

Universal Periodic Review of the People's Republic of China

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Joint submission by

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FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights) is an international human rights NGO federating 184 organizations from 112 countries. Since 1922, FIDH has been defending all civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The International Campaign for Tibet (ICT), founded in 1988 with offices in Washington DC, Amsterdam, Berlin and Brussels, works to promote human rights and democratic freedoms for the people of Tibet.

Summary: The human rights situation in Tibet has deteriorated dramatically since China's previous Universal Periodic Review

1. This civil society submission assesses the human rights situation in Tibetan areas of China since 2013 and offers recommendations for the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).
2. Since the second cycle of the Universal Periodic Review UPR of China in 2013, the human rights situation in the Tibetan areas of China has significantly worsened. This is true for both civil and political rights as well as for economic, social, and cultural rights of the Tibetan people. Violations have been widespread and systematic, and rhetoric, policies, and actions by the Chinese authorities have further undermined a rights-based approach to deep-rooted grievances in Tibetan areas.
3. A number of security-related legislative measures adopted by China are in direct contravention of international legal standards and provide the legal framework for further repressive measures by Chinese authorities. Because these legislative measures explicitly refer to "separatism" and "splittism" and politicize religious, cultural or social expression or dissent by labelling it "terrorist" or "extremist", they have direct repercussions for Tibetans and their enjoyment of political, civil, economic, social, and cultural rights.
4. China's large-scale infrastructure and investment projects in Tibet, such as major hydropower dams, mining sites, or settlement programs for Tibetan nomads and pastoralists, have often resulted in violations of Tibetan's economic social and cultural rights, such as their rights to livelihood and to adequate housing.
5. Chinese development policies in Tibet have disregarded the principles of inclusiveness and participation included in the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Authorities have failed to consult Tibetans on development policies that impact them and to adapt development projects to the local knowledge, experiences, and needs of Tibetans.

Government's security approach to Tibet negatively impacts human rights of Tibetans

6. The presence of Chinese security personnel and ruling Chinese Communist Party (CPC) officials in villages, towns, and monasteries has increased throughout the reporting period. This has been accompanied by drastic measures of surveillance and control through electronic means and physical presence, as well as detentions and other forms of punishment for activities that are protected by international human rights law, such as the exercise of the rights to freedom of opinion and expression and freedom of religion or belief.
7. The Chinese state has enacted a new set of laws that strengthen the security apparatus that, with regard to Tibet, dates back to the time before President Xi Jinping took office in March 2013. During his presidency, Xi Jinping has promoted the adoption of a number of new laws that were quickly drafted and passed. Among those are the 2015 National Security Law, the 2016 NGO Law, the 2016 Counter-Terrorism Law, and the 2016 Cyber

Security Law. These laws represent the CPC's attempt to gain maximum control over all aspects of society that are perceived as a threat to its legitimacy.

8. The 2016 Counter-Terrorism Law considers “distorted religious teachings” as the “ideological basis” of terrorism and other means to incite hatred or discrimination. In effect, the law correlates religious activities to terrorism or “extremism” but fails to define what constitutes “distorted religious teachings” and “extremism.”¹ The interpretation of the expression “extremism”, depending on the political climate, opens the door to arbitrariness and abuse by the authorities in their drive to target and prosecute specific individuals. For instance, as Chinese authorities openly blame the Dalai Lama in exile for a wave of self-immolations across Tibet, keeping a small photograph of the Dalai Lama in one's private possession could conceivably be termed as “extremism.”
9. Consistent with the official language used to emphasize the Chinese government's counter-terror drive, state-run media said that a major religious teaching by the Dalai Lama in exile, the Kalachakra in Ladakh (India) in 2014, incited terror. The authorities called the event ‘illegal’ and warned Tibetans who did not return to Tibet before the Kalachakra began of serious consequences, such as losing their pension or job or having to leave their monasteries in the case of monks. The authorities linked their attempts to prevent Tibetans from attending the Dalai Lama's teachings in exile with ‘counter-terrorism’ efforts in the border areas of Tibet, including Ngari (Chinese: *Ali*) in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), which borders India.²
10. The Counter-Terrorism Law outlines a counter-terrorism structure that has vast discretionary powers. The law's conflation of undefined religious extremism with terrorism, which is a threat to national security, provides the legal basis for the criminalization of virtually any peaceful expressions of Tibetan identity, acts of non-violent dissent, or criticism of state policies with regard to ethnic or religious minorities. The law also requires the strengthening of “counter-terrorism education” in schools, a provisions that runs counter to international human rights standards, and represents a serious threat to rights to freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly, and freedom of religion or belief.³
11. The National Security Law provides the framework for the adoption of measures to protect “national security.” It also aims at promoting “the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party,” maintaining “a socialist system with Chinese characteristics,” and calls for “guarding against and lawfully punishing the exploitation of religion to conduct illegal and criminal activities” and maintaining “normal order of religious activities.”

