

2012-13 Tibet in Parliament

Details and links of when and how Tibet and related matters have been raised in the UK parliament during the 2012-13 parliamentary session (9 May 2012 - 25 April 2013).

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25 April 2013: House of Commons Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Tibet

Lyn Brown (West Ham, Lab): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with international organisations about the situation in Tibet.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): I refer the hon. Member to my answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Wellingborough (Mr Bone) of 18 March 2013, Official Report, column 473W, and my answer to the hon. Member for Bristol East (Kerry McCarthy) of 18 April 2013, Official Report, column 504W.

We continue to work closely with our international partners and multilateral organisations to promote the rights of Tibetan communities, and to encourage the resumption of meaningful dialogue, which we view as the best way of resolving continued tensions in Tibet. We raised Tibet through the EU at the UN Human Rights Council in September 2012. I also issued a statement on 17 December alongside the US, the EU and Canada, which set out our concerns.

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18 April 2013: House of Commons Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Tibet

Kerry McCarthy (Bristol East, Lab): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his (a) EU, (b) UN and (c) US counterparts about Tibet and promotion of dialogue with the Chinese authorities.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): We regularly discuss a range of human rights issues, including Tibet, at official levels with the EU, UN and US. We raised the issue of Tibet through the EU at the UN Human Rights Council in September 2012 and we will continue to raise our concerns about the situation in Tibet through multilateral fora and by working with our like-minded partners.

Ms McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the government of China regarding self-immolations in Tibet; and what reports he has received on the criminalisation of self-immolations and the arrest of relatives and friends on charges of incitement.

Mr Swire: We regularly raise our concerns about self-immolations in Tibet with the Chinese authorities.

I made a statement on 17 December 2012 where I urged both sides to exercise restraint and called for the resumption of meaningful dialogue: <http://tinyurl.com/amc4gjw>

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Richmond (Yorks) (Mr Hague), responded to a question in the House of Commons on 5 March 2013, Official Report, column 817, on the issue of Tibet.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) officials raised their concerns over self-immolations with the Chinese embassy on 12 April 2013. The annual FCO Human Rights Report, published on Monday 15 April, outlines our concerns regarding the situation in Tibet.

We receive regular reports on the situation in Tibet from non-governmental organisations. We are concerned about reports referring to the criminalisation of self-immolations and we are seeking further information about this issue.

We will continue to raise our concerns with the Chinese authorities, including at the next UK-China Human Rights Dialogue.

Ms McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what requests have been made to China for (a) British officials and (b) non-governmental organisations to visit Tibet in the last 12 months for which figures are available; and what response was received.

Mr Swire: In 2012 we made two official requests to visit the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) both of which were refused by the Chinese authorities.

However, during the last 12 months, British diplomats have made regular visits to Tibetan areas of China outside the TAR. We do not keep records of non-governmental organisations who have requested access to travel to Tibet.

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17 April 2013: House of Commons Written Answer: International Development: Tibet

Kerry McCarthy (Bristol East, Lab): To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment her Department has made of the effects of climate change and glacier meltdown in Tibet and the surrounding region.

Lynne Featherstone (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development): The Department for International Development (DFID) has funded two assessments on glacial melt in the Himalayan region.

The first assessment modelled the long-term effects of deglaciation on rivers originating from the Hindu-Kush Himalayas. The second assessment reviewed 52 published studies on glacier shrinkage across the Himalayan region. These reports are available on the DFID's Research for Development website, and both contain findings relevant to the Tibetan region.

DFID is also supporting work in the Mount Kailash area, which covers parts of Tibet, and aims to help about 1 million people adapt to the effects of changing river flows as a result of glacier melt. A new central research programme will also deliver new knowledge on how to adapt to climate change across all the Himalayan river basins.

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18 March 2013: House of Commons Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Tibet

Peter Bone (Wellingborough, Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to ensure that the people of Tibet have basic human rights.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): I refer my hon. Friend to my previous answer of 14 January 2013, Official Report, column 544W, to the hon. Member for Bethnal Green and Bow (Rushanara Ali). We regularly raise our concerns about Tibet with the Chinese authorities, and we will continue to do so. I issued a statement on 17 December 2012 urging the Chinese authorities to exercise restraint and calling on Tibetans not to resort to extreme forms of protest such as self-immolation. Tibet was discussed at the last round of the annual UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in January 2012.

Mr Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will work with his counterparts in other countries on developing a multilateral solution to the issue of Tibet.

