



# Tibet News

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The Newsletter of the **Tibet Information Office** for Australia, New Zealand & South East Asia

## President Obama Meets His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Expresses Support For Result Oriented Dialogue on Tibet

SUNDAY 17 JULY, 2011

**DHARAMSHALA:** US PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA received His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the White House on Saturday, and “encourages direct dialogue to resolve long-standing differences and that a dialogue that produces positive results for China and Tibetans”.

The White House issued a statement following the 45 minutes meeting between President Obama and His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

“The President reiterated his strong support for the preservation of the unique religious, cultural, and linguistic traditions of Tibet and the Tibetan people throughout the world,” the statement noted.

“He underscored the importance of the protection of human rights of Tibetans in China.”

“The President commended the Dalai Lama’s commitment to nonviolence and dialogue with China and his pursuit of the “Middle Way” approach. Reiterating the U.S. policy that Tibet is a part of the People’s Republic of China and the United States does not support independence for Tibet, the President stressed that he encourages direct dialogue to resolve long-standing differences and that a dialogue that produces results would be positive for China and Tibetans.

“The Dalai Lama stated that he is not seeking independence for Tibet and hopes



*His Holiness the Dalai Lama met with President Barack Obama in the Map Room of the White House in Washington DC on 16 July 2011/White House*

that dialogue between his representatives and the Chinese government can soon resume,” the statement noted. ■

## His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 76th Birthday Celebrated in Canberra

TUESDAY 5 JULY, 2011

The Tibetan community and friends in the Australian capital city of Canberra celebrated His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 76th birthday on Saturday, 2 July. Over a hundred people attended the cultural evening which was held in the Multicultural Centre in Canberra City.

The celebrations began with traditional ceremonial sweet rice (drel-si) and tea for all guests and prayers for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's long life by the Tibetan community led by Ven. Tenzin Choephak Ringpapontsang.

This was followed by speeches by the three chief guests. Ven. Alex Bruce, a fully ordained Tibetan Buddhist monk and Associate Professor of Law at the Australian National University spoke of his admiration for His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the importance of His Holiness's teachings in his development as a Buddhist practitioner and human being. Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Australasia and South East Asia, Sonam Norbu Dagpo, spoke about the life of His Holiness and the immense

contribution His Holiness continues to make for the benefit of humanity as a whole through the promotion of human values and inter-religious harmony. Finally, Australian federal Senator Gary Humphries spoke of his respect for the work of His Holiness in the promotion of peace and harmony.

Cultural performances followed a cutting of a giant birthday cake by Representative Sonam Dagpo and Senator Humphries and singing of 'Happy Birthday' by all. Performances included singing of Drug-chu-yangden, a traditional Tibetan birthday song for His Holiness, and the Seytri Ngasol dance by members of the Tibetan community. Well-known Tibetan artist, Lhamo Dolma, also shared a number of evocative traditional songs from Amdo in eastern Tibet. An audience member was heard remarking that these songs felt as though they lifted him up on to the high snow-capped peaks and endless green plains of Tibet. ■

*The event was organised by the Australian Capital Territory Tibetan Community*



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*Photo: Traditional dance performance by Tibetans on the occasion of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 76th birthday in Canberra, Australia, on 2 July 2011*



# Tibet News

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## "My long-cherished aspiration fulfilled," Says His Holiness the Dalai Lama

MONDAY, 8 AUGUST 2011

**DHARAMSHALA:** HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA today said his long-cherished aspiration has been fulfilled, as the Tibetan people put in place Dr. Lobsang Sangay as the democratically elected leader vested with full political authority and responsibility.



Therefore, I always tell that it is wrong for the religious leaders to hold the political authority."

His Holiness further said: "I feel proud to be able to implement what I firmly believe and tell others to put into practice my ideology that the world and countries

Addressing thousands of people at today's swearing-in ceremony of Dr. Lobsang Sangay as the 3rd directly elected Kalon Tripa, His Holiness spoke about his efforts to fully democratise the Tibetan polity in Tibet and later in exile.

His Holiness said Dr. Lobsang Sangay has become the first Tibetan political leader, (Sikyong), elected democratically, and vested with full political authority and responsibility. His Holiness completely handed over his administrative and political powers to the elected Tibet leadership through a democratic process and the amendment of Charter for Tibetans in exile in May this year.

"Today is a proud day for all the Tibetan people who had participated in the democratic elections. My most cherished aspiration has been fulfilled. Most importantly, the Tibetans in exile have taken great initiative and interest, and shouldered huge responsibility to take part in the elections. As a result, we have been able to elect a leader with high standard of modern education. So I would like to thank the general public for their diligent work," His Holiness said.

