

2013-14 Tibet in Parliament

Details and links of when and how Tibet and related matters have been raised in the UK parliament during the 2013-14 parliamentary session (8 May 2013 - 14 May 2014).

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- 30/04/14: Commons Written: FCO: China (UK-China human rights dialogue)
- 08/04/14: Commons Oral: FCO: UN Human Rights Council (UK-China dialogue, UN High Commissioner visit to Tibet)
- 27/02/14: Lords Oral: Debate: Holocaust Remembrance (reference to Tibet)
- 16/12/13: Commons Written: Prime Minister: China (PM visit to China)
- 03/12/13: Commons Oral: Debate: Persecution of Christians (reference to religious repression in Tibet)
- 29/11/13: Commons Written: FCO: Tibet (measures to protect Tibetans)
- 21/11/13: Lords Oral: Motion: Human Rights (references to Tibet & Dalai Lama)
- 19/11/13: Commons Oral: Debate: UK Relations with China (references to Tibet)
- 07/11/13: Lords Oral: Motion: UK and China (references to Tibet)
- 04/11/13: Commons Written: Treasury: China (Chancellor's trip to China)
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- 02/09/13: Commons Written: FCO: Tibet (Dawu shootings)
- 02/09/13: Commons Written: FCO: China (human rights dialogue)
- 02/09/13: Commons Written: DFID: Tibet (aid)
- 29/08/13: Lords Oral: Debate: Syria (reference to Tibet)
- 25/07/13: Lords Oral: Motion: Atheists and Humanists (reference to Dalai Lama)
- 22/07/13: Lords Written: Tibet (nomadic resettlement)
- 18/06/13: Commons Oral: FCO: Topical Questions (policy on Tibet)
- 03/06/13: Lords Oral: Grand Committee: EUC Report (reference to China and Dalai Lama)
- 08/05/13: Commons Oral: Debate following Queen's Speech (policy on Tibet)
- Useful links

30 April 2014: House of Commons: Written Answers: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: China

Kerry McCarthy (Bristol East, Lab): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what reasons the Government received from the Chinese Government for the cancellation of the UK-China human rights dialogue in April 2014; and when the Government was informed of that cancellation.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): The dialogue was originally scheduled for 15-16

April, but China informed us of its decision to postpone on 7 April. An open exchange of views on human rights is in the interests of both sides, and is an important part of our bilateral relationship. We are working with the Chinese Government to reschedule the dialogue as soon as possible.

Ms McCarthy: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects the next UK-China human rights dialogue to take place.

Mr Swire: We consider the human rights dialogue to be an important part of our bilateral relationship with China. We are working with the Chinese Government to reschedule the dialogue as soon as possible.

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8 April 2014: House of Commons: Oral Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: UN Human Rights Council

Tim Loughton (East Worthing and Shoreham, Con): Will the Minister also maintain the robust approach to human rights abuses in Tibet with the UK-China human rights dialogue coming up, and will he press the Chinese for a date for the visit to Tibet and China by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, to which China has agreed?

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): We are of course looking forward to the human rights dialogue with the Chinese, for which a date will be forthcoming shortly. It is worth saying that the new configuration of the Human Rights Council means that it is less prepared to support country mandates, because re-elected along with the United Kingdom were Russia, China and Cuba.

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27 February 2014: House of Lords: Debate: International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance

Excerpt from question for short debate, asked by Baroness Deech

Lord Wills (Lab): ...Of all the crimes against humanity, genocide occupies a unique place because of the way in which it seeks to exterminate entire peoples, their cultures, their society and everything that sustains them as a people...

To the shame of the world, in the past 20 years we have been witness once again to what can only be described only as genocide. We have seen it in Rwanda, Yugoslavia and Darfur and, for all the efforts now to secure accountability for those crimes, the civilised world failed to prevent these terrible crimes against humanity - crimes that have amounted, again, to genocide. Moreover, we have seen brutal repression in Tibet and systematic attempts to eradicate Tibetan culture...

[Read full debate \(starts 2pm\)](#)

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16 December 2013: House of Commons: Written Answers: Prime Minister: China

Bob Blackman (Harrow East, Con): To ask the Prime Minister whether the UK's national action plan on business and human rights was referred to by officials and businesses during his recent visit to China.