Mr Swire: We work closely with our international partners and multilateral organisations to encourage the resumption of meaningful dialogue between the Chinese authorities and the Dalai Lama or his representatives. We raised Tibet through the EU at the UN Human Rights Council in September 2012. Alongside the US, EU and Canada, I raised my concerns over self-immolations in Tibet in a statement on 17 December.

Mr Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to the Chinese government to (a) protect the right to use the Tibetan language, (b) respect freedom of religion and (c) remove censorship in Tibet.

Mr Swire: We regularly make representations to the Chinese authorities about our human rights concerns in Tibet. We did so most recently at senior level on 20 December 2012, and we will continue to do so.

We raised the issues of the right to use the Tibetan language, respect for freedom of religion, and the removal of censorship in Tibet in detail in the last UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in January 2012. The next Dialogue will offer an opportunity for us to re-state these specific concerns. We are awaiting a positive response from the Chinese Government to our requests for a date for this next Dialogue.

Mr Bone: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is on self-government for Tibet.

Mr Swire: Our position on Tibet is clear and unchanged: we regard Tibet as part of the People's Republic of China. We believe a long-term solution depends on respect for human rights and genuine autonomy for Tibetans within the framework of the Chinese constitution.

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EDM 1175: Tibetan Resistance in Tibet since 1959

12 March 2013, tabled by Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East, Lab)

That this House on the occasion of the 54th anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising of 10 March 1959, expresses its sadness at the loss of countless Tibetan lives over the last 64 years due to China's military occupation; draws attention to

the continued Tibetan resistance to China's repressive policies and human and civil rights abuses through peaceful protests and grass roots cultural movements; strongly condemns the use of force by Chinese police and military personnel to quash those protests; further condemns the Chinese government's restrictions on freedom of expression which include long prison sentences for sharing information about demonstrations; calls on the Chinese government to ease tensions by withdrawing its forces from Tibet and allow foreign journalists, humanitarian agencies and independent observers full and unfettered access to Tibetan areas to ascertain the current situation; further calls on the Government to find new forms of approach with China that will help safeguard Tibetans' rights and freedoms; and further calls on the Government to work multilaterally with other governments to urge China to work with Tibetan representatives to resolve the grievances of the Tibetan people and bring stability and peace to Tibet.

[Click here to see if your MP signed this EDM.](#)

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5 March 2013: House of Commons Oral Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Topical Questions

Tim Loughton (East Worthing and Shoreham, Con): May I take the Foreign Secretary to the other side of the world and declare an interest as a member of the Tibet Society? He will be aware that there have now been more than 100 self-immolations in Tibet. He will also be aware of the big crackdown and harsh prison sentences for protestors, including families of the victims. I hope that he is also aware that next Wednesday there will be a big lobby by Tibetans coming to this House. What is he doing to support the growing number of Tibetan refugees, many of whom are escaping across the mountains to Dharamsala? In particular, what help can we give through the British Council to assist in education about and preservation of the Tibetan language and culture, which are being so brutally repressed by China in Tibet?

Mr Hague rose -

Mr Speaker: Preferably the answer will be shorter than the question.

William Hague (The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): In a very short answer, Mr Speaker, we do indeed have serious concerns about the recent wave of self-immolations and urge the Chinese authorities to show restraint towards Tibetan protestors. As my hon. Friend knows, we believe in meaningful dialogue between the Dalai Lama's representatives and the Chinese authorities as the best way to address and resolve the underlying grievances. There is no change in our policy towards Tibet, which we regard as part of the People's Republic of China. However, we are always concerned about human rights issues and—in the interests of brevity, Mr Speaker—we will take an additional look at the points that my hon. Friend raises.

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26 February 2013: House of Lords Oral Answers: Tibet

Lord Alton of Liverpool: To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have held with the Government of China about self-immolations in Tibet and China's approach to human rights in that region.

Baroness Warsi (Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government & Foreign and Commonwealth Office): We are deeply concerned about the large number of self-immolations in Tibet. We regularly raise our concerns with the Chinese authorities. My right honourable friend Hugo Swire issued a statement on 17 December. Tibet was discussed at the last round of the annual UK-China human rights dialogue in January 2012. We encourage all parties to work for a resumption of substantive dialogue as a means to address Tibetan concerns and to relieve tensions. We believe that long-term solutions depend on respect for human rights and genuine autonomy for Tibetans within the framework of the Chinese constitution. Our position on Tibet is clear and long-standing. We regard Tibet as part of the People's Republic of China.

