

Statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama **10th March 1962**

This day, three years ago, the unarmed and peaceful people of Lhasa rose against the armed might of their conquerors. No sacrifice was too great for them, and they gladly laid down their lives in defence of their land and liberty. The reign of terror still continues; and every day that passes more and more refugees are fleeing to the neighbouring states to escape from inhuman treatment and persecution. But the spirit of the people has not been and cannot be crushed. Those who cannot escape are still offering their passive resistance to the unwelcome measures of the authorities in the military occupation of Tibet. The heroic struggle of the Tibetan people still goes on. Their courage and determination still inspire them to defend their hearths and homes against the ruthless attacks of the invaders. Their belief in the future destiny of Tibet is still unshaken, and they remain proud of their cherished heritage. Today, in this grim hour of tragedy, our hearts naturally turn towards them. To them we all Tibetans in exile bow in gratitude and admiration. To them I send my blessings. For them I lift my voice, this day as on other days, and pray that the great lord of Mercy may grant them succour and sustenance to enable them to face their ordeal with unflinching courage and devotion.

We, here in exile, cannot materially help our people in Tibet, who are confronted with destruction of all that they love and cherish. We can only pray with all the strength of our hearts that their nightmare of agony and terror will disappear in the not too distant future. A heavy responsibility lies on all of us to do all that is possible to hasten the end of this sad plight of our people. On this day we must not fail to remember that our first obligation is to the people whom we have left behind and who cannot escape from the trials and tribulations of foreign domination. We must be united as we have always been. A great task lies ahead of us. The events and circumstances during the last three years which forced me and my people to be exiled from our own country have already aroused the conscience of the civilized world. The sufferings of my people were such that there was no alternative for us but to give at least some indication of their full truth. As a result of these sustained efforts, not only by us but also by many friendly States, a resolution was passed last year by the General Assembly of the United Nations. I consider that this resolution is a distinct advance in the furtherance of our cause. It not only expresses grave concern of the world authority at the unfortunate events which are taking place in Tibet but also sets out two definite objectives for the future. It clearly lays down that the fundamental rights and freedoms of the Tibetan people must be restored. It also recognises for the first time the right of the people of Tibet to determine and shape their destiny. I am fully conscious of the fact that the passing of the resolution cannot immediately lead to the cessation of the oppressive policies and measures of the conqueror. However, I earnestly hope and pray that the appeal of the United Nations will not go unheeded by the great Chinese people. The government of China was a party to the declaration made at the historic meeting of Afro-Asian Powers at Bandung which reaffirmed the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The government of China has also affirmed that the subjection of peoples to alien domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, offends against the Charter of the United Nations and is an

impediment to the promotion of world peace and co-operation. If these declarations have any meaning at all, the Chinese government must realise that the measures which have been adopted by its representatives in Tibet constitute total negation of these principles. It must also realise that there must be an end to the policy of force and intimidation which it is pursuing in Tibet and that the only solution to the Tibetan problem is a peaceful settlement consistent with the fundamental rights and freedoms of the Tibetan people. I, therefore, take this opportunity to appeal to the Chinese people to cease immediately the persecution and oppression of my people. The resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations also calls upon the member States to take appropriate measures for achieving the purposes of the resolution. I hope, therefore, that even if the appeal to the government of China is ignored, the leading peace-loving nations of the world will not hesitate to mediate on behalf of the poor and unfortunate people of Tibet to regain their freedom. We are all deeply grateful to the States which have espoused our cause and taken a lead in persuading the United Nations to interest itself in the restoration of Tibetan freedom. We have every confidence that, as in the past, they will continue to endeavour to promote the cause of peace and freedom in Tibet.

So far more than 70,000 refugees have sought asylum in the neighbouring States of India, Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal. They have been driven by the situation in Tibet to save themselves from death and destruction despite the hardships and difficulties they have had to encounter on the way. This mass exodus of refugees clearly shows the intolerable conditions under which the people of Tibet are living today. But what is more important is that something must be done, and done now, to help these refugees and to rehabilitate them in suitable places in India and elsewhere. A great deal has already been done by the government of India and by the other organisations concerned. But a great deal remains still to be done, and the continuous influx of refugees is increasing our task. I have no doubt that all men and women all over the world, who love peace and freedom must be gravely concerned at the unfortunate situation in which my people find themselves today. I, therefore, appeal to them once again to come forward with whatever help they can give us and assist us in improving the lot of these unhappy and destitute refugees from Tibet.

May God's blessings be upon all mankind, and may truth and justice prevail.

The Dalai Lama

March 10, 1962