Appeal to the Secretary-General and Member States of the United Nations Following the Self-Immolation of Pawo Lobga Rangzen

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC), we write with profound grief, solemn determination, and an unwavering commitment to justice following the self-immolation of Tibetan freedom (Rangzen) activist **Pawo Lobga Rangzen**, who sacrificed his life on **2 July 2026 at 5.49 pm** in front of the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Standing before the very institution established to uphold peace, justice, human dignity, and the right of all peoples to self-determination, Pawo Lobga Rangzen made the ultimate sacrifice in the hope that the world would finally hear the silenced voices of the Tibetan people. His final act was not one of despair, but a conscious political protest born from decades of repression, occupation, and the continued denial of fundamental human rights in Tibet.

For nearly seven decades, Tibetans have endured systematic policies aimed at eroding their national identity, suppressing their religious freedom, restricting their language, exploiting their natural resources, and silencing every peaceful expression of dissent. Yet despite unimaginable suffering, Tibetans have consistently embraced non-violent resistance inspired by compassion, courage, and truth.

Since 1998, **more than 170 Tibetans, both inside Tibet and in exile, have self-immolated** in what remains one of the most extraordinary and courageous campaigns of non-violent political protest in modern history. These individuals came from different regions, professions, ages, and walks of life. Monks, nuns, students, mothers, fathers, artists, nomads, and ordinary citizens all chose the same tragic path, not for personal gain, not because of private grievances, but because they believed their sacrifice might awaken the conscience of humanity to the suffering of Tibetan in side Tibet.

For years, the so-called Government of the People's Republic of China has attempted to dismiss these self-immolators' sacrifices by portraying them as isolated incidents caused by personal difficulties, mental instability, family disputes, or economic hardship. Such narratives seek to erase the political message left behind by those who gave their lives and to divert international attention from the realities of repression inside Tibet.

Pawo Lobga Rangzen's sacrifice stands as a powerful rebuttal to these claims.

A Tibetan living in exile, beyond the direct control of the Chinese authorities, he made a conscious and deliberate decision to sacrifice his life before the United Nations, the very symbol of the international community. His final act demonstrated unequivocally that Tibetan self-immolations are not a private misfortune but acts of political conscience. His sacrifice

exposed the falsity of attempts to reduce this movement to personal tragedy while ignoring its unmistakable political message: the demand for freedom, dignity, justice, and the restoration of Tibet's independence.

History records self-immolation as one of humanity's most desperate forms of non-violent protest. Individuals choose such an irreversible path only when every other peaceful avenue has been denied, ignored, or rendered ineffective. The Tibetan self-immolation movement represents an unprecedented moral appeal against repression, a cry from a people who have exhausted every peaceful means to make our voices heard.

No people willingly embrace death when they possess genuine hope of being heard. The continued self-immolations are themselves evidence of the profound crisis facing the Tibetan people and of the international community's failure to respond adequately.

The United Nations was founded on the promise that human dignity would never again be sacrificed to political convenience, would be put to protecting peace, justice, human dignity, and the equal rights of all peoples. Yet, for the people of Tibet, that promise remains unfulfilled. Decades of appeals, documentation, and peaceful advocacy have not resulted in meaningful action to address the unresolved question of Tibet or the ongoing human rights situation under Chinese rule.

We have taken note of the statement by the United Nations Secretary-General that, *"On the border issue, in any country, it is important that minorities are respected, and that they are also made to feel a part of the whole."* While we appreciate the importance of protecting minority rights, we respectfully submit that this characterization does not reflect the Tibetan people's understanding of their own history and national identity.

Tibetans do not regard themselves as a minority within China. We maintain that Tibet was an independent nation before the invasion of the People's Liberation Army in the 1950s and that the Tibetan people possess a distinct history, culture, language, religion, and national identity. From our perspective, Tibet is not a minority region seeking accommodation within another state, but a nation living under occupation.

We therefore respectfully call upon the United Nations and its Member States to:

- Publicly acknowledge the political nature of the Tibetan self-immolation movement and reject narratives that falsely attribute these sacrifices solely to personal or psychological causes.
- Recognize that Tibet was an independent nation before its occupation by the People's Liberation Army in the 1950s, and urge the United Nations to place the issue of Tibet's independence on its agenda by addressing the unresolved status of Tibet and supporting the Tibetan people's legitimate aspiration to restore their national independence through peaceful means.
- Urge the so-called Government of the People's Republic of China to end policies and laws of political repression, forced assimilation, restrictions on freedom, and the systematic erosion of Tibetan language, culture, and identity.

- Demand unrestricted access to Tibet for United Nations Special Rapporteurs, independent human rights experts, journalists, and humanitarian observers.
- Raise the human rights situation in Tibet consistently within United Nations mechanisms and in bilateral and multilateral engagements with the Chinese government.
- Support meaningful dialogue that addresses the aspirations and fundamental rights of the Tibetan people in accordance with international human rights principles and the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

Pawo Lobga Rangzen did not ask the world for sympathy alone. He asked the world to bear witness and to act. He threw the pamphlets in the air, written

" FREE TIBET, CHINA OUT OF TIBET "

Silence in the face of these repeated sacrifices risks conveying that the suffering of the Tibetan people can be overlooked without consequence. The continued absence of meaningful international action only deepens the sense of abandonment felt by Tibetans both inside Tibet and across the world. His sacrifice now joins those of more than 170 Tibetans whose lives have become silent testimonies to a nation that refuses to surrender its identity despite overwhelming oppression. Our voices can no longer be silenced, but whether they are heard depends upon the moral courage of the international community. The United Nations must not allow these sacrifices to fade into history as mere statistics. They are enduring reminders that justice delayed continues to cost human lives.

We urge the United Nations to honour the principles upon which it was founded by standing with truth, defending the universal rights of the Tibetan people, and ensuring that the sacrifices of Pawo Lobga Rangzen and all Tibetan martyrs are neither ignored nor forgotten.

The Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) is an international organization comprising Tibetans committed to the pursuit of full independence for the entirety of Tibet, encompassing its three traditional provinces: U-Tsang, Do-toe, and Do-med, operating as an autonomous entity with its Democratic Constitute, strategic plans, and programs, TYC has established itself as the largest and most active non-governmental Tibetan organization in exile with a legacy of political activism. The organization currently represents a membership of more than 38,556 individuals worldwide.

Respectfully,

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