

EU, UK and France's statements and resolutions on Tibet



VPC/HR Catherine Ashton

On 14 December 2012 EU High Representative Catherine Ashton released [a declaration on behalf of the European Union](#) on Tibetan self-immolations. She expressed concern about the restrictions of Tibetan identity and called on the Chinese authorities to address the deep-rooted causes of the frustration of the Tibetan people. She also encouraged all concerned parties to resume meaningful dialogue.

Tibet will also be a priority for ALDE MEP Leonidas Donskis (European Parliament's Liberal Movement, Lithuania) who is the rapporteur of the EP Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World 2011. During the presentation of the Report at the EP Plenary in Strasbourg in December 2012, he said that in 2013 he would focus on Tibet and urged the EU to set up an office of a Special EU Representative on Tibet to monitor the situation more closely.

Following Ashton's declaration, British Foreign Office Minister Hugo Swire said that the UK had serious concerns about



Leonidas Donskis MEP

the self-immolations in Tibetan regions. [He expressed UK's vision](#) that a long-term solution would be best achieved through respect for universal principles of human rights and genuine autonomy for

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Tibet within the framework of the Chinese constitution. Previously, the French Senate on 27 November adopted a resolution on Tibet stressing, inter alia, the importance for the EU to promote coordinated policies and actions in support of the Tibetan people and the urgency to include Tibet within the priorities of the EU Special Representative for Human Rights. ■

See also:

- ▶ [Annual report on human rights and democracy in the world 2011 and the European Union's policy on the matter](#)

ICT testifies in Spain's National Court on Chinese leadership policies in Tibet

The International Campaign for Tibet has testified in Spain's National Court to the direct responsibility of senior Communist Party leaders for policies in Tibet as part of a groundbreaking lawsuit under the principle of "universal jurisdiction", a doctrine that allows courts to reach beyond national borders in cases of torture and terror perpetrated by states. The case brings Spanish lawyers and Tibet activists closer to the objective of arrest warrants being served to several Chinese leaders for policies on Tibet.

Spanish lawyers and Tibet activists brought two lawsuits to Spanish courts. José Elías Esteve Moltó was the main research lawyer and author of both cases, whereas Alan Cantos from Comité de Apoyo al Tibet (CAT) in Madrid, Spain's Tibet Support Committee, has pioneered the two Tibet lawsuits. The expert Spanish team is now challenging the shelving of the second lawsuit on Tibet after the Spanish government changed the law following direct complaints from China. Alan Cantos, of the Tibet Support Committee in Spain (Comité de Apoyo Al Tibet), told ICT: "After losing our appeal to the Supreme Court we are now appealing to Spain's Constitutional Court arguing the violation of fundamental rights in the whole process and calling for the re-opening of the case." Lawyers for the Tibet Support Committee have now submitted a document of more than 60 pages to the court giving detailed legal

objections to the shelving of the case. ICT had also testified in the case, together with Tibetan witnesses. ICT's report, "The chain of command in the People's Republic of China and the direct responsibility of Chinese leaders in the international crimes committed in Tibet", was presented to Audiencia Nacional's court Nº2 on 26 October 2012, and Kate Saunders, ICT's Communications Director, was summoned by the court to ratify the report to one of Spain's most senior judges, Judge Ismael Moreno, on 28 December. Judge Moreno also accepted additional documents from ICT, including a new report about self-immolations in Tibet and Chinese policy entitled '[Storm in the Grasslands](#)' ■

See also:

► [Kate Saunderson's Blog:](#)

Legendary "bearded Khampa" George Patterson dies



George Patterson (right) with Thubten Samdup (left), the Dalai Lama's Northern Europe Representative, and Mary Beth Markey (middle), President of ICT.

