

**UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL
POLITICAL AND
DECOLONISATION
COMMITTEE
SBSMUN 2019**



The Question of Tibet

Letter from the Executive Board:

Dear Delegates,

The agenda before you aims to tackle one of the most challenging political and legal issues that has existed for decades - one that the international community has been relatively silent about. This agenda is not just one of jurisdiction or decolonisation - it is also one about persecution, violence, and grave human rights violations. The Question of Tibet, therefore, is not just a political one - it is also one that forces us to answer deep moral and ethical questions about history, culture, and identity. The people of Tibet have been in anguish, with no access or recourse to any form of justice or redressal even within their own territory, and no way out of the danger they face every day.

As members of the SPECPOL, as representatives of sovereign nations, but more importantly, as fellow human beings in a global community - it is up to you to find solutions to these problems. The plight of over a six million people is in your hands.

While this background guide serves as a means to provide you with an insight into the subjects of discussion, it is deliberately only a cursory glance into the larger issues. You will need to do a conclusive amount of research to really understand these problems, and to find a solution for the same.

See you in committee.

All the best.

Barkha Batra

Chairperson

United Nations Special Political and Decolonisation Committee

About the SPECPOL

The United Nations General Assembly Fourth Committee, also known as the Special Political and Decolonisation Committee, is one of the six main committees of the GA. Essentially, it focuses on two major issues: decolonisation, and the Middle East.¹ The mandate of the Committee is rather fragmented, including within it five decolonisation-related items: the effects of atomic radiation, questions relating to information, a comprehensive review of the question of peacekeeping operations as well as a review of special political missions, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the report of the Special Committee on Israeli Practices; and international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. Since 1993, the Committee has also been directed to conduct a comprehensive review of peacekeeping operations.

The SPECPOL has a number of subsidiary bodies reporting to it. These include, inter alia: the Committee on Information, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (also called “C-34”), and the Special Committee on Decolonisation (“Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the

¹ <https://www.un.org/en/ga/fourth/>

Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples”, also called “C-24).

The procedural functioning of the SPECPOL is slightly different from the other committees of the General Assembly. Here, all items on decolonisation are debated jointly. The representatives of subsidiary bodies usually introduce their reports, and the author departments of Secretary General reports are also invited to do so. It is important to note that petitioners, ie civil society representatives and other stakeholders, are allowed to address the Committee on decolonisation issues.

Finally, the Committee usually adopts about 30-35 draft resolutions and several draft decisions annually. All draft resolutions related to the questions of UNRWA and Israel, and some under the decolonisation nexus are adopted through voting. When the draft text is related to the work of a subsidiary body, the Member State chairing the subsidiary body often facilitates the negotiations of the text. It must be kept in mind that since the SPECPOL is a General Assembly Committee, all resolutions will indeed be *non-binding*.

The SPECPOL is guided by the principles enshrined in Article 73 of the UN Charter, ie the Declaration regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories.²

² <http://legal.un.org/repertory/art73.shtml>

The Agenda: The Question of Tibet

Introduction:

Tibet is located on the south-west of China, and borders India, Nepal, Myanmar and Bhutan. Tibet's three original provinces are U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo. However, under Chinese occupation, it has been divided up and incorporated into Chinese provinces, with little to no reference to the original 3 provinces. China refers to Tibet as the Tibet Autonomous Region or TAR, which only includes U-Tsang and a part of Kham.

The question of Tibet and its sovereignty dates back to the 13th century, or the Mongol Yuan dynasty (1270-1354). During this era, Tibet was officially incorporated into the Yuan dynasty, and was directly governed in every aspect- militarily, financially, politically- by the Mongol rule. Once the Yuan dynasty was overthrown (the Hongjinjun military forces led by a man named Zhu Yuanzhang brought the fall of the dynasty, and captured Dadu (currently known as Beijing), the capital of the Yuan empire, within a year of the start of their revolt.) the Ming dynasty of China came into place (1368-1644). However during this period, the Sino-Tibetan relations was rather unclear and became the subject of many opinionated stances. Chinese scholars of that time such as Wang Jeiwei, believe that China's sovereignty over Tibet was unquestionable due to the fact that the Ming dynasty issued titles for the Tibetan leaders, and these ti-

