

V. Tibet

Status of Negotiations Between the Chinese Government and the Dalai Lama or His Representatives

There has been no formal dialogue between the Dalai Lama's representatives and Chinese Communist Party and government officials since the ninth round of dialogue was held in January 2010.¹ In its 2017 Report on Tibet Negotiations, the U.S. State Department reiterated the policy of the U.S. Government "to encourage meaningful and direct dialogue between Chinese authorities and the Dalai Lama or his representatives, without preconditions, to lead to a settlement that resolves differences."² In keeping with the Chinese government's longstanding policy,³ executive deputy head of the Party's United Front Work Department Zhang Yijiong stated on October 21, 2017, that the Chinese government opposes meetings between foreign officials and the Dalai Lama, calling him "a leader of a separatist group that is engaging in separatist activities."⁴ At a November 23, 2017, meeting of the Indian Chamber of Commerce in Kolkata, the Dalai Lama reaffirmed the Middle Way Approach of seeking autonomy for Tibet within the People's Republic of China,⁵ stating that the Tibetan people "are not seeking independence" and that they "want to stay with China."⁶ On April 3, 2018, Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) President Lobsang Sangay stated that "back channel talks" continue between the Chinese government and the CTA.⁷

Reincarnation and the 14th Dalai Lama

The Chinese central government maintains that only it has the right to decide the Dalai Lama's successor,⁸ a policy at odds with international standards of religious freedom.⁹ The 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, who reached the age of 83 in July 2018,¹⁰ has stated that he will "consult the high Lamas of the Tibetan Buddhist traditions, the Tibetan public, and other concerned people who follow Tibetan Buddhism, and re-evaluate whether the institution of the Dalai Lama should continue or not,"¹¹ and has hinted that he may select a successor while he is still alive.¹²

The Chinese government continues to suppress expression of devotion to or support for the Dalai Lama. In February 2018, the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) Public Security Department issued a circular encouraging people to report illegal activities of "criminal groups connected to the Dalai clique."¹³ Despite these and other measures attempting to undermine the stature of the Dalai Lama, Tibetan Buddhists continue to revere him as their spiritual leader and take great risks to access his teachings, possess an image of him, or express their devotion in other ways.¹⁴ For example, on May 8, 2018, public security officials in Chiduo (Trido) township, Suo (Sog) county, Naqu (Nagchu) municipality, TAR, detained a father of two for possession of books and audio recordings of the Dalai Lama.¹⁵

Chinese authorities also continued to expand the public profile of their chosen Panchen Lama, Gyaltzen Norbu, whom Party and government officials selected as the 11th Panchen Lama in 1995, shortly after declaring the Dalai Lama's recognition of then six-

year-old Gedun Choekyi Nyima to be “illegal and invalid.”¹⁶ According to observers, Gyaltzen Norbu is likely to play a significant role in the Party and government’s selection of their endorsed successor to the 14th Dalai Lama.¹⁷ Chinese authorities abducted Gedun Choekyi Nyima and his parents on May 17, 1995, three days after the Dalai Lama recognized him as the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama, and have refused to permit an independent expert to visit him.¹⁸ The Panchen Lama and his parents’ whereabouts remain unknown.¹⁹

Religious Freedom for Tibetan Buddhists

The Party and government continued to regulate Tibetan Buddhism and its practices in an effort to strengthen their control over Tibetan Buddhists.²⁰ During Saga Dawa, a month-long celebration of the Buddha’s life and enlightenment that fell between May 15 and June 15, 2018, TAR authorities set up “service centers”²¹ for worshippers and barred current and retired government employees from participating in religious activities.²² Authorities in Chengguan (Chamdo) township, Changdu (Chamdo) municipality, TAR, forbade students attending the Second Kindergarten School, as well as their parents, from participating in religious activities or visiting monasteries during Saga Dawa.²³ [For information on relevant laws relating to religious freedom in China, see Section II—Freedom of Religion.]