Tim Loughton (East Worthing & Shoreham, Con): To ask the Prime Minister whether Government officials and businesses who accompanied him on his recent visit to China used and referred to the UK's national action plan on business and human rights in their work on that visit.

The Prime Minister: During my visit, I emphasised the UK's belief that the rule of law and political openness underpins long-term economic success. UK Government Ministers will continue to discuss these important issues with their Chinese counterparts.

Mr Blackman: To ask the Prime Minister what recent discussions he has had with President Xi Jinping of China on the issue of Tibet; and if he will make a statement.

The Prime Minister: During my visit I re-affirmed our policy on Tibet as unchanged, and made clear that we understood the sensitivities for China.

Mr Blackman: To ask the Prime Minister whether following his recent visit to China any trade deals were signed involving companies doing business in Tibetan areas of China.

Mr Loughton: To ask the Prime Minister what business deals involving conducting business in Tibetan areas were signed during his recent visit to China.

The Prime Minister: Over £6 billion of deals were made by the business delegation that accompanied me. A number of these involved small and medium sized enterprises. Full information about the trade and investment deals announced is available on the Number 10 website.

Mr Blackman: To ask the Prime Minister what recent discussions he has had with President Xi Jinping of China on political prisoners in that country; and if he will make a statement.

The Prime Minister: I raised concerns about human rights during my visit, and agreed with Premier Li that we would hold the next round of the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in early 2014. This dialogue is the right place for detailed expert discussion of these issues.

I also met human rights organisations in China working on issues including disability, sexuality, and equal rights.

Mr Loughton: To ask the Prime Minister whether he raised specific political prisoners' cases with the Chinese government in his recent visit to that country.

The Prime Minister: I raised concerns about human rights during my visit, and agreed with Premier Li that we would hold the next round of the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in early 2014. As is normal in our on-going engagement with China about human rights, specific concerns were raised. The next round of UK-China Human rights Dialogue will provide an opportunity to explore specific concerns in more detail.

Mr Loughton: To ask the Prime Minister which charitable organisations and non-governmental organisations campaigning on human rights issues he met during his recent visit to China.

The Prime Minister: During my visit I met human rights organisations working on issues including disability, sexuality, and equal rights. Other Ministers in the delegation separately met civil society groups.

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3 December 2013: House of Commons: Debate: Persecution of Christians

During a debate on the persecution of Christians, the following references to Tibet were made:

Mark Pritchard (The Wrekin, Con): I am grateful to the Minister for being so generous in taking interventions. In order for there to be some balance vis-à-vis my remarks on China and following on from a debate a week or so ago in Westminster Hall, does he agree that Uighurs in the Xinjiang province of China also need protection, as do the Buddhists in another part of China?

Mark Simmonds (Boston & Skegness, Con): I think my hon. Friend is referring to the Buddhists in Tibet, which I have visited. Certainly, wherever people of religious belief exist, they should be allowed to practise free of persecution, intimidation and violence. As I have said before in relation to China or anywhere else, this is a main priority of our bilateral relations. We have raised this important issue in the past, and we will continue to do so in the future...

Kerry McCarthy (Bristol East, Lab): ...Of course, the Prime Minister is in China at the moment. Before his trip, I tabled some parliamentary named-day questions, which unfortunately were not answered when they should have been, asking him what efforts he was going to make to raise human rights during his visit. I know that it is primarily a trade delegation, but he has gone to a country where Muslims, Buddhists and Christians, as well as Falun Gong practitioners, suffer torture, harassment and arbitrary detention, and the Tibetans and the Uyghurs are prevented from exercising their freedom of religion too. It is important to use such a high-profile visit to raise those issues.

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29 November 2013: House of Commons: Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Tibet

Frank Field (Birkenhead, Lab): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps he is taking to protect the safety of people living in Tibet.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): We regularly express our concerns about the situation in Tibet with the Chinese authorities. We did so most recently at official level on 24 October. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Richmond (Yorks) (Mr Hague), has also raised this in parliament, most recently on 3 September. Our concerns are addressed in detail in the Foreign & Commonwealth Office's Annual Human Rights Report, published on 15 April: www.hrdreport.fco.gov.uk and in the update to it, published on 17 October.

