

Tibet's Path of Development Is Driven by an Irresistible Historical Tide

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Foreword

The People's Republic of China is a united multi-ethnic country created through the joined efforts of the peoples of all the ethnic groups in China. Over the long course of history, these ethnic groups have grown into a single community that responds to each and every challenge under the single name of the Chinese nation. Tibet has been a part of China's territory since ancient times, and the Tibetans have been one communal member of the Chinese nation. The destiny of Tibet has always been closely connected with the destiny of the great motherland and the Chinese nation.

Down through the ages, the Tibetan people have created a brilliant history and culture, and contributed to the enrichment and development of Chinese overall history and culture. However, the social system of Tibet remained one of theocratic feudal serfdom until the mid-20th century, with an economy that was extremely underdeveloped, and a society that was conservative, closed and backward.

Tibet first began to embrace modern civilization only after the People's Republic was founded in 1949. Having going through such important phases as peaceful liberation, democratic reform, establishment of the Tibet Autonomous Region, and introduction of reform and opening up, Tibet has not only established a new social system, but also witnessed great historical leap forward in its economy and embarked on the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

Tibet's continual progress on its present path of development is one of the objective requirements of modern civilization. It accords with the progressive trend of human society, the prevailing conditions and the current reality in China, and the fundamental interests of all ethnic groups in Tibet. While following this path, the people of the numerous ethnic groups in Tibet have become masters of their country and their society, and critically, masters of their own destiny. Along the way, Tibet has been transformed from a poor and backward society to one that is advanced in both economy and culture. Along the way, the people of Tibet have found harmony and the means of working together with the people of other parts of China to create a better and happier life. And along the way, Tibet has opened to the rest of the world and begun to absorb the outstanding achievements of human civilization.

Tibet's tremendous progress in its development serves as eloquent evidence that the path it is now following is the correct one. However, there is a party who cluster around the 14th Dalai Lama, representatives of the remnants of the feudal serf owners who have long lived in exile, driven by a political goal of "Tibetan independence" and a sentimental attachment to the old theocratic feudal serfdom. In recent years, having seen the failure of their attempts to instigate violence in support of their cause, they have turned to preaching a "middle way." This "middle way" purports to advocate "compromise," "concession," "peace" and "non-violence"; in reality it negates the sound path of development that Tibet has followed since the founding of the People's Republic, and attempts to create a "state within a state" on Chinese territory, to be ruled by the 14th Dalai Lama and his supporters, as an interim step towards the ultimate goal of full independence.

I. The End of the Old System Was a Historical Inevitability

In the 1950s, when slavery and serfdom had long since been abandoned by modern civilization, Tibet still remained a society of theocratic feudal serfdom. This system trampled on human dignity, infringed upon human rights, and impeded development in Tibet, all of which went completely against the progressive trend in China and the rest of the world.

- Political and religious powers combined, with absolute supremacy held by religious power - a typical manifestation of theocracy

In old Tibet, religious power enjoyed absolute supremacy. Religious power prevailed over political power while the latter protected the former. The two combined to defend the interests of the three major stakeholders: local officials, aristocrats and higher-ranking lamas in the monasteries. Before Democratic Reform in 1959, there were 2,676 monasteries and almost 115,000 Buddhist monks and their acolytes in Tibet. Active monks accounted for one quarter of the local male population, a total that far exceeded the proportion of clergy in Medieval Europe, and was highly unusual throughout the world.

In this theocratic society religion had been distorted by feudal serfdom, and monasteries were no longer places of purity to study Buddhism and worship the Buddha, but fortresses from which the local rulers organized religious activities, exercised administration and exploitation, built up their armed forces, and passed judicial adjudication. Some monasteries even had private jails, with instruments of torture used for eye gouging and hamstringing, in addition to handcuffs, chains and clubs. A letter from the Tibetan local government department to the head of a Rabden (a theocratic and administrative organization at a lower level) in the early 1950s contains instructions in relation to the celebration of the 14th Dalai Lama's birthday, which said that all the staff of Lower Tantric College would chant the sutra on the occasion, and "during the service, food will be offered to the hungry ghosts, for which a corpus of fresh intestines, two skulls, some mixed blood and a whole human skin are urgently needed. Please have these delivered without delay." Among the three major stakeholders, the upper-ranking lamas were the biggest money-lenders, controlling 80 percent of all loans.

Since a large proportion of the population were not engaged in economic activity and reproduction, but were used as tools of oppression by the religious power, there was an acute shortage of social resources, and demographic growth had remained stagnant for a long period of time. According to "Tibet" from Annals of Military Events in Qing Dynasty written by Wei Yuan (1794-1851) in the mid-19th century, the Department of Minorities Affairs in 1737 (the second year of Qing Emperor Qianlong's reign) produced a report on the areas under the jurisdiction of the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Erdeni, which found that there were more than 316,200 lamas in Tibet, from a regional population (excluding present-day Qamdo) of only 1.09 million. By the early 1950s, the local population still stood around 1 million, having seen hardly any increase in 200 years.

Using religion to maintain a tight control over society was a prominent feature of theocracy. Li Youyi, an official stationed in Lhasa by the Commission for Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs of the Nationalist Government, and a Tibetologist who worked in Tibet in the 1940s, lamented the fact in his essay "Tibet, the mysterious and the un-mysterious": "Why didn't the serfs rise up and rebel against such cruel oppression and exploitation in Tibet? I asked them this question, and was shocked by their answer. They said, 'This is the result of karma.' They believed they had done evil in a previous life, and had to suffer in this life in order to wash away their previous sins and reincarnate into a better next life. This was what the lamas preached to them, and what they firmly believed." In the words of Li Youyi, it was such thought control that made the serfs "willing to toil all their life to accumulate merits for the future, and when the aristocrats whipped them, they thought it was helping them wash away their sins."

Charles Bell, a Briton who lived in Tibet, wrote in his book *Portrait of a Dalai Lama: The Life and Times of the Great Thirteenth*, "Does it not matter to you whether you are reborn as a human being or as a pig? The Dalai Lama can help to ensure that you will be reborn as a human being in a high position, or, better still, as a monk or nun in a country where Buddhism flourishes." He firmly believed that the lamas had used spiritual terrorism to maintain their influence and to hold the power in their hands.

- Rigid hierarchy and trampling on human rights - the last fortress of feudal serfdom in the East

Feudal serfdom dominated Tibet until 1959. The French traveler Alexandra David-Neel visited Tibet and its surrounding areas five times between 1916 and 1924. In 1953, she published *Le vieux Tibet face a la Chine nouvelle*, in which she described Tibet's serfdom as follows: In Tibet, all the peasants spent their whole lives as debt-laden serfs, and hardly any one of them could be found to have paid off their debts... To survive, the serfs had to borrow money, grain and cattle, and pay high rates of interest. But their harvests were never enough to cover their swelling interest... They had no other option but to borrow again, borrow grains and seeds... So on and so forth, year in and year out, the cycle continued on and on. They would be burdened with debts until the day they died, debts which would be passed on to their sons. From the day they started to toil in the fields, the poor boys would be oppressed by these ancestral debts, of whose origins he knew nothing... The poor could do nothing

but toil indefinitely on the barren land, deprived of all freedom as human beings, and becoming poorer with every year that passed.

Under the feudal serfdom, there was a rigid hierarchy. The 13-Article Code and the 16-Article Code, which had been practiced for centuries in Tibet, divided people into three classes and nine ranks, enshrining the rigid hierarchy in law. According to these documents, there were three classes by blood and position, each class was further divided into three ranks... As people were divided into different classes and ranks, the value of a life correspondingly differed... The bodies of people of the highest rank of the upper class were literally worth their weight in gold, while the lives of people of the lowest rank of the lower class were only worth a straw rope.

This backward social structure led to a chasm of wealth in old Tibet. By the late 1950s, the three major stakeholders and their agents, who made up less than 5 percent of the population, owned almost all of the land, pastures, forests, mountains, rivers and flood plains, and most of the livestock. Before Democratic Reform in 1959, there were 197 hereditary aristocratic families, including 25 major ones, the top seven or eight of whom each possessed dozens of manors and over 1,000 hectares of land. The family of the 14th Dalai Lama owned 27 manors, 30 pastures, and over 6,000 serfs. The Dalai Lama alone had 160,000 taels (one tael = 30 grams) of gold, 95 million taels of silver, over 20,000 pieces of jewelry and jade ware, and more than 10,000 pieces of silk clothing and rare furs. Meanwhile the serfs and slaves, who accounted for 95 percent of the population, had nothing and lived a miserable life with no human rights at all. As a Tibetan proverb goes, "Life given by parents, body controlled by officials. Though they have life and body, they are not masters of their own."

- Closed, backward and isolated from modern civilization - bearing no resemblance to the "Shangri-la" fantasy

In the 1930s, British novelist James Hilton in his *Lost Horizon* depicted an earthly paradise, which he called "Shangri-la." Since then, many have dreamed of searching for this fictional place, and some have even taken Tibet as the prototype. But "Shangri-la" was no more than a fantasy, and there was nothing at all in old Tibet that corresponded to the Utopian images of "Shangri-la."

The backwardness of old Tibet can be seen from the following facts: Until its peaceful liberation in 1951, Tibet did not have a single school in the modern sense; its illiteracy rate was as high as 95 percent among the young and the middle-aged;

there was no modern medical service, and praying to the Buddha for succor was the main resort for most people if they fell ill; their average life expectancy was 35.5 years; there was not a single standard highway, and all goods and mail had to be delivered by man and beast of burden; and the region's single hydropower station, with a generating capacity of 125 kw, served only the 14th Dalai Lama and a few other privileged people.

Those who had visited Tibet in person, whether Chinese or foreign, were all struck by how backward the place was, and many of them have left factual records. Li Youyi recalled, after a field survey of a couple of months in Tibet in 1945, "What I saw on my 1,700-mile journey along the mid-lower reaches of the Yarlung Zangbo was a state of complete decay. Every day I would pass by a number of abandoned houses, and expanses of barren fields with no one tending to them. I saw more than 100 such 'ghost towns'... I set out in the season of autumn harvest. At this time of the year, you would expect to see the joy of harvest on the faces of peasants, even in backward inland areas. But in rural Tibet in 1945, I saw no sign of any happy face. What I saw was the nobility and their rent collectors whipping and yelling at the serfs; what I heard was the weeping and moaning of their victims."

In his 1905 book *The Unveiling of Lhasa*, Edmund Candler, the former British journalist in India working for Daily Mail, recorded details of the old Tibetan society: Lhasa was "squalid and filthy beyond description, undrained and unpaved. Not a single house looked clean or cared for. The streets after rain are nothing but pools of stagnant water frequented by pigs and dogs searching for refuse."

