



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

China's revised religious regulations threaten survival of Tibetan Buddhism

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- Revised Chinese government regulations on religion consolidate far-reaching powers of the Communist Party state over people's lives and beliefs, and are a further threat to the continued survival of Tibetan Buddhism in Tibet.
- The revised rules on religious activity, issued by the Chinese State Council on September 7, 2017, conflate peaceful religious practice with 'threats' to China's security, creating a more dangerous political environment for monks, nuns, and lay Buddhists, isolating them further from their counterparts outside China.
- According to a newly revised provision of the regulation – and in an apparent attempt to use religion to achieve political goals of the Communist Party – religious groups are now bound to practice “core socialist values.”
- The Chinese state media also announced a focus on the ‘Sinicization’ of religion, stating: “The direction of religions is to integrate them with Chinese culture” (Global Times, September 7, 2017). The Buddhist community is one of the main targets of ‘Sinicization’ of religion, which represents a more far-reaching effort to mould and shape Tibetan Buddhism to the diktats of the Chinese Communist Party in line with a more entrenched regulatory framework that has already deepened religious oppression over the last decade.

Matteo Mecacci, President of the International Campaign for Tibet, said: “These revised rules consolidate a legalistic framework of compliance and punishment on matters of deeply-felt personal belief as well as the core values of a religious faith based on principles of compassion. They represent a staggering reach of political power and intrusion into people's lives by a government that promotes atheism. Tibetans face a very real danger in their struggle to protect and practice their religion, which is integral to their identity, and will need the spirit and resilience that they continue to demonstrate in holding fast to their teachings. In the focus on the eradication of ‘foreign’ influence, there is no doubt too that the intention is to ensure Tibetans in Tibet are separated from the teachings and presence of their spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, isolating them still further. It is absurd for any Buddhist follower to practice ‘socialist core values’ as part of his beliefs. Religion cannot become an instrument for achieving political goals.”

The updated version of rules that were originally imposed in 2005 is more restrictive than a draft made public last year.¹ They were announced by Premier Li Keqiang on September 7, 2017 in advance of the important 19th Party Congress in Beijing on October 18.² The language of the regulations reveals contradictions in the official position, indicative of both a desire to deepen the secularization of society by a government that advocates atheism, and to actively use religion for political purposes, with Buddhism as one of the religions that is accepted as 'official' by the CCP.

The new rules are consistent with a tightening regulatory and policy framework across the PRC on religion that denies Tibetans religious freedom, and by extension freedom of association, assembly, and expression. These measures are articulated in opaque language that enables the CCP authorities to define contraventions to specific regulations according to its political imperatives. Already, a range of oppressive laws have been passed on a local level across Tibet, particularly in areas where there have been self-immolations or political protest and resistance. For instance, a 'rectification drive' in Driru (Chinese: Biru) in the Tibet Autonomous Region, stated that monasteries deemed 'illegal' would be torn down and Tibetans who keep images of the Dalai Lama or place traditional prayer (mani) stones would be severely punished.³

The revised rules⁴ arise from a Politburo meeting in April, 2016, in which China's President and Party Secretary Xi Jinping set down red lines on religion, specifying the need for the government to guard against foreign influence and "religious extremism" and for religion to adapt to "socialism with Chinese characteristics".⁵

Equating religion and extremism

As the new rules were published, China's official media stated that they "prohibit the use of religion as a tool to sabotage national security, social order or China's education system, or to damage ethnic

¹ For a detailed analysis of the draft version and its context, see International Campaign for Tibet, October 25, 2016: "Suffocating religious freedom in Tibet – China's new draft regulations on religious affairs"; <https://www.savetibet.org/suffocating-religious-freedom-in-tibet-chinas-draft-regulations-on-religious-affairs/#33>. The draft version was translated by ChinaLawTranslate, and posted on September 8, 2016: <http://www.chinalawtranslate.com/religious-regulations/?lang=en>; for a side by side comparison of the differences with the 2005 version, see Thomas DuBois, undated, "China's Religion Law: 2005 vs. 2016", https://www.academia.edu/28414977/Chinas_Religion_Law_2005_vs._2016;

² The updated version has been translated by ChinaLawTranslate at: <http://www.chinalawtranslate.com/%E5%AE%97%E6%95%99%E4%BA%8B%E5%8A%A1%E6%9D%A1%E4%BE%8B-2017/?lang=en>;

