



Tibetan Community in Switzerland & Liechtenstein

Tibeter Gemeinschaft in der Schweiz & Liechtenstein

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

15th October 2012

**Defender of Human Rights – 4th Action of the 2nd year of TCSL
2-year Campaign since May 30, 2011:
Appeal to UN to send an independent fact-finding mission to Tibet now!
"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 4th action of the second year on **Place des Nations on October 19th, from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm.**

Tibetans from **the sections Lucerne and Trogen/St. Gallen** and their supporters will be alerting the public to the ongoing destruction of the rich Tibetan cultural heritage.

Many measures of the Chinese government 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 forced resettlement of Nomads, officially justified by alleged overgrazing of the grasslands, in reality aims at increasing political control over them when they are sedenterized. With this, they lose the basis of self-subsistence with many driven into unemployment and despair. It is estimated that by 2013 all of the 2 million nomads will have been resettled, and another aspect of Tibetan culture may be eradicated. Exercise of Tibetan religion, a centerpiece of Tibetan culture, is becoming increasingly threatened. Many monasteries have effectively been shut down in the wave of repression following the self-immolations during the past 18 months. Other monasteries have been left by the monks or nuns, as they were not able to pursue even basic religious studies and exercise due to continuing harassment by authorities and security forces. Most of those monasteries, where religious practice has not been completely paralyzed, are controlled by a secular administration and are nothing more than showcases for tourists. Any more



serious and in-depth religious studies are suppressed as soon as they are perceived as a threat to the Party and the government.

Not only the traditional culture, but also contemporary culture and arts are becoming increasingly suppressed. Since 2008 several young Tibetan intellectuals and artists, who have only recently been praised as model citizens for their cultural activities, have been arrested. These arrests have encountered a dramatic acceleration since the onset of the self-immolations. Recently many Tibetans who are adhering to the “Lhakar” movement have been arrested. “Lhakar”, or “White Wednesday”, is a loose movement that calls on speaking only Tibetan, using traditional Tibetan clothing and eating Tibetan meals on Wednesdays of each week.

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 demands and to call on the Chinese government

- to stop Cultural Genocide in Tibet!
- to stop forced resettlements of Tibetan nomads,
- to stop “Patriotic Re-education” in monasteries,
- to allow freedom of religious practices,
- to release all arrested monks, nuns, artists and intellectuals
- to immediately terminate all plans to make Chinese Mandarin the primary language in Tibetan schools.
- to allow an independent fact-finding mission with unhindered access to Tibet
- to resume the dialogue with the Tibetan Representatives to find a mutually agreeable solution to longstanding political problems

Yours sincerely

Mr. Kelsang GENPOTSANG:
Trogen/St. Gallen Section of the TCSL

Mr. Tenzin TSARMA:
Lucerne Section of the TCSL

Kopie: UN General Secretary, Mr. Ban Ki Moon