



International Tibet Network's Strategic Framework

The Mission of the International Tibet Network is to maximize the effectiveness of the worldwide Tibet movement, which is dedicated to ending human rights violations in Tibet and to working actively to restore the Tibetan people's right under international law to determine their own political, economic, social, religious, and cultural status.

Network Members regard Tibet as an occupied country, recognize the Tibetan Government in Exile as the sole legitimate government of the Tibetan people, and are committed to non-violence as a fundamental principle of the Tibetan struggle. Beyond these principles, the Network respects the variety of views and opinions of its Member organizations and believes that diversity strengthens our movement.

The International Tibet Network pursues its goals by working to increase the capacity of individual Member organizations, by developing coordinated strategic campaigns, and by encouraging increased cooperation among organizations, thereby strengthening the Tibet movement as a whole.

The goal of the Tibet Network is:

A substantial increase in coordinated, sustained activity by Tibet Groups leading to a major increase in pressure on China so that it genuinely addresses the Tibetan political situation.

In 2008 we created a Strategic Framework as a guide to the development of coordinated campaigns, thus allowing the movement to concentrate resources on actions directed at the root cause of the "Tibet problem" (the occupation), to exploit both its own strengths and the Chinese government's weaknesses, keep us from expending energy in too many directions, thus lessening our effectiveness, and allow us to take the initiative rather than react primarily to the moves of the Chinese government. We believe that by working from a Strategic Framework to build strong plans maximizes the likelihood of our success.

Background: The Network's first Strategic Framework (then called Plan) was developed in 2007 by a specially- convened Task Force. The process involved assessing the contents of more than 80 detailed questionnaire responses from the movement, interviews with experts, and analysis of a limited consultation with Tibetans in Tibet. The Plan was approved by Network Members in early 2008. In late 2012, many of the Task Force members were re-convened to review the Plan. The Task Force reviewed interviews with Member Groups, campaign and Network evaluations, looked at the outcomes of recent multiple-stakeholder planning meetings

and considered the implications of our changing political context, in particular the self-immolation crisis, His Holiness' devolution of political authority and China's leadership change.

Implementation: Since 2007 the Network has supported a full-time Campaigns Coordinator who is responsible for overseeing the design of campaigns and tactics that reflect the central concepts of the Strategic Framework and to assist in the preparation and distribution of materials. Campaign ideas are developed by various mechanisms that encourage Member Group participation, and all campaign plans include activities appropriate to groups of varying size, resources, experience, and local conditions, so as to maximize participation and increase the power of the movement.

Participation by Tibet groups is voluntary, and Groups are, of course, free to pursue campaigns developed that are outside Network plans. It should be clearly noted that the Framework promotes political action as the primary focus of activity but this does not minimize the value of awareness-raising, humanitarian, or cultural/education activities, which are the main focus of some groups and in parts of the world where political action is difficult or prohibited.

Central concepts of the Strategic Plan:

- **To do fewer things but to do them much better.**

This means being more mindful of what we can realistically achieve, what we know best how to do, where we can be most effective, and learning how to be even more effective. Evaluating our work and implementing our findings, and the recommendations of Task Force Reviews, eg our Tactics Review, remains vitally important (see 5). The Steering Committee will rigorously prioritize Network commitments, and the Secretariat will actively encourage Member Groups to lead on campaigns that fit with the Strategic Framework (or partly initiated by the Network) and have the ability to engage the whole movement. We aim to make better use of key dates in the Tibetan calendar. Rapid Response guidelines enable us to swiftly assess events in Tibet and balance proactive and reactive work.

- **To amplify and pay tribute to the courage and determination of the Tibetan people.**

Since 2008 we have successfully changed the primary focus of our message to amplify the unbreakable strength of the Tibetan identity, a strength that withstands the ongoing oppression and brutality of the Chinese government. Celebrating resistance and survival—rather than portraying Tibetans as victims—is a positive message that does not minimize the penalties and pain of resistance. We believe this positive message is more appealing to our supporters and may be more threatening to Chinese leaders.

Note: the Network will never use language that glorifies self-immolation, or appears to encourage such tactics.

- **To build sustained pressure on our governments to act meaningfully for Tibet.**

In our pressure on governments we will focus on two things:

- Encouraging governments to build inter-governmental communication on Tibet, to act multilaterally, to develop greater coordination in response to China in relation to Tibet and thereby increase international influence and pressure on China and minimize China's punitive response.
- Generating tangible actions for Tibet that do not require China's cooperation. Such steps might include setting up a Tibet forum, agreeing financial assistance for project work in Tibet, appointing Tibet Desk officers in Beijing embassies or specialist staff in relevant international offices such as the office of the EU HR Representative. It can also include symbolic actions such as awards.

