

Report on Tibet Negotiations

As Required by

Section 611, Foreign Relations Authorization Act, 2003

"Tibetan Policy Act of 2002"

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I. Executive Summary

The United States is encouraged that the People's Republic of China invited the Dalai Lama's Special Envoy Lodi Gyari and Envoy Kelsang Gyaltsen to visit Beijing and Tibetan areas of China again in September 2004. These visits follow initial trips in May 2003 and September 2002 by the envoys to begin discussions with the Chinese Government on issues relating to Tibet and its relationship to the Chinese authorities in Beijing. We have urged that such contacts continue, and, in public statements and through diplomatic channels, have pressed for direct and substantive dialogue, without preconditions, that will lead to a negotiated settlement of outstanding differences.

The Dalai Lama can be a constructive partner as China deals with the difficult challenges of regional and national stability. He represents the views of the vast majority of Tibetans and his moral authority helps to unite the Tibetan community inside and outside of China. China's engagement with the Dalai Lama or his representatives to resolve problems facing Tibetans is in the interest of both the Chinese Government and the Tibetan people. At the same time, the lack of resolution of these problems leads to greater tensions inside China and will be a stumbling block to fuller political and economic engagement with the United States and other nations.

II. Tibet Policy

Encouraging substantive dialogue between Beijing and the Dalai Lama is an important objective of this Administration. The United States encourages China and the Dalai Lama to hold direct and substantive discussions aimed at resolution of differences at an early date, without preconditions. The Administration believes that dialogue between China and the Dalai Lama or his representatives will alleviate tensions in Tibetan areas and contribute to the overall stability of China.

The United States recognizes the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and Tibetan autonomous prefectures and counties in other provinces to be a part of the People's Republic of China. This long-standing policy is consistent with the view of the international community. In addition, the Dalai Lama has expressly disclaimed any intention to seek sovereignty or independence for Tibet and has stated that he only seeks for China to preserve Tibetans' culture, spirituality, and environment.

Because we do not recognize Tibet as an independent state, the United States does not conduct official diplomatic relations with the Tibetan "government-in-exile" in Dharamsala. However, we maintain contact with representatives of a wide variety of political and other groups inside and outside of China, including with Tibetans in the United States, China, and around the world. We have also met with the Dalai Lama in his capacity as an important religious leader and Nobel laureate. It is a sign of our country's respect for the Dalai Lama that the President, the Secretary, and other senior administration officials have met with him on several occasions.

We have consistently urged China to respect the unique religious, linguistic, and cultural heritage of its Tibetan people and to respect fully their human rights and civil liberties.

III. Steps Taken by the President and the Secretary to Encourage the Government of the People's Republic of China to Enter into a Dialogue with the Dalai Lama or His Representatives Leading to a Negotiated Agreement on Tibet

A. Steps Taken by the President

Since assuming office in January 2001, President Bush has been consistent in urging the Government of the People's Republic of China to engage in substantive dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives, and to respect the unique cultural, linguistic, and religious heritage of the Tibetan people.

On September 10, 2003, President Bush met with the Dalai Lama at the White House. In that meeting, the President expressed his strong support for the Dalai Lama's commitment to dialogue with the Chinese Government. The President said he would seek ways to encourage dialogue and expressed his hope that the Chinese Government would respond favorably. The President also reiterated the strong commitment of the United States to support the preservation of Tibet's unique religious, cultural, and linguistic identity and the protection of the human rights of all Tibetans. State Department Under Secretary for Global Affairs Paula Dobriansky, in her role as Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, joined this meeting.

The President raises the importance of establishing an ongoing dialogue between China and the Dalai Lama or his representatives during his meetings with senior Chinese officials. Most recently, the President met Chinese President Hu

Jintao at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum held in Santiago Chile, in November 2004. There, he discussed his overall concern for lack of progress on human rights and religious freedom in China, including in Tibetan areas, and raised the importance of progress on dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives. President Hu, who is also General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, apparently retains an interest in Tibetan issues. Hu was the TAR Party Secretary, the highest Chinese Communist Party post in Tibet, from 1989 to 1992.