Further Clampdown on Larung Gar

In July 2016, provincial authorities in Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), Sichuan province, began the process of demolishing dwellings and expelling monks and nuns at Larung Gar Buddhist Institute (Larung Gar), in Seda (Serthar) county, Ganzi TAP, Sichuan.²⁴ Government control of Larung Gar continued during the Commission's 2018 reporting year.²⁵ An October 2017 report by Free Tibet and Tibet Watch shows that by the end of May 2017 authorities had leveled at least 4,725 homes and forced at least 4,828 residents to leave Larung Gar since July 2016.²⁶ Human Rights Watch (HRW) obtained a brochure that authorities issued in August 2017, which laid out "standardization" procedures at Larung Gar in the name of security.²⁷ According to the brochure, the government will install cadres at every level and section of the monastery, many in top-level roles, while officials will surveil the monastery as a whole using a grid management system,²⁸ instituting real-name registration for all visitors and residents, and requiring monks, nuns, and laypeople to wear colored tags indicating their status within the institute.²⁹ According to HRW's January 2018 report, 40 percent of the monastery's curriculum must include politics and other non-religious subjects.³⁰ On October 29, 2017, authorities in Sichuan abruptly cancelled observance of the prayer festival Dechen Shedrub at Larung Gar for the second consecutive year, reversing an earlier decision to permit celebrations.³¹ HRW China Director Sophie Richardson said the government's actions "show a pernicious intent to exercise extreme control over religious practice."³² According to the International Campaign for Tibet and the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, the expulsions and demolitions at Larung Gar are also driven by the Chinese government's plans to increase business and tourism in the area.³³

Self-Immolations

Self-immolations by Tibetans as a form of protest continued during this past year,³⁴ including three known self-immolations in Tibetan autonomous areas³⁵ of China. All three were confirmed to be fatal, bringing the total number of such self-immolations by Tibetans living in China to 147 since 2009, 130 of which were reportedly fatal.³⁶ Since 2009, many Tibetan self-immolators have called for the long life of the Dalai Lama, his return from exile, and freedom for Tibet.³⁷

- **Tenga**, a 63-year-old monk, self-immolated in Ganzi (Kardze) county, Ganzi TAP, Sichuan, on November 26, 2017, while calling for freedom for Tibet.³⁸ Armed police quickly came and confiscated his body.³⁹ Authorities cut off telephone lines and social media services in Ganzi TAP following Tenga's death, while police were stationed at Tenga's family home.⁴⁰
- **Konpe**, a former monk in his thirties, set himself on fire on December 23, 2017, near Kirti Monastery in Aba (Ngaba) Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture (T&QAP), Sichuan.⁴¹ The police quickly extinguished the fire and brought Konpe to a hospital in Maerkang (Barkham) county, Aba T&QAP.⁴² Konpe died of his injuries on December 24.⁴³ Around that time,

authorities detained his father, Gyakyab, on unknown charges.⁴⁴ According to the International Campaign for Tibet, 24 current and former Kirti monks have self-immolated since 2009.⁴⁵

- **Tsekho Tugchag (Tsekho Tugchak)**, a former monk at No. 4 (Namsoma) village, Mai'erma (Me'uruma) township, Aba, self-immolated and died on March 7, 2018, in Aba.⁴⁶

Tibetans have also faced detention for sharing information about self-immolations. For instance, in October 2017, authorities in Yushu (Yulshul) TAP, Qinghai province, detained seven Tibetans⁴⁷ for posting to the messaging service WeChat a two-year-old video about the lives of self-immolators.⁴⁸

Security, Surveillance, and Party Policy

The government and Party continued implementing repressive policies in Tibetan autonomous areas of China through the use of extensive and intrusive surveillance, stringent measures that restrict Tibetans' fundamental rights, and pervasive displays of police and military force.⁴⁹ Domestic security spending in two Tibetan prefectures in Sichuan increased nearly 300 percent between 2007 and 2016, while the TAR's domestic security spending grew 404 percent over the same time period, compared to a 215 percent increase nationwide.⁵⁰ Under Chinese President and Party General Secretary Xi Jinping, the Chinese Communist Party's United Front Work Department (UFWD) has assumed the primary role of administering religious and ethnic affairs, making it the locus of management of Tibetans within China as well as of relations with overseas Tibetans.⁵¹

