



## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

### ICT urges G7 leaders to address Tibet

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As leaders of some of the world’s most powerful countries prepare to meet at the G7 summit, the International Campaign for Tibet is calling on them to take up the crisis in Tibet.

“Given the strategic importance of Tibet in the [wider Asian] region, we would like to therefore kindly urge our government to include Tibet into the deliberations at the G7 summit, and beyond,” ICT Interim President Bhuchung K. Tsering said in a letter to US President Joe Biden.

Noting that G7 countries are working out how to deal with China as it becomes more aggressive on the world stage, the letter adds that, “The resumption of the Sino-Tibetan dialogue and the rights of the Tibetan people should be an integral part of any China-related strategy.”

ICT sent similar letters to the heads of the other G7 countries: Justin Trudeau of Canada, Emmanuel Macron of France, Angela Merkel of Germany, Mario Draghi of Italy, Suga Yoshihide of Japan and Boris Johnson of the United Kingdom.

The G7 Summit will begin tomorrow, June 11, in Cornwall, England and end on June 13.

### Human rights violations

ICT’s letter notes the human rights situation has deteriorated inside Tibet, which China annexed more than 60 years ago and continues to rule with an iron fist.

Earlier this year, the watchdog group Freedom House declared Tibet the least-free country on Earth, in a tie with Syria.

China has also closed Tibet off to foreign diplomats, parliamentarians, independent media and international civil society, ICT’s letter says.

“The international community should address the systematic and widespread violations of human rights in Tibet with renewed vigor,” says the letter.

Last month, the foreign ministers of the G7 countries issued a communiqué saying they were “deeply concerned about human rights violations and abuses in Xinjiang and in Tibet.”

Xinjiang—a region north of Tibet that Uyghurs know as East Turkestan—is home to mass internment camps that the Chinese government has used to help carry out its genocide of Uyghurs.

### Impact on wider region

ICT’s letter says the “state of human rights in Tibet is inextricably connected to the peaceful development of South and Southeast Asia.”

The letter points to Tibet's importance for border security and water security in the region.

As the source of many of the largest river systems in Asia, Tibet provides water to more than 1 billion people downstream. However, a study last year found the Chinese government used its dams on the Dzachu River in Tibet (known elsewhere as the Mekong) to prevent the flow of water in 2019, contributing to a devastating drought in Southeast Asia.

China has also used its control of Tibet to try to seize land from Tibet's neighbors.

Over the past year, China has waged a border conflict with India, part of whose territory China claims as "South Tibet." Several soldiers died as a result of the border skirmishes.

The United Kingdom has invited India to take part in this week's G7 summit.

## **Plan for peace**

ICT's letter notes that the Dalai Lama and other Tibetan leaders have already laid out a vision that would resolve the Tibetan conflict in a way that serves all parties.

In 1987, the Dalai Lama—whom China forced into exile from Tibet in 1959—presented his Five Point Peace Plan in an address to the US Congressional Human Rights Caucus.

The plan called for transforming Tibet into a "zone of peace"; respecting Tibetans' fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms; and holding negotiations between Tibetan and Chinese representatives.

"Given the many conflicts in the region, we believe that this vision is more relevant than ever before," ICT says in its letter.

The letter adds that the Dalai Lama has also presented a "Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People" that encourages leaving Tibet as part of the People's Republic of China in exchange for meaningful autonomy for the Tibetan people.

Penpa Tsering, the new president of the Central Tibetan Administration—which provides democratic governance for Tibetan exiles around the globe—has expressed his support for the Dalai Lama's vision, ICT notes in its letter.

"The International Campaign for Tibet is convinced that this approach would benefit both Tibetans and Chinese," the letter says. "It offers the prospect of lasting peace in Tibet, and in the People's Republic of China."



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