Lord Alton of Liverpool: My Lords, with 105 self-immolations and 88 deaths, including three more in the past two days,

many of them young people, the Dalai Lama has said that this futile waste of people's lives brings tears to his eyes. As the noble Baroness considers how best to respond to these events, would she undertake to read the report *Tibet: Breaking the Deadlock*, which the noble Lord, Lord Steel, and I published following our visit to Tibet, and which focused on the need to create dialogue, to end attempts to discredit the Dalai Lama, to examine human rights issues and constitutional arrangements, and to address the reasons why these extreme actions are occurring, leading to this heartbreaking and tragic waste of people's lives.

Baroness Warsi: I know that the noble Lord has a long-standing interest in this matter. Indeed, I have had an opportunity to look at the recommendations of the report that he mentions. I am sure he will be heartened by the fact that we agree, at least in part, with some of its recommendations about the People's Republic of China and the Dalai Lama returning to dialogue to take these matters forward bilaterally. Of course, I have real concern about the tragic cases of self-immolation. I have an opportunity to read the casework on some of them. Tragically, those who die do so at great loss to their communities and families, but those who survive end up suffering for many years with very little treatment. It is a matter that we continue to raise.

Lord Anderson of Swansea: My Lords, China is building better rail and road links to Tibet, which help the Han Chinese colonise that region. Of course, in spite of all these bilateral and multilateral meetings, China ignores any pleas for human rights in China itself, internationally or in Tibet. Does the Minister have any evidence that China is altering its stance in response to human rights in Tibet or internationally, commensurate with its new economic power?

Baroness Warsi: My Lords, we are concerned about the lack of meaningful dialogue to address the underlying grievances against a clearly worsening situation. We continue to encourage all parties to work for a resumption of substantive dialogue as a means to address the Tibetan concerns and to relieve tensions. Of course, we continue to make the case to China that any economic progress can be sustained only if there is social progress as well.

Lord Steel of Aikwood: Does the Minister, having read the report to which she has kindly referred, recognise that in the three years since, two important things have happened? One is that there was a change of leadership in China; the second is that the Dalai Lama has given up his political role as head of the Tibetan Government in exile. Therefore, would she and her colleagues try to encourage the Chinese authorities to enter into dialogue with the Dalai Lama as a religious leader in order to stop these immolations and try to improve relations between the Tibetan people and the Chinese?

Baroness Warsi: Many of us around the world recognise the Dalai Lama as a spiritual leader, but my noble friend will be aware of the position of the Chinese Government. That is not the way he is seen within the People's Republic of China. The noble Lord will also be aware of the UK-China annual human rights dialogue, and we continue to raise these concerns at that point.

The Archbishop of York: My Lords, I thank the Minister for her answer to the question asked by the noble Lord, Lord Steel. I still want to probe a bit further. He is certainly exiled, but the Dalai Lama is not only a spiritual and religious leader of the people of Tibet; he is also recognised throughout the world. Will the Government nevertheless impress upon the Chinese Government that they should recognise and respect the Dalai Lama as a religious leader and not as a political leader? If they did that, it is possible that they would then have a dialogue.

Baroness Warsi: The most reverend Prelate raises an important wider issue: the freedom of religion within China and the recognition of religious groups and therefore of religious leaders. It is a matter that we raise in generic terms, although I cannot categorically say whether the specific issue of recognising the Dalai Lama as a spiritual leader has been raised.

Lord Wills: What representations have the Government made about the fate of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the young boy identified in 1995 by the Dalai Lama as the new Panchen Lama, the second highest office in Tibetan Buddhism? The

Minister will recall that shortly after that identification, that young boy was taken into what the Chinese Government called “protective custody” and has never been seen since. What assurances have the Government sought about his fate and well-being, and if they have not made any representations, will they do so?

Baroness Warsi: Representations were made about the young boy. Indeed, I think his name appeared on a specific list that was handed over during one of the UK-China human rights dialogues. We have also put forward the idea of him being allowed access to an independent organisation that could assess his current health and whereabouts.

Lord Triesman: My Lords, I associate these Benches with the welcome that has been given to the most reverend Primate. We all wish him every success in the contribution he will make in this House. The last major dialogue that the Minister has reported to us was in January 2012. Obviously, there has been a change in the leadership of the Chinese state and Communist Party in the period since. I wonder whether other channels are available that might be used. I am thinking particularly of the business group, the 48 Group Club, which has managed to establish decent relationships with the Chinese Government and is not always associated with the past that this country has had with China, which has not been held in great esteem in many respects by the Chinese people historically. Is there a dialogue going on with those groups? Can we improve it and can we achieve the objectives to which the noble Lord, Lord Steel, referred just a few moments ago?