"The Tibetans in Tibet are not allowed to even express their views and opinions freely, let alone participate in a democratic election, but I am sure they would be proud of the steps that we have taken towards the future when they hear about it," His Holiness laments.

His Holiness further said today is also an important day in the more than 2000-year-long history of Tibet. Even during the reign of the three religious kings, Tibet maintained equal stature with its neighboring countries in every field.

His Holiness reiterated that the power lies in the hands of nearly 70 billion people on this earth and not with the kings and religious leaders. "Similarly, in the case of Tibet, the Tibetan people are the masters of Tibet, and not the religious leaders and kings and their heirs.

belong to the general populace and the period of keeping control through power is outdated. Moreover, I will get more opportunity to speak strongly since I have implemented what I confidently and consistently emphasise the separation of religion and politics."

His Holiness also spoke about the difficult times that he has been facing since assuming the spiritual and temporal leader of Tibet at the tender of 16. "But still, as the spiritual and temporal leader of Tibet, I have put my wholehearted efforts to keep the name of Tibet alive in the world. I consider this as a minor achievement," he added.

"In the last century and the present one, a lot of changes have taken place in the system of democracy. Similarly we, the Tibetan people, have adopted the democratic system and accordingly, I have passed on the political responsibility to Dr. Lobsang Sangay, the democratically elected Kalon Tripa," His Holiness said.

His Holiness said Kalon Tripa will sincerely lead the administration. "In case there is rational criticism from the members of legislature, administrative staffs and members of non-governmental organisations and the general public, otherwise we have to give utmost importance to our common cause instead of personal matters and one's faction using politics."

"Therefore, it would not be in our interest to think about one's personal fame and gain rather than work for our common cause when Tibet is on the verge of life and death," His Holiness added.

"Thanking the Tibetan people for their hard work, he urged them to make efforts to forge unity towards realising our common aspiration," he added.

Braving heavy rain, thousands of Tibetans and well-wishers, including Indian and foreign dignitaries, participated in the swearing-in ceremony with great enthusiasm. ■

# CTA Considers China's New White Paper on Tibet Another Whitewash

In response to China's latest white paper on Tibet, the Department of Information and International Relations of the Central Tibetan Administration issued the following statement during a press conference on 18 July, 2011, in Dharamsala.

THE ULTIMATE JUDGE OF CHINA'S RULE or misrule in Tibet should be the Tibetan people. Ever since the 17-Point Agreement, which was signed under duress in 1951 in Beijing, more than 60 years ago, the Tibetan people have made their judgment clear with their lives and limbs. Even after 60 years of China's invasion of Tibet and more than 50 years after Tibet came under the complete control of Beijing in the aftermath of the repression which crushed that year's popular uprising against Chinese rule, today large parts of Tibet are still under martial law, all but in name. The grim situation in Karze and Ngaba in eastern and northeastern Tibet is a clear judgment made by the Tibetan people of China's sixty years rule of Tibet.

Against this background, for the State Council, the Cabinet of the Chinese Communist government, to issue another white paper on Tibet on 11 July compels the Central Tibetan Administration to consider this document another whitewash of an ongoing and ugly reality. Such a white paper cannot stifle the voices of increasing number of monks, nuns, writers and students who demand greater freedom for Tibet and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to his people.

In fact, the latest white paper is an attempt to cover up the darkest period experienced by the Tibetan people after China's invasion of Tibet. Every vestige of the Tibetan identity is annihilated and more than 1.2 million Tibetans died as a direct result of China's rule of Tibet.

Another startling fact of the nature of China's white papers on Tibet is their frequency. In an open, plural society, no elected government is compelled to issue white papers so frequently. An educated electorate and free media enable people to make their judgment on the performance of their elected representatives during elections. This is not so with China. In the age of the Internet, the Chinese Communist authorities spend enormous

resources to keep the Chinese people ignorant and the media muzzled. In view of this, no amount of cycled and recycled white papers can silence those brave Chinese voices that demand democracy in China and Tibetan voices that call for greater freedoms for the Tibetan people.

Another startling fact is that no other minorities in China have been inflicted with so many white papers as the Tibetan people.

Perhaps one reason for China to waste so much ink and paper on the Tibetans is to counter the enormous and growing sympathy the Tibetan struggle attracts within the international community, including amongst Chinese scholars, writers, public intellectuals and human rights activists in and outside China. The international community, as such, will not be fooled by China's white papers on Tibet.