We also work with international partners and through multilateral fora. For example, we made a strong statement regarding human rights issues, including Tibet, during China's UN Universal Periodic Review on 22 October, and we will continue to work with the UN Human Rights Council to engage China on human rights issues, including Tibet.

It is only through engaging China that we can help bring about positive change to human rights in China, including for Tibetan communities.

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21 November 2013: House of Lords: Motion to Take Note: Human Rights

During a debate on the government's policy towards countries responsible for violations of human rights, the following references to Tibet and the Dalai Lama were made:

Lord Alton of Liverpool: ...There are growing restrictions on freedom of conscience that range from the suffering of the Ahmadiyya Muslim communities in Pakistan and Indonesia to the plight of the Baha'is in Iran and Egypt; from the

Rohingyas and other Muslims in Burma to Falun Gong, Tibetan Buddhists and Uighur Muslims in China, and of course Christians in these countries as well as in countries as diverse as Egypt, Syria, Nigeria, Sudan, India, Eritrea and Cuba...

We can learn a lot from our recent debate on China—another Conservative initiative, tabled by the noble Lord, Lord Dobbs. His understandable concern was with our business and trade with China, and whether our relationship would be affected by too much emphasis on human rights, such as our preoccupation with Tibet and China's attitude to the Uighurs in Xinjiang province, where the conflict has been no less violent. The noble Lord, Lord Goodlad, said in that debate that, "it is perfectly possible ... to exert quiet and helpful influence, to encourage moves towards greater openness while avoiding explicit criticism or confrontation ... not through lecturing or preaching but through the sharing of best practice with partners representing a very ancient civilisation".

That seems to sum things up very well.

The Dalai Lama told a journalist recently that trust develops gradually, even with an animal, "if you show genuine affection", but that if you are, "always showing bad face and beating, how can you develop friendship?".

The same might be said of many other situations in which we have to do business with tyrants or bring humanitarian aid to victims of brutality...

Lord Hannay of Chiswick (CB): ...In considering how Britain should respond to human rights abuses, I suggest that one mistake we need to avoid is looking at the issue principally, or even solely, in the context of our bilateral relationship with the country in question. However, Britain's influence and leverage are unlikely to be decisive nowadays. All too often we have seen how easy it is for the country in question to punish us for our temerity and play us off against other countries which have been less assertive. We saw that over the Chinese reactions to the Prime Minister receiving the Dalai Lama... A multilateral approach is not just a soft option and makes it more difficult for the country on the receiving end of the pressure or the sanctions to divide and rule. I give a few examples of where it has been very successful: the Commonwealth sporting boycott of apartheid South Africa; the wide-ranging international sanctions on the military regime in Burma; and the pressure the European Union is bringing to bear on Ukraine in the run-up to the Eastern Partnership summit later this month. This surely points to our making maximum use of the multilateral instruments and forums that exist for handling human rights.

Read the full motion here (starts 11.37am)

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19 November 2013: House of Commons: Debate: UK Relations with China

Excerpts from debate, moved by Mark Pritchard, featuring Tibet:

Kate Hoey (Vauxhall, Lab): Does [Mr Pritchard] agree that it is shocking that the InterContinental Hotels Group, whose headquarters is in London, is building a new hotel in the centre of Tibet? That is not acceptable to the Tibetans who have fought so long for the right to be free in their own country.

Mark Pritchard (The Wrekin, Con): The InterContinental Hotels Group is an important British company employing a lot of people around the world. Clearly, it must make commercial decisions with the information available. I would hope that it had some dialogue not only with the Chinese authorities but with Tibetans in exile and the people in Tibet who are being oppressed by the Chinese authorities. I will come to Tibet later in my speech. If InterContinental did not consult, I hope that it will learn lessons from the example of Tibet.

Stewart Jackson (Peterborough, Con): ...[Mr Pritchard] talks about the international community being minded to take a

tough approach, but as we speak there are human rights abuses in Tibet. There is self-immolation, and dissidents are being driven into the Dharamsala mountains. There is collective punishment and an attempt to eradicate the culture and language of Tibet. Is that not something on which the international community should be taking a tough stance, rather than kowtowing and acquiescing in the bullying of China when, for instance, the Dalai Lama visits various international communities?

