



Statement of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on the commemoration of the 61st Tibetan National Uprising Day

The army of the People's Republic of China began its invasion of Tibet in about the year 1949. Following courses of developments since then, the government of the Communist Party of China, employing the art of the trio of hypocrisy, deception and deceit on the people of Tibet, eventually bared its naked intention to brazenly occupy the territory of the great nation of Tibet. And with devilish intentions, it targeted the personal safety of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The situation culminated to such an extent of severity that it became impossible for the people of Tibet to endure the ever-worsening development anymore. The result was a mammoth, spontaneous peaceful uprising in Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, involving people from all the Three Provinces of the country, on the 10th of March in 1959. Today marks the 61st anniversary of that momentous occasion in the history of Tibet. Ever since that great uprising day, the Tibetan people have, wherever they happened to reside, commemorated the occasion as a historically important event. The Central Tibetan Administration has also been marking the occasion as the Tibetan Martyr's Day in memory of the heroic men and women who have made sacrifices in the struggle for the country. The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile offers obeisance to the heroic Tibetan men and women who outrightly sacrificed their all, including their very lives, with unwavering courage, determination and actions for the cause of the religious freedom and nationhood of Tibet. The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile also wishes to express solidarity with the heroic Tibetan men and women who even today continue to suffer all kinds of hardship due to persecution and torture under the repressive policies of the communist Chinese government. We pray to the almighty ocean of victorious ones of the Three Jewels that Tibetans living in Tibet may win their freedom from the current state of hardship and suffering to be able to enjoy their status as a free people.

Ever since communist ruled China began its invasion of Tibet more than 70 years ago, over a million Tibetan people were put to death by unnatural means and causes. Besides, thousands of religious places were totally destroyed. With such and other kinds of acts of aggression, the territory as well as the natural and human resources of Tibet have been subjected to all manners of heart-wrenching brutalities of destruction, plunder, and takeover. Besides, China has been unrelenting in the continuousness pursuit of vile policies designed to obliterate the very representation of the Tibetan identity embodied by our religious heritage, culture and language. It has deprived the Tibetan people, the rightful owners of the territory, of even the most basic of their human rights. Under the policy of repression of the Communist Chinese government, the life of the Tibetan people has been reduced to the brutal harshness of suffering hell on earth, marked by endless repression and torture of immeasurable magnitude. Even more than that, China is now poised to fully transform the land of the Tibetan people into that of the Chinese people and the seriousness of the situation today is such that it teeters over the abyss of annihilation. It was due to the absoluteness of their utter inability to endure anymore the gravity

of the continuing brutality of the policies of the communist Chinese government that the people of Tibet have been compelled to carry out a series of campaigns of peaceful protests throughout the period of the occupation rule. Particularly, in the year 2008, a great number of large-scale campaigns of protest broke out throughout the three traditional provinces of Tibet, especially in capital Lhasa. The government of China launched a crackdown by sending in its army which used assault weapons on the peaceful protesters without any show of even a fibre of mercy. The brutality of the repression with beating, firing etc., resulted in the death of many Tibetan men and women, including laypeople and monastics. But that was not all. Unable to bear the agony of the campaign of the pursuant repression and finding themselves utterly hapless for any viable means to express their desperation over it, the people of Tibet have been driven to carry out a total of 154 protest self-immolations from the year 2009 till about the end of 2019. But the leaders of the government of China have remained totally unmoved by such a tragedy turn of event in terms of moving towards the resolution of the Sino-Tibetan dispute. On the contrary, it moved to cover up the real situation in Tibet by taking recourse to subterfuge and deceit with all manners lies before the Chinese public as well as the international community. Besides, it has kept spreading the canard about Tibet being an integral part of China since ancient times on numerous occasions. Recently, when the novel coronavirus infection began to spread from the city of Wuhan in Hubei Province, the government of China sought to conceal the true information about the epidemic with regard to the number of people sickened by it as well as the number of those who had died from it. This was nothing new as it was fully in keeping with the accustomed normal practice of the leaders of the communist Chinese government, a fact too well known to everyone by now. The truth concerning Tibet is that it was never a part of China at any time in its history, nor was it under the dominion of any other country. Rather, it was a totally independent country in terms of its history, territoriality, ethnicity, language, customs, and mores, whether compared to China or any other country. These bear stark testimony to the status of Tibet as a separate nation in its own right.

