



## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

### ICT releases “Beyond Neither Goat nor Sheep” language report and reflects on Human Rights Day

<https://savetibet.org/beyond-neither-goat-nor-sheep-language-report-reflects-on-human-rights-day>

December 11, 2025

**Washington, DC** – Yesterday, the International Campaign for Tibet joined millions worldwide in reflecting on the meaning of Human Rights Day and the work yet to be done to bring freedom to all those living under oppression as well as recognizing the 36th anniversary of His Holiness the Dalai Lama receiving the Nobel Peace Prize.

“On December 10th, 1989, His Holiness the Dalai Lama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his decades-long, nonviolent struggle to achieve freedom and self-determination for Tibetans suffering under Chinese rule. Today ICT reaffirms the vision of His Holiness for Tibet, one where the dignity and fundamental rights of the Tibetan people are respected and Tibet’s culture, language and religion are revered and preserved for generations to come,” said ICT President Tencho Gyatso. “In recognition of Human Rights Day and His Holiness’s continued call for action, we urge the international community to address the human rights crisis in Tibet and hold the Chinese government accountable for its abuses.”

To shine a light on Beijing’s continued repression in Tibet, ICT is marking Human Rights Day by also releasing the report [“Beyond Neither Goat nor Sheep.”](#) which details the Chinese government’s systematic policies to erase the use of the Tibetan language and separate Tibetans from their linguistic heritage. The report focuses on Chinese authorities’ attempts to undermine the use of the Tibetan language in an effort to advance Beijing’s goal of forcibly assimilating Tibetans into the Chinese state and depriving them of a fundamental connection to their identity.

Additionally, the report overviews the evolution of China’s Tibetan language policy and demonstrates that for many decades China’s rhetoric and laws affirming the linguistic rights of ethnic minorities rings hollow in reality. The CCP goes to great lengths to build a façade of support for language rights in Tibet even while it separates children from their families and coerces them to learn Chinese in residential boarding schools; prohibits Tibetans from using their chosen language in administrative, governmental, and judicial proceedings; and removes the Tibetan language as a core college entry subject. Tibetan-language schools have also been closed throughout Tibet.

The report also documents Chinese government policies to undermine the use of Tibetan Sign Language (TibSL). TibSL users face significant barriers as authorities promote Chinese Sign Language as the nominal “national sign language,” making the use of sign language inaccessible for those TibSL users who do not understand Chinese.

Among other recommendations, the report calls on the PRC to reinstate legal provisions making Tibetan the major language for education in Tibetan schools, safeguard its use as a medium of instruction and incorporate the protection of the Tibetan language and the voice of the Tibetan people in the 15th Five-Year Plan.

ICT also calls on other governments to express concern over China’s institutionalized efforts to erase the Tibetan language and urge an immediate change in policies which seek to forcibly assimilate Tibetans into the Chinese nation. The United States and other governments should also urge China to take steps to preserve Tibet’s culture and its unique linguistic identity in adherence to international law. This includes the provision of Tibetan-language instruction to Tibetan children, in accordance with Beijing’s obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which China ratified in 1992.



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