The President also raised the need for progress on dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives when Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao visited the White House in December 2003, during then President Jiang Zemin's 2002 visit to Crawford, and during the President's trips to China in 2001 and 2002.

Vice President Richard Cheney raised the importance of respecting human rights in Tibetan areas and supporting the dialogue with the Dalai Lama's representatives with Chinese Premier Wen and Vice President Zeng Qinghong during his trip to China in April 2004.

B. Steps Taken by the Secretary

During her first trip to China as Secretary of State in March 2005, Dr. Condoleezza Rice raised the importance of the dialogue on Tibet with senior Chinese officials. She noted that the United States hopes that there would be improved relations with the Dalai Lama's representatives, "so that Tibetans can freely pursue their cultural interests."

Then-Secretary of State Colin Powell expressed his strong support for the process of dialogue, and his interest in working to protect Tibet's unique cultural, linguistic, and religious heritage and increase respect for religious freedom in the TAR and Tibetan areas of China, repeatedly in 2004. Secretary Powell, with Under Secretary Dobriansky, raised the importance of the dialogue during his meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing in Washington in September 2004. He repeated his concerns to the Foreign Minister the following month during his trip to Beijing, noting that Lodi Gyari's third trip to China was a positive development and one that he hoped would produce results. At the APEC summit in November 2004, Secretary Powell joined the President in urging the Chinese to continue the dialogue with the Dalai Lama's representatives as a way to find common ground and work toward resolving differences.

Secretary Powell emphasized his support for the dialogue during his meeting with the Dalai Lama in September 2003, and again in his meeting with Foreign Minister Li two weeks later, when he underscored the need to produce tangible results from the process. These discussions closely paralleled earlier talks between the Secretary and then PRC Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan in 2001 and 2002.

C. Steps Taken by Other Department of State Officials

At all levels, in public statements and in private meetings, officials of the Department of State continue to raise with Chinese counterparts the importance of the Tibet issue and to urge that China enter into discussions with the Dalai Lama or his representatives as soon as possible.

During his trip to Beijing in late January 2004, then Deputy Secretary Richard Armitage raised Tibet on several occasions. Deputy Secretary Armitage urged China to move forward with the dialogue process, arguing that it was useful for both sides to pursue discussions aimed at resolving longstanding differences. Deputy Secretary Armitage also specifically requested that the Chinese Government arrange another round of dialogue with the Dalai Lama's representatives as soon as possible.

On May 17, 2001, Secretary Powell designated Paula Dobriansky as Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, in addition to her continuing role as Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs. As the Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, Under Secretary Dobriansky's responsibilities include promoting substantive dialogue between the Chinese Government and the Dalai Lama or his representatives, maintaining close ties with Congress and nongovernmental organizations with Tibetan interests, and seeking to assist in preserving the cultural, religious, and linguistic heritage of Tibetans. Under Secretary Dobriansky accompanied the President to China on both of his trips, and also led a separate delegation to Beijing in April 2002. On all of these occasions, she discussed Tibetan human rights and religious freedom issues as well as the importance of dialogue between China and the Dalai Lama or his representatives.

At the invitation of the European Parliament, Under Secretary Dobriansky visited Brussels in January 2004 to discuss with Parliament members and European Commissioners her role as Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues in the context of the U.S.-China relationship. She met with the Dalai Lama in April and September

of 2004, to discuss the status of the dialogue with the Chinese, the plans for the third visit of the envoys, and the strategy for continuing and strengthening the dialogue in the future. Under Secretary Dobriansky also met with Lodi Gyari eight or more times in 2004 to discuss the dialogue, including preparations for his trip and his views on the outcome. In addition, Under Secretary Dobriansky and Lodi Gyari have discussed the long-term strategy for the dialogue and the potential for future visits. During the last year, she raised the importance of the dialogue and of making further progress during meetings with Chinese Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, Vice Minister of Public Security Zhao Yangji, President of the Supreme People's Court Xiao Yang, and Chinese Ambassador to the United States Yang Jiechi on several occasions.