It is unfortunate that the government of China does not have any intention even now to change its entrenched hardline policy on Tibet. This is borne out by fact that in the afternoon of the 26th of November in 2019, a tragic incident took place in the nomadic township of Meruma in Ngawa County of the traditional Tibetan province of Amdo (but now part of China's Sichuan Province) when Yonten, a Tibetan man, aged about 24 years old, died after he immolated himself in protest against the Chinese government's current hardline policy in Tibet. It is also borne out by the fact that Tibetan people in Tibet continue to remain deprived of their freedom of speech and expression, with their freedom of religious belief being continued to be ignored and trampled upon. Besides, the Tibetan people continue to be subjected to all manners of policies of ethnic discrimination. In total violation of its own laws, Chinese authorities have remained unrelenting in subjecting the Tibetan people to arrest and imprisonment under various types of campaign actions. For example, a number of Tibetan people have been arrested for the sole reason that they had expressed their personal opinions or posted or forwarded pictures of His Holiness the Dalai Lama over the online social media platforms. More than 7000 monks and nuns were forced out by being expelled from the largest Tibetan Buddhist study centre of Yarchen Gar in Palyul County of what is now part of China's Sichuan Province. Likewise, from the Larung Gar Tibetan Buddhist study centre too in Serta County of what is now part of China's Sichuan Province, thousands of monks and nuns were previously expelled by Chinese authorities, after which greatly reduced limits were set on the numbers of new enrolments. In January this year, the government of China declared what was called "Regulations on the Establishment of a Model Area for Ethnic Unity and Progress in the Tibet Autonomous Region", containing eight parts and 48 articles, to be implemented from the first day of May this year. These regulations pose a mortal danger to the Tibetan people's unique religious and

cultural heritage, language, fine traditions and customs and so on, which are symbolic of our rich existential identity. The whole purpose is to assimilate the Tibetan people into the fabric of the Chinese mould. Also, recently, the Chinese government made an announcement that it would invite for enrolment in a clandestine manner a political list of Tibetans in exile desirous of returning to their homeland. The obvious underlying objective of this nefarious move is to weaken the strength of the cohesiveness of the Tibetan community in exile and to try to hoodwink the Tibetan people into allying with the government of China. Furthermore, the government of China has especially targeted the Tibetan people as well as its other so-called ethnic minorities, religious persons, and religious believers among the ordinary masses to exercise tight controls by making use of new modern technologies such especially as artificial intelligence. In particular, for this year of 2020, China has launched a campaign trying to strengthen a nationwide social governance system by employing the artificial intelligence technology to monitor every aspects of its citizens' movement in order to greatly tighten supervisory control over their activities. These things make obvious the true nature of the communist government of China. In this period of the twenty-first century, the prevalence of violence aimed at inflicting harm on others makes it impossible to bring peace and harmony in this world. His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the supreme leader of Tibet, has time and again referred to this situation in this world and provided timely advisories designed to remedy the situation. Given this reality, the government of China too should adapt to the requirements of the time and take into consideration the imperative to respect people's freedom and human rights, and for this purpose change its hardline policy. Were it able to do that, it is certain that the people of all the nationalities in mainland China will especially be able to enjoy a life of peace and happiness, free of anxieties, and this will lead to the establishment of an opportunity for a similar kind of life to people throughout the rest of the world too. We therefore emphatically request the government of China to change its current hardline policy in favour of one that is liberal and not designed to harm others but, rather, which is based on non-violence and compassion as a long-term vision and goal.