Baroness Warsi: The noble Lord makes an important point. I cannot answer it directly. I am not sure whether other groups are being used as alternative avenues to make our views clear. I can, however, inform him that the annual dialogue is now overdue and that officials have been in contact with each other with a view to try to fix a date for further discussions.

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6 February 2013: House of Lords: Written Answer: China

Lord Alton of Liverpool: To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of self-immolations by protestors in Tibet; when they last raised the issue of self-immolations with the Government of China, and what was their response; and whether they have information about the situation in Bhora, eastern Tibet, following the self-immolation and funeral of Kunchok Kyab.

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (Government spokesman for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office): We remain concerned about the large numbers of self-immolations that have occurred in Tibetan areas since March 2011 and about the human rights situation in Tibet. We believe that as of 30 January there have been 97 immolations, of which 48 have not been confirmed by official state media. At least 80 of those incidents are believed to have led to the death of the individual. We most recently raised concerns about the human rights situation in Tibet with the Chinese authorities at senior official level on 21 December.

The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right honourable friend the Member for East Devon (Mr Swire), issued a statement on 17 December, urging the Chinese authorities to make every effort to resume meaningful dialogue with the Dalai Lama's representatives as the best way to achieve a long-term solution to underlying tensions. This statement also urged Tibetans not to resort to extreme forms of protest such as self-immolation, and urged their community and religious leaders to use their influence to stop this tragic loss of life.

We are aware of reports that Kunchok Kyab self-immolated near Bora Monastery in Gannan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture on 22 January, and of allegations that Tibetans were barred from holding funeral rites for him. Our diplomats visited Gannan several times in 2012, most recently in December, but it has not been possible to verify these reports. Foreigners continue to encounter periodic restrictions on access to parts of Gannan, other Tibetan areas and the Tibetan Autonomous Region. We continue to urge the Chinese Government to lift all such restrictions.

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22 January 2013: House of Commons Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Tibet

Stella Creasy (Walthamstow, Lab/Co-op): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the human rights situation in Tibet.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): We continue to have serious concerns about the human rights situation in Tibet, including the large number of self-immolations. Our diplomats visited Tibetan regions of China in December 2012 to assess the situation on the ground. I issued a statement on 17 December urging the Chinese authorities to make every effort to resume meaningful dialogue with the Dalai Lama's representatives as the best way to achieve a long-term solution to underlying tensions. My statement also called on the Tibetan people not to resort to extreme forms of protest such as self-immolations. We believe a long-term solution depends on respect for human rights and genuine autonomy for Tibetans within the framework of the Chinese constitution.

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14 January 2013: House of Commons Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Tibet

Robert Buckland (South Swindon, Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received on the restriction on the religious freedom and freedom of movement of Lama Soepa [Tibet Society: also known as Sonam Wangyal - [click here for case details](#)], who self-immolated in protest at travel restrictions in January 2012.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): We are aware of this case and are seeking further information.

The UK strongly supports the right to freedom of religion and belief and the right to peaceful protest for all. We are deeply concerned about the large numbers of self-immolations that have occurred in Tibetan areas since March 2011. I issued a statement on 17 December 2012 urging the Chinese authorities to exercise restraint with protestors, and to make every effort to resume meaningful dialogue with the Dalai Lama's representatives as the best way to achieve a long-term solution to underlying tensions.

Alongside the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Baroness Ashton and other international partners, I also urged Tibetans not to resort to extreme forms of protest such as self-immolation, and urged their community and religious leaders to use their influence to stop this tragic loss of life. We will continue to raise these issues with the Chinese authorities, including at senior levels.

Rushanara Ali (Bethnal Green and Bow, Lab): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps his Department is taking to protect the human rights of people living in Tibet.

Mr Swire: We remain very concerned about the large numbers of self-immolations that have occurred in Tibetan areas since March 2011, and about the human rights situation in Tibet. I issued a statement on Tibet on 17 December 2012. In this statement, I called on Tibetans not to resort to extreme forms of protest such as self-immolation, and urged their community and religious leaders to use their influence to stop this tragic loss of life.

We regularly raise our concerns about Tibet with the Chinese authorities, most recently at senior level on 21 December. We will continue to raise these issues with the Chinese authorities including at senior levels. Unfortunately their position remains resolute in response.