Security measures markedly increased around the 19th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (19th Party Congress) in October 2017.⁵² The central government reportedly banned foreigners from visiting the TAR between October 18 and 28⁵³ and deployed security forces to the TAR and other Tibetan areas as the 19th Party Congress began, with public military drills reported in the TAR and in Guoluo (Golog) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), Qinghai province.⁵⁴ In Shannan (Lhokha) municipality, TAR, "temple management cadres" went to monks' quarters to conduct "one-on-one study" of the "19th Party Congress spirit."⁵⁵ After the congress concluded, reports emerged of mandatory "patriotic re-education" in Tibetan areas, with abbots and monastery teachers told to organize "training courses" on the "19th Party Congress spirit."⁵⁶

In a report submitted for the November 2018 session of the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Chinese government's human rights record, the International Federation for Human Rights and International Campaign for Tibet warned that "the human rights situation in the Tibetan areas of China has significantly worsened" since the UN Human Rights Council's last UPR of China in 2013.⁵⁷ The TAR government has reportedly constructed a "mass surveillance" system powered by humans and technology,⁵⁸ posting security officials to "convenience police stations" and Party cadres to villages and monasteries,⁵⁹ while also incentivizing Tibetans to police each other. The Naqu

(Nagchu) Municipal Public Security Bureau in Naqu municipality, TAR, issued a circular on March 13, 2018, promising cash rewards for tips on a number of alleged offenses, from illegal possession of firearms to “the abuse of religion, power, and family connections to illegally encroach on property.”⁶⁰ The circular, reprinted in Radio Free Asia (RFA), indicates that public security officers will offer 50,000 yuan (US\$7,300) for certain tips, and up to 100,000 yuan (US\$14,700) for tips on “criminal gangs” advocating for “separatism,”⁶¹ which RFA reported may implicate the promotion of Tibetan cultural and religious practices or support for the Dalai Lama’s Middle Way Approach.⁶²

Status of Tibetan Culture

China’s 2016–2020 National Human Rights Action Plan (HRAP) provides both that “the cultural rights of ethnic minorities shall be guaranteed” and that “[t]he right of ethnic minorities to learn, use and develop their own spoken and written languages shall be respected and guaranteed,” echoing provisions of China’s Constitution, the PRC Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law, and the PRC Education Law.⁶³ Tibetan culture and language face increasing marginalization, however, particularly as the Chinese government and Party continue to promote Mandarin Chinese as the main language of instruction in Tibetan areas.⁶⁴

Nearly two years after the New York Times interviewed him and published a short film about his advocacy for Tibetan language education, Tashi Wangchug (Tashi Wangchuk) stood trial at the Yushu (Yulshul) Prefecture Intermediate People’s Court in Qinghai province on January 4, 2018.⁶⁵ Tashi Wangchug denied the charge of “inciting separatism,” arguing that he was “exercising his right as a citizen to criticize” the local government concerning the preservation of Tibetan culture and language.⁶⁶ Authorities permitted only three of his relatives into the courtroom, and denied entry to diplomats from the United States, the European Union, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Canada.⁶⁷ On May 22, the court found Tashi Wangchug guilty and sentenced him to five years in prison.⁶⁸ The Qinghai High People’s Court reportedly rejected his appeal in August 2018.⁶⁹

Freedom of Expression

This past year, Tenzin Tethong, Tibetan Service Director for Radio Free Asia, testified before the U.S. Congress that the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) “ranks among the world’s worst media environments after North Korea.”⁷⁰ In certain Tibetan areas, censorship further tightened around the 19th Party Congress in October 2017,⁷¹ including a digital communications blackout imposed by the TAR government during the Party Congress.⁷²

Public security bureaus (PSB) in some Tibetan areas of China introduced local directives to control and censor social media groups, operationalizing features of the PRC Cybersecurity Law as well as the Provisions on the Administration of Internet Group Information Services, which took effect on October 8, 2017.⁷³ The provisions hold social group creators and administrators responsible for con-

tent shared among public and private groups.⁷⁴ Selected examples follow.