The nature of the Tibetan struggle is resolutely based on the creed of peace and non-violence and the policy of middle way and there is no way this will ever change. This is the basis on which the Central Tibetan Administration has been striving to reach a negotiated solution on the Sino-Tibetan dispute with the government of the People's Republic of China. This is mutually beneficial to China and Tibet, does not harm either side, and will ensure peace. It is therefore the best possible approach for resolving the dispute. It is for this reason that governments, parliaments, governmental bodies and non-governmental setups as well as Tibet support groups in countries across the world such as the United States of America, European countries, India and others as well as international bodies and private individuals have continued to offer praises as well as support for this approach adopted by the Tibetan side. Likewise, large numbers of Chinese intellectuals and democracy activists living in foreign countries as well as non-biased Chinese intellectuals living in the People's Republic of China have continuously expressed admiration and praise for the approach adopted by the Tibetan side. In this connection it is worthwhile noting that in many countries across the world, including the United Nations, official resolutions and motions for discussion expressing support for a just resolution of the issue of Tibet have been adopted on successive occasions. To cite a section of these by way of example on this occasion, in the year 2018, the United States of America adopted a Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act. Likewise, on the 28th of January in 2019, the House of Representatives, the Lower Chamber of the United States Congress, passed a legislative measure called Tibetan Policy and Support Act 2019 by supermajority votes of its members. On the 23rd of November in 2019, Representative Ted Yoho, Representative Michael McCaul, Representative Chris Smith, and Representative Jim

McGovern of the US House of Representatives introduced a new resolution in the House, “Recognizing the significance of the genuine autonomy of Tibet and the Tibetan people and the work His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama has done to promote global peace, harmony, and understanding”. It emphasized the cultural and religious significance of a genuinely Autonomous Tibet for all of the Tibetan people and commended His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama for his commitment to global peace and nonviolence and peaceful solutions to international conflicts.

Again, just recently, on the 6th of February this year, in the presence of the United States President Donald Trump, a short documentary was screened during the 68th annual National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, DC, held in the Washington Hilton, highlighting China’s restrictions on and even destruction of religious freedom in Tibet and at which former political prisoner in Chinese ruled Tibet Golog Jigme was among the special guests. And at that national prayer breakfast gathering, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi expressed thanks to the thousands of people who had come to voice their support for the millions of “the poor and the persecuted” who continued to remain persecuted, disappeared and executed due to their love for religious freedom and practice. “Let us pray for the Panchen Lama and all the Tibetan Buddhists in prison in China or missing for following their faith,” she said.

For three days from the 3rd to the 5th of October in 2019, the Third Tibetan Special General Meeting was held in accordance with the provisions of Article 59 of the Charter of Tibetans in Exile at which delegates representing all sections of the Tibetan people referred to “the utmost trust and devotion the Tibetans held for His Holiness as the ultimate spiritual guide for this life and the next”. And the meeting unanimously resolved, that “no nation, government, entity or any individual can claim to recognise the reincarnation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, The final authority on decisions regarding the reincarnation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama rests indisputably and completely with His Holiness the Dalai Lama himself and the concerned authorities of the Gaden Phodrang Trust.” The resolution also “categorically rejected any interference of the Chinese government in the selection process of Tibetan reincarnate lamas as unacceptable and outrightly rejected Order No. 5 of 2007 issued by the Chinese government which states that reincarnations of tulkus and lamas must be approved by the Chinese government for legal validation.” For three days from the 27th to the 29th of November in 2019, the 14th Tibetan Religious Conference was held at Dharamshala at which top Tibetan religious leaders appealed “for the continuation of the institution and reincarnation of the Dalai Lama in the future” and supplicated to His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama accordingly. They reaffirmed that “the authority of decision concerning the way and the manner in which the next reincarnation of the 14th Dalai Lama should appear solely rests with His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama himself. No government or otherwise will have such authority.” In addition, the religious leaders stressed that “regarding the method of recognizing the future reincarnations of the Dalai Lama, the same unique Tibetan traditional method, which has been continuously used until now, will be followed. This method conforms to the basic philosophy and tenets of the Buddhadharma and originated in Tibet over 800 years ago.” The special resolution was passed with unanimous support from all the gathered Tibetan religious leaders.