In the memory of Dortar, who once served as director of the Radio and Television Department of Tibet Autonomous Region, "When I came to Lhasa in 1951, I was shocked at the shabby and poor conditions. With the exception of the Barkhor near the Jokhang Temple, there was hardly a decent street in town. No public facilities, no streetlights, no water supply and no drainage. What I often did see were the corpses of those frozen to death, in addition to beggars, prisoners and packs of dogs. To the west of the Jokhang was a colony of beggars, and there was another near the Romache. The beggars numbered as many as three to four thousand, or one-tenth of Lhasa's total population."

In a telegraph to the Gaxag (Tibetan name of the local government of Tibet) in 1950, Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme, then a local government Galoin (minister) and later vice chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China,

reported on the conditions in Qamdo: "The people live in dire poverty in this time of turmoil. In some counties roasted barley is to be found in only seven or eight households, and all the rest have to rely on turnips. It is terribly bleak, with hordes of beggars."

Extensive documentation confirms that the old system in Tibet was doomed by the mid-1950s. Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme recalled: "In the 1940s, I talked more than once with close friends about the crisis of the old society (system) in Tibet. Everyone believed that, if Tibet continued like this, the serfs would all die out in no time, and the nobles would find no escape. Then the whole of Tibet would perish."

By the 1950s, political and religious powers had been separated in most countries and regions throughout the world. But a backward system of theocracy was still practiced in Tibet, hindering the progress of Tibetan society and isolating the region from modern civilization.

Starting in the 19th century, a worldwide campaign to eliminate slavery had spread over many countries and regions. Britain, Russia and the United States were among them. In 1807, the British Parliament adopted an act that forbade British ships to engage in the slave trade. In 1861, the Russian tsar Alexander II formally approved a decree and announcement to eliminate slavery. The following year, US President Lincoln published his Emancipation Proclamation, and in 1865 the US Congress adopted the 13th Amendment to the US Constitution, formally marking the end of slavery. In 1948, the UN Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which stipulates that no one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

However, in the mid-20th century, when serfdom had nearly disappeared throughout the world, the largest fortress of serfdom was still deep-rooted in China's Tibet. This not only hindered China's social progress, but also represented an affront to human civilization, conscience and dignity.

After the People's Republic of China was founded and along with the progress in Chinese society, the old systems in Tibet were completely eradicated around the late 1950s and early 1960s. However, the 14th Dalai Lama and his followers have acted against this historical trend. Instead of acknowledging the ruthlessness and cruelty of

theocratic rule, they pine for the old system and dream of resurrecting it in Tibet one day. Relevant statements can be found in their documents.

For instance, their Draft Democratic Constitution for Future Tibet, promulgated in 1963, stated, "Tibet shall be a unitary democratic State founded upon the principles laid down by the Lord Buddha." The Charter of the Tibetans-in-Exile, adopted in 1991, stated, "The future Tibetan polity shall uphold the principle of non-violence and shall endeavor to promote the freedom of the individual and the welfare of the society through the dual system of government based on a Federal Democratic Republic." The Guidelines for Future Tibet's Polity and Basic Features of Its Constitution, promulgated in 1992, defined the nature of future Tibet's polity as being "founded on spiritual values." The Charter of the Tibetans-in-Exile, amended in 2011, stipulated that the future polity of Tibet would be "a combination of political and religious power."

II. New Tibet Follows a Sound Path of Development

Tibet has undergone historic changes after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The peaceful liberation of Tibet in 1951 made it possible to expel the forces of imperialism from Tibet, and the democratic reform in 1959 brought to an end the feudal theocratic serfdom that had endured, and exerted both religious and political power, for hundreds of years. In 1965, the Tibet Autonomous Region was established, and the socialist system has since prevailed in Tibet. Following the launch of reform and opening up in 1978, the drive for modernization has brought extensive benefits to Tibet as much as to any other part of the country. Especially in the 21st century, Tibet has achieved even faster growth and further progress towards building a moderately prosperous society in an all-round way. Through more than 60 years of development, the people of Tibet have found a path of development that is both characteristically Chinese and suited to the actual prevailing conditions in Tibet. Thus, a new Tibet that is a blend of both the traditional and the modern has appeared.

- The development path of new Tibet safeguards the unity of the Chinese nation.

Tibet faced two different possible outcomes when the imperialists invaded the plateau in the modern era: unity with or separation from the Chinese nation. British colonialists invaded Tibet twice - in 1888 and 1904 - and forced the Qing court, which

ruled China from 1644 to 1911, to sign a couple of unequal treaties that accorded Britain with many privileges in Tibet. When the Qing court was overthrown in 1911, the British began fostering separatist forces in Tibet, trying to engineer "Tibetan independence." No sooner had the People's Republic of China been founded in 1949 than separatists from the upper classes of Tibet were hastening to hatch plots for "Tibetan independence" with imperialist forces, attempting to separate Tibet from the motherland. Based on an assessment of Tibet's history and the prevailing conditions there, the Central People's Government of China decided to follow a principle of peaceful liberation for Tibet so as to safeguard national unity and territorial integrity. Patriots in Tibet, including the 10th Panchen Lama, also called on the central government to liberate and station Chinese People's Liberation Army troops in Tibet to ensure the unity of the country. The peaceful liberation of Tibet was finally achieved when the Agreement of the Central People's Government and the Local Government of Tibet on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet (also known as the "17-Article Agreement") was signed on May 23, 1951. The 14th Dalai Lama sent a telegram to Mao Zedong, chairman of the Central People's Government, which read: "...The local government of Tibet as well as the ecclesiastical and secular people unanimously support this Agreement, and, under the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Central People's Government, will actively assist the PLA troops entering Tibet to consolidate national defense, ousting imperialist influences from Tibet and safeguarding the unification of the territory and the sovereignty of the motherland."

The peaceful liberation enabled Tibet to shake off the fetters of imperialism, confounded imperialist designs for an independent Tibet, and realized the unity of the Chinese nation in these new historical circumstances. It also addressed the issue between the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama left over from history, leading to unity within Tibet. After the peaceful liberation, the Chinese government gradually revoked the privileges foreign countries had awarded themselves in Tibet. In 1954, the People's Republic of China and India signed the Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet Region of China and India, abolishing the privileges India had inherited from the British invaders. In 1956, China signed with Nepal the Agreement on Maintaining Friendly Relations between the People's Republic of China and the Kingdom of Nepal and on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet Region of China and Nepal, settling the issue between the local Tibet government and Nepal left over from history.

Over more than half a century since then, the Tibetan people have shared one mind, and in the face of every challenge have stood together with the people of other ethnic groups of the Chinese nation. Together, they have established a harmonious

relationship featuring equality, solidarity and interdependence. The people of Tibet have stood firmly with the central government in spite of hardships endured and challenges faced in the struggle against separatist forces in order to safeguard national unity and solidarity, and also to share with the rest of the country the fruits and achievements of development in the course of rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

In order to help Tibet develop rapidly and get rid of poverty and backwardness, the central government has fully exploited the institutional advantages of the socialist system to pool nationwide strengths to support the construction of Tibet, and a series of preferential policies have been adopted and great financial and material resources as well as manpower have been amassed to inject new impetus to its development. For the past six decades and more, the financial department of the central government has steadily increased transfer payments for Tibet. In the period from 1952 to 2013, the central government provided 544.6 billion yuan to Tibet in financial subsidies, accounting for 95 percent of Tibet's total public financial expenditure. Since 1980, five national symposiums have been called on work in Tibet, working out integrated blueprints for Tibet's development by proceeding from the perspective of the country's overall drive for modernization. Since the Third National Symposium on Work in Tibet in 1994, the central government has put into effect the policy of pairing-up support for Tibet where 60 central state organs, 18 provinces or municipalities directly under the central government, and 17 centrally managed state-owned enterprises have been paired up with and made to provide assistance to specific areas of Tibet. Over the last two decades, a total of 5,965 of China's best officials have been appointed to work in Tibet, 7,615 assistance projects have been carried out, and 26 billion yuan has been invested in Tibet and mainly directed at improving infrastructure and quality of life. All of this assistance has made an enormous contribution to Tibet's social and economic development. After the Fifth National Symposium on Work in Tibet in 2010, the central government determined that the 17 provincial and municipal governments involved in the paired-up support program should provide Tibet with 0.1 percent of their yearly fiscal revenues as aid funds, thus establishing a mechanism to ensure a steady growth in such aiding funds.

- The development path of new Tibet ensures that the people are masters of their own fate.

The transformation of the old serf-owning Tibet into a new Tibet where the people are masters of their own fate was an essential precondition of Tibet's social development and also a fundamental aspiration of the people of all ethnic groups in Tibet. Within the framework of socialist democracy with Chinese characteristics, Tibet has embarked on a road of modern democracy, and all political rights of the people are fully respected and protected.

In Tibet there are Tibetans, Monbas, Lhobas, Naxi's, Huis, Han's and peoples of some other ethnic groups; they all enjoy the right to equally participate in the administration of state affairs. The system of people's congress, as a basic political system of China, serves as the main channel through which the people exercise their democratic rights. Now, the Tibet Autonomous Region has 21 deputies to the National People's Congress, of whom 12 are Tibetans, and even the Monba and Lhoba ethnic groups, despite their small populations, are each represented by one. The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) is unique to China's socialist democracy; it is an important platform for the Chinese people to exercise deliberative democracy. At present, Tibet has 29 members on the CPPCC National Committee, including 26 from the Tibetan and other ethnic minorities. Among the 34,244 deputies to the local people's congresses at all four administrative levels in Tibet, 31,901 are from the Tibetan, Monba, Lhoba, Naxi, Hui, Zhuang and other ethnic minorities, accounting for more than 93 percent. The 44-member standing committee of the tenth Tibet regional people's congress has 25 representatives from Tibetan and other ethnic minorities, who occupy eight of the 14 positions of chairpersons or vice-chairpersons. Community-level democracy is also subject to constant enhancement. More than 95 percent of Tibet's villages have established the system of villagers' representative meetings and elected villagers' self-governance organizations. All villages have made their affairs public and exercise democratic management, and more than 90 percent of them have set up billboards to guarantee the rights of the general public to be informed about, to participate in, to make decisions on, and to scrutinize local government. All of Tibet's 192 urban communities have also set up community residents' congresses and community committees, providing a solid organizational mechanism for the self-governance of local urban residents.

China's system of regional ethnic autonomy is based on the national conditions. Tibet is one of the five ethnic autonomous regions of China. According to the Constitution and the Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy of the People's Republic of

China, the Tibet Autonomous Region enjoys extensive autonomy in legislation, language, culture and education, and flexible application of relevant state laws as well as fiscal management and official appointments. Since their establishment in 1965, the regional people's congress and its standing committee have passed more than 290 local laws and regulations or resolutions and decisions of a legislative nature, and formulated measures for the flexible application of some state laws in Tibet in order to adapt them to local conditions.