titles were fully accepted by them- indicating that they were under the rule of the Ming dynasty, which is why the Tibetan leaders accepted them. However scholars outside of this region, such as Helmet Hoffman, stated that the titles didn't indicate anything and were only nominal, and lasted until the 11th emperor of the Ming dynasty, Jiajing Emperor (1521-1566) ceased all relations with Tibet. The idea followed by Tibet is that during this time, Tibet refused to pay its tributes to the Ming dynasty and the Ming dynasty did little to impose its rule on Tibet, and thus, it became independent from this point forward. Needless to say, based on the views of Chinese scholars, China has claimed that Tibet has been a part of its region for the past 800 years since the Yuan dynasty. However, the CTA (Central Tibetan Administration) believes that they were never apart of China- in the Yuan dynasty era they were a part of the Mongol empire which happened to include China but did not mean they were apart of China.

During the mid 1500s, Sonam Gaytso, (1543-1588), also known as the 3rd Dalai Lama, the first of this lineage with this title, was responsible for converting those in Tibet at the time to Tibetan Buddhism. As the lineage of Dalai Lama was consolidating his position and power in Tibet as its representative and a spiritual leader, in 1644, the Manchu people of Manchuria overthrew the Ming dynasty and established what would be the final dynasty rule of Tibet -the Qing dynasty. A priest patron relationship was maintained between Tibet, the

Dalai Lama and the Qing dynasty till the end of its rule, however that did not mean or showcase China's suzerainty over Tibet in any which way, as stated and maintained by Tibet this time.

Turmoil once again started erupting in 1705, when the lifestyle of the 6th Dalai Lama, Tsangyang Gyatso, who was mostly interested in women and wine, enraged the Mongol emperor at the time Lhasang Khan, and caused him to try and take the Tibetan throne for himself. The instability in Tibet was capitalised on by China, who took over the Tibetan regions of Amdo and Kham and made them into Qinghai, a Chinese province in 1724.

After many decades and years of power struggles, exilement of the spiritual leaders under the Dalai Llama lineage and constant instability, the People's Republic of China were able to take over Tibet with complete victory in 1950. The Seventeen Point Agreement was then drafted by the PRC, stating that Tibet was now an autonomous region and ruled by China. It was forcibly signed by the Dalai Lama under protest and was invalidated shortly afterwards by him and his followers-causing the exile of the current and 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, who now currently resides and had to flee to Dharamshala, India after an abduction attempt by the Chinese government.

To this date, the relationship and history between China and Tibet is seen as complex and multifaceted, encompassing religious, ethical, independence and sovereignty issues and resulting in one of the most controversial and difficult agendas the UN has had to ever face - one that has still not been provided a legitimate and practical solution, and whose consequences are still affecting hundreds and thousands of Tibetans today.



History of Persecution:³1. Key events:

7th-9th century - Namri Songzen and descendants begin to unify Tibetan-inhabited areas and conquer neighbouring territories, in competition with China.

822 - Peace treaty with China delineates borders.

1244 - Mongols conquer Tibet. Tibet enjoys considerable autonomy under Yuan Dynasty.

1598 - Mongol Altan Khan makes high lama Sonam Gyatso first Dalai Lama.

1630s-1717 - Tibet involved in power struggles between Manchu and Mongol factions in China.

1624 - First European contact as Tibetans allow Portuguese missionaries to open church. Expelled at lama's insistence in 1745.

1717 - Dzungar (Oirat) Mongols conquer Tibet and sack Lhasa. Chinese Emperor Kangxi eventually ousts them in 1720, and re-establishes rule of Dalai Lama.

1724 - Chinese Manchu (Qing) dynasty appoints resident commissioner to run Tibet, annexes parts of historic Kham and Amdo provinces.