The Central Tibetan Administration take this opportunity to inform Beijing that the day when the State Council feels that there is no need to issue white papers on Tibet is the day when the reality in Tibet conforms to official Chinese Communist rhetoric.

If the sentiments of the Tibetan people are respected and their aspirations incorporated into state policy, the Tibetan people on their own volition, with no nudging from the Chinese Communist Party, will present their own White Paper to Beijing. For China to deserve such a White Paper from the Tibetan people on its performance in Tibet, Beijing must let the Tibetan people to speak free. Stifling the voices of the Tibetan people in Tibet and using one giant megaphone to trumpet its propaganda to the world will fool no one. The resources and talent of official China can be gainfully used in other fields.

Later, the Central Tibetan Administration will issue a detailed response to the distortion of historical facts and other propaganda on Tibet presented in China's latest white paper. ■

## New Kalons Sworn In

FRIDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 2011

**DHARAMSHALA, India:** THE FIVE KALONS (ministers) among the six newly elected members of the Kashag (cabinet) were sworn in by Chief Justice Commissioner Ngawang Phelgyal Gyelchen at a ceremony at the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission this afternoon. The six nominees of Kalons were unanimously approved by the Parliament during its opening session.

Following the oath-taking ceremony, the Kashag Secretariat organised a ceremony to felicitate the newly inducted members of the Kashag. The heads of the autonomous bodies of the Central Tibetan Administration, secretaries of the CTA departments and representatives of Tibetan NGOs, greeted the Kalons at the ceremony. ■



*Kalon Tripa Dr Lobsang Sangay announcing the portfolios of the new Kalons at the press conference. left to right: Tsering Wangchuk (Kalon for Health), Gyari Dolma (Kalon for Home), Pema Chhinjor (Kalon for Religion & Culture), Kalon Tripa Dr Lobsang Sangay (Kalon for Education), Tsering Dhundup (Kalon for Finance), Dongchung Ngodup (Kalon for Security), Dicki Chhoyang (Kalon for Information & Int'l Relations)*

# Kashag's Statement on the Occasion of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Seventy-Sixth Birthday Celebration

WEDNESDAY, 6 JULY 2011

ON THIS VERY AUSPICIOUS OCCASION of the seventy-sixth birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Kashag, on behalf of all Tibetans in and outside Tibet, would like to offer our heartfelt greetings and at the same time single-mindedly beseech Your Holiness to remain with us to dispel the suffering of all human beings and especially to guide the Tibetans as long as possible.

Today is a special day not only for the Tibetans but for people all over the world for whom a new champion of world peace was discovered. Taking this opportunity, the Kashag would like to offer our warm greetings to people all over world in general and particularly those who offer their support and stand in solidarity with Tibet and Tibetans.

Throughout his entire life, His Holiness has been tirelessly working for the welfare of the Tibetan people and when Communist China violently annexed and occupied Tibet, His Holiness the Dalai Lama was forced to come into exile to protect Tibet and her rich cultural heritage, including the Buddha dharma. In exile, His Holiness the Dalai Lama led more than 100,000 Tibetans and rehabilitating them in settlements and building various institutions to preserve Tibetan culture and religion. His Holiness has also established many schools where the younger generation of exile Tibetans can get opportunities to study both modern and traditional education.

For over half a century, His Holiness the Dalai Lama widely travelled all over the world to speak and promote the principles of peace and compassion. As a result the Buddha dharma has spread to many parts of the globe and won the support of many people and nations, which helped sustain the issue of Tibet alive on the global forum. The just cause of Tibet has become an issue of interest and many stand in solidarity with Tibet. Moreover, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has abandoned the idea of victory for oneself and defeat for the other and initiated the principle of the Middle Way Approach to resolve the issue of Tibet, which has won overwhelming majority support from the Tibetans inside and in Diaspora. This has also led to an increasing number of truth- and peace-loving people and nations around the world to clearly see that the issue of Tibet is a just cause and that the Chinese Communist authorities' position is wrong.

In exile, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has

also introduced democratic process with the establishment of democratic institutions such as the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, ratification of the Charter for Tibetans-in-Exile and the election of Kalon Tripa directly through popular people's vote. As the Tibetan people have more understanding of the democratic process and inculcate a higher level of democratic culture, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has recently devolved all his powers to an elected Tibetan leadership, which was the first time that such a historic step has been taken in Tibetan history. These are some of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's innumerable and immense achievements.

