

Name of Permanent Representative/Minister  
Addresss of Mission/Foreign Ministry

Date

Your Excellency or Dear Minister/Secretary of State etc

I/We are writing to you in great concern about the situation in Tibet, to appeal to you to support the Dalai Lama's call for an independent investigation into events.

Over the past few days, peaceful protests by many hundreds of Tibetan Buddhist monks from three of the main monasteries in Lhasa have now escalated into widespread unrest and clashes with Chinese authorities. News of large-scale protests against Chinese rule by monks, nuns, students and lay people have also been reported outside of what China defines as the "Tibet Autonomous Region", in the following Tibetan areas:

- Rong Gonchen Monastery, Rebkong County (Ch: Tongren xian), Malho (Ch: Huangnan) "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture", Qinghai Province.
- Kirti Monastery, in Ngaba County (Ch: Aba), Ngaba "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture", Sichuan Province.
- In Labrang (Ch: Xiahe), Sangchu County, Kanlho "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture", Gansu Province.

The demonstrations of earlier last week, initially sparked to commemorate the 49th anniversary of the Tibetan National uprising of 1959, were consistently quashed by the authorities, which brought in thousands of police and security personnel to surround Lhasa's monasteries. The ensuing unrest has led to the most serious challenge to Chinese rule in Tibet in almost twenty years, and demonstrates the scale of the Tibetan dissatisfaction with Chinese rule.

Reports of casualties are slowly being substantiated. Xinhua, China's official news agency, reported 10 dead. On Sunday the Tibetan government in exile said it had reports from numerous sources that put the figure at 80 following the protests in Lhasa; however reports are still coming in of fatal shootings in other Tibetan areas. The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, based in Dharamsala, India reported on the evening of Sunday 16th March that eight dead bodies have been brought to the Ngapa Kirti Monastery, and that at least 30 Tibetans had been felled after armed security personnel fired indiscriminately at protesters.

In Lhasa, the Chinese authorities have issued a notice to Tibetans who have taken part in demonstrations to give themselves up by midnight on Monday 17 March. A promise of leniency has been given to those who surrender and rewards have been offered to those who inform on protesters, but people who shield protestors and "Violators who do not comply with the deadline will be severely punished under the law," (Xinhua). Hundreds of Tibetans have been

taken into custody, a curfew is now in place in Lhasa and the city is completely sealed off. Independent eyewitness accounts have verified the use of force to suppress peaceful demonstrations led by Tibetan monks.

With a media black-out in Lhasa in place, verifiable information will become ever harder to come by. Two Canadian journalists have been detained in Xiahe, and others turned away from here and other areas outside the 'Tibet Autonomous Region', despite China having issued new regulations that were intended to allow free movement by foreign journalists in Olympics year.

China's policies in Tibet are largely responsible for the current regrettable situation: its renewal of a patriotic re-education campaign, its stepping up of anti-Dalai Lama rhetoric and its economic policies that have led to the increasing marginalization of Tibetans in Tibet.

There is widespread understanding by Tibetans in Tibet that China has engaged in a broad further suppression of rights prior to the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. Tibetans are also very aware that the Dalai Lama's attempts at dialogue to reach a peaceful solution to the situation are not being responded to in good faith by China.

We appeal to you make immediate representations to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms Louise Arbour, and to your colleagues in the Human Rights Council, that United Nations investigators be sent urgently to the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and other Tibetan areas outside the TAR, to learn the truth about the current situation, and so that further bloodshed can be prevented.

Additionally, we ask you to call on China to admit all relevant Special Rapporteurs, for example the Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary and Arbitrary Execution and the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Opinion as a matter of urgency.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours faithfully,

Your Name, address