

2015-16 Tibet in Parliament (part 1)

Details and links of when and how Tibet and related matters have been raised in the UK parliament during the 2015-16 parliamentary session. (Part 1: 27 May - 31 Decemer 2015).

Part 1 (27 May - 31 December 2015)

(click here to see part 2)

INDEX

- 26/11/15: Lords: Short debate: Counterterrorism (reference to Dalai Lama)
- 25/11/15: Commons debate: UK musicians performing overseas (Tibet reference)
- 24/11/15: Commons oral: FCO: Tibet (discussions with Chinese President)
- 04/11/15: Commons written: FCO: China: Human Rights (China State Visit)
- 03/11/15: Commons written: FCO: Tibet: Human Rights (conditions in Tibet)
- 29/10/15: Commons written: FCO: Tibet: Religious Freedom (conditions in TAR)
- 29/10/15: Commons written: FCO: Tenzin Delek Rinpoche (death in custody)
- 29/10/15: Commons written: FCO: Gedhun Choekyi Nyima (Panchen Lama)
- 28/10/15: Commons oral: Point of order: Arrests of Chinese Protesters (China State Visit)
- 26/10/15: Commons oral: FCO: Arrests of Chinese Protesters (China State Visit)
- 22/10/15: Commons oral: FCO: China: Human Rights (China State Visit)
- 22/10/15: Commons written: FCO: China: Human Rights (human rights in China)
- 12/10/15: Lords written: FCO: China: Human Rights (arrest of lawyers)

- 10/09/15: Lords motion: BBC: Finance & Independence (China criticism of BBC)
- 24/07/15: Lords written: FCO: Tibet: Religious freedom (discussions with China)

- 21/07/15 Commons written: FCO: China: Minority Groups (travel restrictions; freedom of religion)
- 16/07/15: Lords motion: Freedom of Religion & Belief (Tenzin Delek Rinpoche)
- 07/07/15: Commons written: FCO: Tibet (UK policy on Tibet)

- 30/06/15: Commons written: FCO: China: Human Rights (discussions with China)
- 24/06/15: Commons EDM 181: Dalai Lama's 80th Birthday

- 18/06/15: Commons oral: Debate on Tibet
- 10/06/15: Lords oral: Debate on Gurkhas (reference to Tibet)

- 27/05/15: Queen's Speech (reference to UK-China relationship)
- useful links

26 November 2015: House of Lords: Question for Short Debate: Counterterrorism: Communities

In a short debate following a question on the government's counterterrorism strategy following the attacks in Paris on 13 November, the Dalai Lama was referenced twice.

Lord Stone of Blackheath (Lab): With the help of your Lordships, I would like to suggest a way to foster global links collectively at leadership level to promote a counterterrorism strategy. The terrorist issue involves economics, politics and security, yes, but, of course, religion and faith, whether genuine or distorted, are also involved. Recently, His Holiness the Dalai Lama clarified for me the three aspects or levels within all religions and faiths, and even secular mindfulness. First, there is a total agreement that the basis of humanity is compassion and we are all one. Secondly, there are mutually agreed differences of philosophy—for example, on the nature and existence of God and the afterlife. Thirdly, there are contentious cultural barriers and customs, such as Kashrut and halal in some, dress codes in others and varying moral standards.

Perhaps the leaders of all the major religions, philosophies and wisdoms could come together in one place urgently now, as a grand coalition if you like, to emphasise the mutual spiritual underpinning of all faiths, and then agree on their political differences but strive to find a consensus and agree on a joint statement that nullifies the claim that terrorism has a religious justification.

Lord Suri (Con): There are many examples in the world of people who have resolved conflicts by peaceful means, such as Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela and many more such noble persons. I happened to meet the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan spiritual leader, on his recent visit to the UK. He invited questions from the guests at the reception. I sent him a short written question: how can we see the end of terrorism? His thoughtful one-word reply was, "Education". Education starts at home and a child can start learning while in his mother's womb.

Hansard (Lord Stone) | Hansard (Lord Suri) | Index

25 November 2015: House of Commons: Oral debate: UK Musicians Performing Overseas

In a debate considering British music artists performing overseas, China's tendency to ban musicians who had songs containing references to Tibetan freedom and the Dalai Lama was raised.