1750 - Rebellion against Chinese commissioners quelled by Chinese army, which keeps 2,000-strong garrison in Lhasa. Dalai Lama government appointed to run daily administration under supervision of commissioner.

³ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-pacific-17046222>

1774 - British East India Company agent George Bogle visits to assess trade possibilities.

1788 and 1791 - China sends troops to expel Nepalese invaders.

1793 - China decrees its commissioners in Lhasa to supervise the selection of Dalai and other senior lamas.

2. Banning of foreigners:

1850s - Russian and British rivalry for control of Central Asia prompts Tibetan government to ban all foreigners and shut borders.

1865 - Britain starts discreetly mapping Tibet.

1904 - Dalai Lama flees British military expedition under Colonel Francis Young husband. Britain forces Tibet to sign trading agreement in order to forestall any Russian overtures.

1906 - British-Chinese Convention of 1906 confirms 1904 agreement, pledges Britain not to annex or interfere in Tibet in return for indemnity from Chinese government.

1907 - Britain and Russia acknowledge Chinese suzerainty over Tibet.

1908-09 - China restores Dalai Lama, who flees to India as China sends in army to control his government.

1912 April - Chinese garrison surrenders to Tibetan authorities after Chinese Republic declared.

3. Declaration of Independence:

1912 - 13th Dalai Lama returns from India, Chinese troops leave.

1913 - Tibet reasserts independence after decades of rebuffing attempts by Britain and China to establish control.

1935 - The man who will later become the 14th Dalai Lama is born to a peasant family in a small village in north-eastern Tibet. Two years later, Buddhist officials declare him to be the reincarnation of the 13 previous Dalai Lamas.

1949 - Mao Zedong proclaims the founding of the People's Republic of China and threatens Tibet with "liberation".

1950 - China enforces a long-held claim to Tibet. The Dalai Lama, now aged 15, officially becomes head of state.

1951 - Tibetan leaders are forced to sign a treaty dictated by China. The treaty, known as the "Seventeen Point Agreement", professes to guarantee Tibetan autonomy and to respect the Buddhist religion, but also allows the establishment of Chinese civil and military headquarters at Lhasa.

Mid-1950s - Mounting resentment against Chinese rule leads to outbreaks of armed resistance.

1954 - The Dalai Lama visits Beijing for talks with Mao, but China still fails to honour the Seventeen Point Agreement.

3. Revolts:

1959 March - Full scale uprising breaks out in Lhasa. Thousands are said to have died during the suppression of the revolt. The Dalai Lama and most of his ministers flee to northern India, to be followed by some 80,000 other Tibetans.

1963 - Foreign visitors are banned from Tibet.

1965 - Chinese government establishes Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR).

1966 - The Cultural Revolution reaches Tibet and results in the destruction of a large number of monasteries and cultural artefacts.

1971 - Foreign visitors are again allowed to enter the country.

Late 1970s - End of Cultural Revolution leads to some easing of repression, though large-scale relocation of Han Chinese into Tibet continues.

1980s - China introduces "Open Door" reforms and boosts investment while resisting any move towards greater autonomy for Tibet.

1987 - The Dalai Lama calls for the establishment of Tibet as a zone of peace and continues to seek dialogue with China, with the aim of achieving genuine self-rule for Tibet within China.

1988 - China imposes martial law after riots break out.

1989 - The Dalai Lama is awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace.

1993 - Talks between China and the Dalai Lama break down.

1995 - The Dalai Lama names a six-year-old boy, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, as the true reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, the second most important figure in Tibetan Buddhism. The Chinese authorities place the boy under house arrest

and designate another six-year-old boy, Gyancain Norbu, as their officially sanctioned Panchen Lama.

2002 - Contacts between the Dalai Lama and Beijing are resumed.

4. Protests (as self-immolations):

2011 March - A Tibetan Buddhist monk burns himself to death in a Tibetan-populated part of Sichuan Province in China, becoming the first of 12 monks and nuns in 2011 to make this protest against Chinese rule over Tibet.

