



TIBET LOBBY DAY

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Current Situation in Tibet

CHINA'S CONTROL OF TIBET: CLEAR AND PRESENT DANGER

Irrefutable historical evidence confirms Tibet has always been an independent country. After a military invasion, the Chinese Communist Party claimed dominion over Tibet and rules over it with an iron fist. Under the Xi Jinping regime, human rights violations, environmental degradation, and securitization are becoming increasingly severe.

GLOBAL SECURITY

The PRC regime utilizes its occupation of Tibet to advance its goal of regional hegemony through weaponization of water, expanding military capacity within Tibet and across contested borders, and transnational repression. A prime example is China's massive build out of hundreds of hydropower dams on Tibet's rivers, the healthy flow of which 1.8 billion people downstream depend on for food, clean water, and economic development, including India, Pakistan, and Vietnam. The US must increase investment on this crucial front to constrain PRC's malign influence and secure long-term US strategic interests.

ERASING TIBETAN CIVILIZATION

Under Xi Jinping, the Chinese Communist Party is pursuing a systematic strategy to erase the core pillars of Tibetan civilization. Brutalities include:

- Arbitrary killings by the government; disappearances; torture; cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment or punishment; arbitrary arrest or detention; political prisoners; and transnational repression;
- Displacing Tibetans from their traditional lands and homes. Estimates suggest that nearly 1 million Tibetans have already been dislocated and if the CCP's expansive hydropower construction scheme succeeds, up to 1.2 million individuals will be added to this astonishing number.
- Separating up to 1 million Tibetan schoolchildren from their families and communities to forcibly transfer them to boarding schools in Han Chinese provinces. There, they are cut off from learning their mother tongue. Uprooting children's ability to access their own language, religion, and culture inflicts severe trauma on the children. If this generation is unable to learn the ways of its own people, the Tibetan identity could soon disappear inside Tibet.
- Severe restrictions on freedom of expression and media, including censorship; restrictions on internet freedom including site blocking; substantial

interference with the freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association; severe restrictions on freedom of movement, and the inability of citizens to change their government peacefully through free and fair elections.

- Assault on the core tenets of Tibetan Buddhism, including the right to determine the current 14th Dalai Lama's severe restrictions on freedom of religion or belief, restrictions effectively placing Tibetan Buddhism under central government control;
- Tibetan Buddhism focuses on a system of rigorous study based on the 5-century old history of Buddhism originating in India. Sadly, Chinese policies threaten Tibetan Buddhism's very survival inside Tibet. Tibetans are regularly persecuted for their beliefs. They can be arrested simply for owning photographs of the Dalai Lama. And inside Chinese prisons Tibetans are beaten and tortured for their beliefs.

THE MIDDLE WAY

Espoused by the Dalai Lama and the democratically elected government in exile the Central Tibet Administration for six decades, the Middle Way is a proposal to mutually beneficial compromise based on protecting the core interests of both the Tibetan people and China. Under the Middle Way, Tibetans call for dialogue to identify a solution within the framework of the People's Republic of China's constitution while allowing Tibetans the self-determination needed to protect their unique cultural, religious, environmental, and linguistic heritage.

Unfortunately, China refuses to seek a solution. To date, fifteen years have passed since the last round of Sino-Tibetan dialogue. Although the United States continues to call for the resumption of dialogue, as mandated by the Tibet Policy and Support Act of 2020, the Chinese Communist Party continues to dismiss these calls from the US and like-minded nations.

In the interest of global stability, international law, and basic human rights, it is incumbent on the international community to demand China reverse course and enter into meaningful dialogue—a dialogue to resolve the Tibet-China conflict and bring stability and peaceful co-existence in the region.