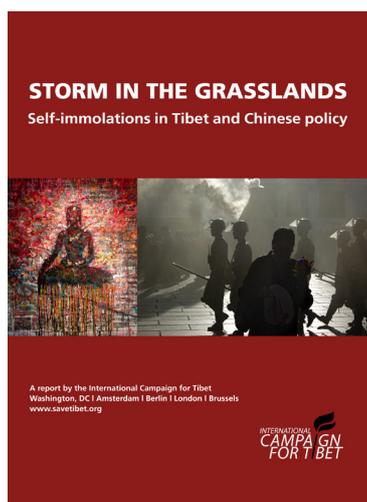
George Patterson, who earned legendary status as the 'bearded Khampa' for his support to Tibetan resistance fighters, and who became one of the first people to report the Chinese invasion of Tibet, died in Scotland on 29 December 2012. George Patterson, who received ICT's Light of Truth award in March 2011, was in his nineties.

George Patterson, a Scot from Falkirk, first travelled to Tibet as a Christian missionary in 1947. With the Tibetan border town of Kangting as a base he travelled extensively in East Tibet, living among the Khampas and learning the language while treating them medically. With the Chinese Communist invasion of Tibet imminent in 1950, and his medical supplies depleted, at the request of Khampa leaders he travelled across Tibet from east to west by a previously unexplored and treacherous route to alert the governments of India, Britain and USA regarding the expected Chinese invasion and to seek help for the Khampas in their resistance, arriving in India in March 1950.

Mr Patterson, who authored more than seven books, traveled back into Tibet in the mid-1960s with a camera on a dangerous mission to document a raid on a Chinese military truck convoy by Tibetan guerillas. The resulting film, 'Raid Into Tibet', became the only available film of Tibetan resistance efforts in Tibet from the remote Mustang area from 1960 to 1974. ■

New ICT Report Released

ICT's new publication 'Storm in the Grasslands: [Self-immolations in Tibet and Chinese policy](#)' reports a strong resolve among Tibetans to compel the new Chinese leadership to confront the policies and oppression that are the causes of these acts.



transition at the Chinese Communist Party Congress in November. Twenty-eight Tibetans self-immolated in November 2012 alone, marking a new phase in the political struggle in Tibet. Many acts of self-immolation – that have recently been clustered in politically restive areas of Amdo in eastern Tibet – have been followed by mass gatherings of Tibetans to honor and express solidarity with those who have called for freedom for Tibet and the return of the Dalai Lama as they set themselves on fire.

including translated copies of notes they left behind or details of their last words to friends and family. It provides an analysis of a direct correlation between the self-immolations and an intensified campaign against the Dalai Lama in Tibet together with the aggressive expansion of legal measures tightening state control over Tibetan religion and culture. The report also assesses the official response to the self-immolations. As the scale of the tragedy increased, there appeared to be a level of ambiguity in official reporting, although language became more strident particularly at the time of the Communist Party Congress in November, when self-immolations spiked in Tibet. ■

Since February 2009, 95 Tibetans have self-immolated in Tibet, with a dramatic acceleration in frequency since the once-in-a-decade leadership

'*Storm in the Grasslands: Self-immolations in Tibet and Chinese policy*' includes details about the lives of 58 Tibetans who have set fire to themselves,

Tibetan Task Force on Negotiations Discusses Critical Situation in Tibet and China's New Leadership

A two-day meeting of the Task Force on Negotiations was held in Dharamsala from 31 December 2012 to 1 January 2013, chaired by Sikyong (Head of the Central Tibetan Administration) Dr. Lobsang Sangay.

The meeting reviewed the deepening political crisis in Tibet, specifically the tragic spate of self-immolations, and discussed the urgent need for peaceful resolution of the issue of Tibet. The meeting also discussed the changes in the Chinese leadership and their implications on the Tibetan issue.

The task force carried out an assessment of the Sino-Tibetan Dialogue, including its future prospects and challenges, based on the situation in Tibet, China and in the international community. In this context, Lodi Gyaltsen Gyari, the former Special Envoy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, said that stalled dialogue process with China failed to make much progress under the decade-long leadership of President Hu Jintao. He explained that prospects of negotiations declined after Hu, who was the Party's chief in Tibet in 1989, became President of the country.