2011 April - Dalai Lama announces his retirement from politics. Exiled Tibetans elect Lobsang Sangay to lead the government-in-exile.

2011 July - The man expected to be China's next president, Xi Jinping, promises to "smash" Tibetan separatism in a speech to mark the 60th anniversary of the Chinese Communist takeover of Tibet. This comes shortly after US President Barack Obama receives the Dalai Lama in Washington and expresses "strong support" for human rights in Tibet.

2011 November - The Dalai Lama formally hands over his political responsibilities to Lobsang Sangay, a former Harvard academic. Before stepping down, the Dalai Lama questions the wisdom and effectiveness of self-immolation as a means of protesting against Chinese rule in Tibet.

2011 December - An exiled Tibetan rights group says a former monk died several days after setting himself on fire. Tenzin Phuntsog is the first monk to die thus in Tibet proper.

2012 May - Two men set themselves on fire in Lhasa, one of whom died, the official Chinese media said. These are the first self-immolations reported in the Tibetan capital.

2012 August - Two Tibetan teenagers are reported to have burned themselves to death in Sichuan province.

2012 October - Several Tibetan men burn themselves to death in north-western Chinese province of Gansu, Tibetan rights campaigners say.

2012 November - UN human rights chief Navi Pillay calls on China to address abuses that have prompted the rise in self-immolations.

On the eve of the 18th Communist Party of China National Congress, three teenage Tibetan monks set themselves on fire.

2013 February - The London-based Free Tibet group says further self-immolations bring to over 100 the number of those who have resorted to this method of protest since March 2011.

2013 June - China denies allegations by rights activists that it has resettled two million Tibetans in "socialist villages".

2014 February - US President Obama holds talks with the Dalai Lama in Washington. China summons a US embassy official in Beijing to protest.

2014 April - Human Rights Watch says Nepal has imposed increasing restrictions on Tibetans living in the country following pressure from China.

2014 June - The Tibetan government-in-exile launches a fresh drive to persuade people across the world to support its campaign for more autonomy for people living inside the region.



Chinese perspective:

The crux of the Chinese argument lies in evidence cited from 800 years ago. The Chinese claim that since Tibet was integrated into China during the rule of the Yuan Dynasty, clearly making it an inseparable part of China. Since then, it has not been its own country. The Chinese argument also puts forth the fact that the Tibetan claims have not been acknowledged or recognised by any other country, thus negating their arguments and claims.

The Chinese then make the classic colonial argument: the fact that Tibet was previously ‘backward’ and thus needed Chinese intervention to liberate it from archaic traditions and underdevelopment. From 1950 to 1959, the Chinese ‘liberated’ Tibet through democratic reforms and policies. This Chinese intervention ended the old feudal serfdom in Tibet, a system wherein there were no rights or liberties, where the underprivileged masses were enslaved by the priests and lords. The liberation efforts culminated in 1959, with the declaration of Serf Emancipation Day - rendering the Tibetan Government illegal. Further, the Chinese argue that Tibet is not oppressed, since it is recognised as the Tibet Autonomous Region of the People’s Republic of China. This means that the Tibetan people are free to follow their traditions, and to practice Tibetan Buddhism.

Since the Chinese liberation, Tibet has seen illustrious development: life expectancy has doubled, there is next to zero poverty, disease and hunger, and literacy has risen from 5% to 85%. Beyond this, former slaves have been provided with land, and major strides have been made in investments, infrastructure, housing, jobs, schools and hospitals.

The next argument pertains to the Dalai Lama and his claims over Tibet. The Chinese see the Dalai Lama as one in a “line of God-King Dictators.” According to the Chinese, he is merely a politician in a monk’s attire, and his agenda is to secure an independent Tibet so that he can establish his rule over it once more.