On this extraordinary day, the Kashag would wish to gratefully thank and remember the visionary steps that His Holiness the Dalai Lama took in the democratization of the Tibetan polity and devolving all his powers to the elected Tibetan leadership, which will represent the six million Tibetans living in and outside Tibet and has empowered the elected leaders to continue to work hard. His Holiness the Dalai Lama's democratization of the Tibetan polity has given the Tibetans the opportunity to make the issue of Tibet more global and strengthened the legitimacy of the exile administration.

However, a few people in our community, who are not satisfied with His Holiness the Dalai Lama devolving all his powers, still continue to criticize him without recognizing and respecting his tireless work for Tibet and the Tibetans. Taking democratic rights as an excuse, these people, who do not have to shoulder any responsibility and who are devoid of any principle and moral values, use their glib tongues to express their dissatisfaction. It is clear that these are aimed neither to improve the democratic culture nor for the welfare of society or for the improvement of Tibetan political discourse. And the fact that the society at large ignores these unjustified criticisms without challenging nor to responding to them is a sign that, perhaps, our collective merit is exhausted.

On this special occasion, the 13th Kashag nearing its completion of term of office would like to pay our respect to the Tibetan people and at the same time would like to remind you the following.

At this time when important changes are taking place in Tibetan political system, the exile community by abandoning

regionalism and sectarianism, and by following democratic principles took active part and succeeded in electing a well-qualified new Kalon Tripa with immense majority support. This is a matter of pride and happiness as it signifies the unity among the Tibetans and it shows their political maturity. The Kashag would like to urge the Tibetans to uphold their spirit and determination by not being deterred by these political changes and His Holiness the Dalai Lama's devolution of all his powers, and should further work hard to carry forward the empowerment of Tibetan polity.

Regarding the Sino-Tibetan dialogue, we have made our stand clear through the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People and Note on the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People. Thus from our side there is nothing new to add. However, it seems that the present leadership of the People's Republic of China has no desire to give any meaningful consideration of our Memorandum and its Note. But from our side, we have a firm determination to continue the dialogue process. Moreover, we have already formulated a clear stand and a firm base to carry forward the dialogue in accordance with any future change that may take place in the People's Republic of China.

In our continued effort towards the welfare of exile Tibetans and specifically the education and the future direction of the younger generation, many programmes regarding further improvements of the settlements are being carried out and the Basic Education Policy was introduced. Though these may have produced some positive results, there are many other programmes where we have not satisfactorily succeeded as we had wished. However, we have no regret on our part for we tried and worked our level best. The Central Tibetan Administration managed to overcome our critical financial problems and presently the administration is self-reliant in terms of its basic needs.

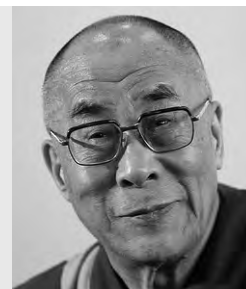
Due to recent political situation in Nepal, the Central Tibetan Administration has not been able to provide necessary support or to look after the welfare of the Tibetans living there. We are also deeply concerned and yet helpless that the Representative could not be appointed nor the Tibetan Welfare Association was able to register. Even our desperate efforts to relocate Tibetan in Nepal to other places in order to downsize the

population was miserably failed. Of late we have appointed a Nepalese citizen as a voluntarily liaison for the Tibetans, and we hope that he can solve some of the immediate problems that Tibetans living there face. We request the Tibetans there to cooperate with him as and when needed in accordance with local situation.

Since 2008, many brave and determined Tibetans in Tibet have carried out a series of non-violent campaigns. Particularly in the last few months, many people in Kirti Monastery and in several places including Kardze have selflessly taken part in peaceful protests. We stand in solidarity with them and pay our heartfelt tribute to them. And we pray for the immediate release of all those who are imprisoned and those who are being persecuted.

As the immediate and the ultimate wellbeing of all Tibetan people depends upon His

**“As the immediate and the ultimate wellbeing of all Tibetan people depends upon His Holiness the Dalai Lama, his long life is the sole basis of the Tibetan people’s welfare.”**



Holiness the Dalai Lama, his long life is the sole basis of the Tibetan people’s welfare. It is a matter of immense happiness for us that His Holiness the Dalai Lama has time and again accepted to have a long life. Furthermore, recently when the civil servants of the Central Tibetan Administration presented a long-life offering, the state oracle envisaged that His Holiness the Dalai Lama was promised to live till the age of 113. However, the state oracle stated that it depends upon the deeds and

conduct of the Tibetan people. Thus, the Kashag would like to urge all Tibetans to engage in actions that will not breach the wishes of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and at the same time to work hard in preserving our traditional values.

