

**32<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UN Human Rights Council  
Submitted to Global Affairs Canada  
June 6, 2016**

## INTRODUCTION

The Canada Tibet Committee (CTC) wishes to extend its appreciation to the Government of Canada for recent efforts to actively promote human rights in China and Tibet. We were particularly pleased when on March 11, 2016 Canada co-hosted with the United States, a side-event in Geneva on the margins of the 31<sup>st</sup> session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) inviting His Holiness the Dalai Lama as keynote speaker. We also acknowledge the quiet support offered by Canada to the coalition of countries that made an unprecedented joint statement about the deterioration of human rights in China during the same HRC session.

We have noted statements about human rights made by Ambassador Guy Saint-Jacques in Beijing including on December 10, 2015, International Human Rights Day, when he spoke publicly about the human rights violations witnessed during his mandate. We were pleased also that on January 27, 2016, the Ambassador signed a joint letter with the U.S, German and Japanese ambassadors addressed to China's State Councillor and Minister of Public Security Guo Shengkun. The letter expressed a collective unease about China's new counterterrorism law, the draft cyber security law, and a draft law on management of foreign non-governmental organizations.

## THE 32<sup>ND</sup> SESSION OF THE HRC

The upcoming 32<sup>nd</sup> session of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) offers opportunities to build on the momentum achieved by Canada's pro-active approach and to continue to hold China accountable for the dismal state of human rights within its borders, including in Tibet.

- The Second cycle of China's *Universal Periodic Review* has now reached its midterm benchmark. In 2013 China accepted detailed recommendations made by the HRC on issues of human rights defenders, lawyers, freedom of expression, association and assembly, and the rights of minority communities, including Tibetans. There has been scant progress towards achieving these goals.
- The *UN Committee against Torture's* 2015 review of China's treaty compliance requested specific follow-up information about attacks on human rights defenders and the abuse of State Secrets legislation. Committee members also expressed concern about individual cases, in particular requesting details about the cases of 24 Tibetans in detention.<sup>1</sup> China has not yet provided an adequate response to the Committee's requests.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.savetibet.org/u-n-committee-against-torture-calls-china-to-account-for-deeply-entrenched-torture-and-ill-treatment/>

- The *Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association* is expected to present his report to the HRC under agenda item 3 on June 17. In 2015, the CTC submitted information to the Rapporteur about the violation of freedom of assembly in Tibet in the context of natural resource exploitation.<sup>2</sup> Other Tibet organizations have recently submitted additional information to the Rapporteur in advance of his report to the 32<sup>nd</sup> session.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the momentum established by the coordinated action of states so far in 2016, and given that the HRC draft program of work offers opportunities to build upon that momentum, the Canada Tibet Committee submits the following recommendations to the Government of Canada:

**Include Tibet in Canada’s opening statement:** Continue to exert public pressure on China to improve its human rights record by including it in the list of countries mentioned in Canada’s “Item 4 statement”, and with specific mention of the deteriorating situation in Tibet.

**Request information about freedom of assembly in Tibet:** Under agenda item 3, and noting that China has signed the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* which incurs a responsibility to act in the spirit of the treaty, continue to press China about the current crackdown on freedom of assembly in Tibet. Particular attention should be given to the recent crackdown on protests related to the exploitation of Tibet’s natural resources.<sup>3</sup>

**Advocate on behalf of political prisoners:** Using the opportunity of bilateral discussions with Chinese counterparts during the council session, Canada should continue to press for the unconditional release of all Tibetan political prisoners including those highlighted in the CTC’s letter to Minister Stephane Dion dated March 7, 2016: Tibetan monk and community leader Khenpo Kartse (Karma Tsewang); the Panchen Lama (Gendhun Choekyi Nyima); teacher Lhamo Kyab; writer-blogger Druklo (Shokjang); and retired doctor Yeshe Choedron.

**Encourage respect for the UN process:** The Government of Canada should actively encourage China to implement its UPR commitments including, for example, by confirming a country visit by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and by the Special Rapporteur on Religious Freedom. Further, Canada should request additional details pursuant to the concluding observations of the Committee against Torture regarding the death in custody of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche who died almost one year ago on July 12, 2015, and about the 24 Tibetans in detention whose cases were presented during the CAT review.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://tibet.ca/\\_media/PDF/SubmissionSRFreedomAssembly.pdf](http://tibet.ca/_media/PDF/SubmissionSRFreedomAssembly.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.tchrd.org/tchrd-calls-on-chinese-government-to-stop-mining-at-sacred-mountain/>