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Report on Tibet Negotiations  
March 2009

As Required by

Section 611, Foreign Relations Authorization Act, 2003

“Tibetan Policy Act of 2002”

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March 2008 – February 2009

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I. Executive Summary

The Dalai Lama's Special Envoys and Chinese officials from the United Front Work Department (UFW) met three times in 2008. While there were no concrete results from these meetings, the United States, nevertheless, welcomed the dialogue and encouraged both sides to engage in a substantive discussion that would work to resolve long-standing issues surrounding Tibet. The first meeting on May 4, in Shenzhen was characterized as "informal" to candidly discuss the way forward following the March 2008 protests and riots that occurred across the Tibetan plateau. The second meeting was held in Beijing on July 1-2, and marked the seventh round of official dialogue since the two sides renewed contact in September 2002. The eighth round of dialogue took place in Beijing from October 31 to November 5.

The first round of dialogue took place in September 2002, followed by meetings in May 2003, September 2004, June 2005, February 2006, and late June/early July 2007. The United States has consistently urged Chinese officials to continue such contacts and, in public statements and through diplomatic channels, has pressed for direct and substantive dialogue, without preconditions, which will lead to a negotiated settlement of outstanding differences.

The United States believes that the Dalai Lama can be a constructive partner for China as it deals with the difficult challenges of continuing tensions in Tibetan areas. He represents the views of the vast majority of Tibetans and his consistent advocacy of non-violence is an important principle for making progress toward resolution of ongoing tensions. 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. Failure to resolve these problems will only lead to greater tensions inside China and will be a stumbling block to fuller engagement with the United States and other nations.

## II. Tibet Policy

Encouraging substantive dialogue between Beijing and the Dalai Lama is an important foreign policy objective of the United States. We continue to encourage 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, in accordance with the consensus position within the international community, recognizes the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and Tibetan autonomous prefectures and counties in other provinces as part of the People's Republic of China. The Dalai Lama has expressly disclaimed any intention to seek sovereignty or independence for Tibet and has stated that he seeks for China to preserve Tibetan culture, religion, and its fragile environment through genuine autonomy.

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, India. 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 President Bush, Secretary of State Rice, and other senior officials met the Dalai Lama on several occasions.

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

The United States continues to believe that meaningful dialogue represents the best way to resolve tensions in Tibet. We are disappointed that, after seven years of talks, there have not been any concrete results. We are concerned that in 2008, the Chinese government increased its negative rhetoric about the Dalai Lama, increased repression in Tibetan areas, and further restricted religious freedoms. We continue to urge both sides to engage in substantive dialogue and hope to see a

ninth dialogue round in the near future that will lead to positive movement on questions related to Tibetans' lives and livelihoods.

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

Throughout his tenure, President George W. Bush consistently urged the Chinese government to engage in substantive discussions with the Dalai Lama or his representatives, and to respect the unique cultural, linguistic, and religious heritage of the Tibetan people. In 2008, he continued this appeal. He also encouraged Beijing to invite the Dalai Lama to visit China as a way of building trust between the two sides.

After violence erupted following four days of peaceful protests in Tibet around the 49th anniversary of the Dalai Lama's flight to India, President Bush telephoned Chinese President Hu Jintao on March 26, to express concern about the situation in Tibet and encourage him to engage in talks with the Dalai Lama's representatives to resolve tensions. He also urged that President Hu allow journalists and diplomats to visit Tibetan areas. President Bush continued to raise Tibet with President Hu during subsequent meetings throughout the year, noting that substantive talks were the best hope to address long-standing grievances and promote stability and prosperity in Tibetan areas.

In early July, at the G-8 meeting in Japan, President Bush met with President Hu and discussed the importance of human rights and political freedoms. During a July 14 ceremony at the White House commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the International Religious Freedom Act, President Bush stated that, "we honor the courage of the Dalai Lama and Buddhists in Tibet." On November 21 - 23, 2008, during the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Forum in Lima, Peru, President Bush again conveyed to President Hu the United States' desire to see substantive dialogue between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama's representatives.