Finally, the Kashag prays for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the immediate fulfilment of all his wishes. May the just cause of Tibet prevail soon! ■

## AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

# His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Special Envoy Lodi Gyari Visits Australia

**CANBERRA, Australia:** KASUR LODI GYARI, Special Envoy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Washington DC and leader of the Tibetan team in the dialogue process with the Chinese leadership, visited Australia from 22 to 28 August 2011 on the invitation of Tibet Information Office and Australia Tibet Council.

During his visit, Special Envoy Gyari met government officials, members of Parliament, scholars, members of Tibetan community, Tibet Support Group members, Chinese scholars and democracy activists and Rigpa Centre members and shared his views on the state of dialogue with the Chinese leadership and on recent changes in the Tibetan political system in exile.

In Canberra, the capital of Australia, Kasur Gyari was invited to brief the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade on the status of the dialogue process with China, His Holiness the Dalai Lama's recent devolution of his political power to the elected Tibetan leadership.

Kasur Gyari made a strong presentation on the dialogue process and asked the Australian government to harness its strong ties with China not only for common economic interests, but also to demonstrate its commitment to universal principles and help China to become a responsible global citizen. Members of Parliament in the Committee evinced keen



interest in the briefing and raised several questions. On the implication of the historic change in Tibetan political leadership on the dialogue process, Gyari Rinpoche conveyed the commitment of the new exile administration towards the resolution of the Tibet issue and the Middle Way Approach as laid down by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Melissa Parke MP and member of Australian All Party Parliamentary Group for Tibet made a statement in the House of Representatives on Kasur Gyari's visit to the Parliament.

A reception was hosted for Mr Gyari in the office of Deputy Speaker Hon Peter Slipper, one of the co convenors of All Party

Parliamentary Group for Tibet which was attended by members from both the Houses. He also met one-on-one meetings with ranking MPs and Senators.

Special Envoy Gyari had a meeting with the head of the China section of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade during which he shared his frank views on the most beneficial way in Australian Government's approach towards China and the issue of Tibet. He emphasized that the Tibetan people strongly supported Australia's engagement with China but that it should also be accompanied by forthright stand on certain fundamental values that Australia stood for, which will also be of benefit to the Chinese and the Tibetan people in the long run.

Kasur Gyari participated in a high level roundtable with some of the senior China scholars convened by Australian National University's (ANU) China Institute and Australian Centre on China in the World. He discussed the Tibetan case for genuine autonomy within the PRC, future potential for reconciliation in Sino-Tibetan relations and implications of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's devolution of power. He also gave a seminar lecture on Tibet to the post graduate students of international relations at ANU.

In Sydney Special Envoy Gyari gave interviews to ABC Radio, ABC TV, SBS Mandarin TV and RFA Tibetan language and Tibetan language media. He met and briefed the representatives of various Tibet support groups in Australia and expressed his appreciation of their support. He gave a packed house public talk "The Way

Forward on Tibet - Prospects for Genuine Autonomy" at Mitchell Theatre, Sydney Mechanics School of Arts. He spoke on the dynamics of the Tibet-China relationship, the aspirations of the Tibetans, and China's approach towards resolution of the Tibetan issue. He spoke at the seminar "Dialogue between Chinese government and Envoy of Dalai Lama: Retrospect and Prospects" to a well attended audience of Chinese scholars and democracy activists at the University of Technology in Sydney.

On the invitations of Rigpa Centre of Australia and Rigpa Practical Wisdom group, Kasur Gyari made presentation on the dialogue with China, devolution of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's political power and Tenzin Gyatso Institute Scholars Program which sponsor Tibetan monks and nuns to study science in the

Universities in the United States.

Kasur Gyari spoke to the Tibetan Communities of Canberra and Sydney on the dialogue process and recent change of leadership in the Central Tibetan Administration. Chinese democracy activist, scholars, members of Chinese Tibetan Friendship Associations of Sydney and Melbourne took the opportunity to meet Gyari Rinpoche.

Kasur Lodi Gyari's visit was organized and coordinated by Australia Tibet Council with support from Tibet Information Office. He was accompanied by Sonam Dagpo, Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Australia, New Zealand and South East Asia, Paul Bourke, Executive Director and Tsering Kyinzom, Research and Government Relations Manager of Australia Tibet Council in all the programs. ■

# Inaugural Speech of Kalon Tripa Dr. Lobsang Sangay



## MY FELLOW TIBETANS:

Today on this auspicious day when Guru Rinpoche, the great Indian yogi who spread Buddhism in Tibet, was born, and in the presence of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, our most revered leader, I accept, with deep humility, the post of the Kalon Tripa.

