



Statement of the Kashag on the Sixty-Fifth Anniversary of the Tibetan Democracy Day



Today, on this momentous occasion of the sixty-fifth anniversary of Tibetan Democracy Day, concurrent with the global observance of the 'Year of Compassion' in celebration of His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama's 90th birthday, the Kashag extends its heartiest greetings to all the distinguished guests, the Tibetan people, and to all who are celebrating in their respective localities.

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama from a very young age held a profound commitment to democratic principles. Although his efforts at social reforms in Tibet could not materialize due to systematic obstructions by the government of the People's Republic of China (PRC), His Holiness established the administration of the Tibetan government in exile on 29th April 1959 in Mussoorie, soon upon his arrival in India. On 3rd February 1960, representatives of the clergy and laity from Tibet's three traditional provinces voluntarily and in unity took the Great Oath (Na Gan Thumoche), solemnly pledging to fulfill His Holiness's counsel under his leadership. His Holiness then advised for the creation of an elected body comprising of representatives from the three traditional provinces and the major schools of the Tibetan Buddhism. Accordingly, on 2nd September 1960, the first Commission of Tibetan People's Deputies was sworn in, laying the foundation for an administration dedicated to resolving the Tibetan struggle and ensuring the welfare of the Tibetan people in exile. Thus, the Tibetan Democracy Day marks a pivotal moment in the political history of the Tibetan people.

Reflecting on the evolution of the democratic system within the Tibetan society in exile over the past 65 years: from 1960 to 1990, gradual reforms were made to the Commission of Tibetan People's Deputies (later renamed the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies) and the administration, based primarily on the "Constitution for Future Tibet". A system based on democracy was initiated characterized by broad participation from representatives of both the central and regional Tibetan administrations in the semi-annual and annually held General Meetings. In 1991, the Charter of Tibetans-in-Exile was promulgated, establishing a complete democratic framework encompassing the three organs of democracy and the three autonomous bodies. Under the directive of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, necessary provisions were made in the Charter that led to the historic direct election of the Kalon Trinpa by the Tibetan people in 2001. In 2011, His Holiness devolved all his political and administrative authority to democratically elected leaders. Through these four phases, the democratic system in the Tibetan society in exile was consolidated and strengthened, owing solely to the blessings of His Holiness's visionary leadership and his systematic top-down encouragement.

The successful establishment and implementation of a comprehensive democratic administration within the Tibetan community in exile, dispersed across some thirty countries, remains unparalleled among other exile communities. It is an undeniable fact that this achievement has been made possible entirely through the benevolent leadership of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. At the same time, the exile Tibetan community requires timely reforms to its democratic system, while numerous challenges remain to be addressed.

The Kashag submitted a draft proposal of Charter amendments to the Rules and Regulations Review Committee constituted in accordance with the resolution of the fifth session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile. The proposal not only reflected the prevailing opinion of the Tibetan people and the crisis thereof, but also proposed amendments aimed at addressing challenges arising from evolving circumstances while ensuring long-term sustainability. The

proposal included amendments to Article 1 of the Charter regarding the assumption of inherent authority by the successive Dalai Lamas, as well as to its second subsection concerning the provision of advice and guidance. While the proposed changes to this article have been amended, other essential points remain to be addressed. As such, it is hoped that it will receive careful review by all in the future.

The Kashag in its official statement at the eighth session of the Tibetan parliament, highlighting the significance of complying with laws of the host country as enshrined in the Charter, stated that in the sixty-five years since the arrival of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and some eighty thousand Tibetans in exile to India, Nepal and Bhutan, both the host countries and the Tibetan exile community have undergone profound transformations. Legal frameworks and policy implementation mechanisms have also evolved concurrently. As such, all the functions of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), as mandated by Article 6 of the Tibetan Charter, must comply with the laws of the host country with a thorough understanding of the same. To ensure legal compliance and long-term sustainability, timely regulatory amendments are imperative. The statement further elaborated on the background of these developments, the prevailing legal situation, regulatory questions and existing challenges. Similarly, a draft bill to amend the CTA's Rules of Budget was presented at the ninth session of the parliament, and a review committee was subsequently constituted. It is hoped that the review and ratification of this bill will take place in the upcoming parliamentary session.

Aligning with the 90th birthday celebration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Kashag convened the 15th Tibetan Religious Conference and offered long-life prayers to His Holiness on behalf of all the deities and the people of the Land of Snow. The official birthday ceremony brought together revered heads and emissaries of the Tibetan Buddhist traditions, dignitaries from the three democratic organs of the CTA, distinguished guests from around the world, including ministers and representatives from Central and State Governments of India, and hundreds of artists who participated in the birthday festivities, during which the 'Year of Compassion' was officially launched. The celebration was covered by around 216 media outlets, and documentaries and analytical articles widely acknowledged His Holiness's noble contributions and brought to view the global reverence and support for his leadership and aspirations. It further facilitated a broader discourse on the significance of Tibet's political situation.

The Central Tibetan Administration designated the period from His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama's 90th birthday on 6th July 2025 to 5th July 2026 as the 'Year of Compassion' to be observed globally. The Kashag appeals to the Tibetan people and Tibet supporters to launch awareness campaigns in their respective and surrounding localities on His Holiness's four principal commitments, emanating from his doctrine of compassion. At the same time, we commend the diverse and thoughtful initiatives that are already underway in various localities and any requirement for resources such as images for such initiatives can be downloaded through the CTA's official Ghoton (90th birthday celebration) website or by contacting the Ghoton Organizing Committee.