Dr Rupa Huq (Ealing Central and Acton, Lab): Regarding China in the post-Wham! era, things seem to be mixed. The British Council had a UK-China season of cultural exchange earlier this year, launched by Prince William. Three newish bands did residencies in different cities, and all that apparently went very well. However, according to Nathaniel Davis, a Brit abroad and music promoter with an agency called Split Works, which does alternative music in China, there is something called "the process", which is about lyric checks and live video reviews—the background checks that have to be gone through for the setlist of every band.

Nathaniel told me about the time frames involved: "the process" can take 30 days, which is prohibitive to British musicians playing overseas. In fact, the Communist party's Ministry of Culture has prevented concerts by Kraftwerk, Bon Jovi, Maroon 5 and Björk by denying them visas because of various statements they have made about Tibet and the Dalai Lama. However, those people are German, American and Icelandic, and we are talking about British musicians today.

Hansard | Index

24 November 2015: House of Commons: Oral Question: Foreign & Commonwealth Office: Tibet

Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East, Lab): What discussions he had with the President of the People's Republic of China on human rights in Tibet.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): During last month's state visit, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister and President Xi Jinping discussed the importance of ongoing dialogue on issues about which we disagree, including human rights. I set out the Government's position on Tibet, including our human rights concerns, in a parliamentary debate secured by the hon. Gentleman in June.

Mr Hamilton: I thank the Minister for that answer. He will be aware that the UN Committee against Torture met last week in Geneva to review China's record, and it expressed serious concerns over China's continued use of torture to extract confessions from prisoners. In response, the Chinese delegation denied all allegations of endemic, systematic acts of torture. China also claims to hold no political prisoners at all. Will the Minister or the Foreign Secretary ensure that the routine use of torture in Chinese jails, including in Tibet, is raised with China at the next UN Human Rights Council?

Mr Swire: We would normally raise such matters regarding Tibet or anywhere else. I congratulate the hon. Gentleman on keeping Tibet at the forefront of the House's deliberations, and there have been two debates on the issue, most recently in June and before that in December. The recent state visit was a huge success. President Xi acknowledged the importance of improving protection for human rights and said that China was ready for increased exchanges and co-operation on that issue with the UK. The UK is one of the few countries in the world to have an annual human rights dialogue with China, and that is an incredibly important architecture within which to press the Chinese and raise such matters. We shall continue to do so.

Tom Brake (Carshalton and Wallington, Lib Dem): The Minister will recall that in an exchange on 22 October he confirmed that China is ready to co-operate with the UK and other countries in the area of human rights.

Were matters such as Tibet and the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners, the alleged forced harvesting of organs, and the harassment of Ai Weiwei discussed with the Chinese President when he visited the UK?

Mr Swire: The right hon. Gentleman credits me with almost total recall, but our position has been consistent. My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary raised the issues of Falun Gong and organ harvesting with State Councillor Yang Jiechi during the UK-China strategic dialogue in Beijing in August. We have raised specific concerns about reports of organ harvesting on numerous occasions, including in response to a written question on 15 July.

Catherine West (Hornsey and Wood Green, Lab): What discussions have taken place to promote the importance of the freedom of religious expression in Tibet, in particular among the Uyghur people?

Mr Swire: We raise those issues consistently with the Chinese within the framework of the UK-Chinese human rights dialogue, and our annual human rights report is updated every six months. Some comments about the recent state visit have implied that our relationship with the Chinese is purely one of commerce, but that is wrong. This is not a binary relationship. As we get closer to the Chinese and are seen as a good partner to China on the world stage, and in terms of inward investment and trade between both countries, we can discuss such matters more maturely than many other countries can. It boils down to whether we believe in megaphone diplomacy, or in getting alongside the people we are trying to talk to, and pointing out that the way to do things is the way that we do things.

Hansard I Index

4 November 2015: House of Commons: Written Question: Foreign & Commonwealth Office: China: Human Rights

Greg Mulholland (Leeds North West, Lib Dem): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what commitments on human rights in China he secured during the recent state visit to the UK by President Xi Jinping.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): In talks with President Xi, the Prime Minister, my rt hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron) reaffirmed the importance we attach to the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue. President Xi acknowledged the importance of improving human rights protection, and that China was ready for increased exchanges and co-operation on this issue with the United Kingdom. In the UK-China Joint Statement, Britain and China agreed to continue exchanges on human rights and rule of law. We will continue to pursue our human rights concerns both privately and in public fora.