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20 December 2012: House of Commons Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Tibet

Pat Glass (North West Durham, Lab): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with (a) the Chinese Government and (b) the United Nations on self-immolations in Tibet.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): I issued a statement on 17 December, urging the Chinese authorities to exercise restraint and calling on Tibetans not to resort to extreme forms of protest such as self-immolation.

We regularly raise our serious concerns about Tibet with the Chinese authorities, most recently, at official level, on 14 and then 18 December. The UK also raised Tibet, focusing on the rights of Tibetans to assemble peacefully, during the 20 June session of the UN Human Rights Council. Through the EU, we expressed concern about reports of human rights violations in China, including in Tibet, at the UN Human Rights Council on 17 September.

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19 December 2012: House of Lords: Written Answer: China

Lord Alton of Liverpool: To ask Her Majesty's Government what information they have about the fate of students involved in protests in Chabcha Sorig Lobling School in Chabcha County, north-eastern Tibet; and about any immolations which have recently occurred in Tibet.

Baroness Warsi (Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government and Foreign and Commonwealth Office): We are aware of reports that Tibetans Rabten, Wangdue Tsering, Chamba Tsering, Choekyong, Tashi Kunsang, Dorjee Tsering, Sanggye Dundrup and Kunsang Bum, all students at the Sorig Lobling medical school, were sentenced to prison terms of five years on 5 December, apparently in connection with their role in protests in Gonghe county (known as Chabcha in Tibetan), Qinghai Province, on 26 November. We are seeking to clarify the nature of the charges against them, and whether they had access to defence lawyers of their own choosing. We are concerned by reports that police in Gonghe used force to disperse protesters, with a number of students reportedly requiring hospital treatment for injuries sustained in the course of this incident. We are also aware of reports that three Tibetan monks have been detained for disseminating information about the Gonghe protests. We would urge the relevant authorities to respect the constitutionally guaranteed rights of all Chinese citizens to freedom of speech, assembly and demonstration.

Since 16 March 2011 there have been 94 immolations (of which 43 have not been confirmed by official state media). At least 77 incidents are believed to have led to the death of the individual involved. They have taken place in four regions- Sichuan, TAR, Qinghai and Gansu.

The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right honourable friend the Member for East Devon (Mr Swire), issued a statement on 17 December setting out our serious concerns about the self-immolations in Tibetan regions, which is available at: www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-has-serious-concerns-about-human-rights-in-tibet.

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10 December 2012: House of Commons Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Tibet

Cathy Jamieson (Kilmarnock and Loudoun, Lab/Co-op): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has made to the government of China on self-immolations in Tibet.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): We closely monitor the situation in Tibet. We most recently raised the need for access to the Tibetan region for diplomats, journalists and NGOs with the Chinese authorities on 21 November.

We will continue to raise our concerns at official level with the Chinese embassy in London and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing. We also work closely with like-minded countries to raise our concerns about the self-immolations.

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22 November 2012: House of Lords: Written Answer: China

Lord Alton of Liverpool: To ask Her Majesty's Government what information they have received regarding self-immolations in Tibet on 7 and 8 November.

Baroness Warsi (Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government and Foreign and Commonwealth Office): We are aware of reports of five individual self-immolations on 7 November. These included Dorjee, Dorjee Kyab and Samdup, young monks from the Ngoshul Monastery, Golmang, Aba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), Sichuan Province. We understand that Dorjee died. The condition and whereabouts of Dorjee Kyab and Samdup are unknown. A 23 year-old nomad and mother of a young son, Tamdin Tso self-immolated in Gemar market, near Tongren, Huangnan TAP, Qinghai Province. We understand she died. An unnamed Tibetan man self-immolated in Bankar village, Biru county, Naqu TAP, Tibetan Autonomous Region. His condition and whereabouts are unknown.

On 8 November 2012, Jinpa Gyatso, an 18 year-old nomad and former monk, self-immolated in Dolma Square outside Longwu monastery, Tongren, Huangnan TAP, Qinghai Province. Xinhua News Agency confirmed the fatal self-immolation but wrongly attributed this to be Jinba, a 41 year-old nomad. Several thousand Tibetans reportedly gathered to protest in Dolma Square following the self-immolation. We will continue to raise our concerns over these tragic events with the Chinese Government at all levels.

Lord Alton of Liverpool: To ask Her Majesty's Government what information they have received about the possible use of Chinese security forces to prevent dissent in Tibet during the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China.

Baroness Warsi: We remain deeply concerned about continuing tensions and human rights violations in Tibetan areas of China.