¹ *Dangers of China's counter-terrorism law for Tibetans and Uyghurs*, Joint report by International Federation for Human Rights and International Campaign for Tibet, November 15, 2016.

² *Kalachakra with Chinese Characteristics: Chinese appointed Panchen Lama gives teaching as authorities suppress religious freedom*, International Campaign for Tibet, July 29, 2016.

³ For example: UN Human Rights Committee's General Comment 22, para. 8; ICCPR, Article 18, para 3; CRC, Article 14, para. 3; UN Commission on Human Rights Resolution 2005/40, para. 12; and UN Human Rights Council Resolution 6/37, para. 14.

12. The Religious Affairs Regulations that came into effect on February 1, 2018,⁴ reflect the government's emphasis on notions of "state security," "religious extremism," and "terrorism," and attempt to link religious activities to politically charged crimes. As in the Counter-Terrorism Law, neither "extremism" nor "terrorism" are defined in the regulations, offering the authorities vast discretionary powers to interpret the letter of the law with regard to unwanted religious activity.

Increased repression under the pretext of maintaining stability

13. Over the years, Chinese authorities have gradually created an extremely oppressive environment in Tibet in the name of maintaining stability. There are no limits to state authority, the climate of fear is pervasive, and every aspect of public and private life is tightly controlled and regulated.
14. In 2016, a Tibetan source told the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) that surveillance and controls in Tibet had become increasingly sophisticated. The source explained that security in Tibet had become pervasive and more difficult to detect, as armed police patrolling the streets had been replaced by police and government officials who infiltrated every segment of society to report on all aspects of people's lives.⁵
15. Repressive measures aimed at strengthening the reach of the CPC into people's lives have been expanded beyond the political boundaries of the TAR. This development has been accompanied by a consolidation of repressive state apparatuses, such as paramilitary forces and the People's Liberation Army and the continued expansion of the powers of the United Front Work Department (UFWD), the CPC bureau responsible for nationalities and religion.⁶ The UFWD's activities in domestic and international influence are regarded by the CPC as a "magic weapon."⁷
16. New and intrusive security systems have been implemented in Tibetan areas of the provinces of Qinghai, Sichuan, and Gansu. These measures were designed to eliminate dissent and enforce compliance with CPC policies and have been increasingly witnessed in the eastern Tibetan areas of Kham and Amdo.⁸ Following the 2011 implementation of a major village surveillance scheme in the TAR,⁹ the intrusive presence of CPC officials

⁴ *Suffocating religious freedom in Tibet: China's draft regulations on religious affairs*, International Campaign for Tibet, October 25, 2016.

⁵ *Tightening of an invisible net: new security measures in eastern Tibet heighten surveillance, control*, International Campaign for Tibet, February 16, 2016.

⁶ For example, in March 2018, Chinese state media reported that UFWD is taking over National Ethnic Affairs work (Xinhua, March 21, 2018, http://www.xinhuanet.com/politics/2018-03/21/c_1122570517.htm).

⁷ Xi Jinping cited in Marcel Angliviell de la Beaumelle "The United Front Work Department: 'Magic Weapon' at Home and Abroad", in Jamestown Foundation, China Brief Volume: 17 Issue: 9 (July 6, 2017); See also: *Inside China's secret 'magic weapon' for worldwide influence*, Financial Times, October 6, 2017.