We invoke the spirit and call on the Gods and Goddesses of Tibet to watch over and guide us. My profound gratitude goes out to the overwhelming support of brave men and women in exile, and the enduring solidarity and support of our brave brothers and sisters in occupied Tibet. We are motivated by their support and sustained by their prayers.

Blessed spiritually by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and authorized politically to continue the extended historical legitimacy of the great institution of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, I am here not as a result of my personal achievement but as a result of the hard work and sacrifices made by elder generations in Tibet and in exile. Today, I pledge to carry on and build upon this great legacy of our elders. I pledge to you, my fellow Tibetans, to strengthen and sustain our movement until freedom is restored in Tibet, and His Holiness the Dalai Lama returns to our homeland.

Over one century ago, in 1910, His Holiness the 13th Dalai Lama, took one last

glance at the Potala Palace before leaving his homeland and promised to his people: "I shall return." Our ancestors at the time did not have modern education and sophistication, but with dedication and unity they work tirelessly to make the return of His Holiness the 13th Dalai Lama possible. His Holiness returned to Lhasa in early 1913 and reaffirmed Tibet's independence from China.

Almost half a century later, the same pledge to return was poignantly repeated by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama as he departed Lhasa on the fateful night of March, 17, 1959.

Today, the responsibility to help ensure the return of His Holiness is with our generation of Tibetans who have modern education and sophistication. But do we have dedication, unity and commitment to make tireless effort like our ancestors? If we do, we will prevail. If we don't, we fail.

No doubt, our task is of Himalayan proportion. But we take inspiration from thousands of other brave Tibetans who, throughout our history, have given up their lives and devoted their hearts to Tibet. We have been tragically separated by force, not by choice, and, we will reach the mountaintop of freedom to reunite Tibetans on both sides of Himalayas.

I promise to work to fulfill the vision of

*Third directly elected Kalon Tripa, Dr. Lobsang Sangay (L), takes oath of office and secrecy before the Chief Justice Commissioner of the Central Tibetan Administration, Mr Ngawang Phelgyal, (R) at the swearing-in ceremony at Tsuglagkhang, the main temple, in Dharamsala, on 8 August 2011  
Photo by Namgyal Tsewang*

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama to create a truly secular democratic society. This year's dynamic Tibetan election demonstrated to the world our commitment to genuine democracy and the universal principle of human freedom. Our democratic election reveals that Tibetan unity is built upon and sustained by universal democratic principles that transcend region, sect, gender, and generations.

The results of this election should send a clear message to the hardliners in the Chinese government that Tibetan leadership is far from fizzling out – we are democracy that will only grow stronger in years ahead. And we are here to stay.

Let me be very clear: our struggle is not against the Chinese people, nor is it against China as a country. Our struggle is against hard-line policies of the Chinese regime in Tibet. Our struggle is against those who would deny freedom, justice, dignity, and the

very identity of Tibetan People. Chinese authorities and our Chinese friends alike must realize that grievances of Tibetan people are many and genuine.

Today, my fellow Tibetans, I reaffirm in the oath and aspiration forged by our forefathers – a treaty signed more than a millennia ago by Tibet and China that pledged a great epoch when “Tibetans shall be happy in the land of Tibet and Chinese in the land of China”.

In 1950, when the Chinese Army first came to Tibet, they promised “Socialist Paradise” for Tibetans. Some Tibetans helped build roads to Tibet from China and were paid in Silver coins for their labor. During that time, the Chinese soldiers were very polite and treated our ancestors kindly.

However, once the roads were built, tanks encircled strategic urban areas, lorries headed straight to the mineral-rich mountains and pristine forests: and Chinese workers arrived to exploit and mine billions of dollars of gold, copper, and uranium. Overnight, it seemed, something had changed. The polite Chinese soldiers changed and became overbearing, aggressive, and violent. They used their guns. Battles erupted. Death and destruction ensued.

The great epoch of happiness was put into peril. And since that time, I fear, Tibetans have become second class citizens in their own homeland.

The ongoing political repression, cultural assimilation, economic marginalization and environmental destruction in occupied Tibet is unacceptable. The construction of new Railway Line brings each day more heavy equipment to exploit mineral resources and more Chinese migrants to demographically dominate Tibet and dilute our rich culture and identity. Today's empirical facts are startling: around seventy percent of the private sector is owned or run by Chinese, and more than fifty percent of public sector jobs of the local Communist Party cadre are also held by the Chinese. Meanwhile, nearly forty percent of our Tibetan brothers and sisters who have worked hard and earned university and high school degrees are unemployed. These statistics are made worse, as we all know, by Chinese officials who treat Tibet as their personal inheritance, and act as feudal lords.