In September 2007, at the APEC Forum, President Bush stressed the importance of the dialogue and informed President Hu that he would be attending

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the Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony in October because he wanted to honor the Dalai Lama. He reiterated that it was in the interest of China's leaders to meet with the Dalai Lama and stated that "if they were to sit down with the Dalai Lama, they would find him a man of peace and reconciliation."

On October 17, 2007, President Bush became the first sitting U.S. president to meet the Dalai Lama in public when he presented the Dalai Lama with the Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of "his many enduring and outstanding contributions to peace, nonviolence, human rights, and religious understanding," at a ceremony in the Capitol Rotunda. During his speech at the award ceremony, President Bush urged Beijing to welcome the Dalai Lama to China and honor the Dalai Lama as a "universal symbol of peace and tolerance, a shepherd for the faithful, and the keeper of the flame for his people." President Bush also received the Dalai Lama at the White House.

In his 2006 meetings with President Hu at the White House and at APEC in Vietnam, President Bush encouraged the dialogue and reiterated the importance of a face-to-face meeting with the Dalai Lama at the earliest possible date. During President Bush's November 2005 visit to China, he urged Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao and Chinese President Hu Jintao to increase religious freedom and human rights in China and encouraged them to engage in a dialogue with the Dalai Lama.

B. Steps Taken by the Secretary

Secretary Clinton traveled to China on February 20 - 21, 2009, and met with President Hu Jintao, Premier Wen Jiabao, State Counselor Dai Bingguo, and Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi. Following her meeting with the Foreign Minister, she stated that the promotion of human rights is an essential aspect of United States foreign policy, and said of our dialogue with China that "we will have frank discussions on issues where we have disagreements, including human rights, Tibet, religious freedom, and freedom of expression."

Over the previous four years, Secretary Condoleezza Rice consistently raised the issues of human rights and religious freedom at the highest levels, including in meetings with the Chinese President, Premier, State Counselor, and Foreign Minister. In her meetings, she highlighted the need for progress on the dialogue with the Dalai Lama's representative as well as the need for greater human rights and religious freedom in Tibet. During her trip to China in February 2008, the Secretary reiterated this message with Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi. One month later, on March 15, she issued a statement calling for "calm in Tibet,"

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after days of peaceful protests turned violent and Chinese authorities intervened harshly.

In her statement, Secretary Rice noted that "we call on the Chinese government to exercise restraint in dealing with these protests, and we strongly urge all sides to refrain from violence." She also urged China to respect the universally recognized right of all citizens to peacefully express their views, and to address policies in Tibetan areas that have created tensions due to their impact on Tibetans' religion, culture, and livelihoods. Secretary Rice also phoned Foreign Minister Yang in the days following these events to express her concern for the situation and continued to raise the issue in subsequent phone calls in the following months.

As the first Cabinet-level official to visit Beijing after the unrest, Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson raised his concern about the situation in Tibet directly with President Hu, in April at the Strategic Economic Dialogue.

In April 2008, Secretary Rice met with newly appointed Special Representative on Tibet, former Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing, in Washington to discuss the situation in Tibet and China's response to the unrest, and to encourage talks with the Dalai Lama's representatives to address the long-standing issues that led to the protests and riots. Meeting with Foreign Minister Yang during a visit to China at the end of June, Secretary Rice urged China to engage sincerely with the Dalai Lama, and stated that "we think he's a very positive figure in dealing with the very difficult issue of Tibet." The seventh round of dialogue between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama's representatives took place days later.

C. Steps Taken by Other Department of State Officials

Department of State officials continue to raise with Chinese counterparts the importance of the Tibet issue and urge that China continue discussions with the Dalai Lama or his representatives. Deputy Secretary John Negroponte raised Tibet when State Councilor Dai was in Washington in December 2008, for the final Senior Dialogue of the Bush Administration. He encouraged the Chinese to consider a discussion on the issues raised in the 2008 Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People, a document presented by the Tibetans to the Chinese during their November dialogue which specifies the Tibetans' position on autonomy.

