



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Chinese author refutes PRC narrative, confirms historical independence of Tibet

<https://savetibet.org/chinese-author-refutes-prc-narrative>

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On January 29, 2026, the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) participated in an event at the National Endowment for Democracy which launched former City University of Hong Kong Professor Hon-Shiang Lau's book "Tibet Was Never Part of China Since Antiquity." The book launch included a panel of Tibetan leaders and experts who discussed Tibet's historical sovereignty and refuted the People's Republic of China (PRC) narrative that Tibet has always been a part of China. Professor Lau's groundbreaking scholarship clearly dispels PRC propaganda that Tibet has been a part of China by analyzing official Chinese documents and definitively establishing the historical fact that Tibet had for centuries until 1950 been independent and sovereign.

Former Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom (and United States Senator and Governor of Kansas) Sam Brownback delivered keynote remarks highlighting Tibet's long history as a free and sovereign nation and warning about the growing cultural genocide the PRC is committing against the Tibetan people. On a panel moderated by the Washington Post's Josh Rogin that included Lau, Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), and ICT Research and Monitoring Head Bhuchung K. Tsering, Brownback contextualized the importance of Lau's scholarship within the larger Tibetan movement. The PRC's forcible assimilation of historically independent Tibet lays bare the hypocrisy of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)'s anti-colonial rhetoric. The CCP fears religious freedom more than any weapon, Brownback observed, because it undermines the weak foundation of the state.

Lau noted his purposeful choice of publicly available, Chinese-sourced official documents created before the 1950 occupation in hopes of credibly refuting the CCP's false narrative around Tibet's historical sovereignty. For example, China has not historically played, or sought to play, any role in the selection process of the Dalai Lama.

ICT's Bhuchung Tsering stressed the bipartisan American consensus, across the executive and legislative branches, that a genuinely autonomous Tibet would enrich the international community and that the United States must do more to support that goal. The Sikyong reaffirmed the Dalai Lama's commitment to the Middle Way approach and said Lau's book supports advancing meaningful autonomy for Tibetans under that approach by changing the CCP's narrative about Tibet. Correcting that narrative, the Sikyong emphasized, is critical to facilitating substantive negotiation between the CTA and the PRC. Bhuchung ended the panel with hope for the future, saying Lau's book offers the possibility to change which narratives are used for future policymaking in support of Tibetan autonomy.



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