



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Communist China turns 70 but still lacks legitimacy in Tibet

<https://savetibet.org/communist-china-turns-70-but-still-lacks-legitimacy-in-tibet/>

September 30 2019

Statement of the International Campaign for Tibet

As part of the 70th anniversary of its founding on October 1, the People's Republic of China (PRC) is touting "70 years of progress" in Tibet. However, the truth is that it has been 70 years of subjugation and oppression for the Tibetan people, and after all that, China still lacks legitimacy in its rule over Tibet.

Both the provisional constitution called the Common Program of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference adopted in September 1949 and the subsequent Constitution of PRC boast of providing communities like the Tibetans the freedom to preserve or reform their own ways and customs, use and develop their own spoken and written languages. The Common Program even committed "to preserve or reform their traditions, customs and religious beliefs."

Following the establishment of PRC, Beijing announced its intention to takeover Tibet. Subsequently, in 1951, it forced the Tibetan side to sign the 17-Point Agreement that established a new framework of Tibetan-Chinese relationship. Despite its controversial signing, the agreement did specify that the then Tibetan government's decision-making over religion, language and political institutions would remain intact in exchange for its acceptance of Chinese sovereignty. Nevertheless, China itself violated this agreement in subsequent years culminating in the Tibetan National Uprising in March 1959, and the Dalai Lama was forced to seek refuge in India in 1959.

As early as March 10, 1961, the Dalai Lama said in a statement on the second anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day, "The Communists are today forcing what they call reforms down the throats of our people. I have given careful consideration to these so-called reforms and I have come to the conclusion that at the end of the reforms the Tibetan people will be reduced to the state of mental and economic serfdom."

Today, the conditions of Tibet and the Tibetan people have become as predicted in 1961 by the Dalai Lama. Destruction has been unleashed on Tibet's monastic and cultural institutes and environment. The Tibetan people's traditions, culture and religion > have been destroyed, and their human rights are consistently violated. Since China's invasion and occupation of Tibet began, successive Chinese leaders have failed to understand and address the underlying grievances of the Tibetan people.

If China really wants to show maturity and become a responsible member of the international community, it should have the courage to address the political problems in Tibet and respond positively to the Dalai Lama's offer for a mutually beneficial negotiated settlement through the Middle Way Approach.

Since the mid-1970s, the Dalai Lama has been promoting this approach, which takes into consideration the interests of both Tibetans and Chinese, and calling for a resolution of the Tibetan issue within the framework of the PRC. Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping had said in 1979 that other than the independence of Tibet, any other issue could be discussed and resolved. In addition, during the short periods of dialogue between Tibetan and Chinese officials over the past four decades, the Tibetan side even presented a Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People. However, Chinese leaders are not sticking to the commitment made by Deng and have rejected the Tibetan proposals.

The International Campaign for Tibet's message to the PRC on its 70th anniversary is this: The Dalai Lama is the solution and not the problem for Tibet.