Pursuant to the above two major resolutions, Sam Brownback, the United States Ambassador at large for international religious freedom said during his visit to Dharamshala in October 2019 that the United State government held in high regards the Tibetan religion, culture, and language, and that the Tibetan culture was a “treasure of humanity” and China’s attempts to destroy it “are an affront to the civilized world.” He stressed that the relationship between the United States and the Tibetan people has been growing in strength year by year, and that “the

international community must work together now to make clear we stand unequivocally with the people of Tibet.” And he also said that the reincarnation system, being a unique tradition of the Tibetan people, should be carried out in full accord with the Tibetan Buddhist customs. He expressed the United States government’s full support for the above resolutions which stressed, “The role of picking a successor to the Dalai Lama belongs to the Tibetan Buddhist system, the Dalai Lama, and other Tibetan leaders. It does not belong to anybody else, not any government or any entity.” He thus expressed his government’s support for the Tibetan people’s right to freely determine the reincarnations of their religious leaders without any interference from external forces.

Elsewhere, there have been moves in several countries, including in the United Kingdom, to introduce resolutions or hold discussions in parliaments, calling for legislative measures for ensuring reciprocal access to Tibet. Besides, in many other countries which support the fundamental cause of the Tibetan people, there have been a substantial number of discussions on the issue of Tibet held in their respective parliaments. These show that in many major countries of the world, especially in the United States of America, there is even greater amount of concern and support for the issue of Tibet. We take this opportunity to appeal to these countries to continue their efforts to extend support to us in whatever way they can.

From the 7th to the 10th of May in 2019, the Seventh World Parliamentarians’ Convention on Tibet was held in Riga, capital of the Baltic republic of Latvia, an event organized by the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile. About one hundred delegates of prominent persons, including members of parliaments of a number of countries, took part in the meeting. During that meeting, a Riga Declaration was adopted, with the main focus on the fundamental issue of Tibet in general and with special focus on the environmental situation of the Tibetan Plateau. A Riga Action Plan was also adopted, outlining future courses of campaign actions on the issue of Tibet. Likewise, for three days, from the 3rd to the 5th of November in 2019, the Eighth International Conference of Tibet Support Groups was held at Dharamshala, the seat of the Central Tibetan Administration. More than 180 delegates representing Tibet Support groups from some 42 countries took part in the meeting and issued a declaration on the issue of Tibet. Through meetings and conferences such as these, continuous efforts have been made to strengthen international support for the issue of Tibet while publicity efforts directed at achieving the same objective have also been made. And the resultant supports achieved from these endeavours have been significant and encouraging.

One thing the new generation of today needs to understand is that until Tibet was invaded, occupied and annexed in its entirety by the communist ruled People’s Republic of China in the year 1959, Tibet was a fully independent country. However, the government of China has always sought to cover up this reality by misleading both the international community and its own people by fabricating tales about Tibet being an integral part of China since ancient times by engaging in all sorts of theatrics and false propaganda efforts designed only to deceive. However, people in the international community who value and support truth and justice have been steadfast in refusing to believe the Chinese government’s lies and make-believe theatrics on the issue of Tibet. On the struggle for the just cause of Tibet, the Tibetan people living in exile led by the Central Tibetan Administration and through governmental entities as well as non-governmental organizations, as well as the entirety of the general Tibetan public have, on the basis of the kindness and generosity of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, as well as the sincerity of purpose and resoluteness of determination of the Tibetan people in Tibet, devoted their utmost attention and commitment. This is the basis on which we have all carried out our bounden duty as a result of which the struggle of the Tibetan people has endured and continues

to remain vibrant thus far. We therefore feel it pertinent to emphatically call on the entire Tibetan people standing on their feet to contribute their lot in whatever way they can in a cooperative manner to the struggle under the leadership of the Central Tibetan Administration so that the just cause of Tibet may come to prevail in the near future.