³ International Campaign for Tibet, November 20, 2014: "Harsh new rectification drive in Driru", <https://www.savetibet.org/harsh-new-rectification-drive-in-driru-nuns-expelled-and-warning-of-destruction-of-monasteries-and-mani-walls/>;

⁴ State Council of the People's Republic of China, September 7, 2017: "宗教事务条例", http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/content/2017-09/07/content_5223282.htm;

⁵ The two-day government conference on religion in April 2016 was presided over by Chinese Premier Li Keqiang and attended by other top leaders including Zhang Dejiang, Yu Zhengsheng, Liu Yunshan, and Wang Qishan. Xi Jinping said that religious groups "must adhere to the leadership of the CPC, and support the socialist system and socialism with Chinese characteristics". He also said: "We must resolutely guard against overseas infiltrations via religious means and prevent ideological infringement by extremists," while also focusing on the internet, both as opportunity to spread state propaganda, as well as the threat of 'subversion'. Xinhua, April 23, 2016: "China Focus: Xi calls for improved religious work", http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2016-04/23/c_135306131.htm;

unity or carry out terrorist activities.” (China Daily, September 8, 2017).⁶ The need to “curb religious extremism” was also emphasized by a top political advisor, chair of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee Yu Zhengsheng, in a meeting on September 11.⁷

Through these rules, the Chinese authorities have broadened their scope of control, connecting people's beliefs and religious activity to matters of counter-terror in the context of the recent and systematic development of a security architecture in the PRC. The 2016 Counter Terrorism Law, the 2015 Security Law, the NGO Law (in force January 2017), and the Cyber Security Law (in force May 2017) are among the raft of new and far-reaching measures with far-reaching control over people's lives.

In equating ‘terrorism’ with an undefined ‘extremism’ linked to religion, the Counter-Terrorism Law of the People's Republic of China gives scope for the penalization of almost any peaceful expression of Tibetan identity, acts of non-violent dissent, or criticism of ethnic or religious policies, in a political climate in which the exiled Dalai Lama has been accused of inciting terrorism through self-immolations, and even terror through his teachings.⁸

As in the new religious regulations, terminology in the 2016 counter-terror law is both broad and vague at the same time, and introduces further extra-judicial measures, increasing the impunity of the Chinese Party state, and reinforcing the powers of local police and officials to impose restrictive measures and use violence against individuals.

While references to the link between terrorism and ‘separatism’ that appeared in the draft counter-terror law were dropped, this remains a strong element in the official discourse on securitization in Tibet. The intensified militarization, regulatory framework and correlation of religion with ‘extremism’ and ‘splittism’ has involved training police in Buddhist monasteries, the characterization of religious teachings by the Dalai Lama as incitement to ‘extremist action,’ and the implication that Tibetan self-immolations can be characterized as ‘terrorism’. This is despite the fact that self-immolations do not harm others, the lack of terror threats in Tibet, and the Dalai Lama's consistent emphasis on non-violence.

‘Core socialist values’ and religion

In the final version of the regulations, an addition has been made to Article 4 from the draft of the religious regulations to include a reference to “core socialist values”. Article 4 now reads as follows⁹:

⁶ China Daily, September 8, 2017: “State Council amends rules governing religion”, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2017-09/08/content_31717459.htm;

⁷ Xinhua, September 11, 2017: “China's top political advisor stresses religious affairs uphold rule of law”, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-09/11/c_136601132.htm;

⁸ International Campaign for Tibet, January 7, 2016: “China's first counter terror law and its implications for Tibet”, <https://www.savetibet.org/chinas-first-counter-terror-law-and-its-implications-for-tibet/>;

⁹ See ChinaLawTranslate,

<http://www.chinalawtranslate.com/%E5%AE%97%E6%95%99%E4%BA%8B%E5%8A%A1%E6%9D%A1%E4%BE%8B-2017/?lang=en>;

Article 4: The State, in accordance with the law, protects normal religious activities, actively guides religion to fit in with socialist society, and safeguards the lawful rights and interests of religious groups, religious schools, religious activity sites and religious citizens.

Religious groups, religious schools, religious activity sites, and religious citizens shall abide by the Constitution, laws, regulations and rules; practice the core socialist values; and preserve the unification of the country, ethnic unity, religious harmony and social stability.