⁸ *Tightening of an invisible net: new security measures in eastern Tibet heighten surveillance, control*, International Campaign for Tibet, February 16, 2016.

⁹ *Tightening of an invisible net: new security measures in eastern Tibet heighten surveillance, control*, International Campaign for Tibet, February 16, 2016; *China: No End to Tibet Surveillance Program*, Human Rights Watch, January 18, 2016.

in villages and monasteries has been expanded to areas of eastern Tibet, where urban areas have been subdivided into 'grid management units' (roughly corresponding to a block or a street) in order to monitor Tibetans' lives, social issues, and loyalty to the Dalai Lama. This grid management unit system, which was first implemented in urban areas of the TAR in 2012, has allowed Chinese authorities to withdraw security forces from some locations, such as monasteries, knowing that security forces can be deployed within minutes if a protest or any other acts of dissent occur.

17. As a result of the Chinese government's repressive policies and the absence of space for Tibetans to freely express themselves, at least 153 Tibetans from every segment of society have self-immolated since February 2009 - one of the biggest waves of self-immolations in the past 60 years. The most recent case took place on March 7, 2018, when a Tibetan man in his 40s, **Tsekho Tugchak**, set himself on fire and died in Ngaba (Chinese: *Aba*) County, Sichuan Province, eastern Tibet.¹⁰
18. Instead of addressing the root causes that led to these desperate acts of peaceful political protest, the Chinese government has responded by intensifying the security build-up in Tibet, and by punishing the self-immolators' friends, families, and, in some case, even entire communities. When members of self-immolator **Pema Gyaltzen's** family went to the Kardze County police station, Sichuan Province, to enquire about his state in March 2017, they were severely beaten and forced to remain standing in the police station all night.¹¹
19. In December 2015, black balaclava-clad special forces raided and made arrests in internet cafes and Tibetan tea shops in Dzoerge, Ngaba County, Sichuan Province.¹² In February 2016, Tibetan shopkeepers in Draggo County, Kardze Prefecture, were ordered by a county-level 'Comprehensive Culture Enforcement Squad' to hand in all the pictures of the Dalai Lama.¹³
20. In 2017, Chinese authorities in the TAR launched a new ideological campaign aimed at "diluting the negative impact of religion" and promoting loyalty to President Xi Jinping. The campaign focuses on the "four loves": 1) love for the "core interests" of the CPC; 2) love for the motherland; 3) love for one's home town; and 4) love for one's livelihood. The campaign also aims to generate admiration and loyalty for the CPC and unity of the motherland. Chinese officials have promoted the campaign in numerous villages and monasteries across the TAR and in schools and the Tibet University in Lhasa. The

¹⁰ *Tibetan man dies after self-immolation; oppressive measures intensified in March 10 anniversary week*, International Campaign for Tibet, March 7, 2018.

¹¹ *Young Farmer Stages First Tibetan Self-Immolation of 2017*, Radio Free Asia, March 19, 2017.

¹² *Dalai Lama compared to Iraqi dictator by Chinese state media as order issued for seizure of pictures*, International Campaign for Tibet, February 11, 2016.

¹³ *Ibid.*

implementation of the campaign in monasteries reflects the authorities' push to ensure Tibetan monks and nuns comply with CPC policies.¹⁴

Tibetans systematically subjected to arbitrary detention, torture, and ill-treatment