In repeated public statements, the Dalai Lama has made clear he does not seek independence for Tibet, but rather that Tibetans be given autonomy in order to preserve their civilization and their unique culture, religion, language, and way of life. For this to occur, the Dalai Lama has said it is essential for Tibetans to be able to handle all their domestic affairs and to freely determine their social, economic, and cultural development.

Then-Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs James A. Kelly also encouraged continuation of the dialogue during 2004. He met with Lodi Gyari several times, both before and after the Special Envoy's September trip. Assistant Secretary Kelly, during several meetings with the Chinese Ambassador and with other senior Chinese officials, urged the Chinese Government to hold substantive talks with the Dalai Lama or his representatives, without preconditions, to resolve outstanding differences. As he noted in a speech to the Woodrow Wilson Center in November, the United States and China have differences and disagreements on a number of issues, including the dialogue with the Dalai Lama, but the United States continues to encourage that process and will work to promote further progress.

Then-Assistant Secretary of State Lorne W. Craner and then-Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Elizabeth Dugan of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor also raised concerns about human rights abuses and lack of religious freedom with Chinese officials throughout the year. Assistant Secretary Craner discussed the situation in Tibetan areas during talks with the Chinese in March 2004. During a November 2004 trip to China, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Dugan raised concerns about the Chinese Government's repression of Tibetan Buddhism and the poor human rights situation in the TAR and other Tibetan areas. She reiterated these concerns during meetings with the Chinese in

January and February 2005.

Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom John V. Hanford and staff have traveled to China repeatedly in recent years to promote religious freedom and has consistently raised concerns about the ongoing abuses in Tibetan areas. During these visits, U.S. officials have reiterated their support for the preservation of the unique cultural and religious heritage of Tibetans. In 2004, China was designated a "Country of Particular Concern" under the International Religious Freedom Act for the sixth consecutive year. The designation was made for severe violations of religious freedom, including the repression of Tibetan Buddhists.

U.S. Ambassador to China Clark T. Randt has raised the importance of the dialogue regularly with Chinese officials. He traveled to the TAR in April 2002 to view conditions there and encourage discussions. During that trip and at other times, Ambassador Randt has pressed for dialogue between China and the Dalai Lama or his representatives and has raised concerns about threats to the unique cultural, religious, and linguistic heritage of Tibetans.

The staff of the U.S. Embassy in Beijing and the U.S. Consulate General in Chengdu travel regularly to the TAR and to Tibetan areas in other provinces of China. U.S. officials have used these trips to ascertain conditions in Tibetan areas and also to urge Chinese authorities to engage in dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives. U.S. officials also follow closely the human rights and religious freedom situation in Tibetan areas and protest instances of abuse of Tibetans detained for peacefully expressing their political or religious views. Finally, U.S. officials monitor and urge the protection of the cultural, religious, and linguistic heritage of Tibetans.

IV. Status of any Discussions Between the People's Republic of China and the Dalai Lama or His Representatives

The last two decades have seen intermittent efforts by the Dalai Lama and the People's Republic of China to reach accommodation through dialogue. During a period of liberalization in the TAR inaugurated in 1980 by then-Secretary General of the Communist Party Hu Yaobang, the Dalai Lama was invited to send several delegations to China to observe conditions in Tibetan areas. Three delegations traveled through Tibetan areas between August 1979 and July 1980. In April 1982, and again in October 1984, high-level Tibetan delegations traveled to

make substantive headway. In 1985, a fourth fact-finding delegation traveled to Tibetan areas of China, but no progress toward substantive negotiations was made.

Contacts between China and the Dalai Lama's representatives were sporadically continued for the next 17 years, with occasional contacts between the Dalai Lama's older brother Gyalo Thondup and officials of the United Front Work Department (UFWD) of the Communist Party of China. However, an open visit by a senior Tibetan figure did not occur again until July 2002, when China invited Gyalo Thondup to visit Lhasa, Beijing, his family home in Qinghai, and the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region in northwest China. Upon his return to India, Gyalo Thondup spoke of "great changes inside Tibet including many good roads and significant development in the cities" since departing Tibet in 1952. He also expressed optimism over the "great changes in the outlook of the Chinese Government" and urged face-to-face talks between Tibetan and Chinese leaders.