Mr Pritchard: ...I have met the Dalai Lama twice, for which I am glad. I am proud to have had the privilege of meeting him, and what the Chinese Government are doing in Tibet is completely unacceptable. There has been suppression of the Buddhist religion and oppression of the Tibetan people... There needs to be a peaceful resolution to the Tibet question, and human rights in Tibet must be recognised.

...The Chinese must stop bullying individuals; they must stop bullying Tibet; and they must stop bullying other Governments, too.

Simon Hughes (Bermondsey and Old Southwark, Lib Dem): On Tibet, many of us are very supportive of better links with China... The Chinese do not yet appear to understand that nobody is seeking to threaten China's control of Tibet; we are just seeking, with the Buddhists, to argue for their religious freedom and for a certain degree of autonomy for them to live their lives in the old parts of China, as they would choose to do.

Mr Pritchard: ...We are hopefully arguing for the upholding of the Chinese constitution itself. The Chinese authorities need not fear freedom of religion. The suppression of religion, not the freedom of religion, is what causes instability in societies.

...China must end its economic strangulation of, and mass economic discrimination against, Tibet. That deliberate policy has forced thousands of Tibetans to abandon their traditional rural lives and move into new housing colonies in urban areas where non-agricultural jobs are controlled by the Chinese state. Tibetans are now a minority in such urban centres because of China's encouragement of mass Chinese migration.

The Buddhist religion continues to suffer... Today, the number of monks allowed to enter monasteries is strictly controlled and limited. Any references to, or images of, the Dalai Lama are banned.

Chinese political oppression - and that is what it is: oppression - has responded to uprisings with extreme violence. Some 300,000 Chinese soldiers are now posted in Tibet. China has repeatedly violated UN conventions through the extensive use of torture against Tibetan political prisoners, including monks and nuns. The Chinese regime has also wreaked huge environmental damage throughout Tibet.

Ms Hoey: ...Does [Mr Pritchard] agree that, although the Chinese reaction to the Prime Minister's meeting with the Dalai Lama was rather upsetting, the Prime Minister should, when he visits China in the near future, specifically raise with the Chinese Government the position of Tibet, including all the political prisoners in Tibet and the way in which Tibetan culture is being ruined?

Mr Pritchard: ...The Prime Minister will set out the case for human rights... but the realpolitik is that we need to engage with China on all sorts of levels.

Kerry McCarthy (Bristol East, Lab): ... China is particularly vulnerable to the impact of climate change, with increasing temperatures and rising sea levels a threat to its long coast line. Glacier melt in Tibet is also a serious concern.

...As to Tibet, while we respect China's sovereignty, we cannot ignore the serious human rights issues that arise - the disturbing number of self-immolations and the reports of arrests because a friend or relative has self-immolated. It is important that the UK should continue to raise concerns about the treatment of people in Tibet and promote dialogue.

Mark Simmonds (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): Where there are additional concerns about human rights, we raise them... We continue to discuss human rights issues with the Chinese authorities, including Tibet.

...We continue to have serious concerns about human rights in Tibet. We believe that meaningful dialogue is the best way to address and resolve the underlying grievances of the Tibetan communities, and we urge all parties to restart talks as soon as possible. However, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary have stated clearly that our policy is unchanged, and is consistent with that of the previous Government, in that we recognise Tibet is part of China. The Prime Minister has no plans to meet the Dalai Lama.

Read selected excerpts featuring Tibet, human rights and UK-China relations

Read the full three hour debate (starts 2.30pm) - [Part 1](#) | [Part 2](#)

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7 November 2013: House of Lords: Motion to Take Note: United Kingdom and China

During a debate on developments in the relationship between the UK and China, the following references to Tibet were made:

Lord Dobbs (Con): ... Although in many eyes the rise of China is a threat to the West, I argue that the greatest threat comes not from China's expansion but from the possibility of her implosion... If we criticise Chinese inflexibility towards Tibet, for instance, we should at least understand their genuine fear that unrest in Tibet will be followed by upheaval in Xinjiang and other border regions, and then perhaps throughout the entire country.