21. Tibetans in Tibet have been systematically subjected to arbitrary detention and acts of torture and ill-treatment. Although China officially prohibits torture, an investigation conducted by ICT into 29 cases of former Tibetan prisoners found that the practice has become endemic in Tibet. This is the result of the authorities' emphasis on ensuring "stability" and the culture of impunity among officials, paramilitary troops, and security personnel.¹⁵
22. Since the unrest and ensuing crackdown in Tibet in 2008, the Chinese authorities have adopted a harsher approach to suppressing dissent and there has been a significant spike in the number of Tibetan political prisoners detained in Tibetan areas of China. There is also evidence that since 2008 torture has become widespread and directed at broader sectors of Tibetan society.
23. **Goshul Lobsang**, 43, died at home on March 19, 2014, following severe torture during his imprisonment. He had been beaten so severely that he could not even swallow his food. Images of Goshul Lobsang in the days before his death showed him looking emaciated and close to death at his family home in Machu (Chinese: *Maqu*) County in the Kanlho (Chinese: *Gannan*) Prefecture in Amdo region, today a part of China's Gansu Province.¹⁶
24. An influential Tibetan lama and one of the most high-profile Tibetan political prisoners, **Tenzin Delek Rinpoche**, 64, died on July 12, 2015, in Chuangdong Prison in Dazhu County in Sichuan Province, where he was serving a life sentence. Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's family had only been allowed to visit him in prison six times during his 13-year detention, most recently in 2013. Chinese authorities ignored requests made by a number of Western governments for his release on medical parole. In 2013, Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's relatives said that they became aware that he was suffering from a heart condition, frequent unconsciousness, and uncontrollable shaking of parts of his body. It is not known whether Tenzin Delek Rinpoche received any medical treatment in prison. Amid allegations of torture, the authorities did not conduct an autopsy on his body, which was cremated four days after his death.¹⁷
25. **Tashi Wangchuk**, a Tibetan shopkeeper in his 30s, has been detained since January 2016 following the release of a *New York Times* video report that detailed his attempts to petition for the rights of Tibetans to speak and learn their own language at school. In

¹⁴ *Inside Tibet: The four loves and the enemy within: new ideological campaign in Tibet reflects heightened agenda of control in 19th Party Congress year*, International Campaign for Tibet, April 20, 2017.

¹⁵ *Torture and Impunity – 29 Cases of Tibetan Political Prisoners*, International Campaign for Tibet, February 26, 2015.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Body of revered Tibetan lama Tenzin Delek Rinpoche cremated in remote high-security prison facility*, International Campaign for Tibet, July 16, 2015.

January 2018, he was tried by an Intermediate Court in Yushu, Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province, on charges of 'inciting separatism.' If found guilty, Tashi Wangchuk could be sentenced to up to 15 years in prison, due to the prominence of his case.¹⁸

26. On December 6, 2016, in Ngaba (Chinese: *Aba*) County, Sichuan Province, **nine Tibetans** were handed prison sentences ranging from five to 14 years for their involvement in celebrations for the Dalai Lama's 80th birthday in 2015. Several of them had been imprisoned and tortured before, following the protests and self-immolations that occurred in the area since 2008. Some were also held incommunicado for months without family or friends knowing their whereabouts.¹⁹ Three senior monks from Kirti monastery, including a scholar and the manager of the medical college at the monastery, received the longest sentences, ranging from 12 to 14 years.

Destruction of Tibetan culture and repression of Buddhist religion: The Larung Gar case

27. The CPC leadership has pursued broader and deeper control measures of certain activities, such as those related to the religious sphere. This has been clearly visible in the Chinese authorities' management of the Buddhist Institute of Larung Gar in Serthar County, Sichuan Province, eastern Tibet.²⁰
28. Larung Gar is one of the world's largest monastic institutions, with a population that reached at least 10,000, consisting of monks, nuns, and laypeople who attend teachings. In recent years, Larung Gar has become increasingly prominent in both Tibet and China as a vital center for the study, practice, and promotion of Buddhist teachings, which are otherwise difficult to access or non-existent in other Tibetan monasteries and nunneries due to restrictions put in place by the Chinese government.
29. In July 2016, demolitions of monks' and nuns' dwellings began at Larung Gar. Local authorities denied the Larung Gar destruction was motivated by religious animus and described the demolition as a "construction development" that is part of a process of "accelerated urbanization" towards "a more orderly, beautiful, secure, and peaceful land." The demolitions were ordered by the county government without any prior consultation with Larung Gar's religious leaders. The order stated that, as a result of the demolition, the Larung Gar population would be reduced to 5,000 persons by

¹⁸ *Trial of Tibetan language advocate today ends without known verdict*, International Campaign for Tibet, January 4, 2018.