Hansard I Index

3 November 2015: House of Commons: Written Question: Foreign & Commonwealth Office: Tibet: Human Rights

Catherine West (Hornsey and Wood Green, Lab): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of developments in the human rights situation in the Tibet Autonomous Region and ethnic Tibetan prefectures in China since March 2013.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): I most recently set out the Government's position on the human rights situation in Tibet during a Westminster Hall Debate on Tibet on 18 June.

Hansard I Index

29 October 2015: House of Commons: Written Question: Foreign & Commonwealth Office: Tibet: Religious Freedom

Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East, Lab): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment his Department has made of the level of freedom of religion or belief in the Tibet autonomous region.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): We consider freedom of religion or belief to be a fundamental human right and support its protection and promotion around the world. We have concerns about restrictions on freedom of religion or belief and the wider treatment of ethnic minorities in the Tibetan Autonomous Region. I made clear a range of our concerns during a Westminster Hall Debate on Tibet on 18 June. We continue to raise our related concerns in detail with the Chinese authorities, for example during the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue. We have highlighted a range of our concerns in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy (www.hrdreport.fco.gov.uk). We will continue to raise our concerns as part of our wider relationship with China.

Hansard I Index

29 October 2015: House of Commons: Written Question: Foreign & Commonwealth Office: Tenzin Delek Rinpoche

Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East, Lab): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions his Department has had with the Chinese government on the death in custody of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): I raised the case of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche during Westminster Hall Debates on Tibet on both 18 June and in December last year. I urged the Chinese authorities to consider him for release on medical parole. We were saddened by reports that Tenzin died in detention on 12 July.

We supported and encouraged the EU statement of 15 July, which said the EU expected the Chinese authorities to

investigate and make public the circumstances surrounding Tenzin's death. We will continue to raise our related concerns at the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue, through the EU, and as part of our wider relationship with China.

Hansard I Index

29 October 2015: House of Commons: Written Question: Foreign & Commonwealth Office: Gedhun Choekyi Nyima

Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East, Lab): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent discussions his Department has had with the Chinese government on Gendun Choeki Nyima, the 11th Panchen Lama; and whether his Department has requested documentation and photographs to support the Chinese government's statement that he is leading a normal life.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): As I stated during a Westminster Hall Debate on Tibet on 18 June, we continue to raise the issue of the Panchen Lama with the Chinese authorities. We have urged them to ensure that the restrictions on his freedom of movement and communication are lifted, so that he may select the career, education or religious life of his choosing, wherever he is. We have also supported calls by the UN special rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief and the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child for the relevant authorities to facilitate a meeting between the Panchen Lama and independent international observers.

Hansard I Index

28 October 2015: House of Commons: Point of order: Arrests of Chinese Protesters

Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East, Lab): On a point of order, Mr Speaker. You might recall that on Monday you granted me an urgent question about the arrests of a Chinese dissident, who is now a British citizen, and two Tibetan students following demonstrations against the Chinese President during his visit last week. Can you advise me whether there is any way in which I can record the fact that all charges have been dropped against the two students and the dissident Chinese British citizen?

Mr Speaker: There is, and the hon. Gentleman has found it. On reflection, he will know that he has found it. The matter is on the record for ever thanks to the ingenuity of the hon. Gentleman.

Fabian Hamilton: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker: We will leave it there.

Hansard I Index

26 October 2015: House of Commons: Urgent Question: Foreign & Commonwealth Office: Arrests of Chinese Protesters

Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East, Lab): To ask the Minister to make a statement on the arrests of three peaceful protesters during President Xi Jinping's visit to London last week.

Read Tibet Society's report on debate

Hansard I Index

22 October 2015: House of Commons: Urgent Question: Foreign & Commonwealth Office: China: Human Rights

Tibet was referenced during a debate on China's human rights and the Chinese State Visit.

Fiona Bruce (Congleton, Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on human rights in China...

Hugo Swire (The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office): We are in the middle of a hugely positive state

visit, which my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has said will benefit not just our nations and our peoples, but the wider world. Yesterday, the Prime Minister and my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary had extensive discussions with President Xi Jinping and his delegation. These discussions continue today, including when the Prime Minister hosts President Xi at Chequers.

As we have made very clear, the strong relationship that we are building allows us to discuss all issues. No issue, including human rights, is off the table. The UK-China joint statement that we have agreed commits both sides to continuing our dialogue on human rights and the rule of law...

... At the UK-China human rights dialogue, which was held in Beijing in April this year, we raised issues relating to religious freedom in China, including the destruction of churches and religious symbols in Zhejiang province. We raised a number of related individual cases. A transparent legal system is a vital component of the rule of law, and we urge the Chinese authorities to ensure that proper judicial standards are upheld.