Lord Howell of Guildford (Con): ... China has limited territorial expansion plans. As we know, it regards Tibet and Taiwan as unquestionably part of China... Moreover, China is still very prickly on questions of human rights and governance values.

Lord Haskel (Lab): ... I was interested when the London Mayor and Chancellor announced their successful business deals in China last month. The Chinese press reported that business had been done because the Prime Minister had admitted that he had mishandled or misunderstood Tibet. Here, some commentators ranging from the Observer to the FT interpreted the business resulting from this visit as kowtowing to the Chinese; I am sure that the Minister saw these reports in the papers himself. Maybe that is true, but to me it looked rather like desperate salesmen doing reckless deals to achieve their quotas.

Lord Goodlad (Con): ... Is it appropriate, some ask, that in its reports on human rights and democracy the FCO should publicly comment on subjects such as China's online censorship, harassment of human rights defenders, the inadequacies of safeguards in China to guarantee the rule of law and access to justice, Tibet and other subjects? The answer is clearly yes, it is appropriate and important. Why else would China engage in more than 20 rounds of the UK/China human rights dialogue on subjects such as detainee rights; migrant rights; capital punishment; freedom of expression; freedom of religion; China's plans for ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; ethnic minority rights; individual human rights cases; the role of faith groups in civil society; and the use of evidence in criminal trials? The Government of the People's Republic do not want implosion.

[Read full debate here \(starts 11.46am\)](#)

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4 November 2013: House of Commons: Written Answer: HM Treasury: China

Kerry McCarthy (Bristol East, Lab): To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what discussions he had with the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs regarding (a) human rights in China and (b) the Government's Action Plan on Business and Human Rights before his recent visit to China; (2) what discussions he had regarding (a) freedom of expression, (b) freedom of association, (c) protection of human rights, (d) the rule of law and (e) Tibet during his recent visit to China.

Nicky Morgan (Economic Secretary, HM Treasury): The Chancellor speaks with his Cabinet colleagues on a range of issues on a regular basis, including the UK's relationships with other major economies. The Chancellor also speaks regularly with international counterparts, including with Chinese Ministers as part of the UK-China Economic and Financial Dialogue; it is not the Government's practice to comment on every detail of those discussions.

The Government's policy is, nonetheless, clear. Ministers believe that UK foreign policy should be based on our values; the Government regularly engages with the Chinese and other governments on human rights issues, and will continue to do so. China is becoming increasingly internationally facing, and the promotion of universal values is good for China's long-term prosperity.

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16 October 2013: House of Commons: Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Tibet

Jim Shannon (Strangford, DUP): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with the Chinese government on Tibet.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): We regularly express our concerns in public and privately to the Chinese Government about a wide range of human rights issues, including Tibet. We raised our concerns about human rights issues in Tibet directly with the Chinese Government in July and we will continue to do so. Tibet will form part of our discussions at the next UK-China Human Rights Dialogue. We are seeking to agree dates for the next Dialogue with the Chinese Government.

Mr Shannon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent steps he has taken to raise the persecution of Tibetan monks with the Chinese government.

Mr Swire: 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 raised freedom of religion in the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in January 2012 and in our Annual Foreign and Commonwealth Office Report on Human Rights and Democracy, which we last published on 15 April 2013, and in the quarterly updates to that.

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3 September 2013: House of Commons: Oral Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Topical Questions: China

Nic Dakin (Scunthorpe, Lab): What recent representations he has made to the Chinese Government on human rights?

William Hague (The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): Foreign Office officials last raised our concerns about human rights issues with the Chinese Government on 23 July. We have also proposed dates for the next UK-China human rights dialogue and are waiting for the Chinese Government to respond.

Mr Dakin: I draw attention to my entry in the Register of Members' Financial Interests. The Chinese Government's response to Tibetan self-immolations is of grave concern. Will the Foreign Secretary raise concerns about Dolma Gyab's treatment and take steps to ensure that his human rights are respected by the Chinese authorities?