But three years ago, in 2008, Tibetans men and women, young and old, nomads and farmers, monks and nuns, all rose up against the Chinese rule in Tibet - from Dromo to Dhartsedo, Ngari to Ngaba, from Lhasa to Lithang, from Kongpo to Kumbum. They spoke out against Chinese oppression and mistreatment and the universal slogan was: we want His Holiness the Dalai Lama return to Tibet. Let me be clear: the Tibetan Administration does not encourage protest in part because we cannot forget the harsh

response Chinese authorities hand down in the face of free and peaceful expression. However, it is our sacred duty to support and to be the voice for our voiceless and courageous compatriots.

After sixty years of misrule, Tibet is no Socialist Paradise that Chinese officials promised. There is no “Socialism” in Tibet, but rather Colonialism. Tibet is not the “Paradise” that it could be: today, it is a tragedy because of the Chinese occupation. Chinese government ought to know it. Recently, many Chinese leaders have visited Lhasa to observe sixty years of “peaceful liberation”. The reality is that the anniversary was observed under undeclared martial law with troops holding automatic machine guns, marching in the streets of Lhasa, sharp shooters positioned on rooftops, tourists banned from visiting Tibet entirely. Beijing's rule in Tibet is clearly unjust and untenable.

Despite the tragedy in Tibet, we want the world to know, especially Chinese friends, that we remain firmly committed to non-violence. We do not view China as a nation and Chinese as a people with malice but with respect. Guided by the wisdom of our forefathers and foremothers, we will continue the Middle-Way policy, which seeks genuine autonomy for Tibet within the People's Republic of China. This, my fellow Tibetans, is a win-win proposition for both the Tibetans and the Chinese. We believe in a peaceful resolution for Tibet, which means a peaceful process and peaceful dialogue. We are also willing to negotiate with the Chinese government anytime, anywhere.

Let's not forget: China aspires to be a superpower. It is the fastest growing major economy in the world and is backed by the largest army in the world. Sadly, however, China's moral power is lacking behind. Moral power cannot be bought in the market or forced with military might. It has to be earned. As long as Tibetans are repressed, there will be resistance, and waning respect for China. Finding a lasting solution to the Tibet question will go a long way toward restoring China's positive image in the minds and hearts of people around the world, as well as towards protecting its territorial integrity and sovereignty. The Chinese people in China and the Greater Chinese diasporic community have a key role to play in helping China overcome this moral deficiency.

I have sixteen years record of reaching out to hundreds of Chinese students and have organized conferences on Tibet between Chinese and Tibetan scholars at Harvard University. We will continue to reach out to the Chinese people to build mutual understanding and trust. I would like to extent

our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the United States, Europe, international community and Tibet Support Groups for their enduring support. We appeal to them to continue to stand with us for justice, freedom, dignity, and equality, and to persuade Beijing to resolve the issue of Tibet peacefully. A lasting solution to the situation in Tibet will be one of the most defining stories of the 21st century for it will reaffirm faith in humanity's capacity to build peace, non-violence and universal freedom. This would be a victory not only for the Tibetan people, but for all the marginalized people around the world.

A just and speedy resolution of the issue of Tibet is in the interest of all Asia. For thousands of years, the Tibetan people served as responsible guardian of the environment of the world's highest and largest plateau that is the source of ten major rivers that contribute to the livelihood of more than 2 billion human beings. China's damming of rivers that originate from Tibet will undermine the livelihood of millions of people downstream in Asia. It is for this reason, millions of people in Asia have a vested interest in seeing that the Tibetan people are restored to their traditional role of being the responsible guardian of the environment of the Tibetan Plateau. This transcends politics. It touches upon the wellbeing and welfare of Asia.

We remain eternally grateful to the people and the government of India for offering the Tibetan people refuge and for allowing us to remain as guests for the past five decades. For those of us who live here, India is our second home. The Tibetan Administration will uphold and continue to honor the special relationship between the Tibetan and the Indian people. Our debt to the Indian government and its people is already enormous. But our work together continues. We humbly appeal for your continued support and kind consideration to treat Tibet as one of the core issues between India and China.

For the next five years, with unity, innovation and self-reliance as our guiding principles, the Tibetan Administration will strengthen the freedom movement, and sustain it for another fifty years, if need be. I urge Tibetans inside and outside to support the Lhakar Movement to be proud of and assert Tibetanness - to show solidarity, to embrace unity, and to keep alive the Tibetan spirit - for together, I know we will foster a dynamic environment and strengthen Tibetan institutions and communities around the world.