Religion must not be used by any individual or organization to engage in activities that endanger national security, disrupt public order, impair the health of citizens or obstruct the State educational system, as well as other activities that harm State or societal public interests, or citizens' lawful rights and interests, and other such illegal activities.

Individuals and organizations must not create contradictions and conflicts between different religions, within a single religion, or between religious and non-religious citizens; must not advocate, support, or fund, religious extremism; and must not use religion to undermine ethnic unity, divide the nation or carry out terrorist activities.”

Xi Jinping has sought to promote “core socialist values” – first disseminated after the 18th Party Congress in 2012 – for mass consumption, including in school textbooks, media content and even public song and dance routines.¹⁰

The propagation of these values, which includes “freedom,” “rule of law,” “equality,” “patriotism,” and “dedication,” at the domestic level, aims at projecting the image of the Party leading Chinese society towards positive social transformation and “harmony.” Internationally, the language seeks to appropriate Western rhetoric using terms such as democracy, rule of law, and justice, without having to refer to, or even acknowledge, international human rights standards.

Furthermore, the inclusion of “core socialist values” in the updated religious regulations underlines the CCP’s efforts to establish a rhetoric of values that both supports the Party’s internal as well as its foreign policy agenda. “Core socialist values” apparently are to serve the integration of the Chinese society, projecting legitimacy for the CCP’s rule, as well as to achieve complete control over every part of the society. The concept, in a seemingly paradoxical manner, has been used to justify state intervention, for example when recently tightening censorship rules.¹¹ Apparently, Xi Jinping’s and the Party’s understanding of “freedom” and “rule of law” differs fundamentally from international human rights standards.

¹⁰ A Global Times article cited a teacher in Hebei province saying: “Students need to read the socialist core values textbook every day before the first morning class for three minutes. It is something we’ve done for years, but ideological education has intensified in recent years.” Global Times, September 15, 2017: “China pushes core socialist values knowledge in primary, middle schools”, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1066496.shtml>;

¹¹ Reuters, June 3, 2017: “China’s broadcast regulator, tightening control of content, promotes ‘core socialist values’”, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-regulator-broadcast/chinas-broadcast-regulator-tightening-control-of-content-promotes-core-socialist-values-idUSKBN18U08D>;

“Two safeguards – Two clarifications – two norms”

The basis of the updated rules were a set of Party slogans – the "two safeguards", "two clarifications" and "two norms", according to a spokesperson for the Legislative Affairs Office of the State Council cited in Legal Daily on September 7 (2017).

According to a translation of the article from Chinese, the "two safeguards" refers to protecting the religious freedom of citizens and the legitimate rights and interests of the religious community, and the safeguarding of “national security and social harmony”. The "two clarifications" explains the legal liability of religious venues and religious property rights, and focuses on curbing the tendencies of religious commercialization. The "two norms" refers to financial management regulation of religious circles and the regulation of religious information services on the internet, intensifying the authorities' level of intrusion.

In the buildup to the 19th Party Congress on October 18, the Chinese authorities have tightened restrictions on all online activities, not only in terms of religion. They have forced the removal of virtual private networks (VPNs) from online mobile application stores, investigated social media platforms whose efforts to censor undesirable comments fell short,¹² and published a new set of regulations for managing 'Internet group information' that will take effect on October 8.¹³ These rules intensify dangers for Tibetans, who are frequent users of platforms such as WeChat. Those who fail to comply with the regulations risk punishment themselves.

In the updated rules, donations from foreign groups or individuals to religious groups are banned, while organizers of unapproved events can now be subject to fines from 100,000 to 300,000 yuan, an increase on the amounts specified in the draft regulations.

At the same time as undermining religious practice and teaching and stepping up intrusive security measures, the Chinese authorities are using the heightened interest in Tibetan Buddhism among Chinese people to attract domestic tourists, leading to fears of further diminishment of monasteries and religious institutes in terms of authentic religious activities and teachings.

Article 34 of the updated regulations references this connection when it states: “Where there are religious activity sites in scenic areas, local people's governments at the county level or above shall coordinate and handle interests and relationships between the religious activity sites and scenic area management organizations, in areas such as gardens, forestry, cultural relics, tourism and so forth, to preserve the lawful rights and interests of religious activity sites, religious professionals, and religious citizens, and to protect normal religious activities. The planning and construction of scenic areas with religious activity sites as the primary sightseeing attraction, shall be coordinated with the style and environment of the religious activity sites.”