¹⁹ *Tibetans sentenced to long prison terms for involvement in Dalai Lama's 80th birthday celebration*, International Campaign for Tibet, December 15, 2016.

²⁰ *Revised religious regulations threaten survival of Tibetan Buddhism*, International Campaign for Tibet, September 18, 2017.

September 30, 2017.²¹ At the end of June 2017, a senior abbot at Larung Gar said that more than 4,825 monks and nuns had been expelled since 2016.²²

30. Many of the monks and nuns expelled from Larung Gar and the nearby religious community at Yachen Gar were forced to return to the TAR and were subjected to degrading treatment and severe restrictions on their rights, including their rights to freedom of movement and freedom of religion. In November 2016, the authorities forced at least one group to undergo political re-education and apparent public humiliation in Nyingtri (Chinese: *Linzhi*) Prefecture, in southeastern TAR.²³
31. In August 2017, Chinese authorities imposed new administrative controls on Larung Gar, which infringed upon the right to freedom of religion. According to an official document, some 200 CPC cadres and lay officials took control over all management, finances, security, admission procedures, and even the choice of textbooks at Larung Gar.²⁴
32. In November 2017, Sichuan provincial authorities cancelled a major religious festival, the prayer gathering Dechen Shedrub at Larung Gar, despite earlier assurances that the event would go ahead.²⁵ Checkpoints were set up on the roads leading to Larung Gar and security was tightened in the area.
33. Major construction work in the valley at the foot of Larung Gar to build a new tourist village suggests that Chinese authorities are using the development of tourism as a tool to counter cultural resilience and monastic influence.²⁶

Violations of economic, social, and cultural rights inconsistent with international obligations and SDGs

34. China became a state party to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) in 2001. Article 1 of the ICESCR prohibits depriving people of their own means of subsistence. Article 11 provides that everyone has a right to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. Article 2 prohibits all forms of discrimination based on several grounds, including national or social origin, property, or other status. The ICESCR also spells out states' obligations to protect people's livelihood, including the right to work and to an adequate standard of living.

²¹ *Demolitions begin at Larung Gar, 'monastery for the world', as religious teachers urge calm*, International Campaign for Tibet, July 25, 2016.

²² *China Bans Major Prayer Festival at Larung Gar*, Radio Free Asia, November 1, 2017.

²³ *China: Major Tibetan Buddhist Institution Faces Further demolition*, Human Rights Watch, March 29, 2017.

²⁴ *China: New Controls on Tibetan Monastery*, Human Rights Watch, January 24, 2018.

²⁵ *Major religious festival cancelled and new police checkpoints at Larung Gar*, International Campaign for Tibet, November 3, 2017.

²⁶ *Shadow of dust across the sun: how tourism is used to counter Tibetan cultural resilience*, International Campaign for Tibet, March 13, 2017.

35. With regard to Tibet, China has regularly failed to uphold its obligations under the ICESCR and to implement recommendations it accepted during its 2013 UPR concerning economic, social, and cultural rights.
36. As a result of the implementation of the 'Western Development Strategy' in 1999–2000, the Chinese government began programs of resettlement, land confiscation, and fencing of pastoral areas inhabited primarily by Tibetans, which dramatically curtailed their livelihood. Thousands of Tibetan nomads have been forced to slaughter their livestock, move into newly-built housing colonies in or near towns, and abandon their traditional way of life.
37. Resettlement programs have been generally implemented without consultation or the consent of affected people, who have had no right to challenge them or to refuse to participate. This has occurred despite the fact that Chinese law requires that those who are to be relocated or have their property confiscated must be consulted and compensated for their losses.
38. In June 2011, China's central government instructed all provincial authorities, including in the TAR, Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu, Inner Mongolia, and Xinjiang, to complete all ongoing relocation programs that affected hundreds of thousands of nomadic herders by the end of 2014.²⁷ Based on the available data, at least 1.8 million nomads in Tibet have been resettled into sedentary communities under various government programs.
39. The Chinese government asserted that all relocation and rehousing operations were entirely voluntary and respected "the will of the Tibetan farmers and herders."²⁸ However, interviews conducted in 2012 suggested that nomads had not moved voluntarily and were never consulted or offered alternatives.²⁹
40. The Chinese leadership is increasingly framing many of its economic policies in Tibet in the context of President Xi Jinping's "ecological civilization." This has been pursued under President Xi to give the appearance of a state committed to environmental protection and to provide a justification for the creation of nature reserves and the settlement of nomads.
41. The announcement that vast areas of Tibet would be turned into national parks is consistent with China's policy that involves the massive drive to remove and relocate Tibetan nomads from their pastures, as a result of the grazing restrictions imposed in areas accorded national park status. It also allows the further development of mass tourism for domestic Chinese, particularly safari or adventure tourism.

