



Tibetan Community in Switzerland & Liechtenstein

Tibeter Gemeinschaft in der Schweiz & Liechtenstein

Office of the United Nations
High Commissioner for Human Rights
Mrs. Navanethem Pillay
Palais Wilson
52 rue des Pâquis
CH-1201 Geneva

Birmenstorf, 9th September 2011

**Defender of Human Rights – 5th Action of TCSL 2-year Campaign
Appeal to UN to send an independent fact-finding mission to Tibet now!
Appeal to UN: "Stop Cultural Genocide in Tibet "**

Your Excellency

Commencing May 30, 2011, Tibetans and their supporters have started a 2-year campaign to appeal to the UN to send an independent fact-finding mission to Tibet.

We kindly invite you to come and visit us at the site of our 5th action on Place des Nations on September 12, from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm.

The action will be staged with the motto "Stop Cultural Genocide".

Tibetans from all three provinces of their home country will present aspects of their rich cultural heritage that is acutely threatened by the Chinese policy.

Many measures that at a first glance impress as aiming at "economic development" or environmental protection are in fact annihilating the unique Tibetan culture. Above all, the mass immigration of Chinese workers, accelerated by the completion of the railway line to Lhasa, is threatening Tibetan culture and identity. Attracted by economic incentives, for example to set up businesses, Tibetans are becoming increasingly marginalized in professional life.

The government program for the so-called "Development of the Western Provinces" and the most recent Five-Year-Plan are aiming at an even more aggressive exploitation of mineral resources and building of dams to generate electricity. This will attract even more Chinese migrants to Tibet.

Exercise of Tibetan religion, a centerpiece of Tibetan culture, is becoming increasingly regulated. All monastic activities are strictly supervised by a secular administration. Very often monasteries are nothing more than showcases for tourists. Any more serious and in-depth religious studies are suppressed when they are perceived as a threat to the Party and the government. Several years ago Serthar monastery with approx. 10'000 residents was destroyed and the residents expelled as their activities were perceived as evolving beyond secular control.

Not only the traditional culture, but also contemporary culture and arts are becoming increasingly suppressed. Since 2008 young Tibetan intellectuals and artists, who have only recently been praised as model citizens for their cultural activities, are now encountering arrest.



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As we have already pointed out to you in our recent letter, another threat to Tibetan culture stems from plans to implement Mandarin as the main medium of instruction in the schools of Qinghai province. This will not only accelerate the marginalization of Tibetan language, but in fact downgrade Tibetan to a “second language” and pose a major threat to the children developing their genuine Tibetan cultural identity.

Rightly, His Holiness the Dalai Lama is calling all these measures “cultural genocide”. Your Excellency, we are inviting you to visit, meet and view with your own eyes, and call on you to support our demand to stop Cultural Genocide in Tibet!

Yours sincerely,

S. Memmishofer

President of the Tibetan Community in Switzerland & Liechtenstein

Copy: Mr. Ban Ki Moon, General Secretary of the United Nations