- **To consider with great care what impact the movement can have on change in Chinese governance.**

We will continue our work in educating the movement about who in the Chinese leadership is responsible for deciding or implementing Tibet policy. It remains the Network's policy to encourage peaceful protests for visiting Chinese leaders and engaging with them if opportunities arise, such as in meetings with parliamentarians, academics or think tanks.

- **To improve the movement's ability and capacity to plan and implement effective and strategic campaigns,**

We will seek to expand strategic planning expertise among other stakeholders and audiences and implement the findings of evaluations and Tactics Taskforce (see 5).

- **To maintain the movement's commitment to nonviolence.**

- **To maintain the movement's absolute commitment to keeping the issue of Tibet alive until a resolution is achieved.**

SUMMARY OF THE NETWORK STRATEGIC PLAN

STRAND 1. PUT TIBETANS IN TIBET FIRST

***Goal: To amplify the actions of Tibetans in Tibet, enhance their standing as the movement's great strength, and strengthen our own connection to them and to the Tibetan Government in Exile.**

Why? Because from Tibetans come our energy and legitimacy. We can be more effective if we forge a closer link between what Tibetans in Tibet are expressing and what we do. The heart of this Strand is to amplify what the Tibetans do and say to assert their Tibetan identity, and the risks they take in expressing their resolute determination to remain Tibetan. This affirms His Holiness's statement that the issue of Tibet is about the Tibetan people, not about him. It reminds everyone that nonviolence is not the same as passivity, and that in ways both quiet and dramatic, the Tibetan people wield an irresistible force preserving Tibetan-ness. We will continue to strengthen communication with the Tibetan Government in exile, the legitimate

representatives of Tibetans in Tibet.

Example Campaigns & Activities:

- ★ [Free Tibetan Heroes](#): This campaign, which profiles political prisoners and presses for their release, conveys the message that the detentions are usually a response to the Tibetan determination to remain Tibetan.
- ★ [Free Panchen Lama](#): This campaign profiles the case of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the Panchen Lama. He was taken by Chinese authorities in 1985 when he was six-years old after he'd been recognised as one of the most important spiritual leaders of Tibet, the Panchen Lama. He hasn't been seen since.
- ★ [Tibet Language Rights](#): The Chinese government is coercing Tibetan parents to send their children to faraway residential schools where the language of instruction is almost entirely Chinese, not Tibetan. This insidious plan is designed to stamp out the next generation of Tibetan speakers and eliminate Tibetan identity.

STRAND 2. PRESSURE ON OUR GOVERNMENTS and COMPANIES

***Goal: To radically increase pressure on our governments to increase their visible and tangible support for the Tibetan people.**

Why? Tibet Groups recognize this is the most effective thing we do. Putting noisy, sustained pressure on our governments (and publicizing it) will send a strong signal of solidarity to the people in Tibet, and send a strong signal to China that the Tibet issue will not go away.

We will continue to focus on measurable and achievable demands that help to build the infrastructure of support for Tibetan resistance inside and outside Tibet. Human rights issues will clearly remain part of our advocacy, but should be so in the context of the messaging outlined in Strand 1. Where there are important opportunities, NGOs, IGOs and Corporations may also be appropriate targets for Tibet Group advocacy, and the Plan does not preclude appropriate efforts towards them, particularly when such efforts are coordinated with building sustained pressure on governments.

Example Campaigns & Activities:

- ★ [NoBeijing2022](#): The Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics is set to happen amid one of the world's worst crackdowns against freedom, democracy, and human rights. This is a cross-movement campaign coordinated by Tibet Network that is pressing for a boycott of the games by Governments, Sponsors and the wider international community.
- ★ [StopGoogleCensorship](#)
- ★ [StopAppleCensorship](#)
- ★ [Cancel China Propaganda](#)
- ★ **Coordinated multilateral action by governments** as a means to change the political landscape/the way governments engage with China on Tibet. Coordinated advocacy with Foreign Ministries, parliaments ([Lobby Days](#)) advocacy@ UN fora, more engagement with Beijing embassies/delegations and with the EU Human Rights Special Representative etc. Continue to push our governments into responding - ideally with joint

statements or demarches - about any protest activities by Tibetans in Tibet.

