

Press Release

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Photo Opportunity

San Francisco Team Tibet, Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi to commemorate the 56th Anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising and pay tribute to continued resistance in Tibet

CAMPAIGNERS URGE WORLD GOVERNMENTS TO 'UNITE FOR TIBET'^[1] TO JOINTLY TACKLE THE CRISIS IN TIBET

WHEN: MARCH 10, TUESDAY

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| 8:00 AM | Tibetan Flag-Raising Ceremony at Berkeley City Hall |
| 10:00 AM | Opening ceremony guest speakers at SF City Hall |
| 12:15 PM | March to Chinese Consulate, via Van Ness Ave & Geary Blvd |
| 1:00 PM | Rally & Demonstration at Chinese Consulate, 1450 Laguna St., SF |
| 2:30 PM | March from Consulate to SF Downtown, to Justin Hermann Plaza |
| 5:00 PM | Candlelight Vigil, Speeches, Performances Closing Ceremony |

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| WHERE: | 8 AM | Berkeley City Hall , 2180 Milvia St., Berkeley |
| | 10 AM | San Francisco City Hall , 1 Goodlett Place, SF |
| | 1 PM | Consulate of the PRC , 1450 Laguna St. @ Geary Blvd., SF |
| | 5 PM | Justin Hermann Plaza , Market St. and Embarcadero |

(San Francisco) Tibetans and Tibet supporters around the world^[2] are this week taking to the streets and organizing events to mark the 56th anniversary of the 1959 uprising in Tibet - a time when hundreds of thousands of Tibetans protested China's illegal invasion and occupation of their country.^[3] Since March 2008 there has been a surge of protests inside Tibet with demonstrators calling for freedom in Tibet. At least 136 Tibetans^[4], from all walks of life, have set fire to their own bodies in protest against China's rule, calling for freedom and for His Holiness the Dalai Lama to be able to return to his homeland. The vast majority have lost their lives.

"Tibetans are literally dying for freedom," said Tenzin Tsepel of the San Francisco Tibetan Youth Congress. *"It's time for world governments to listen to the calls of the Tibetan people and to put pressure on China to resolve the ongoing crisis in Tibet."*

Since Xi Jinping became China's President in March 2013, China's grip on Tibet has tightened^[5]. The renewed clampdown includes newly-imposed "collective punishment"^[6] policies that allow authorities to impose penalties against entire Tibetan communities infringing upon Tibetans' right to freedom of religion and association, and raise the severe oppression in Tibet to a new increased level.

Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi who will speak to SF Team Tibet at San Francisco City Hall said, *"Tibetan Uprising Day is an opportunity for us to remember the sacrifices made by so many in the ongoing struggle of the Tibetan people to enjoy the religious freedom and human rights that all people deserve,"* said House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi. *"What is happening to the people of Tibet is a challenge to the conscience of the world. This is also the time to renew our determination to fight with the people of Tibet for these rights. The American people are proud to stand with all Tibetans in advocating for freedom and peace."*

Congresswoman Jackie Speier's office will be represented and San Francisco Supervisor John Avalos will also speak at San Francisco City Hall.

China's response to protests has been brutal and the crackdown in Tibet has intensified in recent months to include a sweeping campaign to criminalize relatives and friends of those self-immolating, and the use of disproportionate - including lethal - force against peaceful gatherings of Tibetans. In August 2014 paramilitary police open fire on a crowd of Tibetans who were peacefully protesting the detention of a respected village elder; at least six Tibetans died from the incident and many more were injured.

"It remains a severely critical time in Tibet, which is why Tibetans in exile and Tibet activists around the world are intensifying efforts to urge world governments to unite to build pressure on China to end the severe repression in Tibet" said Sonamtso of Students for a Free Tibet – West. "By working in unison, governments can pressure China more strongly to end its dangerously provocative policies in Tibet, and send the signal that China's bullying of individual nations that support Tibet is unacceptable."

Kaydor Aukatsang, Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the Americas, said, "As we commemorate and remember the brave sacrifices made by the Tibetan people in Tibet, I extend my gratitude to all our friends and supporters. I urge the Chinese government to end the suffering of the Tibetan people by resuming dialogue with the representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan leadership. The solution to the Tibet issue lies with the Chinese leadership. The Tibetan people under the guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama have carried out and will continue to carry out our freedom struggle non-violently and peacefully until Tibetan freedom and dignity is restored."

We call on world governments to Unite for Tibet. By working in unison, governments can pressure China more strongly to end its dangerously provocative policies in Tibet, and send the signal that China's bullying of individual nations that support Tibet, is unacceptable

NOTES:

1. Read and download the updated report "Unite for Tibet; A New Global Approach" at <http://issuu.com/internationaltibetnetwork/docs/g20unitefortibet> (high resolution), Google Docs (low resolution) - <https://docs.google.com/file/d/0BznuJeH49IWRX1BpM2lyT2R5Vzg>. The report was co-authored and updated by the Secretariat of the International Tibet Network, <http://www.tibetnetwork.org/>, a global coalition of more than 180 Tibet Groups, with Member Groups Australia Tibet Council <http://atc.org.au/>, US Tibet Committee, <http://www.ustibetcommittee.org/>, Students for a Free Tibet, <https://www.studentsforafreetibet.org/> and Tibetan Women's Association, <http://tibetanwomen.org/>. First published in June 2013.
2. See <http://standupfortibet.org/take-action/10-march-uprising-day-2015/>
3. 10 March 2015 is the 56th anniversary of one of the most momentous days in Tibetan history; on this day in 1959 thousands of Tibetans in Tibet took to the streets of Lhasa to protest against Chinese rule and protect their leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama. As China shelled Lhasa, the Dalai Lama was forced to escape from Tibet. In 2008, 10 March was the beginning of the most widespread opposition to China's occupation of Tibet as protests swept the Tibetan plateau.
4. See <http://standupfortibet.org/learn-more/protesters/>
5. Freedom House, 2015 Freedom In the World Report, found that Chinese-occupied Tibet is among the 11 countries or territories ranked "Worst of the Worst" - <https://www.freedomhouse.org/report-types/freedom-world#.VPR-qVPNKPR>
6. For more information see https://docs.google.com/document/d/129FTptrAOug3lgH-kSzjhpWWeSV1k79t4BYDmrh_1fM

SAN FRANCISCO TEAM TIBET consists of Tibetan Association of Northern California (tanc.org), San Francisco Regional Tibetan Youth Congress (sfrtyc.org) Students for a Free Tibet (studentsforafreetibet.org) Bay Area Friends of Tibet (friends-of-tibet.org)