

110TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. RES. 643

Calling for greater dialogue between the Dalai Lama and the Government of China regarding rights for the people of Tibet, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 1, 2008

Mr. SMITH (for himself and Mr. FEINGOLD) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Calling for greater dialogue between the Dalai Lama and the Government of China regarding rights for the people of Tibet, and for other purposes.

Whereas, on April 25, 2008, China's official news agency Xinhua expressed the willingness of the Government of China to meet with envoys of the Dalai Lama;

Whereas, on May 4, 2008, Special Envoy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama Lodi Gyari and Envoy Kelsang Gyaltsen met with Chinese Executive Vice Minister Zhu Weiqun and Executive Vice Minister Sithar for one day of talks, in which the Government of China alleged that the Dalai Lama instigated the March 2008 unrest in autonomous Tibetan areas of China, and was sabotaging the Olympic Games;

Whereas Hu Jintao, General Secretary of the Communist Party of China, released a statement after this meeting saying that his Government of China was committed to a “serious” dialogue with the Dalai Lama;

Whereas, at the United States-European Union (EU) Summit on June 10, 2008, the United States and the European Union issued a joint statement welcoming the decision by the Government of China to hold talks with representatives of the Dalai Lama, and urged “both parties to move forward with a substantive, constructive and results-oriented dialogue at an early date”;

Whereas the Envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s Kelsang Gyaltzen and Lodi Gyari visited Beijing from June 30 to July 3, 2008, to conduct the seventh round of the Tibetan-Chinese dialogue;

Whereas, during these talks, the Government of China issued a new set of demands, including that the Dalai Lama prove that he does not support Tibetan independence or disruption of the Olympic Games in Beijing;

Whereas the Dalai Lama has stated multiple times he does not favor the independence of Tibet and is instead seeking negotiations to address the legitimate grievances of, and provide genuine autonomy for, the Tibetan people within the People’s Republic of China, and is committed to non-violence;

Whereas the Dalai Lama has repeatedly and publicly declared his support for the Olympic Games in China, as well as his intention to attend the opening ceremony, if invited;

Whereas, at the conclusion of the July round of talks, officials of the Government of China did not accept a proposal by the representatives of the Dalai Lama to agree

to a joint statement supporting a continuation of the dialogue process;

Whereas Special Envoy Lodi Gyari said on July 5, 2008, that the talks with the Government of China, called for by the international community, were “disappointing and difficult”;

Whereas, in contrast to the opinion of Special Envoy Lodi Gyari, President George W. Bush said on July 6, 2008, that “it looks like there’s some progress, at least in the talks with the Dalai Lama”;

Whereas officials of the Government of China subsequently stated that the talks with the Dalai Lama’s envoys are only about the Dalai Lama’s personal future, rather than about the future of Tibet;

Whereas the Office of the Dalai Lama on July 17, 2008, restated its position that the talks are about “the future of 6,000,000 Tibetans in Tibet and not His Holiness the Dalai Lama”;

Whereas, on July 11, 2008, the European Parliament adopted a resolution that “welcomes the resumption of contacts, after the events of March 2008 in Lhasa, between the representatives of the Dalai Lama and the Chinese authorities” and “encourages the two parties to intensify these contacts so as to establish the bases for mutual trust, without which it will be impossible to arrive at a mutually acceptable political solution”;

Whereas, on the official stage during the Olympic torch’s relay through Lhasa on June 21, 2008, China’s Communist Party chief in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), Zhang Qingli, said, “Tibet’s sky will never change and the red flag with five stars will forever flutter

high above it. . . . [W]e will certainly be able to totally smash the splittist schemes of the Dalai Lama clique.”;

Whereas, in reference to Zhang Qingli, the International Olympics Committee said in a rare rebuke that it “regrets that political statements were made during the closing ceremony of the torch relay in Tibet”; and

Whereas China’s People’s Armed Police troops have been sent to monasteries in Tibetan areas to give monks “relevant information” about the Olympics, and Chinese authorities have stepped up “patriotic education” campaigns designed to conform the religious practices of Tibetan Buddhists to Communist Party rules, including forcing monks and nuns to denounce the Dalai Lama: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) urges the Dalai Lama or his representatives
3 and the Government of the People’s Republic of
4 China to begin earnest negotiations, without pre-
5 conditions, to provide for a mutually agreeable solu-
6 tion that addresses the legitimate grievances of, and
7 provides genuine autonomy for, the Tibetan people;

8 (2) urges that the talks in October 2008 be-
9 tween the Government of China and the Dalai Lama
10 should focus on the welfare, cultural, political, and
11 religious autonomy of the Tibetan people, and not on
12 the person of the Dalai Lama;

13 (3) affirms that the human rights of Tibetans
14 and their right to practice religion free of govern-

1 ment regulation is not an internal matter of any one
2 country;

3 (4) urges the President to take a more personal
4 and engaged interest in the successful conclusion of
5 these negotiations, both unilaterally and in coordina-
6 tion with United States allies; and

7 (5) calls on the United States Government to
8 press the Government of China—

9 (A) to respect freedom of speech and free-
10 dom of association, as required by international
11 law and as enshrined in the Constitution of
12 China and to release those who have committed
13 no crime other than peaceful protest; and

14 (B) to end the “patriotic education” cam-
15 paign against lay and clerical Tibetans and
16 allow Tibetans to practice their religion freely.

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