

# STUDENTS FOR A

PRESS COMMUNICATION OF 10 March 2012

# FREE TIBET



Today as we mark the 53rd Anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising of 1959, we pay our respect and our homage to the brave Tibetans who have sacrificed their lives for Tibet. Since 2009, 26 Tibetans between the age of 17-40, monks, nuns and laypeople have set themselves on fire. Their two demands are 'freedom for Tibet,' and the 'Return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet'.

The self-immolations inside Tibet are a clear political act. They are not acts of despair but acts of defiance. Tibetans inside Tibet have made up their mind about the sacrifice that will lead to a free Tibet. This ultimate act of sacrifice is not just for religious and cultural freedom inside Tibet. The real issue here is the illegal occupation of Tibet. For more than sixty years Tibetans have endured one of the most brutal regime and resisted against it in a non-violent way.

Together with the homegrown, grassroots movement called Lhakar, and the non-cooperation against the Chinese colonisers, the resistance inside Tibet is getting stronger day by day. We are inspired by the determination of Tibetans inside Tibet and pledge that, living in free countries, we will do our best to amplify and pass on their message. We believe that unless Tibet becomes independent there will not be lasting peace inside Tibet. Tibetans will continue to resist and fight against the Chinese occupation.

Today as Tibet continues to burn the silence on the part of French government is deafening. Some reporters who managed to sneak into Tibet have

called it a «zone of conflict» where an undeclared Martial law is in place. We want to point out to the French government that few words of «sadness» and «concern» are not enough. The grave situation in Tibet demands a more concrete action by the French government at a bi-lateral level.

We call on the French government to put pressure on China to immediately withdraw their police and military from Ngaba and other regions in Tibet.

We call on the French government to demand China to allow independent observers into Tibet.

We also call on the French government to demand independent media access to Tibet.

We take this opportunity to demand that EU member states take a unified and cohesive position on Tibet. The European Union was founded on the values of respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights. What Tibetans are demanding is exactly that. Respect as Tibetans, liberty and equality.

We take this opportunity to thank our supporters who have stood by us in our struggle. Today we reaffirm our pledge to continue to fight for the independence of Tibet. In the struggle for an independent Tibet, SFT will always stand by the Tibetans inside Tibet. Now the choice is for the French government whether they will side with the colonisers or the the colonised. Which side of history will France be? Tsampa Revolution lives on !

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Etudiants pour un Tibet Libre  
Maison des Initiatives Etudiantes  
Etudiants pour un Tibet Libre N°16  
50, Rue des Tournelles 75003 Paris  
06 87 16 33 54 (or) 06 87 16 33 54  
etudiants@tibetlibre.org - www.tibetlibre.org

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