Fiona Bruce: ...The matter is also urgent because of wider concern that China's human rights position should be raised directly with President Xi Jinping during his state visit, which ends tomorrow...

...Thousands of political prisoners also continue to languish in Chinese jails, the most famous being Nobel laureate Liu Xiaobo, who is halfway through an 11-year sentence for peacefully advocating democratic change. Members may well wish to raise other cases, including, perhaps, events in Tibet and Xinjiang, and the plight of the Uighurs.

As chair of the Conservative Party Human Rights Commission, I welcome the opportunity to engage with China. The Select Committee on International Development met representatives from the Chinese delegation yesterday to discuss the sustainable development goals, which include a commitment to promoting peaceful and inclusive societies and access to justice for all. I recognise the significance of the business relationship and the importance of dialogue with China on a range of issues, including trade, but I hope that dialogue on human rights, freedom of thought, speech and assembly, and the rule of law will also be placed at the centre of the relationship. It is well recognised that the promotion of such freedoms contributes to better business and economic outcomes for the peoples involved. The two go hand in hand.

Tim Loughton (East Worthing and Shoreham, Con): As we have heard yet again, freedom of speech and dissent in China are being brutally repressed, not least in Tibet, where the mere possession of a photograph of the Dalai Lama can result in imprisonment or worse. In the UK, our democracy is built on the principle of free speech, so can the Minister tell me why protesters in the Mall exercising their right to draw attention to human rights abuses in Tibet were this week corralled behind barricades at the back while Chinese state-sponsored cheerleaders were given "Love China" T-shirts, Chinese diplomatic bags and a prime position at the front?

Mr Swire: My hon. Friend is an assiduous campaigner for Tibet and he will know that, after the death of the senior Tibetan Buddhist, Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, in July, we supported an EU statement and the remarks of a Foreign Office spokesman were carried in the media. Prior to Tenzin's death, I continued to call for his release, including in parliamentary debates on Tibet in June and in December 2014.

Read full debate via Hansard I Index

22 October 2015: House of Commons: Written Question: Foreign & Commonwealth Office: China: Human Rights

Tim Loughton (East Worthing and Shoreham, Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of developments in the human rights situation in China since March 2015.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): We pay close attention to the human rights situation in China and report on it regularly through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy. The latest update was published on 15 July and outlines a range of developments from January to June this year.

Whilst we recognise the improvements China has made to social and economic rights, we continue to have concerns about a range of restrictions to civil and political rights. The operating space for civil society groups is shrinking, and over 200 lawyers have been detained or questioned since July. We regularly raise our concerns with China, both through the annual UK-China Human Rights Dialogue and through bilateral meetings, and will continue to do so. We also work through international fora, such as the UN Human Rights Council, to highlight our concerns.

Hansard I Index

12 October 2015: House of Lords: Written Question: Foreign & Commonwealth Office: China: Human Rights

Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench): To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of China and the Chinese Ambassador to the United Kingdom on the human rights situation in China, with respect to the arrest and detention of lawyers and campaigners.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns (Minister of State, Foreign & Commonwealth Office): I refer the noble Lord to my response of 24 July 2015 (HL1378). We remain concerned by reports of the detention of human rights lawyers since 9 July. We supported an EU press statement on the matter on 15 July, and since then have continued to express our concern. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond), personally raised the matter during his visit to China in August. Most recently, in a written statement to the Human Rights Council on 21 September, the UK urged the Chinese authorities to release these lawyers and to uphold the right to the peaceful expression of views.

Hansard I Index

10 September 2015: House of Lords Motion: BBC: Finance and Independence

Tibet was mentioned during a motion in the House of Lords about the independence and finances of the BBC

Lord Smith of Finsbury (Non-Aff): ... I remember when I was Secretary of State some 15 years ago and went on an official visit to China. I took a number of creative business figures with me, and a representative of the BBC. Every time I met with any official or Minister from any of the relevant Chinese ministries, I had to listen to half an hour of disquisition on the evils of the BBC, which had very recently run a candid and fascinating programme about Tibet. The best way I found to respond to the criticism of the BBC was to say, "I know. I am responsible for oversight of the BBC in the Government and for taking BBC matters through our Parliament. Yet every week the BBC carries criticism of me and the Government of which I am part". So it should be, and we value that it should be so. The BBC is not a state broadcaster but the nation's broadcaster, and the Government would do very well to remember that.

