
To: His Excellency Mr. Sai Tengai
Address : 3-4-33, Motoazabu, Minato-ku, Tokyo
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Dear His Excellency Mr. Sai Tengai:

I am shocked to learn that peaceful protests by Tibetans in recent days were violently stopped by the paramilitary People's Armed Police and that dozens have been arrested.

A witness of the Drepung protest, in which monks were simply walking and calling for the release of fellow monks who had been arbitrarily arrested after the Dalai Lama was awarded the U.S Congressional Gold Medal last October, reported that 10 military vehicles, 10 police vehicles, and several ambulances arrived at the checkpoint where the march was stopped. This raises serious concerns about the safety of the monks.

In central Lhasa, 17 people, including a 15-year old monk, were arrested for a protest and harshly beaten. They include Lobsang (15), Tsultrim Palden (20), Lobsang Ngodup (29), Lobsher (20), Phurdhen (22), Lobsang Thukjey (19), Lodie (30), Thupdon (24), Shoepa (30), Tsegjam (22), Gelek Pel (32), Tenpa Rigsan (26), Thupwang (30), Pema Garwang (30), and Samten (17).

On March 11th, 600 monks from Sera Monastery began marching to Lhasa, calling for the release of the monks arrested the previous day and for Tibet to be free. Approximately 2000 People's Armed Police and Public Security Bureau personnel fired tear-gas into the group.

I am appalled that your government has violently suppressed the rights of these Tibetans to peacefully express their opinions. All of the protesters who have been detained must be released immediately.

I am deeply disturbed that China, preparing to host the Olympics in merely 147 days, is blatantly trampling on one of the most basic human rights - freedom of expression. Actions such as these arrests continue to stain China's international reputation.

Your government promised to improve respect for human rights before the Olympics begins, but your actions in Tibet show the opposite.

I will be following this situation closely in the coming days and alerting my government representatives to the situation inside Tibet. I urge you to release all the detainees and stop further use of violence against Tibetans.

Sincerely,

(signature)