- In **Gannan (Kanlho) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), Gansu province**, the Machu County PSB issued directives forbidding chat group administrators and WeChat public account owners from sharing nine different categories of information, from “state secrets” and “rumors” to “other illegal information,” noting that violators “will be dealt with by the relevant departments in accordance with relevant laws and regulations.”⁷⁵
- In advance of the 19th Party Congress in October 2017, PSB officials in **Zeku (Zekog) county, Huangnan TAP, Qinghai province**, forced 248 Tibetan WeChat group administrators to undergo legal training and write statements of responsibility for group chat content as part of an effort to resist “illegal criminal activity” and “harmful information.”⁷⁶
- Authorities reportedly forced monks at Tsang Monastery in **Tongde (Gepasumdo) county, Hainan (Tsolho) TAP, Qinghai**, to attend a March 2018 “legal education” session during which monks received instruction on the PRC Cybersecurity Law’s provisions against sharing “illegal content” online.⁷⁷ On April 16, 2018, local PSB officials reportedly detained two of the monks at Tsang Monastery.⁷⁸ Reports only named one monk, Oechung Gyatso, whom authorities detained in connection with the unauthorized sharing of politically “sensitive” photos and writings on WeChat.⁷⁹

The Commission observed one significant case of a high-profile political prisoner whose detention contravened international standards of freedom of expression.⁸⁰ On January 10, 2018, the Haibei Intermediate People’s Court in Haibei (Tsojang) TAP, Qinghai, sentenced Tsegon Gyal⁸¹ to three years in prison for “inciting separatism.”⁸² According to a February 18 statement by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, authorities detained Tsegon Gyal on December 9, 2016,⁸³ apparently in connection to a blog post he wrote criticizing the Chinese government for failing to truly support its policy of “ethnic unity.”⁸⁴

Authorities released at least four political prisoners during the reporting year.⁸⁵ On March 19, 2018, popular Tibetan writer and intellectual Drukar Gyal⁸⁶ (pen name Shogjang) completed a three-year prison sentence for “inciting separatism” in connection to his writing.⁸⁷ Around August 2, authorities released popular singer Gonpo Tenzin upon completing a sentence of three years and six months.⁸⁸ Authorities detained him in 2013, apparently in connection with his hit song “How Can We Have New Year’s Celebrations in Tibet?” which encouraged Tibetans to preserve their culture and language.⁸⁹ On August 10, Namkha Jam finished a nearly six-year⁹⁰ sentence for “inciting separatism.”⁹¹ The Huangnan Intermediate People’s Court of Huangnan (Malho) TAP, Qinghai, convicted him and three other Tibetans in connection with the sharing of information about self-immolations and protests with allegedly “separatist” Tibetan organizations.⁹² Authorities also released Gonpo Tseten on August 13, one year and six months before the end of his 12-year sentence for “inciting separatism” for leading a protest in Awangcan (Bhelpa) township, Maqu (Machu) county,

Gannan (Kanlho) TAP, Gansu province in March 2008.⁹³ All four men still face from two to four years' deprivation of political rights.⁹⁴

Filmmaker Dondrub Wangchen (Dhondup Wangchen), who had served six years in prison and three years' deprivation of political rights⁹⁵ for "inciting separatism,"⁹⁶ fled China in fall 2017 and reunited with his family in San Francisco on December 25, 2017.⁹⁷ Authorities detained Dondrub Wangchen in March 2008 for his role in making the documentary "Leaving Fear Behind," in which ordinary Tibetans in China shared their feelings about a range of issues, including the Dalai Lama and the August 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing municipality.⁹⁸