We have received reports of a strong security presence in Tibetan areas of China. We are aware that the Chinese authorities are restricting access by foreigners to the Tibetan Autonomous Region and other Tibetan areas.

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19 November 2012: House of Commons Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Dalai Lama

Tim Loughton (East Worthing and Shoreham, Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 12 November 2012, Official Report, column 23W, on Dalai Lama, what advice was given to Ministers on meeting His Holiness The Dalai Lama.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 12 November 2012, Official Report, column 23W. As the hon. Member will be aware it is not the normal practice to disclose detailed departmental advice given to Ministers, as to do so would inhibit the frankness and candour of such advice.

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13 November 2012: House of Lords: Written Answer: China

Lord Patten: To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Warsi on 11 October, when is the next United Kingdom-China Human Rights Dialogue; what will be its agenda; and whether they will raise the position of Catholics in China during that meeting.

Baroness Warsi (Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government and Foreign and Commonwealth Office): The UK-China Human Rights Dialogue takes place annually and was most recently held in January. We have not yet set a date for the next UK-China Human Rights Dialogue. We hope the dialogue will take place later in 2013 following the conclusion of the Chinese leadership transition in March 2013. The agenda has not yet been agreed. The UK and China will agree an agenda closer to the dialogue. The agenda for the most recent dialogue included freedom of religion, as well as the rights of detainees, ethnic minority rights, the death penalty, gender discrimination and freedom of expression including media and internet freedom, the situation in Tibet and Xinjiang, and a number of individual cases.

We strongly support freedom of religion for all, including in China. The prohibition of some religious groups, and the legal restrictions and harassment aimed at others, undermines freedom of religious belief in China. We regularly raise this with the Chinese Government, and did so during the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in January this year. We will continue to raise this issue at appropriate times, including at future human rights dialogues.

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12 November 2012: House of Commons Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs: Dalai Lama

Tim Loughton (East Worthing and Shoreham, Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 5 November 2012, Official Report, column 454W, on Dalai Lama, what the content was of the advice given to Ministers (a) before and (b) during His Holiness the Dalai Lama's visits during 2012.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): The Foreign and Commonwealth Office advised Ministers that the best approach to the visit of the Dalai Lama was of predictability, consistency and principle.

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8 November 2012: House of Lords: Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: China

Lord Alton of Liverpool: To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the Government of China about the Tibetans who have set themselves on fire in protests since March 2011; and what has been the response.

Baroness Warsi (Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government and Foreign and Commonwealth Office): The British Government have consistently raised concerns about the human rights situation in Tibet with the Chinese Government, in particular the large number of self-immolations that have occurred in Tibetan areas since March 2011.

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right honourable friend the Member for Richmond (Yorks) (Mr Hague) set out our concern for the situation on 20 June (Official Report, col. 862).

Tibet was discussed at the last round of the UK-China human rights dialogue in January this year, and officials continue to raise their concerns with the Chinese embassy in London and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing. We remain in frequent contact with the relevant authorities regarding access to these areas.

We also work closely with like-minded countries to raise our concerns about the self-immolations. The UK raised Tibet, focussing on the rights of Tibetans to assemble peacefully, during the 20 June session of the UN Human Rights Council. Through the EU we expressed concern about reports of human rights violations in China, including in Tibet at the UN Human Rights Council on 17 September.

The Chinese Government remain resolute on their position concerning these issues. We will continue to raise this issue with the Chinese Government and to press for a meaningful resolution to the grievances that underlie these distressing events.

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5 November 2012: House of Commons Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Dalai Lama

Tim Loughton (East Worthing and Shoreham, Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what advice (a) he, (b) his Ministers and (c) his Department have issued to Ministers in other departments on meeting his Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): The Foreign and Commonwealth Office provides advice to Ministers across Government whenever a foreign dignitary is visiting our country. Advice given to Ministers on meeting his Holiness the Dalai Lama reflected Her Majesty's Government's position that we view the Dalai Lama as an important religious figure and the need for policy and handling to remain consistent across Government.

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22 October 2012: House of Commons Written Answer: Prime Minister: Members: Correspondence

Tim Loughton: To ask the Prime Minister when he intends to reply to the letter from the hon. Member for East Worthing and Shoreham of 9 July 2012 regarding the visit of the Dalai Lama.

Prime Minister David Cameron: As far as I am aware, my Office has not received the letter.

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24 September 2012: House of Lords: Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: China

Lord Alton of Liverpool: To ask Her Majesty's Government what information they have about the Tibetan monk, Lobsang Lozin, who self-immolated at Tsodun Kirti monastery in Tibet; and what representations they have made to the Government of China about the immolation of Tibetan monks.

