



**Report to Congress on
Tibet Negotiations
Section 613(b) of the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002 (22 U.S.C. 6901 note)**

Pursuant to section 613(b) of the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002 (22 U.S.C. 6901 note), this report covers: (1) the steps taken by the President and Secretary of State in accordance with subsection (a)(1) to implement the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002; and (2) the status of any discussions between the People's Republic of China and the Dalai Lama or his representatives. The Department of State submits this report to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

Executive Summary

No formal negotiations between People's Republic of China (PRC) officials and the Dalai Lama or his representatives have occurred since 2010. The United States continues to encourage both sides to engage in meaningful and direct dialogue, without preconditions, to seek a settlement that resolves differences. The U.S. government remains concerned by the lack of meaningful autonomy for Tibetans within China, ongoing abuses of the human rights of Tibetans in China, and efforts by PRC authorities to eliminate the distinct religious, linguistic, and cultural identity of Tibetans. The United States believes the PRC government must address these concerns to create conditions for a sustainable settlement, which is essential to the long-term stability of the region. The U.S. government has maintained close contact with Tibetan religious, cultural, and political leaders to underscore U.S. support, and has expressed its concerns regarding PRC government actions in bilateral, multilateral, and public venues. Due to the PRC government's withdrawal of consent for operation in retaliation for the closure of PRC Consulate General Houston, the United States suspended operations of the U.S. Consulate General in Chengdu (CG Chengdu) on July 27, 2020. The closure of CG Chengdu has severely restricted the United States' ability to maintain access to Tibetan areas.

The following report describes activities undertaken by senior U.S. officials from May 1, 2021 to April 30, 2022 to encourage dialogue and create conditions for a sustainable settlement.

U.S. Policy on Tibet

The United States views the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and Tibetan autonomous prefectures and counties in other provinces as part of the PRC. The United States' long-standing policy is to encourage meaningful and direct dialogue between PRC authorities and the Dalai Lama or his representatives, without preconditions, to seek a settlement that resolves differences. The U.S. government believes that a negotiated resolution that leads to meaningful autonomy for Tibetans and ensures they are able to practice freely their religion, culture, and language provides the best hope for long-term stability in the region.

The United States continues to urge the PRC government to change its policies in Tibetan areas that have created tensions; respect and preserve the distinct religious, linguistic, and cultural identity of Tibetans; and permit Tibetans to express their grievances freely, publicly, peacefully, and without fear of retribution. The U.S. government continues to call upon PRC authorities to allow diplomats, journalists, tourists, and others to have unrestricted access to Tibetan areas.

The United States remains concerned by PRC government interference in the selection, education, and veneration of Tibetan Buddhist religious leaders.

Due to the PRC government's withdrawal of consent for operation in retaliation for the closure of PRC Consulate General Houston, the United States suspended operations of the U.S. Consulate General in CG Chengdu on July 27, 2020. The consulate has stood at the center of our relations with people in Southwestern China, including Tibetan areas, for 35 years. The closure of CG Chengdu has severely restricted the United States' ability to maintain access to Tibetan areas.

Information regarding human rights conditions in Tibet appears in the Department of State's annual Human Rights Report and International Religious Freedom Report. Information regarding access to the TAR and other Tibetan areas of China appears in the Department of State's annual report to Congress pursuant to section 4 of the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act (RATA) of 2018 (P.L. 115-330).

Steps Taken by Senior U.S. Officials to Encourage Dialogue and Establish Conditions for a Sustainable Settlement

Senior U.S. officials called public attention to China's abuses of the human rights of Tibetans, including their right to freedom of religion or belief, and called for the PRC government to respect those rights on multiple occasions, such as the following:

- In May, State Department Spokesman Ned Price tweeted out congratulations to Penpa Tsering on the announcement that he won the Central Tibetan Administration election to become the next Sikyong.
- The Department's Office of International Religious Freedom tweeted about the PRC's abduction of the Panchen Lama on May 17 and August 30.
- On June 22, 2021, the United States was among 44 countries to sign a joint statement delivered at the 47th Session of the United Nations that expressed deep concern about the human rights situation in Tibet, among other concerns.
- On July 6, 2021, the Secretary released a statement on the occasion of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 86th birthday, noting his dedication to greater global equality and the equal rights of all people, including his fellow Tibetans. The Department spokesperson similarly extended birthday greetings to His Holiness at the top of the daily press briefing.
- In July, DRL Acting Assistant Secretary Lisa Peterson and Senior Official of the Bureau of Population, Refugee and Migration Nancy Jackson spoke at the Office of Tibet during a Tungkar event celebrating the Dalai Lama's 86th birthday.
- In July, DRL Acting Assistant Secretary Lisa Peterson virtually met with newly appointed Central Tibetan Administration Sikong Penpa Tsering.
- In July, the Secretary met with Central Tibetan Administration representative Ngodup Dongchung in New Delhi.
- The Department's Office of International Religious Freedom tweeted concern about reports that PRC authorities arrested nearly 60 Tibetans, including monks, for possessing photos of the Dalai Lama on August 27.

- The Department's Office of International Religious Freedom tweeted about PRC attempts to erase the life and legacy of Tibetan lama Tenzin Delek Rinpoche on November 1.
- On November 15, 2021, the Secretary redesignated China as a Country of Particular Concern and identified the following sanction that accompanied the designation: the existing ongoing restriction on exports to China of crime control and detection instruments and equipment, under the Foreign Relations Authorization Act of 1990 and 1991 (Public Law 101-246), pursuant to section 402(c)(5) of the Act. The redesignation followed the May 2021 release of the 2020 International Religious Freedom Report, which includes a report on violations of religious freedom in Tibet appended at the end of the China report.
- In December, the Secretary of State designated Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights Uzra Zeya as the U.S. Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues.
- The Special Coordinator met virtually with the new Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama Namgyal Choedup on December 22.
- The Special Coordinator met virtually with representatives from the International Campaign for Tibet in December to discuss topics including U.S. support for Tibetans on human rights, humanitarian issues, and environmental protection.
- The Special Coordinator met virtually with participants of the Tibetan Scholarship Program in January.
- On January 13, the Special Coordinator conducted an interview with *Radio Free Asia*, where she expressed deep concern over PRC human rights abuses perpetrated against the Tibetan people, including efforts by the PRC to Sinicize the Tibetan community and interfere in the veneration of Tibetan Buddhist religious leaders, notably His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

- The Department's Office of International Religious Freedom tweeted on January 13 expressing concern about reports of escalating PRC actions against Tibetan Buddhists, including authorities destroying Buddha statues, removing prayer wheels, and burning prayer flags. They urged PRC authorities to respect the right of Tibetans to practice their beliefs freely.
- The Special Coordinator, IRF AAL, and other Department officials from PRM and DRL met with Norzin Dolma, Kalon of the CTA's Department for Information and International Relations in February.
- The Special Coordinator led a Department of State-hosted annual Losar (Tibetan New Year) celebration virtually in March, bringing together representatives from the CTA, community leaders, NGOs, and U.S. government officials. The Special Coordinator recorded a message for the event and the Secretary of State released a press statement to mark the occasion.
- The Special Coordinator met with Tibet Fund President Lobsang Nyandak in March to discuss nurturing vibrant and cohesive Tibetan refugee communities in India and Nepal and tweeted publicly about the meeting.
- The Special Coordinator hosted Penpa Tsering at the State Department on April 25 during his inaugural visit to Washington DC as the Sikyong of the CTA. Multiple senior U.S. officials from the State Department, USAID, and the National Security Council also met with Tsering during his visit.
- On April 25, 2022, the Department spokesperson issued a statement and tweeted on the 33rd birthday of the Panchen Lama. He called on the PRC to make public the Panchen Lama's whereabouts and well-being, and for the PRC to cease interference in the succession of Tibetan Buddhist lamas. The Special Coordinator also tweeted about the Panchen Lama's disappearance and called for PRC authorities to release him immediately.
- On April 25, 2022, Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom (IRF AAL) Rashad Hussain and DRL A/PDAS Scott Busby spoke at a reception hosted by the Office of Tibet in DC to mark the birthday of the 11th Panchen Lama. AAL Hussain and A/PDAS Busby reaffirmed the U.S. government's support for Tibetans' human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion or belief.

- Senior U.S. officials continued to promote accountability for the PRC government's restrictions on international access to Tibetan areas.
- U.S. officials consistently engaged with Tibetan leaders and advocates, underscoring the United States' commitment to protect the distinct identity of Tibetans, improve respect for their human rights, and address their humanitarian needs.