Tibet created alternative regulations in 1981 and 2004, in which the legal age of marriage for both men and women was reduced by two years relative to the Marriage Law of the People's Republic of China, and polyandrous and polygynous relationships that had existed before the regulations took effect would be allowed to continue if no one involved proposed dissolution. Tibet also issued the Interim Measures for Family Planning in Tibet Autonomous Region (Trial). Han Chinese officials and workers and their families are authorized to have only one child per couple; as regards Tibetan, Naxi, Hui and Zhuang officials and workers, and their family members whose hukous (residency registration) are in relevant urban enterprises, are allowed to have two children per couple at reasonable intervals; farmers and herdsmen in farming and pastoral areas are not subject to any restrictions, likewise there are no restrictions on couples from the Monba, Lhoba, Sherpa and Deng ethnic groups.

In addition to the national holidays, Tibet has also established other public holidays, mostly traditional Tibetan festivals such as the Tibetan New Year and Shoton Festival.

According to the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, the state has the responsibility to help the ethnic autonomous areas train large numbers of officials at various levels, and specialized personnel and skilled workers of various professions and trades from among the ethnic group or groups in those areas. The Law of the People's Republic of China on Regional Ethnic Autonomy stipulates that the chairperson of an autonomous region, the prefect of an autonomous prefecture or the head of an autonomous county is to be a member of the ethnic group exercising regional autonomy in the area concerned; other government posts in the relevant area will be assigned to members of the ethnic group exercising regional autonomy and to other ethnic minorities on a proportional basis. The Civil Servant Law of the People's Republic of China provides that, where there is any employment of civil servants in an autonomous area, applicants from ethnic minorities will be given appropriate preferential treatment. In the current contingent of local officials in Tibet, 70.95 percent are from the Tibetan and other ethnic minorities, and among

county and township leaders the proportion is very similar. Since the Tibet Autonomous Region was set up, all the chairpersons of the standing committee of the regional people's congress and of the regional people's government have been elected from the Tibetan ethnic group. Tibetan and other ethnic minority candidates for the national college entrance and civil servant exams enjoy a preferential marking system.

- The development path of new Tibet guarantees the common prosperity of all ethnic groups.

With the full support of the central government and the generous assistance of other ethnic groups from the rest of the country, the people of Tibet have worked together to achieve widespread success.

There have been substantial improvements in the quality of life. In 2013, the Gross Regional Product (GRP) of Tibet reached 80.767 billion yuan; the per-capita net income of farmers and herdsmen was 6,578 yuan and the per-capita disposable income of urban dwellers was 20,023 yuan. The overwhelming majority of Tibetans have now shaken off poverty that had dogged them for centuries to enjoy a relatively comfortable life. The low-income housing projects for farmers and herdsmen that were initiated in 2006 have been completed, and a total of 460,300 low-income houses were built, providing safe modern housing to 2.3 million farmers and herdsmen. The average per-capita floor space of farmers and herdsmen was 30.51 sq m, and that of urban dwellers reached 42.81 sq m.

In 2013, the population of Tibet rose to 3.1204 million, and average life expectancy was 68.2 years. These represent a tripling and a doubling of the respective figures from the early 1950s. According to the "CCTV Economic Life Survey" jointly sponsored by the National Bureau of Statistics, China Post Group, and China Central Television (CCTV), Lhasa has topped the "happiness index" for five consecutive years.

There has been comprehensive development in Tibet's education, health and social security. The region took the lead in China to provide its residents with a 15-year free education (three-year preschool, six-year primary school, three-year junior middle school and three-year senior middle school); 99.59 percent of school-age children are enrolled at primary level; the gross enrollment rates for junior middle school and senior middle school have reached 98.75 percent and 72.23 percent, respectively. The quality of the population is also improving. Illiteracy has been wiped out among the young and the middle-aged, and the average length of time spent in education for people above the age of 15 has reached 8.1 years. A basic

medical and health service system has been established. Tibet now has 6,660 medical and health institutions. Free medical services are now available to all farmers and herdsmen in the autonomous region, with the relevant annual subsidy being raised to 380 yuan per person in 2014. Tibet is the first area in China to provide free physical examinations for urban and rural residents.

The drive for modernization continues. Modern industry and infrastructure are improving rapidly. A distinctive modern industrial system has been established that is adapted to the needs and conditions in Tibet and comprises more than 20 industries, in addition to the full development of a new energy system that is based on hydraulic power features complementation of geothermal, wind and solar power as well as other new energy sources. In 2013, the total installed generating capacity reached 1.28 million kw, and 100 percent of the local population was ensured access to electric power supply. A comprehensive transportation system including road, aviation, railway, and pipeline transportation has been gradually developed and improved. In 2014, every county and township now has highway access; 62 of the region's 70 counties are accessible by asphalted roads. The rail link connecting Lhasa and Shigatse - an extension to the Qinghai-Tibet Railway - is now in service. Tibet has now five airports served by eight airlines; and 45 domestic air routes link Tibet with other parts of China. A network of optical cable, satellite and long-distance telephone lines has been established in the region, and all places above county level now have 3G coverage. Every township has broadband service and every village has telephone services. By the end of 2013, the penetration rates of telephones and Internet stood at 98.1 percent and 37.4 percent, respectively.

Tibet is becoming increasingly open to the outside world. Keeping abreast with other parts of China, Tibet has gradually evolved from being a closed type to being one that is open and market-oriented. Tibet has been fully incorporated into the national market system. While products from all over the nation and across the world flow into Tibet, the region's own characteristic products also move in large quantities to other parts of the country and further afield. In 2013, the total value of Tibet's foreign trade reached 3.319 billion U.S. dollars; and the region hosted 12.91 million tourists, including 220,000 from overseas.

- The development path of new Tibet facilitates the inheritance and spread of the positive aspects of traditional Tibetan culture.

Tibet has succeeded in preserving the spoken and written Tibetan language. The region enacted three provisions in 1987, 1988 and 2002, respectively, to provide a

solid legal base for the study, use and development of the Tibetan language and script. Bilingual education, with Tibetan as the principal language, is widespread in Tibet. Primary schools in all farming and pastoral areas and some urban areas use both Tibetan and Chinese in teaching, but mostly Tibetan for the major courses. Middle schools also use both languages, and Tibetan classes in middle schools in inland areas also have Tibetan language course. In the national college entrance exams, it is permissible to answer questions using Tibetan script. Computer coding of Tibetan characters has reached national and international standards. Editing, laser phototypesetting and electronic publishing in Tibetan are extensively adopted. Tibetan is widely used in political life. Resolutions, laws and regulations adopted at people's congresses at all levels, and official documents and declarations published by people's governments at various levels and their subsidiary departments in Tibet are published in both Tibetan and Chinese. In judicial proceedings, Tibetan is used to try cases involving litigants from the Tibetan group and for the relevant legal documents. While preserving and developing the Tibetan language, the state also popularizes standard Chinese throughout the country, including Tibet, so as to promote economic and cultural exchanges between ethnic groups and regions.

The outstanding traditional Tibetan culture has been preserved and handed down. Tibet has issued the Regulations of the Tibet Autonomous Region on the Protection of Cultural Relics, and issued the Notice of the Tibet Autonomous Region People's Government on Strengthening the Protection of Cultural Relics, in addition to the enactment of various other relevant laws and regulations. Currently, Tibet has 4,277 cultural relic sites, including 55 key cultural heritage sites under state protection, 391 under regional protection, and 978 under city- or county-level protection, as well as three state-level historical and cultural cities (Lhasa, Shigatse and Gyantse). The Potala Palace, the Norbulingka and Jokhang Temple are on the World Heritage List. Tibet Museum is a national A-class museum. The Tibet Archives boasts a collection of more than 3 million documents of historic importance. Tibet has 76 items listed as state-class intangible cultural heritage items, 323 as regional ones, 76 as city-level ones, and 814 as county-level ones, in addition to 68 representative trustees of such cultural items at the national level and 350 at the regional level. There are 117 Tibetan opera troupes. Tibetan opera and the Gesar epic are included in UNESCO's Masterpieces of the Intangible Heritage of Humanity. Modern public cultural services also extend across an ever-widening area; radio and TV coverage has reached 94.38 percent and 95.51 percent, respectively. Every administrative village or Buddhist temple in Tibet now boasts a library appropriate to its needs. In 2011, Tibet set up a special fund to support the development of cultural industries.

Citizens enjoy full freedom of religious belief. In Tibet, Tibetan Buddhism, Bon, Islam, and Catholicism coexist with a number of other religions, and within Tibetan Buddhism there are different sects such as Nyingma, Kagyu, Sakya and Gelug. The freedom of religious belief of various ethnic groups is respected and protected by the Constitution and the laws, with all religions and sects being treated equally. This equates to true religious tolerance. No state organ, public organization or individual may compel citizens to believe in, or disbelieve in, any religion, nor may they discriminate against citizens who believe in, or do not believe in, any religion. Currently, Tibet has 1,787 sites for different religious activities, over 46,000 resident monks and nuns, and 358 Living Buddhas; there are four mosques and over 3,000 Muslims, and one Catholic church and 700 believers. Traditional religious activities such as learning the scriptures and debate, promotion through degrees, initiation as a monk or nun, abhisheka (empowerment ceremony), sutra chanting, and self-cultivation are held on a regular basis, while ceremonial activities are also held at important religious festivals in accordance with conventions. Ordinary believers usually have a scripture hall or a Buddha shrine at home, and such religious activities as circumambulation while reciting scriptures, Buddha worship, and inviting lamas or nuns from monasteries to hold religious rites are normally practiced.

Living Buddha reincarnation is a succession system unique to Tibetan Buddhism and is respected by the state. Through traditional religious rituals and historical conventions like drawing lots from a golden urn, the Tibet Autonomous Region searched for and identified the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama, and conferred and enthroned the 11th Panchen Lama with the approval of the State Council in 1995. The State Administration for Religious Affairs issued the Measures on the Management of the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas of Tibetan Buddhism in 2007 to further institutionalize the reincarnation process of Living Buddhas. Since democratic reform in Tibet, over 60 incarnated Living Buddhas have been confirmed through historical conventions and traditional religious rituals.

- The development path of new Tibet is sustainable.

Serving as the important ecological safety barrier in China, Tibet's role is significant not only in Asia but on a global level. In recent decades, in keeping with economic, social and natural laws, Tibet has avoided development at the expense of the natural environment. Instead it has followed a sustainable path compatible with the harmonious coexistence of economy, society, and ecological environment. Guided by the Scientific Outlook on Development, the central government lays great emphasis on environmental protection, deeming it as an important part of

development. Aiming at the strategic objectives of building the ecological safety barrier as well as ecological and beautiful Tibet, the regional government strives to establish and follow a new sustainable pattern of development on the Tibet plateau.

