

SPECIAL MEETING:

Tibetan exiles back the Dalai Lama, challenge talks with China: The Special Meeting in Dharamsala, India closed on November 22 with a strong endorsement of the 'Middle Way' approach, which seeks a genuine autonomy within the framework of the People's Republic of China (PRC), but also clearly stated that exile Tibetans might take a position seeking independence if results of engagement were not evident "in the near future." While many delegates urged for the Dalai Lama's envoys not to be sent again for talks to China, others recognized the importance of retaining some form of engagement with China, blaming Beijing for the lack of results from the latest round of talks, not the Middle Way approach or the Dalai Lama. The Special Meeting also provided a strong endorsement of the Dalai Lama's leadership. A Tibetan researcher who participated told ICT: "This is really democracy in action. I was discussing Tibet's future with the Dalai Lama's sister and several cabinet ministers, as well as other Tibetans from different parts of the diaspora. This was an unprecedented gathering of Tibetans with many perspectives from all over the world that marks a real step forward for the exiles in considering new approaches and strategies." <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-press-releases/tibetan-exiles-back-dalai-lama-challenge-talks-with-china>
http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/23/world/asia/23tibet.html?_r=1&ref=world&oref=slogin

Perspectives from Inside Tibet: Despite physical limitations, Tibetans in Tibet have remained intellectually engaged in the Special Meeting in Dharamsala, India. While strategy proposals vary, Tibetans have remained resolute in their commitment to a nonviolent solution and in their recognition of the Dalai Lama as the true representative of the Tibetan people. The Special Meeting has been recognized as a unique opportunity for the voice of Tibetans from across the political spectrum to be heard, while also presenting an opportunity to come together to forge a new way ahead. ICT brought out a special report on views of Tibetans inside Tibet on blogs and on telephone linked to the special meeting. <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/perspectives-inside-tibet>

Perspectives from China: An increasingly vocal constituency in public discussions on the future of Tibet is being found among Chinese academics, lawyers and other intellectuals within China itself. While there has always been a notable degree of sympathy and support for Tibetans and the Tibetan cause among sections of China's politically active exile community, events since the Spring Uprising in Tibet appear to have inspired more and more Chinese writers within China to question the Chinese government's treatment of Tibet and the Tibetan people. In this special report, ICT has translated a number of articles that are an example of a growing tendency among Chinese intellectuals to question the official angle on Tibet - sometimes in conjunction with broader questions about the Party's and government's over-arching abuses of power. The articles themselves make no reference to the ongoing Special Meeting in Dharamsala, but they nevertheless offer timely voices of moderation and introspection from within China, in sharp contrast to official propaganda and rhetoric. <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/a-way-forward-tibet-perspectives-inside-china>

The Dalai Lama's elder brother speaks out: Eighty-year old Gyalo Thondup, a former chairman of the Tibetan cabinet (Kashag) in Dharamsala, was prompted to give a rare and detailed address to the media on November 20, after hardline comments by a Chinese official denying that Deng Xiaoping had said that "except independence all other issues can be settled through discussions." The Dalai Lama's Special Envoy Lodi Gyari had reminded the Chinese side of Deng's statement during the most recent eighth round of dialogue in the first week of November, but later his dialogue counterpart Zhu Weiqun, Executive Vice Minister of the Central United Front Work Department said: "Comrade Deng Xiaoping had never made such a statement. It is a falsehood made by Gyari and is a complete distortion of Deng Xiaoping's statement." Gyalo Thondup said that he was "shocked" by Zhu's comments, because "it was myself to whom the late paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping, said that "except independence all other issues can be settled through discussions" on March 12, 1979. <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/dalai-lamas-elder-brother-gyalo-thondup-speaks-out-dharamsala>

U.N.:

U.N. committee against Torture finds 'deepened climate of fear' in Tibet: The UN Committee against Torture, on November 21, released its concluding observations of China's report on its adherence to the UN Convention against Torture and expressed deep concern about allegations "corroborated by numerous Chinese legal sources, of routine and widespread use of torture" and, in its section on Tibet, "longstanding reports of torture, beatings, shackling and other abusive treatment, in particular of Tibetan monks and nuns, at the hands of public officials, public security and state security, as well as paramilitary and even unofficial personnel at the instigation or with the acquiescence or consent of public officials." The Committee has asked China to provide, within one year, a response to reports of widespread excessive use of force and other abuses related to the spring demonstrations in the Tibetan Autonomous Region and neighboring Tibetan prefectures and counties. <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/un-committee-against-torture-finds-deepened-climate-fear-tibet>

INSIDE TIBET:

Labrang monk official who spoke out seized from monastery as detentions continue across Tibet: Jigme Guri (or Gyatso), whose account of a period in detention following the March protests was videoed and uploaded on Youtube. Jigme Guri, deputy director of his monastery's 'Democratic Management Committee' and Director of Labrang's Vocational School, was taken from his monk's quarters at Labrang on November 4 by around 70 police and is now being held in Lanzhou, the provincial capital of Gansu province. Images included in the ICT report show the 42-year old Jigme in hospital following torture during his period of detention from March 22. It is Jigme Guri's third detention, and there are serious fears for his welfare after he endured severe torture during a 42-day period of imprisonment from March 22. Full ICT report can be viewed at <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/labrang-monk-official-who-spoke-out-seized-monastery-detentions-continue-across-tibet>