The Tibetan leadership reiterated its commitment to non-violence and the Middle-Way Approach, and expressed that the only way to resolve the issue of Tibet is through dialogue. Also, the Tibetan leadership welcomed the statements of concern by the United Nations and governments about the current situation in Tibet as well as their encouragement for dialogue. ■

EU Council Building in Brussels illuminated by the International Campaign for Tibet



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On the occasion of the Peace Nobel Prize Ceremony and the International Human Rights Day (10 December), the International Campaign for Tibet projected an image onto the EU Council building in Brussels of the Dalai Lama and Xi Jinping meeting in order to convey a strong message of the urgent need for such a meeting.

On 10 December 2012, the EU was awarded the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize, joining a prestigious body of laureates, including the Dalai Lama, who received his award in 1989. Two years ago, the Chinese intellectual Liu Xiaobo was honoured with the same award but was unable to attend the ceremony as he had been handed 11 years' imprisonment and two years' deprivation of political rights, and is now serving his sentence in a prison in Jinzhou, in Liaoning Province. Meanwhile, 23 years after receiving his award, the 14th Dalai Lama is still waiting for the fulfillment of his vision of peace and security for Tibet, where the situation is more acute today than it was two decades ago.

The International Campaign for Tibet congratulates the European Union for being awarded the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize and for the recognition of the key role it has played in Europe and worldwide to promote peace, conflict prevention and conflict management. The prize gives the EU even greater authority in its reconciliation and peace-building work and now it is time for this to be applied to the crisis in Tibet. There has been no meeting between Chinese officials and representatives of the Dalai Lama since January 2010, the longest period since dialogue re-started between the two sides in 2002. In light of the December EU statement on Tibet and the conferment of the Nobel Peace Prize, the EU must strengthen its efforts to facilitate the resumption of talks and facilitate a meeting between the new Chinese leader Xi Jinping and the Dalai Lama. ■

State Department highlights Tibet as example of US-EU “common strategic engagement”

The U.S. State Department has cited the Tibet issue as an example where the United States and the European Union can partner on “*common strategic engagement*.”

In remarks at an 11 December 2012 European Union human rights day event in Washington, DC, Under Secretary of State and Tibet Coordinator Maria Otero observed that “[European governments, including Germany, UK, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, and Poland, have joined the call for Chinese authorities to address the worsening human rights conditions in Tibetan areas](#)”. This was cited as an example of “*common strategic engagement*” between the U.S. and the EU in Asia policy. The remarks also reiterated the [State Department's call](#)

for Chinese authorities to address the root causes of the self-immolation crisis in Tibet, as made by Under Secretary Otero on 6 December. The remarks were delivered by Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Dan Baer, as Otero was necessarily absent. ■

See also:

- ▶ [List of government statements on the self-immolation crisis in Tibet](#)

Tibet Brief

A report of the International Campaign for Tibet



January 2013

Political prisoners focus

Chemey



According to the Tibet Post International, a Tibetan nun has been sentenced to three years in prison for her alleged role in political activities.

Chemey, from Lamdrag nunnery in Karze, Kham, eastern Tibet, was among a number of Tibetans arrested during the Chinese

government's crackdown following protests in the region in 2010. It was reported that local Tibetans were detained regardless of whether or not they had taken part in the demonstrations. It is not known under what charge the nun was sentenced or where she has been detained. The source also stated that the Chinese authorities did not inform Chemey's family of her arrest until a year after she went missing. ■

This number's reading suggestion

**"Tibetan journey",
by George N. Patterson**

This is a tale of life in a remote Tibetan valley, in 1950 just before the Chinese invasion. It is an extraordinary tale of adventure as the expedition tries to find a way out through the high mountain passes to India to reach more supplies. All topics and facts are discussed with a vivid sense of humour. George Neilson Patterson, also known as Patterson of Tibet, was a former Scottish engineer and missionary who served as medical officer and diplomatic representative of the Tibetan resistance movement during the Chinese invasion of Tibet. He was awarded the Light of Truth Award by the International Campaign for Tibet on 25 March 2011. ■

Upcoming Events

▶ 10 March 2013: European Solidarity Rally for Tibet, Brussels