The International Campaign for Tibet has documented major construction work in the vast valley at the foot of Larung Gar Tibetan Buddhist academy in Sichuan for a new tourist village and other

¹² Sarah Cook, Washington Post, September 14, 2017, 'China's thought police are giving a master class in Chinese censorship': https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/democracy-post/wp/2017/09/14/chinas-thought-police-are-giving-a-master-class-in-censorship/?utm_term=.6003b83f459f

¹³ Website of the Cyberspace Administration of China at: http://www.cac.gov.cn/2017-09/07/c_1121623889.htm

developments. This indicates that tourism is now being used as a tool by the Chinese authorities to confront revivalist trends of Tibetan religious and cultural expression and contain monastic growth.¹⁴

The Sinicization of Buddhism

The official newspaper the Global Times reported on September 7, 2017 that at a meeting in Beijing: “Leaders from five religious communities - Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Catholicism and Christianity – reached a consensus at a forum that ‘the direction of religions is to integrate them with Chinese culture.’”

The ‘Sinicization’ of religion outlined by the Global Times in conjunction with the publication of the updated religious regulations appears to be in line with intensified official efforts observed over the past year to incorporate attacks on the Dalai Lama as part of the United Front Work Department-led process to re-frame Tibetan Buddhism in conformity with CCP doctrines.

One of the key priorities of the United Front Work Department, which oversees the implementation of Party policy toward those considered China’s ethnic and religious groups, intellectuals, entrepreneurs, and non-Communist Party organisations, is to maintain a hard-line position on Tibet, with a core mission of ‘struggle’ against the Dalai Lama. In 2015, the Chinese state media announced the formation of a leading group on United Front work, indicating an upgrading of the department and a strengthening of control, which has continued.¹⁵

The United Front has been prominent in efforts to promote Gyaltzen Norbu, the Chinese-appointed Panchen Lama, installed as part of the government’s long-term strategy to control Tibetan Buddhism and eliminate loyalty to the Dalai Lama. Last year the ‘Chinese Panchen,’ as he is known among Tibetans, even carried out a major religious teaching in Shigatse – the first time a Kalachakra initiation has been held in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) for more than half a century.¹⁶ Numerous Chinese state media articles reported the attendance of more than 100,000 people every day at the ceremonies conducted by the Chinese appointed Panchen Lama in Shigatse, underlining the political intention to showcase the Kalachakra as a demonstration to the outside world that Tibetans are allowed to practice their religion.

Political advisor Yu Zhengsheng stressed in the state media at the same time as the release of the regulations that the new rules mean that: “Patriotic religious figures should be fostered to improve their abilities to inhibit extremist ideology and overseas infiltration.”¹⁷

While Gyaltzen Norbu is compelled to conform to the role of ‘official’ Panchen Lama as a figurehead with allegiance to the CCP, he made an unusual observation in a statement in March, 2015,

¹⁴ International Campaign for Tibet, March 13, 2017: “Shadow of Dust Across the Sun: How Tourism is Being Used to Counter Tibetan Cultural Resilience”, <https://www.savetibet.org/shadow-of-dust-across-the-sun-how-tourism-is-used-to-counter-tibetan-cultural-resilience/>;

¹⁵ China founds central leading group to pool support http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-07/30/c_134464393.htm

¹⁶ International Campaign for Tibet, July 29, 2016: “Kalachakra with Chinese characteristics – Chinese appointed Panchen Lama gives teaching as authorities suppress religious freedom”, <https://www.savetibet.org/kalachakra-with-chinese-characteristics-chinese-appointed-panchen-lama-gives-teaching-as-authorities-suppress-religious-freedom/>;

¹⁷ Xinhua, September 11, 2017: “China’s top political advisor stresses religious affairs uphold rule of law”, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-09/11/c_136601132.htm;

expressing his concern over endeavors to further ‘sinicize’ Tibetan Buddhism. In a comment that appeared to depart from the official view, he indicated that because of the shortage of monks in Tibet and [monastic] “quotas set too low,” there is “a danger of Buddhism existing in name only.”¹⁸

Control of reincarnate lamas the ‘poisonous fruit’ of China’s religion policy

The updated rules specify an increase from the previous version on fines on individuals who “impersonate religious professionals to carry out illegal acts such as conducting professional religious activities or defrauding funds” (Article 74).

