



## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

### Tibet 2020 campaign concludes as US election approaches

Read online: <https://savetibet.org/tibet-2020-campaign-concludes-as-us-election-approaches>

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In July 2020, the International Campaign for Tibet launched the “Tibet 2020” campaign to raise awareness of China’s oppression in Tibet among the US public and presidential candidates. Tibet 2020 involved citizens’ outreach to the Democratic and Republican presidential candidates urging them to include the Tibetan issue in their foreign policy agendas and platforms.

Accordingly, we reached out to the Democratic and Republican national committees and urged them to consider our asks. Several thousands of our members and supporters responded to our campaign action as well and we are forwarding these petitions to the DNC and the RNC.

We are pleased to report to our members that the Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden released a statement on September 3, 2020 saying a Biden-Harris administration “will stand up for the people of Tibet.”

He added, “As President, I’ll put values back at the center of American foreign policy. I’ll meet with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, appoint a new Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, and insist that the Chinese government restore access to Tibet for U.S. citizens, including our diplomats and journalists. I’ll work with our allies in pressing Beijing to return to direct dialogue with the representatives of the Tibetan people to achieve meaningful autonomy, respect for human rights, and the preservation of Tibet’s environment as well as its unique cultural, linguistic and religious traditions.”

On the Republican side there was no statement on Tibet by their presidential candidate, Donald Trump. While the Republican National Committee’s executive committee decided on June 10, 2020 not to adopt a new platform until the 2024 election cycle, analysts interpreted this to mean that the RNC is allowing the 2016 platform to stand for the next four years. The 2016 Republican platform made this reference to Tibet: “[C]ultural genocide continues in Tibet and Xinjiang, the promised autonomy of Hong Kong is eroded, the currency is manipulated, our technology is stolen, and intellectual property and copyrights are mocked in an economy based on piracy.”

### Special Coordinator appointed

Tibet 2020 also asked the candidates to commit to the congressionally mandated appointment of a Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues at the State Department. On October 14, 2020, Secretary of State Michael Pompeo announced that Assistant Secretary Robert A. Destro of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor will serve as the United States Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues.

While ICT is glad that the Trump administration has responded to wide-ranging calls for the appointment of a new Special Coordinator, which came from ICT members and members of Congress alike, we remain concerned that the appointment of the Special Coordinator at a lower level could be regarded by the Chinese government as a message that America has downgraded the priority it gives to Tibet.

The United States has a strong history and tradition of bipartisan support for the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people and we will continue to work to strengthen this. As a non-profit organization, the International Campaign for Tibet does not endorse any candidate for elections at any level, and has worked for over 30 years in a bipartisan way to support the aspirations of the Tibetan people.



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