Hansard I Index

24 July 2015: House of Lords: Written Answers: Foreign & Commonwealth Office: Tibet: Religious Freedom

Lord Alton of Liverpool (CB): To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have discussed freedom of religion and belief in Tibet with the government of China since the death in prison of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche; and if so, when.

Baroness Anelay of St Johns (Minister of State, Foreign & Commonwealth Office): We pay close attention to the human rights situation in China, and remain concerned by all restrictions to freedom of religion or belief, including in Tibet. We have raised the case of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche with the Chinese authorities on a number of occasions, including during the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in April this year. The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for East Devon (Mr Swire), also raised this case during Westminster Hall Debates on Tibet

in June and last December, and urged the Chinese authorities to consider him for medical parole.

Although we have not raised the issue of freedom of religion or belief with the Chinese authorities since Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's death, we support and encouraged the EU statement of 15 July, which said the EU expected the Chinese authorities to investigate and make public the circumstances surrounding Tenzin's death. We will continue to raise our concerns through the EU, and as part of our wider relationship with China.

Hansard I Index

21 July 2015: House of Commons Written: Foreign and Commonwealth Office: China: Minority Groups

Tim Loughton (East Worthing & Shoreham, Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of the implications for his policy of the Human Rights Watch report, One passport, two systems, China's restrictions on foreign travel by Tibetans and others; and when he last raised the subject of the treatment of China's religious minorities with the Chinese government.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): We pay close attention to the human rights situation in China and consult a wide range of reports, including from non-government organisations (NGO's), when considering UK policies. We are concerned by the issues raised in 'One Passport, Two Systems' - that ethnic minority populations are experiencing restrictions to their freedom of movement and that the inability to travel abroad for religious festivals is impacting on their right to freedom of religion or belief.

We consider freedom of religion or belief to be a fundamental human right and support its protection and promotion around the world, including in China. We also have concerns about the treatment of ethnic minorities in China, particularly in the Tibetan Autonomous Region and Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. We have raised our concerns in detail with the Chinese authorities, including during the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue in April, and have highlighted the full range of our concerns in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy (www.hrdreport.fco.gov.uk). We will continue to raise these concerns as part of our wider relationship with China.

Hansard I Index

16 July 2015: House of Lords: Motion to Take Note: Freedom of Religion and Belief

Tenzin Delek Rinpoche was referenced during a motion to take note of worldwide violations of Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Lord Alton of Liverpool (CB): Will Article 18 be on the agenda for discussion with China's President when he visits the United Kingdom?

Baroness Anelay of St Johns (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office) (Con): ... The noble Lord, Lord Alton, raised particular questions about China. I will be brief and say that we are saddened by reports that Tenzin Delek Rinpoche has died in detention in China. We have raised his case with the Chinese authorities on a number of occasions, including during the UK-China human rights dialogue in April this year. We support and encourage the EU statement of 15 July which said that the EU expected the Chinese authorities to investigate and make public the circumstances surrounding Tenzin's death.

The noble Lord, Lord Alton, also asked about the Chinese Christian lawyers who were arrested this week as part of a major crackdown. He asked what will happen with the Chinese state visit later this year and whether Article 18 will be on the agenda for discussions with China's President when he visits the UK. The full programme for the visit is not yet fully fleshed out—and one would not expect it to be at this stage. However, we pay very close attention to the human rights situation in China. We are deeply concerned by reports of the number of human rights lawyers and activists who have been detained since 9 July and we fully support the EU statement of 15 July, which states that the detentions raise

serious questions about China's commitment to strengthening the rule of law, and called for the release of those detained for seeking to protect rights provided by the Chinese constitution.

We have regular discussions with the Chinese authorities, including on human rights and rule-of-law issues. They will hear what I have said in public today—my colleagues have also said it in private—and I am sure they will be aware that these matters will be raised, not only by politicians but by the public, when the Chinese state visit takes place. I am sure that discussions about that visit will be wide ranging and naturally the Chinese Government will have an input. But as a country we believe firmly in making clear our commitment to human rights and we have an expectation that the Chinese Government will listen to that. They will take their own view naturally, as they always do.