Censorship of Social Media and Reporting on Jokhang Fire

Limited access to information about a fire that broke out at the Jokhang temple complex in Lhasa municipality, Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), on February 17, 2018, raised concerns among Tibetan communities and experts about the extent of the damage at the site.⁹⁹ Tibetans posted distressed messages and video of the fire to the messaging service WeChat, including some messages questioning why the fire department did not immediately arrive.¹⁰⁰ Within hours, the TAR government reportedly imposed a ban on discussion of the fire on social media,¹⁰¹ while the state-run media outlet Xinhua reported that the fire had been extinguished.¹⁰² A leaked document later revealed that the authorities took 30 minutes to respond, even though in December 2017 China reported to the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Committee that the temple had a fire brigade stationed on premises "for the safety and protection of cultural relics."¹⁰³ The temple remained open on February 18, but drapes covered the site of the central Jowo Shakyamuni statue,¹⁰⁴ the namesake of the temple and one of the most sacred statues in Tibetan Buddhism.¹⁰⁵ The State Administration of Cultural Heritage reported that the fire did not damage the Jowo Shakyamuni statue.¹⁰⁶

According to scholar Robert Barnett, "almost total suppression of information"¹⁰⁷ quickly followed the fire at the 1,300-year-old Jokhang temple complex,¹⁰⁸ which is a sacred site for Tibetans, Mongolians, and other Buddhists in the Himalayas and Central Asia.¹⁰⁹ Barnett indicated that the restriction of information about the fire caused many Tibetans to fear that the damage was far worse than had been reported.¹¹⁰ In June, the advocacy organization Free Tibet published satellite images showing damage to the Jowo Rinpoche Chapel, which houses the Jowo Shakyamuni statue.¹¹¹

Freedom of Movement

The Chinese government severely restricts the ability of Tibetans to travel abroad, often in relation to religious pilgrimage.¹¹² For example, this past year Radio Free Asia reported that Chinese authorities threatened the families of Tibetans traveling to attend the Dalai Lama's teachings in Bodh Gaya, India, and that Chinese immigration authorities destroyed some of their passports upon their return to China and failed to reissue new passports.¹¹³ According to international advocacy organization Free Tibet, in March 2018,

Chinese authorities detained 60 Tibetans upon their return from pilgrimage to India and Nepal, and reportedly sent them to a “re-education” program.¹¹⁴

Authorities also continued to restrict movement of Tibetans within Tibetan areas of China. This past year, Tibetans making pilgrimage to Lhasa on foot reportedly faced a fine of 3,000 yuan (US\$440) per day.¹¹⁵ In April 2018, plainclothes officers in Dali (Darlag) county, Guoluo (Golog) TAP, Qinghai province, detained and interrogated a 60-year-old pilgrim on her way to Lhasa.¹¹⁶ The pilgrim, Lhamo Drolma (Lhamo Dolkar), from Bora village, Xiahe (Sangchu) county, Gannan (Kanlho) TAP, Gansu province, remained missing as of April 13, 2018.¹¹⁷

Chinese officials increasingly seek to restrict the freedom of movement of Tibetans in neighboring Nepal with the cooperation of Nepalese authorities. The Chinese government has stationed Chinese police on the Nepali side of the border to capture Tibetan refugees.¹¹⁸ The Chinese government reportedly provided funding for a new training academy for the Nepal Armed Police Force, which allegedly plays an important role in preventing Tibetan refugees from entering Nepal.¹¹⁹ Nepal has hosted Tibetan refugees since the 1950s¹²⁰ and currently has a population of around 20,000 Tibetans.¹²¹

Economy, Environment, and Development

The Commission observed no evidence during its 2018 reporting year that the Party or government solicited systematic or representative input from the Tibetan population on economic development in Tibetan autonomous areas of China.¹²² Chinese officials reportedly used environmental protection regulations to restrict the land use of Tibetan herders¹²³ and in one instance detained at least 30 people who protested a mining project located on a mountain considered a sacred site, while one protester went missing.¹²⁴ Other infrastructure projects may threaten environmental damage and the livelihood and safety of Tibetans.¹²⁵