Deputy Secretary Negroponte also raised the issue of Tibet during the

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previous U.S. - China Senior Dialogue round in January 2008, in Guiyang, China. During that visit, he reiterated to Foreign Minister Yang President Bush's recommendation to invite the Dalai Lama to China at the earliest possible date.

When Deputy Secretary Negroponte testified before the Senate Foreign Relations sub-committee on Asian and Pacific Affairs on April 23, 2008, on Tibet, he noted in his opening statement the dialogue and stated that "in the end only the Chinese government and the Tibetans themselves can address and resolve their differences. We look to them to do so peacefully and in accord with international standards of religious freedom and human rights."

Deputy Secretary Negroponte welcomed the Dalai Lama to the State Department in October 2007, following the Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony. He expressed the commitment of the United States to the preservation of Tibetan culture and human rights, and his willingness to raise the issue of Tibet with his Chinese counterparts during bilateral meetings. Under Secretary Dobriansky also participated in this meeting.

On May 17, 2001, Secretary of State Colin Powell designated Paula Dobriansky as Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, in addition to her continuing role as Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs. As the Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, Under Secretary Dobriansky's responsibilities included 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 met with the Dalai Lama twice in 2008, once in Detroit during April and once in Philadelphia during July. They discussed a broad range of issues related to Tibet, including the situation in Tibet following the protests in the spring. She also met with the Dalai Lama in October 2007, during his last trip to Washington.

In February 2008, Under Secretary Dobriansky met in Washington, D.C., with China's Director of the State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA), Ye Xiaowen. They discussed the Dalai Lama's position on Tibetan autonomy and new regulations requiring the Chinese government's approval of the reincarnation of Tibetan Buddhist lamas. Under Secretary Dobriansky explained that the Dalai Lama has repeatedly and consistently stated that he is not seeking independence, and in recent statements he said that Tibet has benefited economically from being

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part of China.

Under Secretary Dobriansky met with the Dalai Lama thirteen times during her tenure as the Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues. In November 2006, she traveled to Dharmasala, India, to meet with the Dalai Lama and visit with the Tibetan refugee population. She met with the Dalai Lama during his September 2006 visit to New York City.

Under Secretary Dobriansky accompanied President Bush to China in October 2001 and February 2002. She traveled to Beijing in August 2006 and 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 Chinese officials and the Dalai Lama or his representatives.

During 2008, senior State Department Officials met with the Dalai Lama's Special Envoy, Lodi Gyari, including Deputy Secretary of State Negroponte, Under Secretary of State Dobriansky, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Christopher Hill, and Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor David Kramer.

In May 2008, Assistant Secretary Kramer led a U.S. delegation to Beijing to resume the bilateral human rights dialogue with China. He encouraged China to meet with the Dalai Lama's representatives to address the issues that led to the March 14 unrest in Tibetan areas. He also expressed concern for the continuation of the patriotic education campaigns, which force monks and nuns to denounce the Dalai Lama.

Assistant Secretary Kramer also met twice with Sitar, Vice Minister of the United Front Work Department (UFWD) and one of China's lead negotiators in the dialogue with the Tibetans. Assistant Secretary Kramer and Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom John V. Hanford met with Sitar on the margins of the May 2008 U.S. - China Human Rights Dialogue in Beijing, where he reiterated President Bush's message that the Dalai Lama is not seeking independence for Tibet, and that the international community knows him to be a man of peace who denounced the recent violence in Tibet. Assistant Secretary Kramer also met with Sitar in December 2008 in Washington, D.C. following the November round of talks between the Chinese government and the Tibetans. During that meeting, Assistant Secretary Kramer expressed disappointment that the November round of dialogue failed to produce results.

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Former Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom John V. Hanford, III traveled to China repeatedly over the reporting period to promote religious freedom and consistently raised concerns about the ongoing abuses in Tibetan areas with Chinese officials. In 2008, he raised the Tibet issue during his meeting with SARA and the UFWF on the margins of the May 2008 U.S. - China Human Rights Dialogue. Ambassador Hanford also met with the Dalai Lama during his November 2005 visit to Washington. The State Department has designated China as a "Country of Particular Concern" under the International Religious Freedom Act, since 1999. The designation was made for severe violations of religious freedom, including the repression of Tibetan Buddhists.