Mr Hague: Yes. According to state media reports, Dolma Gyab was sentenced to death on 15 August. We urge the Chinese authorities to commute the sentence and give a reprieve. We firmly believe that all trials should be free and fair and in line with international standards. We remain extremely concerned about reports of self-immolations and call on all parties to use their influence to bring them to an end.

James Gray (North Wiltshire, Con): I call attention to my entry in the Register of Members' Financial Interests: namely, a visit to Tibet at the cost of the Chinese, and a visit to the Dalai Lama at Dharamsala at the cost of the Tibet Society. Although it is right to be deeply concerned about human rights abuses in China and elsewhere, does the Secretary of State not agree that excessive concentration on them or excessively large noises about them, especially if linked to any talk of a free Tibet, risk exactly the opposite of the end we all want: religious and political freedom within a sovereign People's Republic of China?

Mr Hague: Of course, human rights issues are by no means the only issues we discuss with the Chinese Government and others; there is a vast range of issues to discuss. But I think that we should always be clear in the United Kingdom about our belief in universal human rights and never be afraid to give our advocacy for those rights. That includes relations with China.

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2 September 2013: 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 if he will make representations to his Chinese counterparts on the whereabouts and wellbeing of the 10 Tibetans who were shot and injured whilst taking part in a peaceful community picnic to celebrate the birthday of the Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): The FCO made representations at official level on 23 July regarding this issue. We regularly raise our concerns about the human rights situation in Tibet with the Chinese Government and will continue to raise our concerns with the Chinese embassy in London and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing.

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2 September 2013: House of Commons: Written Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: China

Cathy Jamieson (Kilmarnock and Loudoun, Lab/Co-op): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the next UK-China human rights dialogue will take place; what its agenda will be; and if he will raise concerns about the human rights of the Tibetan people at this dialogue.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): We are working with the Chinese to agree dates for the next Human Rights Dialogue in 2014. An agenda has not yet been finalised, but we would expect Tibet to form a key part of any such discussions, alongside other concerns we have about the broader human rights situation in China. Tibet was discussed at the last UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in January

Ms Jamieson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make representations to his Chinese counterpart on that country upholding its constitutional commitments to allow freedom of assembly and religious belief; and if he will request an investigation into the actions of the security forces who opened fire on unarmed Tibetans celebrating the birthday of their spiritual leader.

Mr Swire: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office regularly raise our concerns about the human rights situation in Tibet with the Chinese Authorities. We outlined our concerns in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Annual Human Rights Report, which was published on 15 April 2013 and can be found at www.hrdreport.fco.gov.uk and in the update to it, published on 19 July 2013. We also expect to discuss Tibet at the next UK-China Human Rights Dialogue. We raised our concerns at official level on 23 July about the incident in Dawu on the Dalai Lama's Birthday.

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2 September 2013: House of Commons: Written Answer: International Development: Tibet

Cathy Jamieson (Kilmarnock and Loudoun, Lab/Co-op): To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what level of aid her Department provides to the Tibet Autonomous Region and other Tibetan regions in China; and what the main areas of focus are of such programmes.

Alan Duncan (Minister of State, Department for International Development): DFID does not have a bilateral programme in the Tibetan region. It is included within a small number of regional programmes looking at helping people adapt to the effects of changing river flows, such as in the Mount Kailash area.

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29 August 2013: House of Lords: Debate on Syria and use of chemical weapons

During the debate on Syria and the use of chemical weapons in the House of Lords, the following reference to Tibet was made:

Baroness Deech: The struggle in Syria will not be ended by air strikes or even the delivery of arms to acceptable rebels. There will be a showdown with Russia and reverberation across the Middle East and at home. We have never taken the moral action that maybe we should have in relation to, say, the Chinese occupation of Tibet and the protection of North Koreans, with as many horrors, because of the strength of Russia and China and their presence on the United Nations Security Council. Our morality is selective.

[Read full debate here](#)

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25 July 2013: House of Lords: Motion to Take Note: Atheists and Humanists - Contribution to Society

During a debate on the contribution of atheists and humanists to UK society, the following reference to the Dalai Lama was made:

Baroness Meacher: The Dalai Lama has shown the way in his book, *Beyond Religion*. He argues that compassion is the most central instinct which enables human beings to survive and thrive. Compassion leads us to treat others as we would wish them to treat us—a central tenet of Christianity — that is, with concern, affection and warm-heartedness. The Dalai Lama — a lifelong Buddhist, of course — advocates, “an approach to ethics which makes no recourse to religion”.