These days, not an insignificant number of Tibetan people are seen to spend much of their precious time on voice chats, facebook and other social media platforms. On occasions, these social media platforms are seen being used to create disturbances within the Tibetan community on the pretext of differences based on provincial and sectarian considerations. Such kinds of activities sowing discord with the Tibetan community are seen to be continuing without an end. In view of this situation, we take the opportunity provided by this occasion to urge the general Tibetan public not to waste their precious time and instead realize the imperative to direct their efforts towards their career prospects and for the future of the Tibetan cause. At the same time, it does not bear pointing out the fact, since it is all too obvious to all of us, that the Tibetan people are the rightful owners of the Tibetan nation, which means that each and every Tibetan individual has a duty to contribute towards realizing it. In keeping with what His Holiness the Dalai Lama has every now and then, and on repeated occasions, advised us, we should ensure that there is no let down in our constant efforts to teach and learn our language and religious knowledge, if we are not to lose our ethnic identity. The government of China continues to be unrelenting in implementing “a hundred methods and a thousand strategies” in its malicious design to obliterate the religious and cultural identity of the Tibetan people. Nevertheless, by dint of the unvanquished sincerity of purpose and determination of the Tibetan people in Tibet; by the blessings of the kindness of Tibet’s supreme leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama; and thanks to the gratitude owed to our elder generations, those who show concern for the Tibetan people and extend support to us keep growing enormously from all across the world.

Over the past more than two months, we have been witnessing a saddening development in the form of the spread of the novel coronavirus epidemic Covid-19 which originated in the Chinese city of Wuhan, which also reached Tibet, and which still continues to spread to many countries across the world. This is a global emergency situation and the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile wishes to express its concern for and empathy with the affected countries and peoples. It is estimated as a serious danger that this epidemic is likely to spread to more than half the world. We accordingly urge people across the world to exercise utmost care and caution on this unfolding epidemic. China failed to take timely steps to close the network of transport services from Wuhan city, the epicentre of the novel coronavirus infection that broke out in early December 2019, to Tibet, with the result that it exposed the Tibetan people to serious risks of falling victim to the deadly new virus. This is because the virus could easily spread in Tibet where medical facilities are particularly poor, not at all comparable to those available in China. It is extremely saddening in this context that in the Tibetan county of Tawu, the infection is spreading rapidly from day to day. Tibet is under China’s occupation rule; so the government of China has the responsibility to ensure that the novel coronavirus infection does not spread among the Tibetan people. It must therefore extend equal level of protection and help to the Tibetan people against the viral infection and we urge the World Health Organization to instruct the government of China accordingly. We also appeal to the government of China to strive to bring the epidemic to an end at the earliest possible moment.

In keeping with the developing trend in the urgency of the need to address the tragic situation in Tibet today, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile maintains an ongoing agenda of campaigns of

appeals to governments of India and other countries across the world and, likewise, to prominent public figures as well as the general public in order to bring international pressure on the government of China on the issue of Tibet. On behalf of all Tibetans in and outside Tibet, the Tibetan parliament takes this opportunity to offer heartfelt gratitude to government leaders, members of parliaments, organizations and private individuals, but especially to the Indian central and state governments and people, for extending facilities and assistance by every possible means to the Central Tibetan Administration and the Tibetan people in general in this critical moment of existential threats to the survival of the Tibetan national as well as civilizational identity.

Finally, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile prays that His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the spiritual lord of the three world realms and a champion of world peace, may live for a hundred aeons, that all his wishes may be seen fulfilled with utmost spontaneity, that the just cause of Tibet may be seen to prevail with indubitable certainty.

The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile
10 March 2020