping with the momentum of the emergent time. Nevertheless, government of China continues to be stubborn in adhering to its hardline position even to this day. And because of it, a major demonstration of protest against the government of China was held in front of the United Nations headquarters in the Swiss city of Geneva on November 6 with the participation of Tibetans, Uyghurs, Mongolians, Taiwanese, and Hong Kong people. Within Tibet, Tibetans people have continued to carry out non-violent protests. And the number of such protests by means of staging self-immolations, has risen to a total of 153 including the most recent immolation by Dobo-la. Among them 131 died.

The government of the communist party of China is clearly seen to pursue a policy of total annihilation of the outer geography and inner natural and human constituent resources of the nation of Tibet. In this connection, it bears pointing out that in October as well as November this year, landslides occurred in Tibet which blocked the Yarlung Tsangpo river and the Driчу river, leading to the creation of barrier lakes. The resultant floods wreaked havoc on the life of the local Tibetan people, destroying a historically antiquated monastery, family homes, school buildings, monastic living quarters and so on. In addition, the geological disasters blocked roads and thousands of Tibetan people were forced to relocate from the disaster zones. The fact that catastrophic major emergencies such as these took place show that the government of China is only interested in the greedy pursuit of wealth by such means as exploiting Tibet's mineral resources, building dams over its rivers and so on without any consideration for the condition of its natural environment. We accordingly call on the government of China to acknowledge its

wrongdoings and, on that basis, imperatively hold discussion on the issue so as to extend help to fully address the hardship of the Tibetan people in recognition of its primary responsibility to solve these problems of our compatriots. Besides, we call on the government of China to release all Tibetan political prisoners, including the language rights activist Mr. Tashi Wangchuk. And we also reiterate our emphatic call on the government of China to dispense with its existing cruel hardline policies and make efforts to resolve the Sino-Tibetan dispute on the basis of the mutually beneficial Middle Way Approach.

In order to achieve resolution of the just cause of the Tibetan people and win ever increasing support for the Tibetan cause, the Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile recently undertook a tour of several countries in Europe with an agenda to raise awareness of and win backing for the issue of Tibet from governments, parliaments, and other organizations etc in the international community. Likewise, members of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile were constituted into teams of delegations and each team undertook visits to the different states of India as well as to other countries to lobby for support for the issue of Tibet and this remains an ongoing programme. In particular programmes to meet with public figures in each state of India has been successfully concluded recently. These interactions have resulted in the most positive of outcomes in terms of continuing support for the issue of Tibet. It is therefore with a feeling of joy and pride that I take the opportunity offered by this occasion to let this be known by the wider public.

A vital matter which all the Tibetan people rooted should firmly bear in mind is the fact that His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama, the savior and protector of all the Tibetan people for this life as well as for lives hereafter of utmost exceptionality, keeps advancing in age. The very fact that His Holiness the Dalai Lama continues to live on this earth is by itself guaranteed to bring joy of utmost fortune – like the sun being at its brightest moment of radiance – to us Tibetan people. Hence, in keeping with a speech with profound implications given by His Holiness the Dalai Lama during His recent sojourn in Ladakh, we should all work to ensure that He lives a longer life. And in order to realize this, all concerned organizations, whether public or private, or welfare and other groups of various kinds, should strive to minimize their visits and other types of engagements for His Holiness the Dalai Lama. This should be kept in mind as a matter of great importance. In this connection the Standing Committee of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile recently submitted an appeal through the Gaden Phodrang Office, requesting that every effort be made to ensure for His Holiness the Dalai Lama more rest times. I therefore appeal to everyone concerned to ensure an effective adherence to the requirement to realize this objective.

With regard to other matters, an International Himalayan Festival is being held today at Dharamshala. And in association with this festival, the general public of the local host community are also taking part in celebrations marking the anniversary of the conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize on His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Such a manner of honouring His Holiness the Dalai Lama for His noble works is a symbolic representation of the fraternal relationship that exists between the Indian and Tibetan peoples. Hence, I wish to compliment and express thanks to all the organizers of this Himalayan festival. Over the last nearly 60 years, the central government of India as well as the state governments and the local administrations at various levels, have extended help, protection and friendship to unimaginable extent of generosity to the Tibetan people and there is no way our gratitude to them could ever be forgotten. Hence, I also take this opportunity to once again express gratitude of the highest order to the central and state

governments as well as the people of India. Likewise, I, on behalf of the Tibetan people both in Tibet and in exile, also wish to express heartfelt thanks to all the governmental as well as private entities, and peoples across the world who have thus far extended support to us with great concern for our just cause.

Finally, we pray with great ferventness that His Holiness the Dalai Lama live to the very end of this world and on that basis see all His great wishes fulfilled with great spontaneity and that the just cause of the Tibetan people be seen definitely accomplished in all speediness.

By the Tibetan Parliament in Exile

10 December 2018

.....
** In case of any discrepancy between this English translation and its Tibetan original, the latter should be considered authoritative and final for all purposes.*