Over the years, both central and regional governments have devised and implemented a series of plans for ecological conservation in Tibet to make overall planning for eco-environmental protection and economic construction of the region. In the National Plan for Eco-environmental Improvement and the National Program for Eco-environmental Protection, formulated by the government in 1998 and 2000 respectively, a separate plan with specific protection measures was drawn up to make the freeze-thawing zone on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau one of the country's eight major areas for ecological improvement. In 2009, the national government approved the Plan for Ecology Safety Barrier Protection and Improvement in Tibet (2008-2030), aiming to complete the Tibet ecology safety barrier by 2030 with an investment of RMB 15.8 billion. The Tibet Autonomous Region has also worked out and implemented a series of plans for eco-environmental protection and construction, including the Eco-environmental Improvement Plan, Plan for Water and Topsoil Conservation, Comprehensive Improvement Plan for the Environment in Farming and Pastoral Areas, and Ecological Function Zoning. Tibet has also further intensified efforts in eco-environmental protection by way of legislation, such as amending the Regulations of the Tibet Autonomous Region for Environmental Protection, and issuing the Methods of the Tibet Autonomous Region on Oversight and Management of Eco-environmental Protection.

Both the central and regional governments have adopted quite a number of strict measures for environmental protection. Projects have been carried out to protect natural forests, to reforest cultivated land, and to restore grassland by prohibiting grazing, as have grassland ecological environment improving programs like conservation and recovery of natural grassland, settlement of nomads, man-made grassland, and deteriorated pastureland improvement. A national fund was launched to compensate costs of public forest management. Efforts are being made in the areas of desertification control, water and soil conservation, comprehensive control of the drainage basins of small rivers, and prevention of geological disasters. Tibet's regional government is very prudent in developing industry, imposing strict constraints on industries that are heavy consumers of energy, and those which cause severe pollution or issue heavy emissions. It advocates the use of clean energy, and endeavors to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases. The central and regional governments have adopted strict measures to prohibit exploitation of mineral resources. In 2013, the Tibetan government issued and began implementing regulations on supervising eco-environmental protection, regulations on supervising

the exploration and exploitation of mineral resources, and measures on evaluating environmental conservation, further controlling the access to mineral development licenses through stricter environmental standards. The autonomous region has brought exploration and exploitation of mineral resources under its unified management, and vetoes any project that fails to meet the environment standards.

Thanks to concerted efforts made by all parties concerned, great progress has been made in Tibet's ecological improvement. Currently, its nature reserves, which amount to 413,700 sq km, or 33.9 percent of the total land area of the region, lead the whole country. Its forest coverage rate reaches as high as 11.91 percent, and the region tops the whole country in total growing wood stock. Tibet boasts 6 million ha of wetlands, leading all the other areas of China. All the region's 125 species of wild animals and 39 wild plants under state protection are well cared for in the established nature reserves. By the end of 2012, Tibet had 85.11 million ha of natural grassland in total, of which 69.1 million ha was available for grazing. Tibet remains one of the areas with the best environmental quality in the world, with most parts of the region maintaining their original natural state.

III. The Essential Intent of the "Middle Way" Is to Split China

Following more than half-a-century's concerted efforts of the peoples of all its ethnic groups, Tibet has embarked on a path of development conforming to the times and the people's fundamental interests, and made tremendous strides forward. However, in their pursuit of "Tibetan independence," the 14th Dalai Lama and his supporters have always turned a blind eye to Tibet's development and progress, denying the achievements made by the people of Tibet and rejecting the sound path that Tibet has taken.

Over the course of the years, the Dalai group has kept modifying its tactics for "Tibetan independence." In March 1959, it fled to India after they failed in an all-out armed revolt that they launched; subsequently it began to publicly advocate "Tibetan independence" and tried to achieve it by force. In the late 1970s, when relations between China and the US improved, the Dalai group, finding that the international situation was unfavorable to it, started to alter its tactics, shifting its attempts from achieving open independence to achieving disguised independence by cloaking them with what is called the "middle way." After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the drastic changes in Eastern Europe in 1989, it again misread the situation and believed that the time was right, it began to demand "complete

independence" once again. After 1994, having realized that there was no possibility of achieving this goal, it turned again to the "middle way" and began to lobby for what it now termed "a high degree of autonomy." In recent years, it has intensified its efforts to promote this "middle way" and to disguise it.

The "middle way," also known as the "way of meditation on the mean," is a Buddhist term. It is the Dalai group which has politicized it. Its claims can be summarized into five major points.

First, it denies the fact that Tibet has been an integral part of China since ancient times; instead it claims that Tibet was "an independent state" which was "occupied by China in 1951," and that "Tibetans have the right to independence from a historic perspective." Second, it seeks to establish a "Greater Tibet" that has never existed at any time in history, claiming that the "Tibet issue" concerns 6 million Tibetans and that Tibet, Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu, Qinghai and other areas that Tibetans and people of other ethnic minorities inhabit in compact communities should be incorporated into a unified administrative region. Third, it demands "a high degree of autonomy" that is not subject to any constraint whatsoever from the central government, denies the leadership of the central government and Tibet's present social and political systems, and proposes to establish an "autonomous government" under which "Tibetans" (in truth the Dalai party) take full charge of all affairs other than diplomacy and national defense. Fourth, it opposes the central government to garrison troops in Tibet and, despite its superficial agreement that the central government holds the authority over national defense, it demands that the central government "withdraws all Chinese troops" to turn Tibet into an "international zone of peace." And fifth, in total disregard of the fact that the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau has been a multi-ethnic region since ancient times, it denies the access of other ethnic groups to "Greater Tibet" and drives them out of regions where they have lived for generations.

Under the "middle way," the Dalai group feigns acceptance of China's sovereignty in Tibet to seize the reins of power and set up a semi-independent political regime under the control of the "Tibetan independence" forces, and ultimately seek full sovereignty and achieve "Tibetan independence" when its governing power is consolidated.

As a political strategy for achieving independence through a series of steps, the "middle way" does not tally with China's history, national reality, state Constitution,

laws and basic systems. Neither does it conform to Tibet's history, reality and ethnic relations. Moreover, it runs counter to the fundamental interests of all the people of China, including the Tibetans.

- Tibet has been an integral part of China since ancient times, and has never been an independent nation.

Tibet has been an integral part of China since ancient times, and, as one of the centuries-old ethnic groups in China, the Tibetans have made important contributions to the formation and evolution of the Chinese nation - a single family sharing a common destiny. Archaeological and historical research shows that since ancient times the Tibetan people have been closely connected with the Han and other ethnic groups in such aspects as consanguinity, language, culture and others, and that there has never been a break in economic, political and cultural exchanges between Tibet and the rest of China. The Tubo regime established in Tibet in the seventh century was a local government of ancient China, which made an important contribution to developing China's southwest frontier.

It was during the Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368) that China's central government formally incorporated Tibet into the central administration. The Yuan government set up the Supreme Control Commission of Buddhism and Commission for Buddhist and Tibetan Affairs to directly administer local military, political and religious affairs, conduct censuses in Tibet, set up courier stations, collect taxes, station troops and appoint officials; it also issued and enacted the Yuan criminal law and calendar in Tibet to fully exercise effective administration. The Ming government (1368-1644) implemented a policy of multiple enfeoffment, conferring "prince of Dharma," "national master in Tantrism" and other honorific titles upon religious leaders in various parts of Tibet. Succession to such titles required the approval of the emperor, who would send an envoy to confer the official title on each new prince.

During the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), the central government granted honorific titles to the leaders of the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism - the 5th Dalai Lama and the 5th Panchen Lama - officially establishing the titles of the Dalai Lama and Panchen Erdeni and their political and religious status in Tibet. From then on, it became an established convention that the central government conferred the titles of Dalai Lama and Panchen Erdeni.

From 1727, the Qing government started to station grand ministers resident in Tibet to supervise and manage local administration on behalf of the central authorities; in

total it appointed more than 100 such grand ministers resident in Tibet. In 1751, the Qing government abolished the system under which the secular princes held power, and formally appointed the 7th Dalai Lama to administer the local government of Tibet, thus establishing theocracy there, and it set up the Kashag (cabinet) composed of four Kalons (ministers) that took orders from the grand ministers resident in Tibet and the Dalai Lama. In 1774, when the British East India Company sent a representative to Tashilhunpo in an attempt to build a direct relationship with Tibet, the 6th Panchen replied that Tibet was part of China's territory and all its affairs were handled in accordance with imperial edicts from the Chinese emperor. In 1793, the Qing government promulgated the Imperially Approved Ordinance for Better Governance of Tibet (29-Article), improving several systems by which the central government administered Tibet. The Ordinance clearly stipulated that the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama and other Living Buddhas had to follow the procedure of "drawing lots from the golden urn," and the selected candidate would be subject to approval by the central authorities of China. Observing the Ordinance, the 10th, 11th and 12th Dalai Lamas and the 8th, 9th and 11th Panchen Lamas were selected in this way, but 13th and 14th Dalai Lamas and the 10th Panchen Lama did not go through the procedure of "drawing lots from the golden urn" with approval from the central authorities.

The Republic of China (1912-1949) continued the central government's sovereignty over Tibet and maintained its sovereignty and jurisdiction there. The last Qing emperor Puyi declared in 1912 in the Edict on Qing Emperor's Abdication, "I will return sovereignty to the whole nation and establish it as a constitutional republic," and "Manchu, Han, Mongol, Hui and Tibetan ethnic groups will enjoy territorial integrity in this great Republic." The Provisional Constitution of the Republic of China in 1912 and the General Outline of the Constitution for the Political Tutelage Period of the Republic of China in 1931 both stipulated that Tibet was a part of the territory of the Republic of China. In 1929, the Provisional Government of the Republic of China in Nanjing established a Commission for Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs to exercise administrative jurisdiction over Tibet. In 1940, the Commission for Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs opened an office in Lhasa as a permanent establishment of the central government in Tibet. The identification and enthronement of the 14th Dalai Lama and the 10th Panchen Lama were both done with approval from the government of the Republic of China. In the years of the Republic of China, the central government did its utmost to safeguard the nation's

sovereignty over Tibet though hamstrung by constant civil conflicts among warlords and the intrinsic weakness of the nation.

After the People's Republic of China was founded, it became its historic duty to bring an end to national separation and realize national unification under new historical conditions. The peaceful liberation of Tibet and the stationing of the People's Liberation Army in Tibet were two right steps taken by the central government of China in exercising national sovereignty and safeguarding national unification and territorial integrity after a wholesale regime change. The 17-Article Agreement signed in 1951 between the central government and the local government of Tibet was a domestic agreement reached on the basis of respecting and accepting the historical fact that Tibet is part of China. After its peaceful liberation, Tibet had gradually embarked on the socialist path, and the people of Tibet have worked with people of other ethnic groups around the country towards China's progress and development.