This links to a controversy in Tibet over fake ‘Living Buddhas’, particularly as more Chinese in the PRC have become followers of Tibetan Buddhism. Just as there are increasing numbers of sincere Chinese Buddhist practitioners who follow genuine Tibetan lamas, there are also a number of fake ‘Living Buddhas’ who seek to exploit followers. In December, 2015, a self-proclaimed ‘Living Buddha’ in Hong Kong – whose filmed ordination of a Chinese actor Zhang Tielin went viral – issued an apology and resigned from all his posts after a Tibetan monastery denied certifying him. The Dalai Lama has on numerous occasions expressed concern about the number of fake lamas and the risks of exploitation of their followers.

In a Chinese television appearance, senior official Zhu Weiqun (who oversaw Tibetan issue during his stint at the United Front) avoided criticizing this particular case of a fake ‘Living Buddha’ and said instead that some fake lamas have posed threats to national security, as they use money they collect to sponsor illegal or ‘separatist’ activities in Tibet.

This was followed by an online discussion after Jamphel Gyatso, a respected senior scholar who was among the older generation of Tibetans who first worked with the Communist authorities in the 1950s, made a scathing public critique of Zhu, saying that instead of challenging the fake ‘Living Buddha’ in Hong Kong, he had instead ‘slandered, framed and attacked’ ‘Tibetan compatriots and Tibetan lamas’.¹⁹ Jamphel Gyatso referred to the Party’s approach to reincarnate lamas in Tibet as the ‘poisonous fruit’ of policy developed over the last 50 years by the Chinese leadership, specifically referring to Ye Xiaowen, the former head of the State Administration for Religious Affairs.²⁰

Article 36 in the new regulations refers to the succession of ‘Living Buddhas’, underlining that they have to be “reported for approval to the religious affairs department of people’s governments at the provincial level or above or to a people’s government at the provincial level or above”.

This Article in the rules follows the publication last year of an online database of Communist Party approved Tibetan Buddhist reincarnations, consistent with 2007 measures demonstrating the Party’s

¹⁸ International Campaign for Tibet, April 17, 2015: “The danger of Buddhism existing in name only”, <https://weblog.savetibet.org/2015/04/the-danger-of-buddhism-existing-in-name-only-translation-of-a-speech-by-gyaltzen-norbu-the-chinese-panchen/>;

¹⁹ International Campaign for Tibet, December 22, 2015: “Communist Party official known for virulent attacks on Dalai Lama comes under unprecedented criticism”, <https://www.savetibet.org/communist-party-official-known-for-virulent-attacks-on-dalai-lama-comes-under-unprecedented-criticism/>;

²⁰ International Campaign for Tibet, May 2, 2016: “The poisonous fruit of Tibet’s religious policy as China publishes living Buddha database”, <https://www.savetibet.org/the-poisonous-fruit-of-tibets-religious-policy-as-china-publishes-living-buddha-database/>;

agenda to undermine and supplant the Tibetan religious hierarchy and weaken the authority of legitimate Tibetan religious leaders including the Dalai Lama.²¹

Also coinciding with the release of the new regulations, the Chinese media announced the 30th anniversary of the 'Tibetan Buddhist College' in China, evidence of the CCP's long-term efforts to manage, control and appropriate Tibetan Buddhism.²² The College was originally founded in 1987, at the suggestion of the 10th Panchen Lama, who wrote a searing critique of the Party's policies against religion known as the '70,000-character petition.'²³ Although the intentions of the 10th Panchen Lama were the sustenance and development of authentic Tibetan Buddhism, the school is now under tight Communist Party control and used simultaneously as a showcase for the religion and in order to demonstrate that religious practice can only be carried out under the auspices of the Party state. According to Tibetan sources, a number of Tibetan monks and lamas who attended the school have disrobed in recent years. Executive Vice Minister of the United Front Work Department Zhang Yijiong made a speech at the 30th anniversary together with Wang Zuo'an, director of the State Administration for Religious Affairs of the PRC.

Recommendations

The People's Republic of China has signed, but has not ratified the International Covenant on Political and Civil Rights. However, the country has ratified a number of human rights related treaties, such as the Convention Against Torture or the Child Right Convention, the latter stipulating the right to freedom of religion. The Chinese government was re-elected to the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2016 which, according to General Assembly Resolution 60/251 should, consist of members which "uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights, shall fully cooperate with the Council and be reviewed under the universal periodic review mechanism during their term of membership."