On November 27, 2017, Chinese authorities announced that only security and other authorized officials would have access to the Hoh Xil Nature Reserve, which spans Qinghai province, the TAR, and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR); Qiangtang (Chang Tang) National Nature Reserve in the TAR; and Altun Shan Nature Reserve in the XUAR.¹²⁶ UNESCO approved the nomination of Hoh Xil as a World Heritage site in July 2017,¹²⁷ the highest and largest plateau in the world¹²⁸ and China’s largest World Heritage site at 3.74 million hectares (14,423.35 square miles), with a buffer zone of 2.29 million hectares (8,845.23 square miles).¹²⁹ The Chinese government estimated that 50,000 people herd in the reserve’s buffer zone,¹³⁰ and stated that it would “fully respect the will of the local herders and their traditional culture, religious beliefs, and lifestyle.”¹³¹ A white paper released by the State Council Information Office in June 2018, however, claimed that Hoh Xil is “free of human activity.”¹³²

Infrastructure projects in the TAR could further impact the local people and the environment, as well as communities beyond the TAR. For example, a proposed 1,000-kilometer (621.37-mile) water tunnel from the TAR to the XUAR¹³³ would divert the Yarlung

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Tsangpo River, which becomes the Brahmaputra downstream in Bangladesh and India.¹³⁴ Some observers fear this is a sign that the Chinese government is attempting to expand its influence over neighboring countries.¹³⁵ Fan Xiao, a senior engineer at the Sichuan Bureau of Geological Exploration,¹³⁶ warned that the scheme willfully ignores the environmental, social, and cultural costs of diverting a major water source, including flooding and displacement of local residents.¹³⁷

This past year, TAR officials continued to promote tourism, efforts allegedly connected to the demolition of Tibetan religious and cultural centers.¹³⁸ According to the state-run Xinhua news agency, the TAR received 1.2 million tourists during the National Day holiday in October 2017, up 16.5 percent from the previous year, in part as the result of the opening of a new highway connecting Lhasa municipality and Linzhi (Nyingchi) municipality.¹³⁹ In May 2018, about 60 Tibetan nomad families in the village of Lhadul in Nimu (Nyemo) county, Lhasa, TAR, made a video that circulated online appealing to officials beyond their township to regain access to pastureland which Chinese authorities had designated for tourism.¹⁴⁰

Notes to Section V—Tibet

¹U.S. Department of State, “Report to Congress on Tibet Negotiations, Department of State Authorities Act, Fiscal Year 2017, Improvements Act P.L. 115–94, Sec. 13,” attached to letter from Mary K. Waters, Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, U.S. Department of State, to House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, 21 May 18, 1; U.S. Department of State, “Report on Tibet Negotiations, P.L. 107–228 Section 613(b), of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2003,” attached to letter from Julia Frifield, Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, U.S. Department of State, to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, 19 August 16, 1.

²U.S. Department of State, “Report to Congress on Tibet Negotiations, Department of State Authorities Act, Fiscal Year 2017, Improvements Act P.L. 115–94, Sec. 13,” attached to letter from Mary K. Waters, Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, U.S. Department of State, to House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, 21 May 18, 1. See also International Campaign for Tibet, “Trump Administration’s First Tibet Negotiations Report to Congress Reflects the Absence of a Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues,” 6 June 18.

³Cui Jia, “China Strongly Opposes Any Meeting With Dalai Lama,” *China Daily*, 21 October 17. See also “China Reiterates Opposition to Dalai Lama’s Botswana Visit Next Month,” *Tibetan Review*, 16 July 17; Robert J. Barnett and Deborah Jerome, “U.S.-China: Dalai Lama Drama,” *Council on Foreign Relations* (blog), 17 February 10.

⁴Stuart Lau, “Senior Chinese Official Attacks Foreign Leaders for Meeting Dalai Lama as He Promises To Crack Down on Religious Separatists,” *South China Morning Post*, 21 October 17; Bhuchung K. Tsering, “Analyzing Chinese Official Zhang Yijiong’s Remarks on Dalai Lama and Tibet,” *International Campaign for Tibet* (blog), 26 October 17.

⁵Central Tibetan Administration, “The Middle-Way Policy,” last visited 14 July 18; “Tibet Wants To Stay With China, Says Dalai Lama,” *Times of India*, 24 November 17; “‘Past Is Past’: Dalai Lama Says Tibet Wants To Stay With China, Wants Development,” *Hindustan Times*, 23 November 17.