History demonstrates clearly that Tibet has been part of China since ancient times, and it has never been an independent nation. In today's world, all countries acknowledge this as a fact; no country has ever acknowledged "Tibetan independence." There is no question about Tibet's political status. After 1959, when he opposed the reform measure abolishing serfdom and defected abroad, the 14th Dalai Lama has no authority whatsoever to represent the people of Tibet, nor has he the right to decide the future and destiny of Tibet. The self-styled "government-in-exile" is an illegitimate political organization engaged in secessionist activities, and no country around the world acknowledges it.

- "Greater Tibet" is sheer fantasy, and does not conform to China's history and national conditions. Talking about the "middle-way" approach by the 14th Dalai Lama and his followers is invariably accompanied by references to "Greater Tibet." In their hypothesis, this "Greater Tibet" extends to southern Xinjiang and the Hexi Corridor in the north, central Gansu and central Sichuan in the east, and to central Yunnan in the south, covering all of the Tibet Autonomous Region and Qinghai Province, half of Sichuan Province, half of Gansu Province, a quarter of Yunnan Province, and the southern part of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. In total, this represents an area larger than one quarter of China's total territory.

In China's entire history, there has never been any geographical entity that supports this concept of a "Greater Tibet." The administrative repartition of contemporary

China came into being over a long historical course. During the Tang Dynasty (618-907), the Tubo Kingdom was a multi-ethnic regime established by the Tubo people together with other ethnic groups and tribes inhabiting the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and surrounding areas. After the Tubo Kingdom collapsed, the Tubo people shared the plateau together with other ethnic groups without any unified regime. During the Yuan Dynasty, the central government set up the U-Tsang High Pacification Commissioner's Office in Tibet to exercise jurisdiction over Tibet, and Do-kham and Domed High Pacification Commissioner's Offices in other Tibetan-inhabited areas. The three High Pacification Commissioner's Offices were under the Commission for Buddhist and Tibetan Affairs (previously the Supreme Control Commission for Buddhist and Tibetan Affairs) of the central government. The central government of the Ming Dynasty set up the u-Tsang Military Command and the Ngari Civilian and Military Command in Tibet, which were later upgraded to the u-Tsang Regional Military Commission. It also set up the Do-kham Military Command in the Do-kham area, which was later upgraded to the Do-kham Regional Military Commission. In 1726, in view of the upheaval in Tibet, the Qing imperial government adjusted the administrative divisions of Tibet and neighboring Sichuan, Yunnan and Qinghai, bringing into being the basic structure of administrative divisions under which the Qing central authorities governed Tibet and other Tibetan-inhabited areas. This structure has remained to this day. Never at any point prior to the peaceful liberation of Tibet in 1951 did the scope of administrative jurisdiction of the local government of Tibet extend beyond the present Tibet Autonomous Region.

"Greater Tibet" was a product of Western colonialist invasions of China and a product of their efforts to split China. The concept is not the brainchild of the Dalai group; it was proposed by British colonialists at the Simla Conference which took place from 1913 to 1914, and it was then written into the illegitimate Simla Accord. The Accord divided Tibetan-inhabited areas in China into "Outer Tibet" and "Inner Tibet"; the former covered the present Tibet Autonomous Region and would have "autonomy," while the latter included Tibetan-inhabited areas in Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu and Qinghai, to which the Chinese government could dispatch officials and troops. The proposal was rejected outright by the whole of China, and the delegates of the Chinese government refused to sign and recognize the Simla Accord. As a result the Simla Conference broke down, and the Simla Accord never had any status as a legal document.

However, British colonialists continued to foster and support secessionist forces from the upper levels of Tibetan society, who persisted with their plans to achieve "autonomy" with British support. In his later years the 13th Dalai Lama, who had been exploited by British colonialists, finally woke up to what was happening. In 1930, he told Liu Manqing, a representative of the central government, in Lhasa:

"Since it is all Chinese territory, why draw lines between yourselves and ourselves? If we allow ourselves to become ensnared in conflict... it is like brothers fighting each other; it makes no sense."

"Greater Tibet" ignores the history and culture created by all the ethnic groups who have lived together on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. After many years of contact and exchange, some of China's ethnic groups have spread over vast areas, while others live in individual concentrated communities in small areas. In China, it is quite common that people of one single ethnic group live in different administrative regions, while in a single administrative region there can be many different ethnic groups. On the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, particularly in its neighboring regions, there have lived more than a dozen ethnic groups since ancient times. These include Han, Tibetan, Hui, Monba, Lhoba, Qiang, Mongol, Tu, Dongxiang, Bao'an, Yugur, Salar, Lisu, Naxi, Pumi, and Nu, all of whom are masters of this land. The present Tibet and the four provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu and Qinghai are all multi-ethnic regions, which is the result of a long-term history of exchange, communication and blending among various ethnic groups of China. For reasons of geography, history and customs, different Tibetan tribes are under the jurisdiction of the four different provinces, and have lived together with other ethnic groups in these places over a very long time. In the course of this long history, the Tibetan people, spread across different administrative regions, have both maintained some common features and displayed certain differences in language, customs and other aspects. At the same time, they have engaged in frequent political, economic and cultural exchanges with people of other local ethnic groups, and maintained close ties with them, particularly in the economic field, thus sharing the same or similar regional and cultural characteristics with other local peoples.

"Greater Tibet" disrespects China's national conditions. The system of regional ethnic autonomy is one of the basic elements of China's political system. Regional ethnic autonomy means that the minority ethnic groups, under unified state leadership, practice regional autonomy in areas where they live in compact communities and establish their own organs of self-government to exercise their right of autonomy. Ethnic autonomous areas are classified into the three levels of autonomous regions, autonomous prefectures and autonomous counties. All ethnic autonomous areas are integral parts of the People's Republic of China. After New China was founded in 1949, in addition to Tibet Autonomous Region, eight Tibetan autonomous prefectures, one Tibetan and Qiang autonomous prefecture, one Mongol and

Tibetan autonomous prefecture and two Tibetan autonomous counties were set up in Sichuan, Yunnan, Gansu and Qinghai, while in some Tibetan autonomous prefectures there are autonomous counties of other ethnic minorities.

Such administrative division takes into account the distribution of different ethnic groups with a view to their future development. It gives expression to the combination of both the ethnical and regional, both political and economic factors that are the outcome of history and contemporary reality, and is conducive to the common prosperity and development of the various ethnic groups in the great family of the Chinese nation. Practice has proven that this system is successful. As the Law of the People's Republic of China on Regional Ethnic Autonomy stipulates in Article 14: "Once established, no ethnic autonomous area may, without legal procedures, be abolished or merged. Once defined, no boundaries of an ethnic autonomous area may, without legal procedures, be altered. Where abolition or merger or alteration is necessary, it will be proposed by the relevant department of the State organ at the next higher level with the organ of self-government of the ethnic autonomous area concerned after full consultation before it is submitted for approval according to legal procedures."

In summary, the concept of "Greater Tibet" the Dalai group seeks to establish runs counter to both history and contemporary reality, and is totally divorced from China's national conditions. "Greater Tibet" disregards the fact that the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau has long been populated by multiple ethnic groups, warps the true history of multi-ethnic development of the plateau into a false single-ethnic history, creates conflict and artificial differences among various ethnic groups of China, and seeks to establish a purely Tibetan "Greater Tibet" exclusive of all the other ethnic groups. It is thus an archetypal expression of racism and ultra-nationalism.

- "A high degree of autonomy" attempts to set up "a state within a state," which contravenes the Constitution and state systems.

"A high degree of autonomy," also described as "true autonomy" or "genuine autonomy," is another core element of the "middle way" advocated by the Dalai Lama and his followers. It purports to pursue the "power of autonomy" in language, culture, religious affairs, education, environmental protection and some other fields, subject to the sovereignty of the People's Republic of China. But, the Dalai party's demands for "a high degree of autonomy" also include claims that undermine national unity, sovereignty and the state systems of China; the essence of "a high

degree of autonomy" is to set up "a state within state" free of any control from the central government. The first issue is the relationship between the "autonomous government" and the central government of China. Through "a high degree of autonomy," the Dalai group proposes to establish an "autonomous government" through "democratic elections." "All affairs except diplomacy and national defense should be under the full responsibility of the Tibetan people"; and "Tibetan people should have the power to set up a local government, governmental organizations and institutions that meet their demands and are in line with their characteristics. The people's congresses in autonomous areas have the authority to make laws and regulations for all issues, and the enforcement power and discretionary power in all departments of the autonomous government..."

This actually places the "autonomous government" in a position of independence and removes it from any level of authority exercised by the central government; it establishes an alternative set of political systems by overturning the ones currently effective in Tibet Autonomous Region.

The second issue concerns military affairs in Tibet. The Dalai party takes the position that "Only when troops of the Communist Party of China withdraw completely from the region, can we start real reconciliation." It also demands that "regional peace conferences shall be held to ensure Tibet remains a demilitarized zone," proposing to turn Tibet into an "international zone of peace" and a "buffer between China and India," attempting to move China's internal affairs into the international arena.

Tibet is a component of the People's Republic of China, and the central government stationing troops in Tibet serves as a symbol of state sovereignty and is out of the needs of national security. The Dalai group's opposition to the central government stationing troops in Tibet is clear evidence of its intention to seek complete independence.

The third issue concerns the rights of other ethnic groups. The Dalai group demands that the central government must "prevent further migration into Tibet and return the Han people who have migrated into Tibet back to China." Samdhong Rinpoche, an influential figure in the Dalai group, declared in a speech in 2005, "The whole area inhabited by Tibetan people should be under the regional ethnic autonomous control of Tibetans themselves; Han and other groups are like guests and should not restrict our rights in any form."

As has already been demonstrated, the so-called "Greater Tibet" region, and particularly the neighboring areas of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, has for centuries been a corridor of frequent migration of China's different ethnic groups, who have lived together and depended on each other in this region. The Dalai group's logic is absurd and chilling, proposing to force tens of millions of people of other ethnic groups out of this region where they have lived for generations. The net result of "a high degree of autonomy" would be tantamount to an ethnic cleansing of the plateau.

The fourth issue concerns the "one country, two systems" policy. The Dalai group bases its demand for "a high degree of autonomy" on the "one country, two systems" policy; it believes that Tibet is "special" and should have even greater rights of autonomy than Hong Kong and Macau.

"One country, two systems" is a basic state policy adopted by the central government of China to resolve the issues of Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau, and to realize the peaceful reunification of our country. But the Tibet issue has nothing in common with the situation in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau. The Taiwan issue was a carry-over from the KMT-CPC civil war. The issues of Hong Kong and Macau were the direct result of imperialist aggression against China, and they concerned the resumption of sovereignty. Tibet has been an integral part of China's territory since ancient times, over which the central government has always exercised effective sovereign jurisdiction. So the issue of resuming exercise of sovereignty does not arise.

