

U.S. GOVERNMENT:

ICT Report: Dalai Lama concludes three day Washington visit: His Holiness the Dalai Lama departed Washington, D.C., Friday, February 19 following meetings with President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and after being awarded the Democracy Service Medal by the National Endowment for Democracy. Speaking to the press at the White House following the meeting with President Obama on February 18, His Holiness said he was “very happy” and noted that the President supported his “full commitment to the ‘Middle Way’ approach.” The White House’s statement noted that the “President commended the Dalai Lama’s “Middle Way” approach, his commitment to nonviolence and his pursuit of dialogue with the Chinese government.” In the afternoon of February 18, His Holiness the Dalai Lama met at the U.S. State Department with Secretary Hillary Clinton, who was joined by Under Secretary of State and Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues Maria Otero, and other senior officials. His Holiness described his meeting with the Secretary of State as a meeting between two old friends, as he had met with Mrs. Clinton as First Lady and as U.S. senator from New York many times over the years. On February 19, in a ceremony at the Library of Congress, the Dalai Lama was awarded the Democracy Service Medal by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-press-releases/dalai-lama-concludes-3-day-washington-visit>

White House Statement from the Press Secretary on the President’s meeting with His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama: “The President met this morning at the White House with His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama. The President stated his strong support for the preservation of Tibet’s unique religious, cultural and linguistic identity and the protection of human rights for Tibetans in the People’s Republic of China. The President commended the Dalai Lama’s “Middle Way” approach, his commitment to nonviolence and his pursuit of dialogue with the Chinese government. The President stressed that he has consistently encouraged both sides to engage in direct dialogue to resolve differences and was pleased to hear about the recent resumption of talks. The President and the Dalai Lama agreed on the importance of a positive and cooperative relationship between the United States and China.” <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/statement-press-secretary-presidents-meeting-with-his-holiness-xiv-dalai-lama>

Pelosi Statement on President Obama meeting with the Dalai Lama: On February 18, following President Obama’s meeting with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Speaker Nancy Pelosi released a statement which said, “I commend the President for meeting with His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, a champion of peace and non-violence, and a voice for dignity, justice, and respect for all humanity. His Holiness is a source of wisdom and compassion, a powerful spokesman for the moral duty and inherent worth of every person, and a force for human rights across the globe. President Obama’s meeting with the Dalai Lama marks another chapter in the long friendship and close ties between the United States and the people of Tibet. As Americans, we must continue to stand with His Holiness to promote, preserve, and protect the rights of all people to live in freedom worldwide.” <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/tibet-news/pelosi-statement-president-obama%E2%80%99s-meeting-his-holiness-dalai-lama>

INSIDE TIBET:

ICT Report: Tibetans celebrate Dalai Lama meeting with President Obama despite crackdown: On February 18, Tibetans defied intense security by chanting prayers and setting off fireworks in a second day of celebrations in the Amdo area of Tibet, where the Dalai Lama was born, marking his meeting with President Obama that day. Tibetan sources said that while security appeared to be stepped up in an area already under crackdown, there were no detentions. He said: “The purpose of the ceremony was to mark the meeting between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and President Barack Obama in the hopes that it will bring a productive outcome for Tibet’s future. We are very happy about the meeting and we are praying and making offerings to ensure there is justice and truth for this cause.” In the Ngaba area of Sichuan province (within the Tibetan area of Amdo), monks and laypeople gathered to pray for the long life of the Dalai Lama and make offerings. Reuters reported that Buddhist monks in the town of Rebgong (Chinese: Tongren), Malho (Chinese: Huangnan) Tibetan autonomous prefecture, Qinghai province, held a ceremony at their monastery, while laypeople marked the event by setting off fireworks. Celebrations appear to have taken place in Lhasa, too, but took a more muted, religious form with Tibetans making offerings of traditional homemade wine at the Jokhang temple in lieu of purchased offerings of Chinese spirits that have been used in recent years. <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/tibetans-celebrate-dalai-lama-meeting-president-obama-despite-crackdown>