²⁷ Ibid., page 4.

²⁸ "They say we should be grateful": Mass rehousing and relocation programs in Tibetan areas of China, Human Rights Watch, 2013.

²⁹ Ibid., page 6.

42. China recently gained UNESCO World Heritage status for a vast landscape of wetlands, wildlife, and lakes on the Tibetan plateau known as Hoh Xil (Tibetan: *Achen Gangyab*, Chinese: *Kekexili*), traditionally traversed by Tibetan nomads, which is now likely to be developed further for adventure tourism. On November 27, 2017, Chinese authorities issued a notice prohibiting access to the Hoh Xil nature reserve except for security personnel or other authorized officials. The Director of the Hoh Xil nature reserve was cited by Chinese state media as saying that the notice “aimed to crack down on illegal crossing and mining” and that anyone who did not comply with the notice would be punished.
43. China has undertaken large-scale and unchecked infrastructure and investment projects in Tibet, such as major hydropower dams and mines that pollute rivers. Together with new railways and nomad resettlement, these projects are accelerating climate change and damaging the fragile ecosystem that supports unique and biodiverse flora and fauna, drives the monsoon seasons, and feeds rivers that provides the livelihood for 1.4 billion people.
44. Mines throughout Tibet have been met with strong local opposition, mainly for two reasons: 1) residents are forcefully relocated to make way for mines’ operations; and 2) the discharge of dangerous, often poisonous, chemicals into rivers, has caused residents to fear for the harmful impacts on their health, livestock, and the environment.
45. Over recent years, several environmental protests in various regions of Tibet demonstrated the importance that Tibetans attach to their land and natural surroundings. The Chinese authorities’ response to the protests has been heavy handed and the security forces’ disproportionate use of force on peaceful protesters has been inconsistent with relevant international standards.
46. In August 2013, Chinese armed police beat and tear gassed hundreds of Tibetans who protested illegal mining activities in Gedrong area in Dzatoe (Chinese: *Zaduo*) County in Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province. At least eight Tibetans were detained and many others were hospitalized after sustaining injuries during a protest against illegal diamond mining on August 13, 2013, in Atoe, Zachen, and Shiza Villages in Dzatoe County.³⁰
47. In June 2014, authorities in Qinghai Province detained 27 Tibetans for protesting against Chinese mining operations that had run beyond the expiration of the concession and had begun to encroach on sacred sites.³¹ Such mining operations constitute a violation of Article 15(1)(a) of the ICESCR, which imposes an obligation on states to respect, promote, and fulfill the right of everyone to take part in cultural life.

³⁰ *Yushu mine protest crackdown exposes China’s ‘nature reserve’ sham*, Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, August 24, 2013.

³¹ *Tibetans Held For Opposing Chinese Marble Mining Operations*, Radio Free Asia, June 18, 2014.