In September 2002, Special Envoy Lodi Gyari and Envoy Kelsang Gyaltsen led a four-member delegation to Lhasa, Shigatse, Chengdu, Shanghai and Beijing. The visit, hosted by the UFWD, marked the first public travel of Lodi Gyari to China since 1984, when he visited Beijing. It also marked the first formal contact between the Dalai Lama's representatives and China since 1993. Lodi Gyari later stated that the delegation had two tasks on the trip: "to re-establish direct contact with the leadership in Beijing and to create a conducive atmosphere enabling direct face-to-face meetings on a regular basis in the future; and to explain His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Middle Way Approach towards resolving the issue of Tibet."

In a September 2002 briefing, Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) spokesperson Kong Quan stated "China welcomes their return and views the visit as an opportunity for the group to observe Tibet's development." He also noted that "it is also helpful for the expatriates to witness the religious freedom of Tibetans. China believes that in recent years, the Dalai Lama has used support provided by international organizations to engage in separatist activities." Kong stressed that the Dalai Lama must cease those activities and accept that Tibet and Taiwan are parts of China.

Lodi Gyari and Kelsang Gyaltsen traveled to China again May 25 to June 8, 2003. Their party traveled to Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Tibetan areas of Yunnan Province, as well as Beijing and Shanghai. The envoys met with various officials in the localities they visited, and also met with the President and Vice President of the Buddhist Association of China, a government-affiliated religious organization. In a press statement released after the visit, Lodi Gyari stated, "We have been able

to meet officials of various levels of the provinces we visited and exchanged views in a warm atmosphere." Regarding the envoys' travel to Dechen Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Yunnan Province, he said, "Our visit was too short for us to assess in an adequate manner how effectively the Tibetan language, culture, religion and identity are being preserved, protected, and promoted. He was, however, "impressed by efforts to protect the beautiful environment of Gyalthang," referring to a county in Dechen Prefecture.

Shortly after the trip concluded, MFA Spokesman Kong said in a press conference that Beijing approved of Tibetan "compatriots" visiting China in a private capacity. Kong noted that Lodi Gyari and Kelsang Gyaltsen had close ties with the Dalai Lama, and stated that their visit illustrated that the Chinese Government maintained channels of communication with the Dalai Lama. Kong also stated that through their greater understanding of developments in China and Tibet, the Dalai Lama would be able to assess the situation and make "correct choices."

Lodi Gyari and Kelsang Gyaltsen traveled to China for a third time from September 12 to 29, 2004. In addition to visiting Beijing, Hebei and Guangdong, the envoys visited several counties of the Kardze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in western Sichuan Province, including Lodi Gyari's hometown. The envoys were again hosted by the UFWD, and met with UFWD head and Vice Chairperson of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee Minister Liu Yandong and other officials. Lodi Gyari issued a statement after the visit noting that they had "so far the most extensive and serious exchange of views on matters relating to Tibet," conducted in "a frank but cordial atmosphere." He noted that "both sides acknowledged the need for more substantive discussions in order to narrow down the gaps and reach a common ground. We stressed the need for both sides to demonstrate flexibility, far-sightedness and vision to bridge the differences."

Chinese Assistant Foreign Minister Shen Guofang described the 2004 talks as "useful and beneficial." As with the previous visits, the MFA spokesperson again described the visit as "some Tibetan expatriates allowed to come back to China in a private capacity." He continued, "We welcome them back to China to see for themselves the development of Tibet and other Tibetan autonomous areas of China," and noted that they would visit relatives and "have a chance to meet with people at all levels." The spokesperson reiterated China's opposition to a visit by the Dalai Lama at this time, once again saying that he was engaged in "splittist activities." If the Dalai Lama ceased these activities, recognized Tibet and Taiwan as part of China, and admitted that the Government of the People's

Republic of China was the sole legitimate government representing all of China, then China would be willing to have direct consultations with him "on his personal future."

The United States is encouraged that the People's Republic of China invited the Dalai Lama's envoys again in 2004, and hopes to see a fourth visit in 2005. We urge that these contacts continue, and that substantive dialogue between the Chinese Government and the Dalai Lama or his representatives lead quickly to a negotiated settlement on questions related to Tibet.