During his tenure at Embassy Beijing, Former U.S. Ambassador to China Clark T. Randt raised human rights and religious freedom repeatedly in his regular meetings with high-ranking Chinese officials. After the March 14 riots in Lhasa, Ambassador Randt pressed U.S. concerns with high-level officials in the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He also requested that diplomats be allowed to visit Lhasa as soon as possible. Ambassador Randt also traveled to the TAR in April 2002, to view conditions there and encourage discussions.

The staff of the U.S. Embassy in Beijing and the U.S. Consulate General in Chengdu closely followed the human rights and religious freedom situation in Tibetan areas and regularly raised U.S. concerns with Chinese officials. U.S. officials attempt to travel regularly to the TAR and Tibetan areas in other provinces of China to ascertain living conditions, raise human rights concerns, urge Chinese authorities to engage in dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives, and support the protection of the cultural, religious, and linguistic heritage of Tibetans. However, following the unrest and protests across the Tibetan areas in the spring, access to Tibetan areas was severely limited. One tightly controlled visit by diplomats was allowed in Lhasa in late March, before access was restricted until after the conclusion of the Olympics. The travel ban covered both the TAR and Tibetan areas in other provinces.

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

A. History of Discussions

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, and one delegation visited in 1985. Talks between Beijing and Tibetan delegations in April 1982 and in October 1984 did not make substantive headway.

Contacts between China and the Dalai Lama's representatives continued sporadically for the next 17 years, but a visit by a senior Tibetan figure did not occur again until July 2002, when China invited Gyalo Thondup, the Dalai Lama's older brother, to visit Lhasa, Beijing, his family home in Qinghai, and the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region in northwest China. Upon his return to India, he 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 Gyaltzen 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 three tasks on the trip: to re-establish direct contact with the leadership in Beijing, 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 toward resolving the issue of Tibet."

In a September 2002 briefing, Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) spokesperson Kong Quan welcomed their visit and 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.

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Lodi Gyari and Kelsang Gyaltsen traveled to China again from May 25 to June 8, 2003. Their party traveled to Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces, the Tibetan areas of Yunnan province, and to Beijing and Shanghai municipalities. 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."

MFA spokesperson Kong Quan said in a press conference that Beijing approved of Tibetan "compatriots" visiting China in a private capacity and stated that their visit illustrated that the Chinese government maintained channels of communication with the Dalai Lama.

Lodi Gyari and Kelsang Gyaltsen traveled to China for a third time in September 2004. They visited Beijing, Hebei, and Guangdong, and 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."

Former 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" and welcomed the visit as a chance "to see for themselves the development of Tibet and other Tibetan autonomous areas of China." The spokesperson reiterated China's opposition to a visit by the Dalai Lama, 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."

On June 30 - July 1, 2005, Lodi Gyari and Kelsang Gyalsten again met with

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a delegation of Chinese officials in Bern, Switzerland, led by Vice Foreign Minister Zhu Weiqun, Deputy Head of the UFWD. This was the first meeting held between the two sides outside of China. Gyari described the discussions as concrete and substantive, although many differences still remained.

From February 15 - 23, 2006, the Dalai Lama's envoys met in Guilin, China. In previous meetings, the envoys had requested to visit other autonomous regions of China, which is why Guangxi Autonomous Region was chosen. After the meetings concluded, Lodi Gyari reported that there was "a growing understanding between the two sides, though fundamental differences persisted." He made clear, however, that the Tibetans remained committed to the dialogue process and were hopeful that progress would be possible by continuing the engagement.

The Dalai Lama's envoys were hosted by the UFWD in Shanghai and Nanjing from June 29 to July 5, 2007. Following this meeting, the envoys reported that "our dialogue process has reached a critical stage" and that "we ... made some concrete proposals for implementation if our dialogue process is to go forward."