Lord Howell of Guildford (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): We are aware of reports that on 17 July, Lobsang Lozin, an 18 year-old monk from the Gedhen Tashi Choeling Kirti monastery in Barkham, Aba Prefecture, Sichuan Province, self-immolated outside the assembly hall of his monastery. Chinese state media has not confirmed reports that he has died.

We have been robust in raising our concerns about the human rights situation in Tibet with the Chinese Government, in particular the large number of self-immolations that have occurred in Tibetan areas since March last year. We are deeply concerned about the immolations and the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right honourable friend the Member for Richmond (Yorks) (Mr Hague) set out our concerns most recently in Parliament on 20 June.

In common with its international partners, the UK has raised our concerns with the Chinese authorities. We urge them to lift restrictions on access to Tibetan areas imposed on foreigners, including diplomats and international media. We call upon all parties to engage in substantive dialogue to address Tibetan concerns and relieve tension. We believe a long-term solution depends on respect for human rights and genuine autonomy for Tibetans within the framework of the Chinese constitution.

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24 September 2012: House of Lords: Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: China

Lord Alton of Liverpool: To ask Her Majesty's Government what conclusions they have drawn about the right to freedom of religious belief in China from the cases of Bishop Thaddeus Ma Daqin, Bishop Su Zhimin and Bishop Shi Enxiang.

Lord Howell of Guildford (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): We have serious concerns about freedom of religion in China, including government restrictions on religious organisations and the treatment of individuals associated with these groups including these cases.

The prohibition of some religious groups, and the legal restrictions and harassment aimed at others, undermines freedom of religious belief in China, a point officials raised with the Chinese delegation at the most recent round of the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in January 2012. We have repeatedly made clear that such actions are not consistent with Article 18 of the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights, nor indeed with Article 36 of the People's Republic of China's Constitution.

We are concerned by the cases of Bishop Thaddeus Ma Daqin, Bishop Su Zhimin and Bishop Shi Enxiang and will continue to seek opportunities to raise our concerns about individual cases and on issues relating to freedom of religious belief with the Chinese Government.

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EDM 285: Tibetans' Rights

28 June 2012, tabled by Fabian Hamilton MP (Leeds North East, Lab)

That this House is gravely concerned and saddened by the continued instances of self-immolation by Tibetans inside Tibet as a means to draw attention to the ongoing repression by the Chinese authorities; notes that there have been 41 occurrences since 2009, 25 being in 2012, and that 31 Tibetans have died; is worried for the safety and well-being of those who survived and whose whereabouts are either unconfirmed or who are in hospital but have no contact with their family; further notes the lack of any constructive steps being taken by the Chinese government to address the grievances of the Tibetan people despite continued widespread resistance to its rule by Tibetans through demonstrations and other actions; is greatly disturbed by the Chinese authorities' imposition of de facto martial law in all Tibetan regions, the restriction of movement for Tibetans and the complete ban on foreign media; calls on the Prime Minister to make a public statement of concern about the deteriorating human rights situation in Tibet; further calls on the Government to support the Dalai Lama's request that the Chinese government carries out a thorough investigation on the causes of the self-immolations and to urge the Chinese government to ease tensions by withdrawing its armed forces from Tibetan areas and to give foreign journalists, humanitarian agencies and independent observers full and unfettered access to Tibetan areas to ascertain the current situation; and further calls on the Government to work with other governments to safeguard Tibetans' rights and interests and instigate a multilateral approach whereby international governments together urge the Chinese government to enter into immediate and unconditional negotiations with representatives of the Tibetan people in order to resolve the Tibetans' underlying grievances.

[Click \[here\]](#) to see if your MP signed this EDM.

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21 June 2012: House of Commons Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Nepal-Tibet

Keith Vaz (Leicester East, Lab): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reports he has received on the ability of British passport holders to cross the border between Nepal and Tibet. [112437]

Jeremy Browne (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): The British embassy in Kathmandu recently received a report that a group of British nationals were not allowed to cross the border from Nepal into Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). The Chinese embassy in Kathmandu confirmed that those without travel permits issued from Lhasa are not allowed to cross the border.

Foreigners wishing to travel to the TAR require the permission of the Chinese authorities. However the Chinese authorities periodically suspend issuing permits for travel to, and within, the TAR for foreign nationals, and may also restrict travel to the region by those who have already obtained a permit. This is clearly stated in our travel advice for China:

Travel agencies in China reported on 6 June that permits are not currently being granted to foreign tourists. The Chinese Government has not confirmed this.