⁶“‘Past Is Past’: Dalai Lama Says Tibet Wants To Stay With China, Wants Development,” *Hindustan Times*, 23 November 17; “Tibet Wants To Stay With China, Seeks Development, Says Spiritual Leader Dalai Lama,” *Indian Express*, 23 November 17.

⁷Tenzin Dharpo, “No Official Communication With Beijing but ‘Back Channel Talks’ Happen, Says CTA President,” *Phayul*, 4 April 18; Aishwarya Kumar, “No Official Communication, but Back Channel Talks On With China, Says Tibetan Govt-in-Exile,” *News18*, 3 April 18.

⁸Takeshi Narabe, “Discussions on Dalai Lama’s Succession Could Begin This Year,” *Asahi Shimbun*, 16 March 18; Matthew Gindin, “US Senate Backs Tibet in Battle Over the Dalai Lama’s Reincarnation,” *Tricycle*, 11 May 18. See also CECC, 2017 Annual Report, 5 October 17, 299; CECC, 2008 Annual Report, 31 October 08, 189; “Special Topic Paper: Tibet 2008–2009,” *Congressional-Executive Commission on China*, 22 October 09, 38–39.

⁹Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 36/55 of 25 November 81, art. 6(g). Article 6(g) of the Declaration includes the right to “train, appoint, elect or designate by succession appropriate leaders called for by the requirements and standards of any religion or belief.”

¹⁰Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, “Brief Biography,” last visited 14 July 18. According to biographical information on the Dalai Lama’s official website, he was born on July 6, 1935.

¹¹Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, “Reincarnation,” 24 September 11.

¹²Takeshi Narabe, “Discussions on Dalai Lama’s Succession Could Begin This Year,” *Asahi Shimbun*, 16 March 18; Ellen Barry, “Dalai Lama’s Journey Provokes China, and Hints at His Heir,” *New York Times*, 6 April 17.

¹³Tibetan Autonomous Region Public Security Department, “Bulletin on Reporting Leads on Crimes and Violations of Evil Forces” [Guanyu jubao hei’e shili weifa fanzui xiansuo de tonggao], issued 12 February 18, sec. 1(2); “CCP Cracks Down on Tibet—Preservation of Mother Tongue Called ‘Reactionary Ideology’” [Zhonggong yu xizang kaizhan yanda—baohu muyu chengwei “fandong sixiang”], *Voice of Tibet*, 12 February 18; Liu Caiyu, “Police Asks Tibetans for Dalai Lama Tips,” *Global Times*, 11 February 18; International Campaign for Tibet, “Chinese Police Circular Urges Public To Report on Loyalty to ‘Evil Forces’ of Dalai Lama,” 13 February 18.

¹⁴See, e.g., “Two Tibetans Arrested for Keeping Dalai Lama Photos,” *Tibetan Journal*, 28 June 18; Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, “Annual Report 2017: Human Rights Situation in Tibet,” 7 May 18, 49; Freedom House, “Freedom in the World 2018—Tibet,” last visited 3 September 18.

¹⁵Free Tibet, “China Arbitrarily Arrests Elderly Tibetan Man,” 18 May 18; “Tibetan Detained, Disappears in Suo (Sog) County, Naqu (Nagchu) Prefecture, TAR” [Xizang naqu suo xian yi zangren bei bu shizong], *Radio Free Asia*, 21 May 18. For more information on Ganggye, see the Commission’s Political Prisoner database record 2018-00279.