B. Current Status of Discussions

The Dalai Lama's representatives and officials of the UFWD held their seventh and eighth rounds of dialogue in 2008, as well as an informal round in the weeks immediately following the unrest in Tibetan areas in the spring.

On May 4, 2008, Lodi Gyari and Kelsang Gyalsten, Special Envoys of the Dalai Lama, met with Executive Vice Minister Zhu Weiqun and Vice Minister Sitar of the UFWD in Shenzhen. This meeting was held to discuss the current situation unfolding in Tibet following weeks of protests and unrest in Tibetan areas. When discussing the meeting, the Tibetans reported that they rejected the claims by the Chinese officials that the Dalai Lama was responsible for instigating the demonstrations and unrest in Tibet and that he was trying to sabotage the Olympic Games; emphasized that the events in Tibet were the consequences of "wrong policies of the authorities towards the Tibetans, which goes back several decades;" and called for the release of prisoners, proper medical treatment for the injured, unfettered access to visitors, including the media, and an end to the "patriotic re-education campaigns." In his summary of the meeting, Foreign Ministry Spokesman Qin Gang reported that "they talked about the 'March 14' incident, the current situation in Lhasa, the Central Government's policy on Tibet, and toward the Dalai Lama." At the conclusion of the meeting both sides agreed that there was an understanding that a date would be set soon for the next round of

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formal dialogue. President Hu stated on May 7, in Japan that “we hope the contact [with the Dalai Lama’s side] to yield positive results.”

The seventh round of dialogue took place on July 1 – 2, in Beijing. Lodi Gyari and Kelsang Gyalsten again met with Executive Vice Minister Zhu Weiqun and Vice Minister Sitar. They also met for the first time with Du Qinglin, Vice Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference and Minister of the UFWD. During this round, the Chinese presented the Tibetans with a set of new preconditions, called the “four no-supports,” stating that the Dalai Lama must not support: 1) any attempt to disrupt the 2008 Beijing Olympics, 2) inciting violence in Tibet including protests, 3) the alleged “terrorist activities” by a Tibetan NGO, or 4) Tibetan independence. The Chinese insisted that the Dalai Lama should “promise” to fulfill the requirements of the “four no-supports” and “prove it in his actions.” The Tibetans stated that “no one needs to urge us ... as His Holiness and the Tibetan struggle are universally acknowledged and appreciated as consistently rejecting and opposing such acts.” In their response, the Tibetans reported their rejection of violence and their insistence that the issue under discussion was the welfare of the Tibetan people and not the personal status of affairs of the Dalai Lama or the Tibetans in exile.

During the eighth round of talks from October 31 to November 5, in Beijing, the Tibetan representatives met with UFWD counterparts and with Du Qinglin, Vice Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference. The Tibetans presented the Chinese with a document entitled “Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People,” which clarified their understanding of the meaning of “genuine autonomy.” The document had been requested during the July meeting.

The 11-page document laid out in detail the Tibetans’ notion of genuine autonomy for a large range of issues including language, culture, religion, education, environmental protection, economic development and trade, public health, public security, and regulation of population migration. The memorandum stated that it is their intention “to explore how the needs of the Tibetan nationality can be met within the framework of the PRC since we believe these needs are consistent with the principles of the [Chinese] Constitution on autonomy.” It also stated that the Tibetans “have no intention at all of using any agreement on genuine autonomy as a stepping stone for separation from the PRC.” Chinese officials said in a press conference on November 10 that the memorandum presented by the

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Tibetans showed they had not given up their dream of independence and that it contained proposals that were unacceptable.

During the meeting Du Qinglin, Vice Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference briefed the Tibetans on the Olympics, Paralympics, the economic and social development in the TAR and the country at large, as well as relief efforts for the May earthquake in Sichuan and for the January snowstorms that crippled wide areas of southern China. After the talks, Du said the Dalai Lama should respect history, face reality, and conform to the times, as well as fundamentally change his political positions.

