



December 8, 2016

Hon. Stéphane Dion, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6



**DAVID  
SWEET**  
Flamborough-Glanbrook

*Member of Parliament/Député  
Flamborough-Glanbrook  
National Conservative Caucus Chair/  
Président du caucus national conservateur*

Dear Minister,

As members of the House of Commons Sub-Committee on International Human Rights, we are contacting you regarding an opportunity for the Government of Canada to promote and protect human rights and religious freedom in Tibet.

On November 23, 2016, the Subcommittee heard testimony from Dr. Lobsang Sangay of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA). The CTA, also referred to as the Tibetan Government in Exile, considers itself to be the legitimate government of the Tibetan people. The CTA administers more than 60 schools and oversees a diaspora of about 1.8 million people in 70 settlements throughout India, Nepal, and Bhutan, with a workforce of 1,000 civil servants.

Dr. Sangay spoke of the longstanding effort by the government of China to suppress the people of Tibet through cultural assimilation, controls on freedom of religion, and the destruction of religious buildings – including the Larun Gar monastery. The Committee also learned of new vague and overreaching national security and anti-terrorism laws enacted in 2015. Dr. Sangay said that while these laws in principle have been unofficially imposed on Tibetan civil society for decades, the recent effort by the Chinese government to codify them will make it easier to violate civilians' rights – including the right to religion – under the guise of protecting national security.

The concerns of Dr. Sangay highlighted a growing list of human rights grievances amongst international observers, including arbitrary and unlawful arrest of dissidents, torture and ill-treatment of detainees, violations of the right to freedom of movement, and restrictions on the right to free expression and assembly.

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David Sweet, M.P. stated at the committee hearing, “the actions of the Chinese government embody an effort to totally eliminate Tibetan culture and language from the region.”

We are aware that the Office of Human Rights, Freedoms and Inclusion (OHRFI) is exploring the possibility of partnering with international human rights organizations. At our November 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting, Dr. Sangay, on behalf of the CTA, expressed his willingness to partner with OHRFI in pursuit of improved human rights conditions for the people of Tibet. If Global Affairs is unwilling or unable to partner directly with the CTA, Dr. Sangay also expressed his desire to see a partnership established between the OHRFI and Canada-based Tibetan rights NGOs.

We encourage you to consider putting the OHRFI to work in Tibet with the goal of improving human rights for all its citizens.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Yours sincerely,



David Sweet, MP  
Flamborough—Glanbrook  
Vice-Chair, Subcommittee on International Human Rights



David Anderson, MP  
Cypress Hills—Grasslands  
Official Opposition Critic for Human Rights and Religious Freedom  
Member of the Subcommittee on International Human Rights