On 2nd July 2025, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, with infinite compassion, affirmed the continuation of the Institution of the Dalai Lama. On the same day, the eminent heads and masters of all Tibetan Buddhist traditions present at the 15th Tibetan Religious Conference, along with all other participants, unanimously adopted a three-point Resolution of Heartfelt Gratitude to His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama. The resolution stated that all the participants of the 15th Tibetan Religious Conference unanimously endorsed His Holiness the Dalai Lama's sacred statement. It affirmed that the process of recognizing the reincarnations of

His Holiness the Dalai Lama is rooted in the unique and sacred traditions of Tibetan Buddhism and condemned any attempts by the People's Republic of China to politicize the religious practice while firmly rejecting all forms of external interference. On 4th July, an additional four-point resolution was adopted which stated that with the definitive establishment of the responsibility and authority for the process of recognizing the reincarnations of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, all obstacles to the Buddha dharma and the sentient beings will naturally be pacified. All the participants and their followers solemnly pledged with unwavering faith to commit to ensuring the continuation of this sacred legacy for eons. Thus, the PRC government's deceptive propaganda regarding the search for His Holiness's reincarnation within China, the usage of so-called "Golden Urn Lottery" or the requirement of "Central government's approval" have been dismantled from the very foundation.

The PRC's government, following its invasion of Tibet, undertook a systematic campaign to eradicate Tibetan Buddhism, destroying over 6000 monastic institutions, forcibly disrobing monks and nuns, and killing an estimated 1.2 million Tibetans. Today, Tibetans are coerced into abandoning their identity in order to forge a so-called "consciousness of the Chinese national." With the state-mandated Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism, restrictive quotas are imposed on the number of monks and nuns in the monasteries, while ownership and income of the monasteries are seized. Chinese Communist Party members, PRC government officials, and public security personnel are appointed to manage administration of the monasteries and movements of monks and nuns are restricted. They are further barred from pursuing their studies and practice of the Tibetan Buddhism and instead, are subjected to indoctrination in communist ideologies. Religious figures such as abbots, lamas, and geshe are forcibly used as political tools. In the history of the Tibetan Buddhism, no force has ever caused greater threat to the Buddha Dharma than the PRC's Communist government. On the basis of history, morality, or any system of law, the PRC's authorities have no legitimate right whatsoever to grant approval to the reincarnations of His Holiness while transgressing international borders.

Thirty years ago, Beijing forcibly abducted the 11th Panchen Lama, Jetsun Tenzin Gedhun Yeshe Trinley Phuntsok Pal Sangpo, at the tender age of six. To this day, his well-being and whereabouts remain unknown. The PRC's government installed Gyaltsen Norbu through a staged ceremony using the so-called "Golden Urn Lottery" and has since used him as mouthpiece for state propaganda. Tibetans are coerced to seek his audience and attend his teachings. In such an environment where there cannot be a genuine opportunity to serve the Buddha dharma, the very purpose of reincarnation is defeated.

One thing we can state with absolute clarity is that His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama will undoubtedly live a long life and continue his noble endeavour in fulfilling his four principal commitments. His Holiness has explicitly stated that until a meaningful resolution to the Sino-Tibet conflict is achieved, the reincarnation of the Dalai Lamas will be born in a free country. The responsibility of searching, recognizing, and enthroning the reincarnation of His Holiness shall be undertaken by the Gaden Phodrang Trust. The leadership of the Trust, in consultation with the revered heads of the Tibetan Buddhist traditions and the oath-bound Dharma protectors will search and recognize in accordance with established tradition of recognizing reincarnations. With the unfailing fulfilment of the sacred commitment to lead the Tibetan people by the successive reincarnations of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, any deceptive fabrications propagated by the PRC government is rendered baseless before the international Buddhist community, followers of Tibetan Buddhism, as well as the international community.

On His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday, numerous former and present heads of governments and dignitaries extended their felicitations. Furthermore, Human Rights

ambassadors of United Kingdom, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Lithuania, Estonia and Iceland issued a joint statement in honour of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama's 90th birthday reiterating the right to freedom of religion or belief and the right to choose religious leaders free from state interference. On 27th July, His Excellency Petr Paval, the Honourable President of Czech Republic, a nation with which His Holiness shares long-standing ties, met with His Holiness the Dalai Lama in a historic visit to Ladakh. The Kashag is in the process of compiling supporting documentation of resolutions, declarations and appeals issued by the Tibetan community, followers of Tibetan Buddhism, broader Buddhist community, and nations, pertaining to the reincarnation of His Holiness. We will continue in our sincere efforts to seek international support from the free nations on the issue of reincarnation and further urge for the collective effort of all.

The democratic principles remain an indomitable force in the Tibetan freedom struggle and stands as the most precious gift to Tibetans in Tibet upon our re-union. The Kashag's vision for equitable justice can also be realized through a just legal framework and equitable policies of a democratic system. We hope for the collective efforts of the Tibetan populace through their active political and social participation and to advance in unity towards freedom in Tibet. Let us summon our shared resolve to bring our collective aspirations into reality.

Finally, we fervently pray for the long life of His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet and for the perpetual continuation of his meritorious deeds. May the melody of freedom and democracy swiftly ring as the Tibetans in Tibet and in exile reunite.

The Kashag
2nd September 2025

N.B.: This is the English translation of the original Tibetan statement. In case of any discrepancies, the original Tibetan text should be regarded as final and authoritative.