This demonstrates that "a high degree of autonomy" is a mask that conceals the true aim of realizing complete independence; and its purpose is to deny China's sovereignty over Tibet and establish a "Greater Tibet" beyond the jurisdiction of the central government. There is no prospect of it ever coming to pass, for the following reasons:

First, it violates the principles of the Constitution of China concerning ethnic relationships. The Constitution states clearly in the Preamble: "The People's Republic of China is a unitary multi-ethnic state built up jointly by the people of all its ethnic groups. Socialist relations of equality, unity and mutual assistance have been established among them and will continue to be strengthened. In the struggle to safeguard the unity of the ethnic groups, it is necessary to combat big-nation chauvinism, mainly Han chauvinism, and also necessary to combat local-national

chauvinism." Article 4 says: "All ethnic groups in the People's Republic of China are equal... Discrimination against and oppression of any ethnic group are prohibited; any acts that undermine the unity of the ethnic groups or instigate their secession are prohibited." The Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy stipulates in Article 48: "The organ of self-government of an ethnic autonomous area shall guarantee equal rights for the various ethnic groups in the area." The Dalai group's demands for "a high degree of autonomy" are an expression of ultra-nationalism that negates the equal rights of ethnic groups in Tibet.

Second, "a high degree of autonomy" runs counter to the present state structure of China. When founded, the People's Republic of China inherited a unitary state structure, with a unitary Constitution and legal system. In China, the state is constituted by local administrative regions rather than local governments. As the Constitution stipulates in Article 57: "The National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China is the highest organ of state power." It also stipulates in Article 58: "The National People's Congress and its Standing Committee exercise the legislative power of the state."

Local governments at various levels are all subordinate to the central government and thus shall be subject to its administration - de jure, there is no power subject equal in status to the central government. "A high degree of autonomy" denies the supreme power of the NPC and defies the authority of the central government. Instead, it demands the legislative power of the state, and interprets the administrative relationship between local government and the central government as a "cooperative" or peer-to-peer relationship between political entities. In China, there is no such a thing as the central government and a local government "negotiate" on an equal footing, seek "consent" from each other, and then find a "solution through cooperation."

Third, "a high degree of autonomy" runs counter to China's fundamental political system of socialism with Chinese characteristics. As aforementioned, the system of regional ethnic autonomy is a basic political system of China. In an autonomous area, people of various ethnic groups enjoy equal rights, and such rights are protected by the Constitution and other laws. All ethnic autonomous areas are integral parts of the People's Republic of China. The people's governments of ethnic autonomous areas are local organs of the state power at the relevant levels, as well as organs of self-government in these areas. The Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy stipulates in

Article 15: "The people's governments of all ethnic autonomous areas will be administrative organs of the State under the unified leadership of the State Council and will be subordinate to it." Tibet, as an autonomous region of China, is naturally under the leadership of the central government. The Dalai group's claims for "a high degree of autonomy" represent an out-and-out denial of China's system of regional ethnic autonomy.

In Buddhism, the "meditation on the mean" advocates rejection of two biases - "real existence" and "having evil views of the doctrine of voidness" (*dur-grhita suyata*), and advocates the avoidance of extremes. But the actual political claims of the members of the Dalai group are all about independence. Ringleaders of the group, including the 14th Dalai Lama's two brothers - Gyalo Thondup and Tenzin Chogyal, and Samdhong Rinpoche, an influential member of the leading group, once stated that they first seek autonomy, and then drive out the Chinese! Autonomy will be the start...; the first step is to realize the semi-independence of Tibet in the name of autonomy, and the

is to transit to its independence. The new head of the Tibetan "government-in-exile" once told Dialogue India, "Tibetan independence does not conflict with Tibetan autonomy. Dialectically, the former is the principle goal while the latter is a realistic target." To pursue the "middle way" and realize independence by stages, the Dalai party try their best to appeal to contemporary international trends, presenting their claims for independence as a call to fairness, justice, democracy and freedom under the banner of such expressions as "the third way," "national self-determination," "ethnic autonomy," "non-violence" and "win-win." However, they have no prospect of success as their goals are completely divorced from China's national conditions and Tibet's reality, and violate China's Constitution, its laws, and its basic systems.

IV. A Veneer of Peace and Non-violence

Over the years, the Dalai group has propagated its "middle way" with the use of such terms "peace" and "non-violence" to hide its true nature, feigning beneficence to gain international sympathy and support. Looking beyond the warm words, however, it is not difficult to find evidence that they have been willing to resort to both violence and non-violence, and to carry out violence under the guise of non-violence. For the Dalai party, "peace" and "non-violence" are no more than fig leaves, and in truth they have never abandoned the use of violence to promote their ultimate goal of "Tibetan independence."

- The Dalai party has never abandoned the use of violence to achieve their ultimate goal of full independence.

In 1959, the Dalai party launched a large-scale armed revolt against officials the central government stationed in Tibet, and massacred local Tibetans who supported democratic reform. The 14th Dalai Lama was not only well-informed of the action but gave it his active support. He wrote in his book *My Spiritual Autobiography*: "Every one of them is armed to teeth, and even my personal cook is carrying a bazooka, with his waist belt full of ammunition. He has been well trained by the CIA..."

After the 14th Dalai Lama fled to India, he reorganized an army and waited to "fight his way back to Tibet." In 1960 in Mustang, a county in north Nepal, he rebuilt the "Chushi Gangdruk," an anti-Chinese guerilla force. In 1962, with support from external powers, he built a Special Frontier Force composed of mainly Tibetan exiles. From 1961 to 1965, these forces sneaked across the border 204 times to harass Chinese border troops and civilians.

The Dalai group has got armed support from the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). According to the US archives disclosed, the Dalai Lama first established contacts with the US government in 1951 after the peaceful liberation of Tibet. During the armed rebellion in Tibet, the CIA not only sent agents to help the 14th Dalai to flee, but also purposefully trained militants to support his forces and airdropped a large quantity of weaponry. An article titled "Heiliger Schein" published on June 8, 2012 in the *Suddeutsche Zeitung* commented that, as the leading exponent of pure pacifism, Dalai's knowledge of the CIA's infiltration in Tibet was probably much more than he had admitted so far; and this tainted the spiritual leader. The article also pointed out that the 14th Dalai Lama's relationship with CIA was "incompatible with his status as the supreme moral authority."

With the evolving international situation since the late 1970s, the Dalai group's use of violence was steadily losing public support. It turned to a new dual strategy: constantly provoking incidents of violence to keep up the pressure on the central government, while publicly proclaiming non-violence to deceive his international audience. In the 1980s, a succession of violent incidents took place, planned or instigated by the Dalai party. On September 21, 1987, the 14th Dalai Lama made a speech to the US congress, calling for independence. On September 27, in the square of Jokhang Temple, a group of lamas shouted separatist slogans, attacked police, and injured many civilians. On October 1, a small gang of rioters raided the police station

on Barkhor Street in Lhasa and burned seven cars, leaving dozens of policemen injured. The rioters proclaimed that the Dalai Lama was fighting for Tibetan independence. They demanded the support of bystanders and the general public, and threatened personal retaliation on those who failed to join them. On March 5, 1988, during the Monlam Prayer Festival, a gang of rioters stormed into local Party and government offices and police stations around the Jokhang Temple and Barkhor Street, smashing and burning cars and shops, leading to 299 police and civilian casualties. From March 5 to 7 of 1989, Lhasa witnessed another riot in which one policeman was shot dead and 40 others were injured, and 107 shops and 24 government offices, primary schools and neighborhood committees destroyed. On March 11, 1992, nine Tibetan separatists attacked the Chinese embassy in India with fire bombs.

A much more serious riot took place on March 14, 2008. That day, a mob congregated in the downtown area of Lhasa, assaulting innocent passers-by with weapons including rocks, daggers and clubs, smashing and looting vehicles, shops, banks, the Telecom business offices, and government properties, severely disrupting social order, and causing heavy losses of life and property. During the incident, there were over 300 cases of arson, while 908 shops, seven schools, 120 houses, and five hospitals were damaged. Ten bank branches were looted, at least 20 buildings were burnt to the ground, and 84 vehicles were torched. Most seriously, a total of 18 people were burnt or hacked to death, and 382 people were injured - 58 of them seriously. There is ample evidence that the March 14 riot was organized, masterminded and instigated by the Dalai group. After the incident, the 14th Dalai Lama himself released a statement through his personal secretariat, describing the riots as "peaceful protests." On March 16, he said in an interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) that he would not ask the rioters to stop because their demands came from the Tibetan people, and he had to respect their will. In the meantime, the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC), very much under the influence of the Dalai, passed a resolution to "immediately organize guerrillas to infiltrate China for armed struggle." The head of the TYC claimed that they were ready to sacrifice another 100 Tibetans to win complete victory. (- The separatists' attempts to disrupt the Olympic Games expose their hypocrisy.

The Olympic Games are a symbol of peace, friendship and progress, which is welcomed and cherished by all peoples. The Tibetan separatists' disruption of the Beijing Olympic Games exposed their hollow image of "non-violence."

In May 2007, the Tibetan independence forces and the international anti-China forces held the Fifth International Campaign for Tibet in Brussels. It was attended by Samten, leader of the Tibetan government-in-exile. At this meeting, a strategic plan was agreed to launch a campaign to boycott the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. Later, the Tibet independence organizations in the US put forward proposals for a "Tibetan people's uprising." Believing the 2008 Olympic Games represented the last opportunity to achieve the Tibetan independence, they decided to take advantage of this "opportunity" while China was the focus of international attention before the Olympic Games. Their goal was to "instigate and coordinate activities within Tibet to create crisis for China."

Towards the end of 2007, radical groups, such as the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) and the Tibetan Women's Association (TWA), held meetings in India, announcing plans to launch a People's Uprising in Tibet. On January 4 and January 25, 2008, seven Tibetan independence organizations held a press conference in New Delhi, India, releasing proposals for this uprising, spreading the news on more than 100 websites, and threatening to instigate constant large-scale uprisings from March 10, 2008. On March 10, the 14th Dalai made a speech, urging his followers within Chinese territory to engage in violence. On the same day, the TYC made a statement, claiming that it would "now seize a most important opportunity never before seen in our struggle for independence - the upcoming Olympic Games," and that it would "spare neither blood nor life for Tibetan independence."

Masterminded and instigated by the Dalai group, the Tibetan independence forces engaged in a series of sabotage activities against the Beijing Olympic Games. They interfered with important ceremonies, including disrupting the torch-lighting ceremony in Greece and attempting to grab the Olympic torch during the torch relay in various countries, provoking a strong reaction from the international community.

- The 14th Dalai Lama encourages deluded lamas and lay followers to engage in self-immolation.

In August 2011, the new leader of the so-called Tibetan government-in-exile announced a new commitment to non-violence. Subsequently, the Dalai group leadership began to incite Tibetan lamas and lay followers inside China to engage in acts of self-immolation, leading to a series of such incidents in a number of regions.