¹⁶Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, “International Religious Freedom Report for 2017—China (Includes Tibet, Hong Kong, and Macau),” 29 May 18, 47; Guo Xin, “It Is Both Illegal and Invalid for the Dalai Lama To Universally Identify the Reincarnated Soul Boy of the Panchen Lama,” *People’s Daily*, 1 December 95 (translated in Open Source Center, 1 December 95); “China’s Panchen Lama Calls for Patriotism, Says Greed Taints Tibetan Buddhism,” *Reuters*, 14 March 17; “Dalai Lama Rejects Communist Party ‘Brazen Meddling’ in Tibetan Buddhist Reincarnation,” *CECC China Human Rights and Rule of Law Update*, No. 1, 24 January 12, 3. See also Lilit Mohan, “Tibetans Decry Disappearance of 11th Panchen Lama,” *Tribune*, 18 May 18; Yangchen Dolma, “Tibetans and Tibet Support Groups Urge World Leaders To Act Over Missing Panchen Lama,” *Tibet Post International*, 18 May 18.

¹⁷Greg C. Bruno, *Blessings From Beijing: Inside China’s Soft-Power War on Tibet* (Lebanon, NH: ForeEdge, 2018), 92; John Powers, *The Buddha Party: How the People’s Republic of China*

Works To Define and Control Tibetan Buddhism (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), 125. See also CECC, 2016 Annual Report, 6 October 16, 301–02. For more information on the Panchen Lama and China's likely model for selecting the next Dalai Lama, see CECC, 2008 Annual Report, 31 October 08, 189.

¹⁸Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "International Religious Freedom Report for 2017—China (Includes Tibet, Hong Kong, and Macau)," 29 May 18, 42; Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, "China: Allow Independent International Bodies To Verify Fate of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the 11th Panchen Lama of Tibet," 17 May 18.

¹⁹Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2017—China (Includes Tibet, Hong Kong, and Macau)," 20 April 18, 76; "Tibet's Exile Community Observes the 23rd-Year Anniversary of the Panchen Lama's Disappearance" [Xizang liuwang shequ jinian banchan lama shizong ershisan nian], Voice of Tibet, 17 May 18. For more information on Gedun Choekyi Nyima, see the Commission's Political Prisoner database record 2004-00835.

²⁰Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, "Annual Report 2017: Human Rights Situation in Tibet," 7 May 18, 52–53; Tshering Chonzom, "Tibet, the 19th Party Congress and China's United Front Work," Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi, ICS Delhi Blog, 1 November 17. See also Sarah Cook, Freedom House, "The Battle for China's Spirit: Religious Revival, Repression, and Resistance Under Xi Jinping," February 2017, 86–101; CECC, 2016 Annual Report, 6 October 16, 300–04.

²¹"Tibetans in Lhasa Celebrate Holy Month of Saga Dawa," Xinhua, 16 May 18; Liu Xuanzun, "Tibet Celebrates Saga Dawa Festival, Stresses Social Order," Global Times, 24 May 18.

²²"Tibetan Officials Warned Against Participating in Religious Activities During Holy Month," Phayul, 31 May 18.

²³Free Tibet, "Schoolchildren Blocked From Joining Buddhist Festivities," 16 May 18.

²⁴Roseanne Gerin, "Report Details Destruction at Sichuan's Larung Gar Buddhist Academy," Radio Free Asia, 19 October 17. For more information on the demolitions and expulsions at Larung Gar that took place during the previous reporting year, see CECC, 2017 Annual Report, 5 October 17, 303–04.

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¹²³International Campaign for Tibet, “Ban on Access to Nature Reserves in Tibet Raises Concern About Tibetan Nomads at UNESCO Site,” 11 December 17. See also Freedom House, “Freedom in the World 2018—Tibet,” last visited 3 September 18.

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ural beauty—free of human activity—describing it as ‘an amazing scene to behold.’ The World Conservation Union, which is also called the International Union for Conservation of Nature, stated that the “World Heritage listing unequivocally supports the rights of the Tibetan pastoralists in the area,” thus acknowledging human activity there.

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¹³⁸ International Campaign for Tibet, “ICT Inside Tibet: Safety Fears Over Tibet Railway Raised Amid Concern Over Mega-Projects,” 21 November 17.

¹³⁹ “Tibet Receives 1.2 Mln Tourists During Holiday,” Xinhua, 9 October 17.

¹⁴⁰ “Tibetan Nomads Appeal for Return of Land Seized for Tourist Project,” Radio Free Asia, 14 May 18.