



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

US: China should create conditions for negotiated Tibet resolution

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A negotiated resolution to the Tibet-China conflict provides the best hope for long-term regional stability, the State Department says in a new report to Congress that calls on China to create the conditions for a sustainable agreement.

In its annual Report to Congress on Tibet Negotiations, the State Department says: “The U.S. government believes that a negotiated resolution that leads to meaningful autonomy for Tibetans and ensures they are able to freely practice their religion, culture, and language provides the best hope for long-term stability in the region.”

The report arrives as Penpa Tsering, the Tibetan Sikyong (President), is set to visit Washington, DC next week, where he will meet with State Department officials, members of Congress, journalists and others.

The report, which is a requirement of the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002, notes that China has not taken part in negotiations with Tibetan leaders since 2010.

International Campaign for Tibet President Tencho Gyatso said: *“This report is mandated by Congress for the administration to address the need for resolution of the Tibet-China conflict.”*

“ICT calls on Congress and the State Department to embrace the bipartisan Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Conflict Act, which will pressure the Chinese government to get back to the negotiating table.”

Creating the conditions

The Chinese government has occupied Tibet for over 60 years, turning it into the least-free country on Earth alongside South Sudan and Syria, according to watchdog group Freedom House.

The State Department report says the US “remains concerned by the lack of meaningful autonomy for Tibetans within the [People's Republic of China], ongoing abuses of the human rights of Tibetans in the PRC, 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 report adds.

China met for 10 rounds of dialogue with the Dalai Lama’s envoys beginning in 2002. However, no dialogue has taken place in 13 years.

The report says the US is also concerned about Chinese government interference in the selection, education and veneration of Tibetan Buddhist leaders. Beijing has long said it plans to appoint a successor to the 88-year-old Dalai Lama, which the US vowed to oppose in the Tibetan Policy and Support Act of 2020.

The report also urges China to give diplomats, journalists, tourists and others unrestricted access to Tibet. The report says Secretary of State Antony Blinken determined this year that China's restrictions on access to Tibetan areas meet the standard under the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018 "for mandatory visa ineligibilities for officials substantially involved in such restrictions."

US efforts

The report highlights efforts by US officials over the reporting year, May 1, 2022 to April 30, 2023, to encourage a renewal of the dialogue process and establish the conditions for a sustainable settlement.

According to the report, these efforts included:

- Under Secretary of State Uzra Zeya, who serves as Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, calling on China to return to dialogue at an event hosted by the US Mission in Geneva on the human rights implications of the Dalai Lama's succession.
- President Joe Biden raising concerns about China's policies in Tibet during a meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping in November 2022.
- US officials calling out China's mass DNA collection in Tibet, forced separation of over 1 million Tibetan children from their families and other outrageous human rights abuses.
- The US designating Chinese officials Wu Yingjie and Zhang Hongbo with the first sanctions for serious human rights abuses in Tibet under the Global Magnitsky program.

The Tibet Policy Act mandates that "The President and the Secretary should 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." Further, it says reports on negotiations should detail steps taken by the President and the Secretary.

Need to redouble efforts

However, ICT underscores that the report fails to provide details regarding meetings by President Biden and Secretary Blinken with Chinese leaders on how Tibet was raised.

During the reporting year, Biden had one meeting (November 2022) with Xi and a phone call with him (July 2022). During the same period, Blinken had three meetings (July 2022, September 2022 and February 2023) with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi and two phone calls with him (November 2022 and February 2023). Other White House and State Department officials, including the US Ambassador to China, had at least six meetings with Chinese officials during the period.

The State Department report does not detail any elevation of greater American efforts to support the dialogue, despite the extended period of time since the last negotiations between envoys of the Dalai Lama and the Chinese leadership. In light of the 13 years that have passed since the ninth round of dialogue, the United States must redouble its efforts to bring the PRC back to the table and effectively help in bringing about a negotiated settlement on Tibet.

Sikyong visit

The report also notes that US leaders met several times with the Dalai Lama and with Penpa Tsering, the President (Sikyong) of the exile-based Central Tibetan Administration.

Penpa will arrive in Washington on Sunday for several days of engagements, including [speaking at the National Press Club on Oct. 18 at 2 pm EDT](#).

[Read the State Department's 2023 Report to Congress on Tibet Negotiations.](#)



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