I find that very interesting and powerful. He argues for a secular ethics and sees no contradiction between that and his religious beliefs. Secular ethics, or humanism, is beyond religion, as the Dalai Lama suggests, not beneath or above it.

[Read full debate here \(starts 2.12pm\)](#)

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22 July 2013: House of Lords: Written Answer: Tibet

Lord Alton of Liverpool: To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Human Rights Watch report *They Say We should Be Grateful* on human rights abuses in Tibet; whether they have made any estimate of the number of people from nomadic tribes who have been forcibly resettled and relocated to Chinese villages; and whether they intend to draw the report to the attention of the Chinese authorities.

Baroness Warsi (Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government & Foreign and Commonwealth Office): We are aware of the recent Human Rights Watch report which makes reference to a number of issues about which we have serious concerns. However, we have not been able to make an assessment of the number of people who have been relocated due to the lack of reliable data. There has been criticism by some Chinese academics of the impact of the state-led development programmes including the lack of local consultation. We are very concerned about reports of forced relocations amongst Tibetan communities. We regularly raise our concerns about the situation in Tibet with the Chinese authorities and did so most recently on 12 July.

We remain of the view that sustainable prosperity and stability in Tibet - as in other parts of China - depends on greater public participation and transparency. We continue to urge the Chinese authorities to recognise minority rights for Tibetan people, including the right to cultural life and to appropriate economic and social development as outlined by both the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, both of which China has signed. We will maintain a dialogue with the Chinese authorities on these issues and we encourage Human Rights Watch to bring the report to the attention of the Chinese authorities.

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18 June 2013: House of Commons: Oral Answer: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Topical Questions

Laura Sandys (South Thanet, Con): Will the Foreign Secretary update us on the Government's policy towards Tibet?

William Hague (Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): The Prime Minister made clear our position in the House a few weeks ago: we recognise Tibet as part of China and we do not support Tibetan independence. We have well-established positions and dialogue on human rights, as the House well knows, but of course we also understand Chinese sensitivities and concerns about Tibet.

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3 June 2013: House of Lords: Grand Committee: Motion to Take Note: EUC Report: EU External Action Service

During a debate on a report by the European Union Committee on the EU's External Action Service, the following reference to the Dalai Lama and China was made:

Lord Kerr of Kinlochard: ...On the other hand, I think that the noble Lord is wrong when he says that there is no role for EU diplomacy, as distinct from member state diplomacy, on human rights. Sometimes, people find that there is safety in numbers. When one is dealing with, say, China or Russia, as we see, receiving the Dalai Lama can have consequences and criticising the murder of Litvinenko in London can have consequences. Sometimes, member states feel braver about speaking up for human rights if they are speaking up collectively. There may well be a role for the noble Baroness, Lady Ashton, there.

[Read full debate here \(starts 3.52pm\)](#)

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8 May 2013: House of Commons: Debate following Queen's Speech

In the debate following the Queen's Speech which opened the new session of Parliament, the following question was asked:

Sir Malcolm Rifkind (Kensington, Con): My right hon. Friend has rightly emphasised the importance of the United Kingdom's relationship with China, but he will be as aware as all the rest of us that, from time to time, it has been a difficult relationship, particularly given the very difficult problem of Tibet. Is he able to be positive today about what he expects to be the relationship between the United Kingdom and China over the year ahead?

Prime Minister David Cameron: I am grateful to my right hon. and learned Friend for what he says. Let us be absolutely clear: this Government have not changed the long-standing British policy towards China, and China and Tibet, and we do want to have a strong and positive relationship with China, which I believe is to our mutual benefit. The Chinese Government are aware of our policy on Tibet. We recognise Tibet as part of China. We do not support Tibetan independence, and we respect China's sovereignty, and when I spoke to Premier Li recently, we both looked forward to our countries working very closely together in the months and years ahead.

[Read full debate here](#)

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Useful Links

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