Hansard: full motion | Hansard: Minister's response | Index

7 July 2015: House of Commons: Written question: Foreign & Commonwealth Office: Tibet

Tim Loughton (East Worthing and Shoreham, Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what change there has been in the Government's policy towards the status of Tibet and the integrity of the culture of Tibetan people within China; and what recent discussions he has had with his Chinese counterparts on the status of Tibet.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): As I stated during a Westminster Hall Debate on Tibet on 18 June, our position on Tibet has not changed. The Government position remains that of subsequent governments before it: we regard Tibet as part of the People's Republic of China and do not support independence. The Prime Minister confirmed this position with Premier Li during the UK-China Summit in June last year.

We support the protection of cultural rights throughout China, and remain concerned by restrictions to these rights in ethnic minority regions, including Tibet.

We maintain our belief that long term stability in Tibet will be best achieved through respect for the universal principles of human rights, and genuine autonomy for Tibet within the framework of the Chinese constitution. Meaningful dialogue is the best way to address and resolve the underlying differences between Tibetan communities and the Chinese government, and we continue to encourage all sides to restart talks as soon as possible.

Hansard | Index

30 June 2015: House of Commons: Written question: Foreign & Commonwealth Office: China: Human Rights

Andrew Rosindell (Romford, Con): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions he has had with his Chinese counterpart on the human rights situation in that country.

Hugo Swire (Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs): We remain concerned by the human rights situation in China, particularly in relation to civil and political rights. As noted in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy (www.hrdreport.fco.gov.uk), the climate for human rights defenders and civil society is very difficult in China, and restrictions to ethnic minority rights continue. We are concerned that individuals continue to be detained for the peaceful expression of their views, and that some detainees are not permitted adequate medical care.

We consistently raise our concerns with the Chinese authorities, not least through the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue, last held in April. I raised a number of my concerns with Ambassador Liu Xiaoming earlier this month, and publicly highlighted the range of my concerns on the situation in Tibet during a Westminster Hall Debate on 18 June. We also continue to make representations in international fora such as the UN Human Rights Council.

Hansard I Index

24 June 2015: House of Commons: Early Day Motion 181: Dalai Lama's 80th Birthday

Tabled by Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East, Lab)

Early Day Motion 181: That this House congratulates Tibet's exiled spiritual leader Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, on his 80th birthday on 6 July 2015; recognises him as a global icon of peace and compassion; commends his work promoting mindfulness and non-violence; and encourages the Chinese government to enter into immediate and meaningful dialogue with the Dalai Lama's representatives to find a peaceful solution to the grievances of the Tibetan people which will allow the Dalai Lama to return to his homeland.

Signed by 48 MPs.

[Click here to see which MPs signed I Index](#)

18 June 2015: House of Commons: Westminster Hall: Debate on Tibet

A backbench debate on Tibet was held in Westminster Hall, the secondary debating chamber of the House of Commons. The debate was proposed and led by Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East, Lab).

[Read Tibet Society's report & summary](#)

Hansard I Index

10 June 2015: House of Lords: Question for Short Debate: Gurkhas: Anniversary

During a short debate on the 200th anniversary of the Gurkhas' service to the Crown, Tibet was referenced.

Viscount Slim (CB): ... Politically, we want to be very careful. China is not being pleasant to the Tibetans, and I have a feeling that Nepal is in their sights, long term, as well. As the noble Lord, Lord Davies of Stamford, said, it is about time some of the British Government got out to Nepal to assess the situation and make some firm judgments about how we can stand by Nepal and help it.

Hansard I Index

27 May 2015: Queen's Speech

Reference to the Chinese President's State Visit in October.

The Queen: ... My Government looks forward to an enhanced partnership with India and China... Prince Philip and I look forward to our State Visit to Germany next month and to our State Visit to Malta in November, alongside the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. We also look forward to welcoming His Excellency the President of The People's Republic of China and Madame Peng on a State Visit in October.

Hansard I Index

Useful Links

Find out who your MP is: findyourmp.parliament.uk

Write to your MP online: www.writetothem.com

Find out more about your MP: www.theyworkforyou.com

Tibet in Parliament (by parliamentary session):

[2008-09](#) | [2009-10](#) | [2010-12 \(pt 1\)](#) | [2010-12 \(pt 2\)](#) | [2012-13](#) | [2013-14](#) | [2014-15](#)

Tibet Society, the world's first Tibet support group, was founded in 1959. Funded by its members, it has been working for over 50 years to seek justice for Tibet through parliamentary lobbying, campaigns and actions. Help keep Tibet alive by joining Tibet Society today. Annual membership £24; Family £36; Life £500.

[Join Tibet Society | Donate](#)

[More details about membership](#)