



23rd March 2008

We, the representatives of The European Buddhist Union extend our support and solidarity with the recent protest against the Chinese occupation of Tibet as we see hundreds of Buddhist monks and ordinary citizens take to the streets of Lhasa in protest too about the destruction of their culture. They have been met with violence and the monasteries in Lhasa have been closed and surrounded by troops. Yet the monks are undeterred, and continue to protest in Tibet's cities wherever possible.

In solidarity with the people of Tibet, our brothers and sisters in the Dharma, we condemn the Chinese government's suppression of peaceful demonstrations, the closing of monasteries, and the broad imposition of martial law. The violent response by Chinese security forces only adds fuel to fires they lit many years ago.

Day by day we closely follow the news. We are shocked and appalled. The world has stood by whilst decades of Chinese occupation has systematically attempted to destroy indigenous Tibetan culture until, as the International Campaign for Tibet says "In Tibet's cities and fertile valleys, particularly in eastern Tibet, Chinese outnumber Tibetans by two and sometimes three to one."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has appealed "to the Chinese leadership to stop using force and address the long-simmering resentment of the Tibetan people through dialogue with the Tibetan people...I also urge my fellow Tibetans not to resort to violence."

We join with the Dalai Lama in his appeal and condemn the violent repression of natural and proper protest of China's longstanding repression of Tibet. We ask all friends of Tibet - people and governments - to do the same. We call on the government of the People's Republic of China to release all Tibetans held on political charges. Finally we encourage the brave and patient people of Tibet to stay strong, and to uphold the Buddha's teachings of nonviolence.

We urge all ministers and governments to do everything in their power to stop repression and to achieve discussions with the Dalai Lama as leader of the Tibetan people. We call upon all concerned agencies to take special responsibility to see that the situation receives immediate attention to avoid further harm, bloodshed and conflict.