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20 June 2012: House of Commons Oral Answer: Prime Minister's Questions

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Mr William Hague replied on behalf the Prime Minister who was attending the G20 summit in Mexico.

Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East, Lab): The Foreign Secretary will be aware that His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet is in London today and that he will visit Parliament this afternoon. On such an auspicious day, will the right hon. Gentleman use this opportunity to restate the Government's commitment to the human rights of Tibetans within China?

William Hague (Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): In this country and the House, we believe in the universality of human rights. I often make that point to Chinese leaders, including in the annual strategic dialogue that I conduct with China. We also have a formal human rights dialogue with China and we do not shy away from raising any of these cases. Of course, like the previous Government, we see Tibet as part of the People's Republic of China, but we also look for meaningful dialogue between representatives of the Dalai Lama and the Chinese authorities, and we will continue to support that.

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19 June 2012: House of Commons Oral Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Topical Questions

Nic Dakin (Scunthorpe, Lab): I draw attention to my entry in the Register of Members' Financial Interests. Two Nobel peace laureates are in the United Kingdom today: Aung San Suu Kyi and His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Will the Secretary of State take this opportunity to update the House and the country on what steps the Government are taking to work with those Nobel laureates and the authorities in Burma and Tibet to address ongoing human rights issues?

William Hague (Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): I mentioned a few moments ago our support for democratic change and human rights in Burma, including the resolving of the conflicts that continue, such as that in Kachin state. Ethnic conflicts have continued although there is a ceasefire in place in many of them. All that work will continue. We have a regular and formal human rights dialogue with China. As the hon. Gentleman knows, we, like the previous Government, recognise Tibet as part of the People's Republic of China—let there be no mistake about that—but we certainly speak up for human rights in China, as we have done regularly and will continue to do.

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Early Day Motion 202: Forced Settlement and Relocation of Tibetan Nomads

14 June 2012, tabled by Fabian Hamilton MP (Leeds North East, Lab)

That this House welcomes the visit by the Dalai Lama to Westminster on 20 June 2012 when he will give an address to parliamentarians on international development; shares the Dalai Lama's concerns over Chinese government policy of forcible settlement of Tibetan nomads from Tibetan land into walled compounds which is leading to the cessation of the traditional Tibetan nomadic way of life that for centuries has managed and husbanded Tibet's fragile grasslands and habitat; supports the view of scientists, rangelands experts and the Dalai Lama that it would be more constructive and beneficial to the long-term survival of Tibet's environment and continuation of Tibetan nomads' unique way of life for the Chinese government to develop and invest in infrastructure such as hospitals and schools for nomads in the local environs of traditional grazing areas; calls on the Government to take this opportunity publicly to reinforce both the Dalai Lama's concerns and those of the EU as set out at the European parliament on 12 June 2012 about the impact of the resettlement policy of Tibetan nomads; and further calls on the Government to actively develop practical initiatives that seek to safeguard the survival of Tibetan nomads' unique way of life, traditional Tibetan lands and its fragile eco-system that is the world's 'third pole'.

[Click \[here\]](#) to see if your MP signed this EDM.

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17 May 2012: House of Commons Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Tibet

Karen Lumley (Redditch, Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has any plans to visit Tibet up to 2015.

Jeremy Browne (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Richmond (Yorks) (Mr Hague), and I have no plans to visit the Tibetan Autonomous Region in the People's Republic of China.

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15 May 2012: Tibet raised in debate following Queen's Speech

In the debate on the Queen's Speech that covered Foreign Affairs and International Development, Fabian Hamilton, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Tibet, contributed with a strong speech on Tibet where he said, "Our Government needs to stand up and speak louder for the future and self-determination of the Tibetan people before it is too late." and added, "We should not be afraid of the Chinese bullies. I was very pleased that the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister were there yesterday to meet His Holiness at St Paul's cathedral, and I congratulate them."

Kate Hoey and Ivan Lewis also referred to Tibet later in the debate. Kate Hoey followed up on Fabian Hamilton's comments saying, "Our Government should be speaking out more about this issue. We should be forming alliances with other countries and not allowing China to get away with what it is doing just because it is such a huge and economically powerful country."

Ivan Lewis also reiterated the importance of keeping up pressure on China, saying, "We should use every opportunity to say to the Chinese that we keep a close eye on human rights, freedom of expression and freedom of faith in Tibet, and that we have serious concerns about the human rights abuses that continue to occur."

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