The International Campaign for Tibet, referring to international human rights standards, would like to offer the following recommendations:

To the Chinese government:

- Ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR); provide a concrete timeline for the ratification process;

²¹ International Campaign for Tibet, August 15, 2007: "New measures on reincarnation reveal Party's objectives of political control", <https://www.savetibet.org/new-measures-on-reincarnation-reveal-partys-objectives-of-political-control/>.

²² China Tibet Online, September 13, 2017: <http://eng.tibet.cn/news/th/1505263328386.shtml>

²³ The 10th Panchen Lama, who died in 1989, was an outspoken advocate for the preservation of Tibet's unique cultural heritage, religion and language. His 70,000 Character Petition," remains the most extensive internal criticism of Chinese Communist Party policies on Tibet and other 'minorities' ever submitted to the Chinese leadership. 'A Poisoned Arrow: The Secret Report of the 10th Panchen Lama', published by the now closed Tibet Information Network, London, 1997. Mao Zedong reacted by denouncing the report as a "poisoned arrow shot at the Party" and its author as a "reactionary feudal overlord". Two years later, the 10th Panchen Lama was condemned without trial as an enemy of the people, and spent most of the following 14 years in prison or under house arrest before his death in 1989. When the Petition was sent to Mao Zedong in 1962, the Panchen Lama was the most senior religious leader remaining in Tibet and titular head of the Tibetan government. Prior to the publication of his Petition the 10th Panchen Lama had often been portrayed as a Chinese puppet, co-operating with the Chinese authorities rather than going into exile. This "patriotic" image was encouraged by both Beijing and the government in Lhasa. He is now seen as having done the best he could, under very difficult circumstances, to safeguard the interests of Tibetans.

- Revise the current regulations on religious affairs according to international human rights standards, in particular with the principles enshrined in Article 18 of ICCPR.
- Apply comments and resolutions by international human rights bodies or the United Nations General assembly with regard to Article 18 of ICCPR, in particular,
 - Refrain from appointing or approving religious personnel, in accordance with the 1981 Declaration of the General Assembly and Human Rights Committee general comment 22, para. 4;
 - Refrain from using broad and vague language such as “state security”, “religious extremism” and “terrorism” as a pretext for swift interventions with religious activities, groups, practitioners or religious professionals, in accordance with Human Rights Committee general comment 22, para. 8, ICCPR, Article 18, para 3, CRC, Article 14, para. 3, Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/40, para. 12, and Human Rights Council resolution 6/37, para. 14;
 - Refrain from applying censorship to Buddhist literature or related information disseminated in publications or via the internet, in accordance with 1981 Declaration of the General Assembly, Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/40 (paragraph 4 (d)) and Human Rights Council resolution 6/37 (paragraph 9 (g)), Human Rights Committee general comment 22, para. 4;
 - Refrain from requiring approval, oversight and management of religious affairs, in accordance with Article 18 ICCPR;
 - Refrain from demolishing Tibetan Buddhist sites, in accordance with the 1981 Declaration of the General Assembly, Article 6, Human Rights Council resolution 6/37, Article 9e;
- Refrain from penalizing Tibetan Buddhist pilgrimage abroad, in accordance with Article 12 ICCPR;
- Seek dialogue with Tibetan Buddhist leaders on a regular basis when state oversight, according to international human rights principles, is justified, in order to solve conflicts amicably while respecting principles of freedom of religion an belief;

To the international community:

- Urge the Chinese government to ratify the ICCPR and to provide a concrete timeline for the ratification;
- Urge the Chinese government to stop demolitions of Tibetan Buddhist religious institutions, such as Larung Gar;
- Urge the Chinese government to fully revise religious affairs regulations and bring them in conformity with Article 18 of ICCPR and international human rights standards.

- Urge the Chinese government to refrain from using broad and vague language such as “National Security”, “terrorism” or “religious extremism” as a pretext for wide ranging interventions into Tibetan Buddhist life.
- Use international fora, such as the United Nations Human Rights Council, to publicly address the restrictions of freedom of religion with regard to religious groups in the People’s Republic of China;
- Use bilateral dialogues with the People’s Republic of China to address the restrictions of freedom of religion in the People’s Republic of China;
- Seek close consultation with Tibetan Buddhist leaders living in exile on the status of religious freedom in Tibet.