



## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

### **Prayers for earthquake victims and statements of American support for Tibet at State Department Losar event**

<https://savetibet.org/prayers-for-earthquake-victims-and-statements-of-american-support-for-tibet-at-state-department-losar-event>

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This weekend saw the beginning of a somber observance of the Tibetan New Year as Tibetans reflected on the recent earthquake inside Tibet and the death of Kasur Gyalo Thondup, His Holiness the Dalai Lama's brother. As tradition holds, Losar also is a time to forward to the coming year as a time of hope and renewal.

Losar, the Tibetan New Year, began on Feb. 28, 2025, marking the start of the Year of the Wood Snake - 2152 in the Tibetan lunar calendar.

#### **State Department event**

Yesterday, representatives of the Tibetan community and invited guests joined together at the US State Department's annual gathering to observe Tibetan New Year. State Department leaders; including Senior Official Albert Gombis performing the duties of the Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights attended the event.

Last week, Secretary of State Marco Rubio released a [statement](#) saying, "I extend my warmest wishes to all those celebrating Losar, the Tibetan New Year. On this first day of the Year of the Wood Snake, we celebrate the strength and perseverance of the Tibetan community worldwide. The United States remains committed to protecting the universal, fundamental, and inalienable human rights of Tibetans and promoting their distinct cultural, linguistic, and religious heritage.

I wish Tibetans celebrating all across the world peace and prosperity in the new year. Losar Tashi Delek and Happy New Year!"

At the State Department 2025 Losar Reception, Senior Official Gombis spoke to the close relationship between America and all Tibetans, "We recognize that the safety of the United States is inextricably bound to the battle of ideas and influence with the Chinese Communist Party... their struggle constitutes one of the front lines in the global effort for freedom from the Chinese Communist Party's repression.

He continued, "US strength is reinforced in an international system that upholds and promotes universal, fundamental, and inalienable human rights, including the freedom of religion or belief. The CCP's co-optation of Tibetan Buddhism, including its interference in the Dalai Lama's succession process, mirrors its larger efforts to co-opt other religious traditions, both within China and globally. We must challenge the CCP's brazen efforts to undermine the ideals that are a key source of our strength and identity as a nation. We must also empower Tibetans to negotiate an enduring solution

for Tibet – one that guarantees meaningful autonomy and allows them to express their religious and cultural identity without fear of repression.

As Asia's high ground and source of the regions major rivers, that sustain 1.8 billion people, Gombis further attested to the critical role Tibet plays in US and global stability adding, "The CCP's aggressive extraction of Tibet's resources and construction of hydropower dams threaten the stability of broad swaths of South and Southeast Asia, livelihoods of communities there, and by extension, US economic and trade relationships in the Indo-Pacific."

He concluded, "US advocacy for Tibet contributes to America's own strength, prosperity, and stability and is important if we believe that religious freedom is indeed a universal, fundamental, and inalienable right, then standing up for the Tibetan community and supporting you all here today is simply the right thing to do." The full remarks of Senior Official Gombis can be found [here](#).

These remarks represent the newly inaugurated Trump Administration's first statement regarding Tibet, continuing decades long bipartisan support

In addition to the State Department speakers, Namgyal Choedup, Representative of the Office of Tibet spoke to "As the Tibetan people all over the world mark another Losar in the face of China's relentless assault on the Tibetan civilization, the spirit and determination of the Tibetan people remains ever stronger because the human desire for freedom and dignity can never be suppressed."

ICT President, Tencho Gyatso shared remarks and thoughts on the coming year, saying, "This year, Losar is being marked in a somber way as Tibetans reflect on the uncertain aftermath of the recent devastation and loss of the life in the earthquake in Western Tibet, as well as the recent passing of the elder brother of His Holiness. Tibetans are gathering in prayer and marking the new year with traditional cultural activities without the usual festivities."

## **Tibet in US Foreign Policy**

US policy and investment in Tibet has always been a critical facet of an overall regional strategy to confront China's political and military expansion across the region. The United States must enhance and focus its engagement or risk allowing China to achieve its goal, weakening the US interest. Tibetans have stood on the frontlines of resisting CCP repression for decades, and relatively small funding amounts are crucial to enabling this resistance.

Currently, all foreign assistance that supports many programs worldwide, has been frozen by the new administration. ICT, the Office of Tibet, and other organizations are working to ensure that this funding is not lost.

## **Further Losar events**

Events were held nationwide including a busy Losar in New York City. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer joined in observing Losar at a NYC Tibetan Community Center, marking his first Losar with the Tibetan community. The City Council added Losar to the list of officially recognized holidays in the city, providing observers of Losar with eased parking restrictions. Finally, the Mayor's office unveiled a new Tibetan language Facebook page for the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs.

ICT sends our best wishes to all as we begin the year of the Wood Snake and our hopes for abundant blessings of peace, health, and happiness to all.



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