- ★ Build Strong Parliamentary Support, promoting Lobby Days to build strong/active Parliamentary support either by Parliamentary groups or individual Parliamentarians, especially in **'Tibet 10' countries - G8 (& EU) minus Russia, plus India, Australia and Taiwan – plus Brazil and South Africa (BRICS) and also Asian countries.** Increase our dialogue with INPAT.
- ★ **Get the whole movement to target key governments at strategic moments**, e.g., EU, BRICS, G8, US, France, etc. (This provides opportunities for political involvement for Tibet Groups in countries where direct political pressure on their own governments is difficult. It can also demonstrate to key governments the range and size of the Tibet movement.)

* **We need to be noisy** (not necessarily literally) and exert sustained, not episodic pressure. This Strand involves protest, holding governments and companies to account for how their policies and behaviour impact Tibetans in Tibet.

STRAND 3. SPOTLIGHT CHINESE LEADERS

***Goal: To identify and craft messages and activities that uniquely target key individuals in the Chinese leadership with direct responsibility for Tibet policy.**

Why? The best approach to any big problem is to break it down into its constituent parts; the CCP is simply a collection of individuals, each with unique personal qualities, experiences, aspirations and emotions. Our consultations with Groups showed that many of us feel that the best hope for Tibet is change in China. Direct pressure on incumbents of lower-level but key positions (who generally work out of the public eye) may encourage them to think differently about the Tibet policies they support. Targeting them also sends a signal to the next generation, shows solidarity with the people in Tibet and may contribute to a nascent discussion within China about the consequences of government policy in Tibet.

Example Campaigns & Activities:

- ★ **Focus on key Chinese Leaders:** Build profiles and dossiers for key Chinese leaders for action via Magnitsky or other similar sanctions.
- ★ Support protest when Chinese leaders travel overseas. This remains a core activity because it maximizes “bang for our buck”. We have a number of related resources.
- ★ **Highlight China’s Failed Policies in Tibet:** Show how official policies in Tibet have failed to benefit the Tibetan people or create “stability”.

STRAND 4. REACH OUT TO SELECTED GROUPS OF CHINESE PEOPLE

***Goal: Enhance support for Tibet by showing solidarity with Chinese dissidents in China, supporters in Hong Kong and building alliances with other China-related movements.**

Why? Because change for Tibet is more likely if the Chinese people understand the Tibetan people and their point of view. Because we all agree it is important, we've been talking about it for ages, His Holiness urges us all to do it. BUT - we have to be realistic. Most Tibet Groups

have limited ability or skills to take this on in a major way. Outreach will be most effective if done by Tibetans (or Chinese supporters) one on one.

Example Actions & Future Priorities:

- ★ **Solidarity with Uyghurs, Hongkongers and Chinese:** Include strong elements of solidarity work among as many of our campaigns as possible. See
 - [NoBeijing2022](#)
 - [ResistChina.org](#)
 - [StopAppleCensorship](#)
 - [Cancel China Propaganda](#)
- ★ Translate as many of our key campaign materials as possible into Chinese.
- ★ Support the coordination of solidarity actions (eg June 4th, Human Rights Day, 1 October) and joint statements/actions (eg China's new Party leaders) with Chinese human rights defenders, Uighurs and Southern Mongolians.

- ★ Maintain and promote www.chinatibetfriendship.org. This website features Chinese-language information about Tibet by writers who are writing from inside China.

5. IMPROVING THE MOVEMENT'S ABILITY TO PLAN AND IMPLEMENT EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGNS *(this is not a Strand, but an internal priority for our campaign plan)*

***Goal: To significantly improve the movement's ability and capacity to plan and to implement effective and strategic campaigns,** and expand strategic planning expertise among other stakeholders and audiences.

Why? The movement has lacked strategic ability in the past, often through a focus on being reactive rather than proactive, but also because of a lack of experience. In the last two years, with training and the introduction of [campaign planning templates](#), we have seen significant improvements. This has been further assisted by the efforts of active, experienced representatives of Campaign Working Groups and other Member Groups promoting sharing their skills and ideas at Regional and International meetings.

Example Past Actions:

* Creation of a ["Tactics" Task Force](#) to evaluate the effectiveness of current campaign tactics and consider new ones. See below.

* Training in Strategic Planning and creation of [planning template](#) (shared among NED grantees)

Promoting learning through focus on successful campaigns and prioritize campaigns that have potential for tangible results

* Regular campaign evaluations, and better-defined, detailed campaign objectives.

* Greater focus on Strand 2, including Lobby Day Training and Small Grants.