On May 29, 2012, at a TYC candlelight rally to commemorate Tibetans who had conducted self-immolation, its head claimed, "Tibetan independence will neither fall from the sky nor grow from the earth; rather it relies on our efforts and action and needs sacrifice." From September 25 to 28, 2012, the Dalai group convened the Second Special Meeting of Tibetans in Exile, describing self-immolation as the highest form of non-violence, hailing its unfortunate victims as "national heroes," building memorials and raising special funds for them. For a period that ensued, the Dalai group vigorously preached that "self-immolation does not go against Buddhist doctrine" and that "self-immolation is martyrdom and Bodhisattva deeds," duping Buddhist believers in Tibet - and particularly innocent young people - and setting them on a path of ruin. The inevitable result was a sudden increase in self-immolations.

Investigations by China's public security organs into incidents of self-immolation revealed clearly that they are being manipulated and instigated at the highest level by the Dalai group. Kirti Gumpa in the Aba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture is where the greatest number of self-immolation incidents have taken place; it has been proved that these incidents have close links with the Dalai group.

The Dalai group has four ways to instigate self-immolation: first, planning incidents from abroad through a so-called "press liaison group" based in Kirti Gumpa in Sichuan and the Kirti Monastery in India; second, sending TYC members into Tibet to incite self-immolation; third, mobilizing people returning from overseas to abet self-immolation; and fourth, using the Internet and "Tibetan independence" media to hype up self-immolation.

The Dalai group has also released a Self-immolation Guide on the Internet - an instruction manual to incite Tibetans residing within China to burn themselves. The author of this Guide is Lhamo Je, who served for two terms as a "member" of the "parliament in exile." The Self-immolation Guide consists of four parts: the first part advocates the idea that self-immolators are "great, honorable and intrepid heroes" and that "both these male and female heroes" should always be prepared to sacrifice themselves for the "just cause." The second part gives detailed instructions on "preparations for self-immolation," including "picking important days and places," "leaving written or recorded last words," and "asking trustworthy friends to help record videos or take photos." The third part introduces the "self-immolation slogans," instructing victims to always shout the same slogans. And the fourth part illustrates other activities in company with self-immolation. The Self-immolation

Guide is a death guide filled with a sense of terror. In Tibetan Buddhism, writing and spreading such instructions is contrary to Buddhist teachings and supposed to be a sin.

Inflicting self-immolation in public is itself an act of violence, intended to create an atmosphere of terror and horror. On this issue of principle, the 14th Dalai Lama played an infamous role. On November 8, 2011, when the incidents of self-immolation had just begun, he said in an interview that the point was the self-immolation demanded courage, and a great deal of courage indeed. He thereby both showed his appreciation for and approval of self-immolators. On January 3, 2012, he defended self-immolation on the basis that it was superficially an act of violence, but what differentiated violence and non-violence was the motives and aims behind each act, and only an act driven by hatred and anger was violence. It was clear that he regarded self-immolation an action of non-violence. On October 8, 2012, he said in an interview that he was sure that self-immolators were sacrificing themselves with a sincere motivation and for the benefit of Buddhism and well-being of Tibetans, and that, from the Buddhist point of view, it was a positive act. Through these words, he has repeatedly and explicitly offered his approval of and compliments for self-immolation. He has also hosted dharma assembly acting in his capacity as a religious leader to expiate the sins of the dead, chant scriptures and pray for them, an action which turns out to be very incendiary to innocent believers in Buddhism.

Respecting life and opposing violence are basic tenets of Buddhism. Buddhism opposes killing and suicide, and advocates leniency, and valuing, loving and saving all beings. Suicide is a taboo set by Buddha. In Buddhist classics, suicide and instigate others to take their own lives are both major evils. The Buddhist precepts such as Dharmagupta-vinaya, Mahishasaka Vinaya, and Shikchapada Vinaya all stipulate that, if bhiksu kills, asks others to kill himself, or teaches others to kill themselves, he thus breaches the precepts, disqualifies himself as a bhiksu, and should be expelled from Sangha. In Buddhism, it is believed that inducing, inciting, or praising suicide, and assisting with or facilitating suicide are a great asukla-karman (sin). The Dalai group's attitude and response to Tibetans' self-immolations are encouraging them to commit suicide, a criminal act. It not only runs counter to basic human conscience and morality, but also tramples on Buddhist doctrine and contravenes the Buddhist outlook on life.

In order to safeguard people's rights and defend the dignity of the law, the Chinese government has taken a series of measures to stop self-immolation, save innocent

lives, and bring the criminals involved in these incidents to justice in accordance with the law.

- The Dalai group incites inter-ethnic animosity and trains its supporters to promote independence through violence.

Over the years, the Dalai party has, to realize "Tibetan independence," constantly stoked the flames of division between Tibetan and other ethnic groups, sowing discord and inciting inter-ethnic animosity. Since the failure of his attempted rebellion in 1959, the 14th Dalai has made frequent statements in his speeches such as:

"the Red Han people were snakes in your chest and abominable..."

"the Han people are like psychopaths..."

"they tortured us Tibetans ruthlessly and treat us like beasts..."

"after their arrival, Tibetans had more pain to suffer, so the cause of our pain is them..."

"the Han people are cruel and malicious, aiming to wipe Tibetans out..."

"the CPC has slaughtered over one million Tibetans..."

In recent years, the Dalai group has intensified sentiments of hatred among the young by exploiting self-immolation, exhibiting grotesque photos in schools, forcing students to pay tribute to self-immolators, attacking the central government's policies in Tibet, and building up inter-ethnic animosity and division.

The Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC), founded in 1970, is a radical organization for "Tibetan independence" giving its allegiance to the 14th Dalai; it is to train successors to the "cause of Tibetan independence." Its charter stipulates that it will "follow the correct leadership and guidance of Dalai Lama," "devote to Tibet's just cause for freedom and independence," "even at the cost of life." Ever since the time it was founded, the TYC has constantly promoted violence and acts of terrorism. TYC leaders have made the various following claims:

"Armed struggle and the use of violence are the only road to the complete independence of Tibet..."

"Acts of terror can maximize the effect at minimal cost..."

"Acts of terror can exert wide influence and attract the attention of the international community to the Tibet issue..."

On July 3, 2003, the then TYC leader Kelzang Phuntsok said in an interview, "We will try all means, violent or non-violent, to achieve our goal." For years, the TYC not only schemed and incited ill-informed people to engage in violence, but also actively trained armed and reserve forces. They set up military training bases in Dharamsala, India, and established the "Tibetan Freedom Fighters Association" to carry out armed sabotage and sent people to contact international terrorist organizations to seek mutual support. TYC has had a hand in many incidents of violence and terror in Tibet and other places in China.

For the political purpose of training successors for the cause of "Tibetan independence," the Dalai group masterminded the "Tibetan infants" incidents, a real human tragedy by taking infants away from their parents. According to the report of Swiss newspaper Neue Zuercher Zeitung, in 1960s, about 200 Tibetan infants were taken from their parents and sent to Switzerland for adoption through a Swiss businessman in collusion with the 14th Dalai Lama, claiming these children were orphans. His doing violated common ethics and morality, trampled on children's rights, and is despised by every person with a sense of justice.

The Dalai group has also employed political and religious persecution against dissidents to maintain its authority. Rivals have been eliminated by assassination and poisoning. In the late 1990s, Kundeling, the living Buddha, was stabbed and severely wounded at his home, while Trisong and Sumpa, two young living Buddhas, faced death threats. It has been confirmed that the Dalai group had a hand in these events.

V. The Central Government's Policy Towards the 14th Dalai Lama

More than 60 years ago, for the sake of the unification of the country and national unity, the central government made positive efforts to seek the cooperation of the 14th Dalai Lama and achieve the peaceful liberation of Tibet. Since the 14th Dalai

Lama fled abroad in 1959, the central government has all along exercised great restraint and done its best for best solutions. However, he has repeatedly made choices that run counter to the wishes of the central government and the people of Tibet.

- The historical legitimacy of Dalai Lama came from the central government. The 14th Dalai Lama did make some contribution to the peaceful liberation of Tibet, but he subsequently deviated from his correct choice.

Dalai Lama is a leading incarnation in the hierarchy of the Gelug Sect of Tibetan Buddhism. Its historical status and influence have been closely associated with conferment by the central government. In 1653, the 5th Dalai Lama was summoned to an audience with Qing Emperor Shunzhi, who conferred on him the title of Dalai Lama and issued a gold imperial edict and gold seal to him, officially establishing the title and its political and religious status in Tibet. In 1793, the Qing government enacted the 29-article Authorized Regulations for the Better Government of Tibet. These regulations established the system of drawing lots from a golden urn in relation to the authenticity of the reincarnation of Dalai Lama. On February 5, 1940, the central government of the Republic of China (1912-1949) issued edict No. 898 to approve the status of the five-year-old boy Lhamo Thondup, born in Qijiachuan, Huangzhong County, Qinghai, as the incarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama and his enthronement as the 14th Dalai Lama, and give consent to the local government's request to waive the lot-drawing convention. The central government granted 400,000 yuan to cover his enthronement costs. On February 22, following established historical traditions, the central government representative Wu Zhongxin and the Tibetan Regent Reting Hutuktu presided over the enthronement ceremony of the 14th Dalai Lama. Lhamo Thondup's enthronement as the 14th Dalai Lama owed its legality to the central government's regulations on the Dalai Lama system, and approval by the government of the Republic of China.

After the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, the central government invested extensive efforts to achieve the peaceful liberation of Tibet. In November 1950, the pro-imperialist separatist Regent Taktra Ngawang Sungrab was forced to resign. The 14th Dalai Lama assumed power and won congratulations from the leadership of New China. Inspired by the central government's policy of equality of all ethnic groups and the peaceful liberation of Tibet, the 14th Dalai Lama and the local government of Tibet sent a delegation led by Ngapoi Ngawang Jigme to Beijing for talks with the central government. After Tibet was peacefully liberated, the 14th

Dalai Lama waited at Dromo in Tibet, near the Indian frontier, to see how events would proceed. A representative of the Central People's Government arrived with a letter written by Mao Zedong, leader of New China, which tried to persuade the Dalai Lama to return to Lhasa. Chairman Mao pointed out in his letter, "The Agreement is in the interests of the Tibetan ethnic group and its people as well as that of people of all other ethnic groups of China. Henceforth, the local government and people of Tibet, as part of the greater family of the motherland under the unified leadership of the Central People's Government, will forever break free from the shackles of imperialism and foreign oppression, and stand up to strive for the cause of the people in Tibet. I hope that the local government of Tibet, with you in charge, will seriously implement the Agreement on Measures for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet and do its best to help the People's Liberation Army enter Tibet peacefully." On July 21, the 14th Dalai Lama left Dromo for Lhasa. On October 24, on behalf of the local government of Tibet, he made a public statement accepting in full the 17-Article Agreement.

- After the peaceful liberation of Tibet, the central government recognized the established status of the 14th Dalai Lama, treating him with great respect and encouraging him to contribute to the building of New China. However, he betrayed these efforts; his co-operation proved to be a pretence.