Education will be our number one priority. As His Holiness the Dalai Lama has taught us, sharing knowledge is “a way to achieve

immortality". It is the beacon that will light the future of Tibet. We will strive to reach 10,000 professionals among 150,000 in exile and appeal to Tibetans inside Tibet to reach 100,000 in the next two decades.

We will also continue to professionalize the Tibetan Administration and ensure greater access and transparency through the integration of technology and social networking tools. To this end, in the months ahead we will establish a Tibet Policy Institute that will serve as an intellectual platform to envision, develop, and execute policies that will strengthen Tibet. We will also establish Sister Shichaks (settlements) to strengthen solidarity between Tibetans in India and the West and introduce Tibet Corps, a movement that will invite skills and know-how of Tibetans within and abroad to serve Tibet, and create employment for youth and build sustainable shichaks (settlements).

Along with all other Tibetans, I am profoundly grateful to Professor Samdhong Rinpoche for his leadership over the past decade. And I thank him and the able members of his cabinet for their heartwarming hospitality and productive support during this smooth transition of administrations. Going forward, I will abide by the Charter and Supreme Justice Commission, and extend my full co-operation and partnership to the honorable speakers and gentlemen and women of the fifteenth parliament, and lead our very capable and dedicated civil servants in the fulfillment of this pledge.

In conclusion, it is important to remember that the devolution of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's political power is not at all solely to me as the Kalon Tripa, but to all Tibetans. His Holiness' trust and belief in the people and our 50 years of consolidation of democratic institutions now will be challenged to survive

and thrive independently, without his political involvement. So this is a test for each of us. It is a test, for the leadership in the judiciary, for the parliament and for the executive branch to live up to His Holiness' expectations and to work as an effective and united entity. This is our challenge and our opportunity.

I speak with particular urgency to the younger generations of Tibetans. We need your support, your energy, and your talent to stand tall and march forward to freedom. Let us never forget: during our lifetime, our freedom struggle will meet the fate of justice or defeat. Tibet will either appear or disappear from the map of the world. Tibetans, as a people, will be alive or become a museum piece. Tibetan perseverance and pride, wit and will, courage and commitment, will be truly tested.

This is no time for simply criticism and cynicism. This is a time for courage, and a time for conviction. Above all, it is time for confidence in the belief that we are Tibetans and we can do it. The time has come for the younger generation to take a greater leadership role in both internal and international forums. Remember: if we do not, no one will.

Of this, we can be certain too, my fellow Tibetans: like the successful return of His Holiness the 13th Dalai Lama to Tibet, the opportunity will arise and our day will come. Like our dedicated and united ancestors, if we are not united and prepared to accept the challenges together, we will fail. Unity is paramount and it simply cannot be compromised; it is the bedrock of our movement. Any failure to attain unity will solely be our fault. We should do our utmost not to disappoint the majority of compatriots in Tibet who have put their faith in us, and who will be closely watching every step we take from today onward. However, thankfully we take comfort in the knowledge that His

Holiness the Dalai Lama, our most revered leader, is very much in our midst to offer his wisdom.

During my first audience as the Kalon Tripa elect earlier this year, I was reminded by His Holiness the Dalai Lama that I was sitting on the same spot when I first met him nearly two decade ago, in 1992. His Holiness told me that my term as the Kalon Tripa will be good and I am committed to making his words come true. However, my two hands alone are not nearly enough. I request you to lend me your 12 million hands in realizing the words of the present Dalai Lama on the fateful night of March 17, 1959 that "he shall return" to Tibet.

For my brothers and sisters in Tibet, I say to you with confidence today: we will meet soon. Though I have never been allowed to set foot in Tibet, Tibet is in my heart each and every day. I am proud to be born a Tibetan and I will be proud to die as one. While I live, I am determined to fight for our freedom. My late father, like many of our parents, could not return to Tibet. But this, my fellow Tibetans, will not be the story of all Tibetans. Together, we will ensure the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet, reunite our people, and restore freedom in Tibet.

Today, we are in the holy land of India, where the Lord Shakyamuni attained Buddhahood. Next we will meet in the holy land of Tibet, where Buddhism is the heart and soul of six million Tibetans. We are always ready to embark on this epic journey from Dharamsala, the abode of Dharma, to Lhasa, the abode of Gods. From the town where His Holiness the Dalai Lama lives, to the city where he belongs.

This is our aspiration. This is our struggle. This is our dream. And with unity, innovation, and self-reliance as the guiding principles of six million Tibetans, victory will be ours. Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama. ■

## Tibet News

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