

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 3, 2014

Sarah Sewall

Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights  
Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues  
U.S. Department of State  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Under Secretary Sewall:

Please let us extend our congratulations on your confirmation as Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights. We are also pleased that you have been appointed concurrently as the Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues. It is in that capacity we write to you and urge you to take strong and immediate actions to support basic human dignity and freedoms in Tibet and to advance greater coordination in the international community about the future of Tibet and the Tibetan people – their survival, their culture and their religion.

We believe that a solution to the Tibet issue is both imperative and possible. It would benefit both the Chinese and Tibetan people and provide a level of stability the Chinese government asserts that it seeks. We welcome that you have taken on the task, as Special Coordinator, of implementing U.S. policy to promote dialogue toward this end. We believe you have strong and bipartisan support in Congress in this regard.

We are disappointed that the Chinese government has failed to respond to the multiple expressions of interest in further negotiation by the U.S. government and to the willingness of the Tibetan side to return to the table. It has been almost five years since the last round of dialogue.

During this time, the Chinese government has employed a “divide and conquer” strategy of isolating the Dalai Lama and threatening governments over the Tibet issue, rather than of addressing the legitimate concerns of Tibetans inside Tibet.

We appreciate that your predecessors and others in the Department have reached out and collaborated with other governments on Tibet. However, we believe that the U.S government must continue to take and strengthen its leadership role in this regard. Therefore, we respectfully request that you, through your position as Special Coordinator, work with “like-minded” governments to develop and implement a common approach on Tibet. Such efforts, at a minimum, might include:

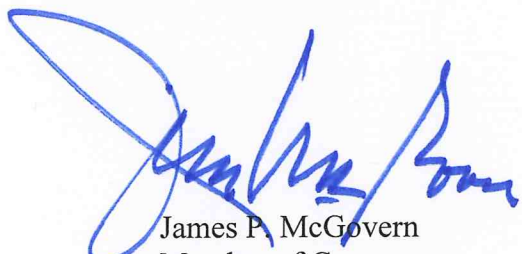
- **Develop a common approach to the Dalai Lama.** While we are proud that four U.S. presidents have met the Dalai Lama twelve times, the trend in Europe has been negative, as China has pressured most leaders not to meet with him. Having a coordinated approach to how the Dalai Lama is received is not only appropriate for this major world religious figure, but will also help convey a global and united concern for the Tibetan issue and people.

- **Encourage resumption of negotiations.** Like-minded nations should present joint appeals to the Chinese government to resume negotiations with the Dalai Lama or his representatives and make clear that failure to do so reflects poorly on Beijing's efforts to be seen as a responsible and modern nation. Such a joint strategy should also include a strong, common and public response should the Chinese government remain intransigent.
- **Urge China to make good on its promise to the U.N.** In its 2013 Universal Periodic Review, China committed to allowing the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights to visit Tibetan areas, a long-standing request. There are also a number of U.N. special mandate holders who have asked to visit Tibetan areas. None of these requests have been granted by the Chinese government. Failure by the U.S. and the international community to hold China to these commitments not only fails the Tibetan people, but weakens and undermines international human rights institutions and structures overall.
- **Promote access to Tibet.** As the State Department has stated, Chinese authorities routinely deny access to Tibetan areas to U.S. diplomats, journalists and tourists. The same is true of Europeans, as well as United Nations officials. Like-minded nations should develop a unified position that insists that China respect the fundamental principle of diplomatic reciprocity in terms of Tibetan areas.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these and other possible measures and actions that you and the State Department might take to further invigorate U.S. engagement on the Tibetan issue. We are attaching two sets of previous correspondence with your predecessors on these and similar issues.

We appreciate in advance your commitment to this effort as part of the implementation of the requirements for U.S. policy as laid out in the Tibetan Policy Act. Please let us know how we can be of assistance in promoting and securing basic human rights and freedoms for Tibet and the Tibetan people.

Sincerely,



James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



Frank R. Wolf  
Member of Congress

cc: Tom Malinowski, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor  
Daniel R. Russel, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the Pacific