The 17-Article Agreement stipulates, "The central authorities will not alter the established status, functions and powers of the Dalai Lama." After the peaceful liberation of Tibet, the central government recognized the political status of the 14th Dalai Lama and treated him with great respect. In 1953, he became the honorary president of the Buddhist Association of China. In 1954, he participated in the discussion on state affairs at the First Session of the First National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China and upheld the draft of the country's first Constitution. At the meeting, the 14th Dalai Lama spoke highly of the success achieved over the previous three years and more since the conclusion of the 17-Article Agreement and expressed strong support for the principles and rules of regional ethnic autonomy. He also said, "The enemy has been spreading the rumor that the Communist Party and the People's Government destroyed religions. This strategy has collapsed and the people of Tibet now enjoy religious freedom."

At the session, the 14th Dalai Lama was elected by the meeting a vice chairman of the Standing Committee of the First National People's Congress, the highest central government position ever held by a local leader of Tibet. During his stay in Beijing, central government leaders held frank and genial talks with him on many occasions. The 14th Dalai Lama wrote the Ode to Chairman Mao to extol the great

accomplishments of Mao Zedong. In 1956, the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region was founded and chaired by the 14th Dalai Lama. In his speech at the inaugurating ceremony, he reaffirmed that the 17-Article Agreement "had enabled the Tibetan people to enjoy in full all rights of ethnic equality and to embark on a bright road of freedom and happiness," and hailed the founding of the Preparatory Committee as "timely and necessary." For a time, he showed a positive attitude towards the implementation of the 17-Article Agreement, the PLA's entry into Tibet, the 10th Panchen Erdeni's return to Tibet, and the founding of the Preparatory Committee.

However, through the machinations of separatists and imperialist forces, the 14th Dalai Lama turned away from the basic discipline and ethics of Buddhism and betrayed the hopes the central government had placed in him, secretly engaging in separatist activities while feigning loyalty to the central government in public. In 1959, he and his supporters tore up the 17-Article Agreement, rejected the democratic reform of abolishing serfdom, and instigated a full-scale armed rebellion. The central government had already begun to see through this double-dealing. As Chairman Mao Zedong pointed out, "The Dalai Lama's plans to launch a rebellion started just after his return from Beijing in 1955. He prepared this rebellion for two years - from early 1957, when he returned from India, to 1958." In 1965, the 14th Dalai Lama spoke publicly about his feigned compliance during the nine years from 1951 to 1959, "We paid lip service to being glad to return to the motherland and to working together to build a socialist society, while we kept an unspoken faith in our heart - 'Tibet wants freedom and independence'."

- After the armed rebellion broke out, the central government showed extreme forbearance and waited for a time with an attitude of patience, but the 14th Dalai Lama went further and further down the road of dividing China.

With the support and cooperation of people of all the ethnic groups in Tibet, the PLA quickly put down the armed rebellion and enforced democratic reform. The central government decided not to prevent the 14th Dalai Lama from fleeing abroad, even allowing him some leeway by announcing that he had been abducted. The central authorities adopted an attitude of patience, and preserved his position as a vice-chairman of the NPC Standing Committee until 1964. In his talks with a delegation from the Indian Communist Party in October 1959, Chairman Mao Zedong said, "We will welcome the Dalai Lama's return if he accepts our two propositions. One is that

Tibet is part of China and the other is that he will carry out democratic and socialist reform in Tibet."

However, the 14th Dalai Lama publicly abandoned the 17-Article Agreement during his defection and flatly denied his previous patriotic stance and his promise of loyalty to China. He openly broke with the central government, taking a path of betraying the Chinese nation. In June 1959, he issued a statement in Mussoorie, India, claiming that Tibet had in fact been an independent country. In 1963, he convened a "people's congress of Tibet" in Dharamsala, India, which established the "Tibetan government in exile." A so-called "constitution" was promulgated, which states that "the Dalai Lama is the head of state," "the ministers shall be appointed by the Dalai Lama," and "no work of the government shall be approved without the consent of the Dalai Lama."

On December 17, 1964, the 151st Plenary Meeting of the State Council adopted the Decision on the Removal of the Dalai Lama from His Official Positions, which stated, "After the Dalai Lama staged the treasonous armed rebellion in 1959, he fled abroad and organized a 'government-in-exile,' issued a bogus constitution, provided support for Indian aggression against Chinese territory, and engaged in the organization and training of remnants of Tibet's armed forces who had fled abroad with the object of attacking our borders. All this proves that he has alienated himself from the country and the people, and been reduced to a traitor working for imperialists and reactionaries abroad."

- After the start of reform and opening up, the central government offered the 14th Dalai Lama an opportunity to repent his way by adopting the policy that "all patriots belong to one big family, whether they embrace patriotism earlier or later." But he chose to maintain his support for "Tibetan independence."

Patriotism is a basic requirement of the central government raised on the 14th Dalai Lama and other overseas Tibetans. From August 1979 to September 1980, the relevant central government departments received three visiting delegations and two groups of relatives sent by the Dalai Lama. Most of the Dalai Lama's kin residing abroad have made return visits to China. Regretfully, the Dalai Lama did not draw on the goodwill of the central government. Instead, he stubbornly stuck to his stance and further intensified his separatist activities, wasting the valuable opportunity the central government had provided for reconciliation. In fact, the visiting groups sent by the Dalai Lama took advantage of the central government's policy of free

movement in and out of the country to circulate and advocate independence, inciting hatred among ethnic groups, and disturbing and disrupting the social order.

Responding to a request from the 14th Dalai Lama, in 1979 the central government began to conduct talks with his private representatives on an irregular basis. In February 1979, in his meeting with Dalai Lama's elder brother Gyalo Thondup, Deng Xiaoping spoke about a possible return to China: "As Tibet is part of China, the discussion on their return is a domestic affair rather than a negotiation between countries. This is the fundamental principle... The central government is willing to talk with the Dalai Lama as long as he openly admits that Tibet is part of China. Anyone is welcome, whether he embraces patriotism earlier or later. Essentially Tibet is part of China. This is the criterion for judging right or wrong."

Following the drastic changes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in 1989, the 14th Dalai Lama misread the situation and declared, "The time for Tibetan independence is coming," and committed "not to negotiate with a collapsing regime." In 1989, the 10th Panchen Erdeni passed away. With the approval of the central government, the Buddhist Association of China invited the Dalai Lama to attend the Panchen Erdeni's memorial ceremonies. But, he rejected the invitation. In 1993, he unilaterally decided to break off contact with the central government. In 1995, in defiance of the historical traditions and religious rites, he announced the so-called reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Erdeni.

Nevertheless, the central government continued to offer solutions. In 1997, the central authorities stated, "The central government is willing to contact and negotiate with the 14th Dalai Lama over his own future as long as he genuinely abandons separatism and any activities likely to divide the country, and openly admits that Tibet and Taiwan are inalienable parts of China and that the government of the People's Republic of China is the only legitimate government representing China." The central government has continued to follow these basic principles to this day. In 2003, the central government made it clear that the leadership of the Communist Party, the socialist road and the system of regional ethnic autonomy should be upheld in Tibet. These are stipulated in the Constitution and are the paramount political facts in Tibet as well as the fundamental principles for contact and negotiation. The central government emphasized two premises for contact and negotiation. One is that the central government will only talk with private representatives of the Dalai Lama. No matter what it is called or who is in charge, the "government in exile" is essentially a separatist political group, cannot represent the

people of Tibet, and does not have the legitimacy or qualifications to engage in talks with the central government. The other is that the talks are aimed at discussing the future of the Dalai Lama and some of his followers at most. To be specific, any negotiations will be limited to seeking solutions for the Dalai Lama to completely abandon separatist claims and activities and gain the forgiveness of the central government and the Chinese people, and to working out what he will do with the rest of his life. As the political status and system of Tibet is stipulated by the Chinese Constitution and laws, the "Tibet issue" and "a high degree of autonomy" are not up for discussion.

The central government received 13 visits by private representatives of the 14th Dalai Lama between 1979 and 2002, and ten visits from 2002 to January 2010. To the disappointment of the central government, the Dalai Lama has remained committed to his "middle way," which runs counter to the Constitution and aims at splitting the country. Moreover, he has planned and instigated activities of sabotage, including violent disturbance during the Beijing Olympic Games, violence in Lhasa on March 14, 2008, and incidents of self-immolation. In 2011, the Dalai Lama announced his "political retirement," followed shortly by the announcement of "resignation" by his private representatives who had kept contact with the central government. Since then, the Dalai group has declared that it would only talk with the central government in the name of the "government-in-exile," thereby destroying any basis for contacts and negotiation, which have now been halted.

Over the past 30 years and more, the Dalai Lama and his supporters have adjusted and altered their strategies along with changes in the national and international situation. They have unilaterally broken off contacts and negotiation with the central government on several occasions. When they thought the situation was working to their disadvantage, they would call for contacts with the central government; when they thought the situation was in their favor, they would break off these contacts. None of the negotiations were conducted in good faith - it was always the intention of the Dalai Lama and his supporters to divide China and achieve independence for Tibet.

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the central leadership led by President Xi Jinping has reiterated, "The central government has followed a clear and consistent policy towards the 14th Dalai Lama. Only when he makes a public statement acknowledging that Tibet has been an integral part of

China since antiquity, and abandons his stance on independence and his attempts to divide China, can he improve his relationship with the central government in any real sense." The central government hopes that the Dalai Lama will put aside his illusions in his remaining years and face up to reality, adapt his position, choose the objective and rational path, and do something of benefit to overseas Tibetan compatriots in exile.

Conclusion

The wheels of history roll forward and the tides of the times are irresistible.

Tibet's path of development is one imposed by history and chosen by the people. Experience proves to us that only by upholding unity and opposing separatism, only by upholding progress and opposing retrogression, only by upholding stability and opposing turmoil, can the future of Tibet be assured. Any person or force that attempts to resist the tide will simply be cast aside by history and by the people.

The "middle way" advocated by the Dalai Lama and his supporters, with "Tibetan independence" as their ultimate goal, is just such an attempt. It places itself in opposition to the prevailing realities of the nation and in Tibet. It contravenes China's Constitution and its state systems. The only sensible alternative is for the Dalai Lama and his supporters to accept that Tibet has been part of China since antiquity, to abandon their goals of dividing China and seeking independence for Tibet, and to begin to act in the interests of Tibet and the country at large.

The future of Tibet belongs to all the peoples of Tibet and to China as a nation. Tibet has every prospect of a brighter future. In the years to come, the people of every ethnic group in Tibet, along with others in the greater family of the motherland, will progress on the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, striving to build a new, united and democratic Tibet, to celebrate the brilliance of its culture, to develop a prosperous, harmonious socialist society, and to join with their fellow Chinese in accomplishing the Chinese Dream of the great renewal of the nation.