Throughout the year and especially in the days immediately following the riots in Lhasa, Chinese central and provincial government and Communist Party officials continued to make negative public statements concerning the Dalai Lama, including blaming him for the March violence. At a press briefing on March 18, MFA spokesperson Qin Gang told reporters that China had ample evidence to prove that the Dalai Lama masterminded the March 14. Prime Minister Wen Jiabao later echoed these comments, saying that China "had ample evidence to prove that the riots were organized, premeditated, masterminded, and instigated by the Dalai clique." The Dalai Lama responded by welcoming an international investigation. In the week following the March 14 riots, TAR Party Secretary Zhang Qingli called the Dalai Lama "a wolf in monk's clothes" and "a devil with a human face but the heart of a beast."

During the protests and unrest in Tibetan areas in March, the Dalai Lama publicly and repeatedly called for an end to violence by all sides. On March 19, he wrote a letter to President Hu and, on March 28, issued a public appeal to the Chinese people. In this appeal, he expressed sadness for loss of all life in Tibet, repeated that he had no desire for Tibet's separation from China, and stated his support for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in Beijing.

On April 6, the Dalai Lama issued a 13 point statement to all Tibetans. This statement expressed his sadness and concern that force had been used to suppress peaceful demonstrations, and that the recent protests in Tibet "not only contradicted but also shattered the People's Republic of China's propaganda that except for a few 'reactionaries, the majority of Tibetans enjoy a prosperous and contented life.' " The Dalai Lama stated that the struggle of the Tibetans was "with a few in the leadership of the People's Republic of China and not with the Chinese people." He reaffirmed his support for the Beijing Olympics and urged Tibetans living outside of Tibet not to engage in any action that could be

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interpreted as violent. The Dalai Lama denied that he or the Tibetan “government-in-exile” had anything to do with orchestrating the recent events in Tibet, as Chinese authorities had alleged, and he appealed for an international investigation into the matter. Finally, he reaffirmed that he had decided to find a solution for the future of Tibet within the framework of the PRC.

On May 7, in the days immediately following the first round of “informal” talks, President Hu said, “Our attitude toward contacts and consultation with the Dalai Lama is serious. We hope that the Dalai Lama’s side takes concrete actions to show its sincerity by earnestly stopping activities involving splitting the motherland, instigating violence, and disrupting the Beijing Olympics, so as to create conditions for next consolation.”

After months of continuing repression in Tibet, harsh rhetoric from Chinese officials, and the inconclusive dialogue round in July, the Dalai Lama publicly expressed his frustration on several occasions over the failure of his “Middle Way” approach aimed at greater autonomy for Tibet. As a result, Tibet’s “government in exile” held a meeting in Dharamsala, India, with hundreds of Tibetans leaders to debate whether to continue to pursue a measured path of compromise with China or if another path should be taken. After five days of deliberation, the majority of Tibetans decided not to break with Dalai Lama’s vision of finding a peaceful solution to Tibet within the framework of the People’s Republic of China. There was also a strong endorsement of the Dalai Lama’s continued leadership.

On November 4, during the eighth round of dialogue, MFA Spokesman Qin said that China’s position on the Dalai Lama had been “clear and consistent.” The Dalai Lama should “take concrete actions to give up separatism and do something good for the Tibetan people in his lifetime.” After the conclusion of talks a week later, Xinhua, China’s state news agency, reported that the Chinese government was looking to a “post-Dalai Lama era.” On November 6, UFWD issued a press statement in which Minister Du urged the Dalai Lama to “change his political views and not support Tibetan independence.”

In early November, the Dalai Lama expressed frustration with the dialogue while on a trip to Japan. Speaking at a press conference the Dalai Lama said, “My trust in the Chinese government has become thinner, thinner, thinner. Suppression [in Tibet] is increasing and I cannot pretend that everything is OK.” Lodi Gyari said in Dharamsala, India, on November 16, that “we have told the Chinese very clearly this time that we have now reached the crossroads.”

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While the United States remains supportive of the talks, after seven years we are disappointed and concerned that the dialogue, including the two rounds in 2008, has not produced concrete results. Dialogue is better than its absence; we expect, however, this dialogue to lead to negotiated solutions to the real problems that Tibet and its people face.

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