

Suggested March 10th Messaging and Sound Bites

What are you doing here today?

We are here to stand with our brothers and sisters in Tibet and to send a message to the Chinese government that Tibetans are more united than ever before in our struggle to regain our country and win our freedom.

In spite of China's brutal repression, there is a powerful new movement growing in Tibet. It is being led by the younger generation and they are using creative, non-violent tactics to challenge China's occupation of our/their homeland.

March 10th is a day for Tibetans everywhere to be proud of our history. Proud of our identity, proud of our ancestors who died protecting our homeland, proud of the courageous resistance of Tibetans inside Tibet, and proud of the younger generation who raise the flag of Tibetan freedom even higher.

We are here today to commemorate the day fifty years ago when thousands of Tibetans rose up in Lhasa, Tibet's capital, to protest against China's decade-long occupation of their homeland. The spirit of their resistance is alive both in Tibet and in exile, as we see a new wave of young Tibetans taking up the torch of our nonviolent freedom struggle.

We are here because we are Tibetan and because we have an internationally recognized right to self-determination, to live our lives free of China's oppression. Today, we renew our resolve to the Tibetan struggle, so that one day soon we can return to a free and independent Tibet.

What are we asking for?

We are calling on the [INSERT COUNTRY] government to take concrete action to help broker a just and lasting resolution for Tibet.

As Tibetans inside Tibet continue their courageous nonviolent resistance to Chinese rule, it's time for leaders of free countries to take bold and new approaches to help secure a negotiated resolution for Tibet.

Under Chinese occupation, Tibetans are denied their fundamental right to freedom of expression. We call on Google to uphold its decision not to censor information inside Tibet and China, and we call on other information technology companies to do the same.

In recent years, the Chinese government has intensified surveillance of all forms of communication inside Tibet. A simple text message or phone call can result in a lengthily prison sentence. We demand a stronger response from world governments to pressure the Chinese leadership to stop its crackdown against Tibetans who dare to communicate information about the situation inside Tibet to the outside world.

We are calling for the immediate release of Dhondup Wangchen, a Tibetan filmmaker, sentenced to six years in prison and tortured for simply interviewing Tibetans in Tibet about their lives under Chinese rule. His film *Leaving Fear Behind* is a testament to the true reality of the situation inside Chinese occupied Tibet.

We are calling for the immediate release of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, a revered Buddhist teacher and community leader from eastern Tibet. He has been serving a life sentence for crimes he did not commit since 2004.

In recent months, 40,000 Tibetans risked arrest to sign a petition calling on the Chinese government to re-open his case and demanding his release. This incredible action is an example of the new wave of creative resistance Tibetans are engaged in, a resistance movement that even with all its military might, the Chinese government can not stop.

What is the situation inside Tibet?

(TCHRD) Chinese authorities have launched an aggressive “Strike Hard” campaign in Lhasa, Tibet’s capital, and in many parts of Tibet. This preemptive strike in advance of the March 10th Uprising anniversary to arbitrary detain any Tibetan who poses a challenge to China’s complete control over Tibet. <http://www.tchrd.org/press/2010/pr20100305.html>

(TCHRD) Since March 2008, there has been a highly visible armed security presence in Lhasa, and other major Tibetan areas. Sources in Lhasa reported that in recent days additional security forces in full combat gear have been deployed in and around Lhasa. Security checkpoints have been set-up, new blockades erected, security forces in combat uniform were seen patrolling the major gathering points and searching guest houses. <http://www.tchrd.org/press/2010/pr20100305.html>

(TCHRD) On February 28th, 2010 it was reported that three Tibetans were sentenced to a two-year suspended death sentence, life imprisonment and a 16 year prison term respectively for allegedly putting up posters for Tibetan independence and setting fire to a Chinese government building (not fatal) during the March 2008 protests. These harsh prison sentences demonstrate the ongoing crackdown against Tibetans who took part in the 2008 protests. <http://www.tchrd.org/press/2010/pr20100224.html>

Chinese authorities continue to do everything in their power prevent news or images of Chinese forces suppressing Tibetans. Tibet is still largely closed off to media and there are no independent observers in Tibet. This tight control is part of a sinister ploy to distort and lie about the true reality on the ground in Tibet.

According to the 2009 Freedom House Survey of over 200 countries and territories, Tibet received the ranking of “least free” in the area of political rights and civil liberties. (examples of other countries with the same ranking as Tibet: Turkmenistan, Sudan, North Korea, Libya). <http://freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=15>

In 2009, the Chinese authorities targeted, detained and sentenced Tibetan writers, artists, internet bloggers and publishers who did not engage in overt protest activity, but who sought to explore and express Tibetan views on issues that affect Tibetan people’s rights, culture, religion and Tibet’s fragile environment.

According to the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy: 1,542 known Tibetans continue to remain in detention or are serving prison sentences since spring 2008. At least 334 known Tibetans have been sentenced since 2008 Uprising (many of them sentenced in 2009).

The Chinese government is engaged in sinister plot to destroy the very way of life of Tibetan nomads who have lived for centuries on the Tibetan plateau. According to Human Rights Watch, more than a quarter of a million nomads have already been settled into prison-style concrete housing blocks. Their animals have been confiscated and they have no access to education or alternative employment. In the next 5 years, China plans to re-settle 560,000 nomads in eastern Tibet.