

Objective of the 4th World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet

To share information, review current developments, and develop a plan of governmental action to advance Tibetan issues and secure effective governmental support for the process of dialogue between the Chinese leadership and His Holiness the Dalai Lama or his representatives leading to a negotiated solution for Tibet.

[4th WPCT Report](#) [PDF 927K]

The convention is being held after 8 years, during which time the Tibet movement has internationalized and matured, and China has developed a more influential and sophisticated international presence. Inside Tibet, the situation has also changed from simply employing hard-line suppression to control the Tibetan people, to using economic resources to transform and develop Tibet to reflect Beijing's priorities. The movement of large numbers of Chinese onto the Tibetan Plateau threatens to obliterate the Tibetan identity.

Changes in the global as a result of terrorism and the war against terrorism have created a less optimistic worldview. Yet, His Holiness the Dalai Lama's message of non-violence, universal responsibility and compassion is still relevant, perhaps more than ever. Some believe that a modern, pragmatic leadership has taken the helm of China's ship of state. These leaders are said to be more receptive to world opinion, which could help explain why Chinese officials have engaged in four rounds of talks with representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama since September 2002.

Participants in the 4th WPCT will have an opportunity to hear from members of the Tibetan delegation and fellow parliamentarians who can share the insights of

governments that engage China in their own dialogues on human rights and Tibet issues.

The 4th WPCT will convene from 18 to 19 November 2005 in Edinburgh, Scotland. It will be co-hosted by the Cross Party Scottish Parliamentary Group for Tibet and the UK Parliamentary Group for Tibet.

Mr. Penpa Tsering of the Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre in New Delhi and Mr. Victor Spence in Edinburgh will coordinate the convention.

Background:

In the last few decades, there has been increasing support for the Tibetan people in many democratic countries, and consequently growing support and sympathy for the Tibetan issue in the parliaments and governments. Riding on this groundswell of support, the All-Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet organized the First World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet in New Delhi from 18 - 20 March, 1994.

New Delhi Convention: The first World Parliamentarians Convention on Tibet was held in New Delhi from 18 to 20 March 1994 and attracted 67 parliamentarians from 25 countries. It issued a statement on March 20, which has come to be known as the New Delhi Statement on Tibetan Freedom, reaffirming the independence of Tibet before its invasion and subsequent occupation by China. The statement called "for the formation of all-party parliamentarians groups on Tibet in the parliaments which did not have such groups, as well as an international network of parliamentarians to coordinate activities on Tibetan issues."

Vilnius Convention: The Second World Parliamentarians Convention on Tibet, held from 26 - 28 March, 1995, attracted 88 parliamentarians from 21 countries. The convention reaffirmed its support to the New Delhi Statement on Tibetan Freedom and resolved to "initiate investigations, hearings and inquiries on the legitimacy of China's claim that Tibet is a part of China, in every parliament represented at the convention, and to persuade members of other parliaments to do the same, as a prelude to according recognition for the Tibetan Government-in-Exile."

Washington, D.C. Convention: The 3rd WPCT was hosted by the US House International Relations Committee and the Congress under the leadership of Senator Jesse Helms and Rep. Benjamin A. Gilman on 23 and 24 April, 1997 in Washington, DC, which was attended by 63 members from 27 countries. The convention supported the earnest negotiations without preconditions between the Tibetan Government-in-Exile and the People's Republic of China. The convention reaffirmed its support to His Holiness the Dalai Lama's repeated statement that despite the historical reality of Tibet's sovereignty, he is prepared to hold negotiations on genuine self-government, the demilitarization and transformation of Tibet into a zone of peace and nonviolence, without seeking independence.

The three conventions have contributed enormously in increasing the network of Tibet supporters and have had a powerful impact on the national and international lobby efforts. On account of the frequent discussions and resolutions in various parliaments, more peoples and nations are better informed about the situation in Tibet and are more

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supportive than ever before.