

**Guidelines:  
Meeting Members of Parliament**

Members of Parliament meet Canadians every day. It is part of their job to know Canadians care about. MPs are, however, busy people and Tibet supporters should be ready to make a brief presentation with clear “asks” for follow-up. Here are a few guidelines to help you keep Tibet on Parliament’s agenda.

**1. Making appointments**

Begin by writing a concise letter to your MP requesting a meeting. If you live in the MP’s constituency, mention it at the top of your letter. Be sure to follow-up by phone within a few days in order to set the time, date and location of your meeting. Make a note of the name of the staff person who spoke with you on the phone.

**2. Learn about your MP before the meeting**

Do a little research about your MP before going into the meeting. For example, is he or she already a member of the Canadian Parliamentary Friends of Tibet? Has he or she made statements about Tibet in the past, attended rallies, or met with the Dalai Lama? The Canada Tibet Committee has a record of MP involvement in the Tibet issue – please contact us if you need additional information.

**3. Confirm your meeting delegation**

When meeting an MP, ensure that you have at least two people and never more than five people. Efforts should be made to ensure gender balance – it is important to show that the Tibet movement is inclusive and that Tibetan women are empowered. Each meeting delegation should include a minimum of one Tibetan (more is better), but if no Tibetans are available do not cancel the meeting! Each meeting delegation should designate who is spokesperson and who is note-taker.

**4. Prepare hand-out materials**

Before the meeting, prepare information to hand out. The information should be short and clear - one page is the optimal length. Do not swamp the MP with information that will be put aside as

soon as you leave the room. Familiarize yourself with the briefing material you have prepared and the specific requests being made to the MP. It is important not to contradict the information in your materials when you are speaking with the MP.

## **5. Protocol and procedure**

Be sure to bring proper identification to each meeting as there will be security in government buildings.

Dress properly, either in business or appropriate Tibetan attire. Be tidy and clean. Remember you are an Ambassador for Tibet! Wear a Canada Tibet pin!

Arrive at least 10 minutes early for each meeting. Introduce yourselves to the MP's staff and give them your business card.

Begin each meeting by thanking the MP for his time. Introduce your delegation members before beginning.

A meeting will normally last for 15 minutes. Be concise, avoid emotion, and make sure that your most important points are made early in the meeting.

Give the MP time to respond to your remarks and discuss Tibet-related issues of interest to him or her. Take notes (best to pre-assign this task). The person talking should not take notes.

If the MP or Senator asks a question and you do not know the answer – don't worry! Simply say you do not know or that you will verify the exact facts and forward the information after the meeting. Definitely do NOT improvise!

Do not argue with the MP or take a side on other policy issues that might arise in the conversation. Remember, the Tibetan cause is non-partisan and we need support from ALL of Canada's political parties.

Ask if it's OK to take photos before pulling out your camera.

Before the meeting ends, inquire if the MP would like to receive the weekly e-bulletin sent by the Canada Tibet Committee to MPs. In some cases, it might also be appropriate to ask if they wish to receive specific materials or information in French.



## **6. After the meeting**

Send a thank you note with a copy of any photos that you have taken. If you have time, inform the Canada Tibet Committee about the meeting. This can be done by using the meeting record sheet found below. The meeting record sheet will ensure that meeting outcomes are documented and added to the MP profiles.

Prepared by the Canada Tibet Committee  
Parliamentary Outreach Project  
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## MEETING RECORD

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**MP or SENATOR'S NAME** .....

**POLITICAL PARTY**.....

**CONSTITUENCY**.....

**DATE OF MEETING**.....

**ASSISTANT'S NAME and EMAIL ADDRESS (or attach business card)**

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**NAMES OF DELEGATION MEMBERS**

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**GENERAL COMMENTS**

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**FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS TO BE DONE**

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.