48. In July 2014, more than 100 Tibetans protested against coal mining in Nangchen (Chinese: *Nangqian*) County, Qinghai Province, citing environmental and health concerns.³²
49. In March 2018, a Tibetan man was detained in the northern part of Driru (Chinese: *Biru*) County in Nagchu (Chinese: *Naqu*) Prefecture, TAR, after opposing to a mining project on the sacred mountain called Sertra Dzagen.³³
50. In Tibet, Tibetans are excluded from meaningful consultations concerning development policies and programs that are imposed from the top by the CPC leadership. As a result, Tibetans are largely unable to contribute to, or benefit from, development. The Chinese government's resource policies in Tibet run counter to SDG 16 and all other SDGs that refer to concepts of inclusion and justice.³⁴
51. In April 2017, nearly 200 Tibetan families were ordered to leave their homes in Dzogang (Chinese: *Zuogang*) and Pashoe (Chinese: *Basu*) Counties in Chamdo Prefecture, eastern Tibet, to make way for an unspecified government construction project, with the move to new locations to be made at their own expense.³⁵
52. The resource policies of the Chinese state are threatening the Tibetan people's sustainable modes of subsistence and their access to cultural heritage. Environmental protection, sustainable development, and combatting impacts of climate change can only be successful if the rights of those affected are safeguarded and respected. Tibetans must be meaningfully and actively involved in any decisions concerning measures that are undertaken to achieve these goals. In addition, the rights of Tibetans must be protected so that they are not deprived from their means of subsistence or their access to cultural or spiritual heritage.

Recommendations for the 2018 Universal Periodic Review

53. The following recommendations should be raised during the third UPR of China and enjoy the support of the Chinese government:
54. Repeal or significantly amend laws, regulations, and other provisions that violate the rights to freedom of expression, freedom of association, freedom of peaceful assembly, and freedom of religion or belief in order to bring them in line with international human rights standards.
55. Undertake full investigations into ongoing reports of enforced disappearances, torture, and ill-treatment and ensure that those found responsible are prosecuted in trials that conform with international standards.

³² *Tibetans Protest Against Coal Mining in Nangchen County*, Radio Free Asia, August 7, 2014.

³³ *Tibetan Man Detained After Villagers Protest Chinese Mine Plans*, Radio Free Asia, March 20, 2018.

³⁴ SDG 16 states: "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels."

³⁵ *Tibetan Families Ordered From Their Homes in Chamdo Prefecture*, Radio Free Asia, April 4, 2017.

56. Allow independent observers, including the United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Human rights and all UN Special Procedures that have requested a country visit, unfettered access to Tibet.
57. Immediately ratify and implement the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and ensure that its protections are extended to Tibetans.
58. Comply with the legal obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which offer legal grounds for the protection of local Tibetan populations and their livelihood, and prohibit depriving any people from their means of subsistence.
59. Bring government policies and programs in Tibet in line with the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People and the 1992 Convention on Biodiversity, which acknowledge the importance of indigenous communities as guarantors and protectors of biodiversity.
60. Halt current nomadic resettlement programs in Tibet, pending a comprehensive review of the policy outcomes and their impacts, and revise the resettlement policy, with active participation and contribution from nomads.
61. Pursue development policies and programs that are inclusive of Tibetans, including the right of Tibetans to be consulted on the formulation and implementation of such policies and programs and adapt development plans to local knowledge, experiences, and needs as highlighted in the Sustainable Development Goals.
62. Refrain from interfering in the conduct of religious affairs, such as the appointment or approval of religious personnel.
63. Repeal or significantly amend laws, regulations, and other legal provisions that use broad and vague language such as “state security”, “religious extremism”, and “terrorism” in order to interfere with religious activities, groups, practitioners or religious professionals.
64. Set standards of practice for development that are consistent with the environmental and social focus of the Sustainable Development Goals.
65. Conduct independent and rigorous studies on the state of the environment, assess the environmental and social impacts of investment and infrastructure projects, and pursue strategies to mitigate or minimize their negative impacts on the environment and local populations.
66. Systematically report on the state of Tibet’s environment in all international fora, such as conferences related to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.
67. Grant access to Tibet for independent researchers in order to monitor the environmental changes taking place on the Tibetan plateau.
68. Submit a detailed report as part of the Voluntary National Review at the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which explicitly lists achievements or challenges in all the Sustainable Development Goals.