



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

ICT report highlights the promise of Tibetan democracy amidst the recent CTA elections

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On Friday, May 29, the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) released its [comprehensive survey](#) of the state of Tibetan democracy. The report highlights the challenges the Tibetan democratic experiment faces on the doorstep of the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) totalitarian rule of China and Tibet, and the opportunities offered by the recent Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) elections, the May 27 inauguration of the CTA President (Sikyong), and the imminent assumption of office of the 18th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile (TPIE.)

Members of the 18th TPIE [were elected](#) on April 26. Sikyong Penpa Tsering [was elected](#) to a second term in the first round of voting on February 1.

“Our research clearly documents the accomplishments and durability of Tibetan democracy at a time when the CCP offers an authoritarian model of repression and assimilation only 150 miles from Dharamsala,” said ICT President Tencho Gyatso. “The CTA’s elected officials taking office, as envisioned and inspired by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, offers the international community an opportunity to reaffirm its support for the Tibetan people and to accelerate its engagement with the CTA as their democratically elected representative.”

“The 17th Kashag reiterates our commitment to keep the thought and counsel of His Holiness the Dalai Lama at its very core,” said Sikyong Penpa Tsering after he took the oath of office for a second five-year term on May 27, 2026. “We shall uphold equitable justice founded on rules and regulations; harness collective effort through principled policy implementation, and move forward to achieve common goals. The Kashag will pursue political and social welfare initiatives with the primary goal of long-term sustainability of the Tibetan struggle until a just resolution of the Tibet-China Conflict is achieved.”

ICT’s research and the CTA’s swearing-in spotlight the stark contrast between the flourishing of Tibetan communities living in freedom, i.e. outside of China, and those living under China’s rule in Tibet. Tibetans living in exile are given the chance to participate in Tibetan democracy through free and fair voting, while Tibetans living under CCP rule are denied the right to determine their own future, including the right to elect their own leaders. Since Communist China began its invasion of Tibet in 1949 and completed its occupation in 1959, the CCP has ruled Tibet without the consent of Tibetans. Equally important, the CCP denies Tibetans in Tibet the freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and other democratic freedoms.

ICT’s [report](#) recommends that governments:

- Publicly acknowledge and commend the democratic significance of the February-April 2026 Tibetan elections and the assumption of office by Sikyong Penpa Tsering and the new Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile;
- Engage the CTA at senior levels in capitals and during diplomatic visits to India as a credible democratic partner and representative institution;
- Sustain support for programs serving Tibetans in exile, including initiatives that preserve Tibetan language and culture, through the CTA;
- Support the CTA’s involvement in multilateral dialogues, institutions, and processes where relevant to increase its standing on the global stage; and
- Press China to resume Sino-Tibetan dialogue without preconditions in pursuit of a peaceful resolution.

Specifically, ICT calls on the United States Congress to pass the bipartisan “Assuring the Future of Tibet Act” and the “Tibet Atrocities Determination Act,” and asks the Executive Branch to reinstate full funding for humanitarian and other support to Tibetan communities in India and Nepal and for capacity building efforts within the CTA as mandated by law.

ICT asks the European Union to appoint a Special Representative for Tibet to improve coordination and coherence in EU policy on Tibet, including consulting with the CTA, similar to the role of the US Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues.



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