Those who do not support the Chinese claim in Tibet belong to the upper-ruling strata, who want to preserve feudal serfdom and imperialist rule. These are the people staging rebellions against China. Further, the Dalai Lama is seen as the sponsor of the unrest in Tibet - wherein his peaceful policies and demonstrations are “blatant lies fabricated by the Dalai Lama himself, and his Dalai clique.”⁴ Those who report about any form of brutality in Tibet, including Western media outlets, report based on fabrications, distorted facts, and unfounded claims.

Finally, China strongly believes that the Tibet issue is an internal one, and strongly opposes any form of foreign inspection, reporting, or intervention.

Tibetan Perspective:

Protestors in Tibet repeatedly call for the protection of Tibetan identity, for freedom, for human rights, and for the return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet. Currently, the Tibetan Government-in-Exile maintains that Tibet is not, under any circumstances, part of China - it is an independent state under unlawful occupation.

According to this view, Tibet was not ruled by China until the 1950 invasion. In fact, in 1912, the 13th Dalai Lama issued a proclamation reaffirming Tibet's in-

⁴ (China's Ministry of Public Security press release, April 2008
For further reading: <http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/zt/wrd/t997355.htm> ;
http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/zt/zgxz/default_6.htm

dependence and the country maintained its own national flag, currency, stamps, passports and army. It signed international treaties and maintained diplomatic relations with neighbouring countries. In 1950, the newly established Communist regime in China invaded Tibet, which was rich in natural resources and had a strategically important border with India. With 40,000 Chinese troops in its country, the Tibetan government was forced to sign the "Seventeen Point Agreement" which recognised China's rule in return for promises to protect Tibet's political system and Tibetan Buddhism

Far from welcoming the Chinese as liberators, Tibetans across the country continued to resist China's armed forces and China responded with widespread brutality. Resistance culminated on the 10th of March 1959, when 300,000 Tibetans surrounded the Potala Palace to offer the Dalai Lama protection. This date is commemorated as National Uprising Day by Tibetans and supporters, as opposed to Serf Emancipation Day.

The Tibetans assert that in 1950, many states that are today stable democracies were undemocratic and did not respect human rights. While Tibet did have a serf-slave system, it did not receive the opportunity to grow and reform itself as all other newly reformed and decolonised nations around it were able to. Even while in exile, the Dalai Lama has won the Nobel Peace Prize and has entirely

democratised the exiled Tibetan government. In contrast, the Chinese government continues to have no democratic authority. China claims that its vision of a brutal past justifies its occupation. However, Tibet under Chinese rule has experienced brutality on a massive scale – from the destruction of thousands of monasteries and the deaths more than one million Tibetans in Mao’s era, to torture, arbitrary arrests and the denial of fundamental freedoms today.

The declaration of Tibet as an ‘autonomous territory’ has no real meaning. Most senior political positions have never been occupied by a Tibetan - Beijing is truly in charge. The official language is Chinese, with many Tibetan children losing their ability to speak and write Tibetan. Resistance to China's rule - from singing to environmental protests – is met with repression and brutality. When it comes to the right to follow Tibetan Buddhism freely, monasteries are monitored and controlled by the Communist Party, and monks and nuns are persecuted by the Chinese regime. Any Tibetan possessing an image of the Dalai Lama risks imprisonment.

About the question of development - while Tibet has seen economic progress (as most countries have since 1950), Tibetans have benefitted less than the Chinese immigrants in Tibet. For one, infrastructure projects enable the movement

of China's military, mass immigration of Chinese workers, Chinese tourism and access to Tibet's resources. Economic growth benefits Chinese businesses and workers, and the tourism industry aims to legitimise the Chinese government's occupation. Millions of Tibetan nomads have been forced from their lands, ending their centuries-old way of life and leaving them dependent on the state as second class citizens in their own country. Education is primarily taught in Chinese, disadvantaging Tibetans who can only learn their mother tongue as a second language. The United Nations has repeatedly challenged China on human rights abuses in Tibet, including finding Tibet the area with the highest malnutrition rates in China.⁵ Since March 2011, more than a hundred and thirty people have set themselves on fire in Tibet, in protest against China's repression.

The Tibetan view from a legal standpoint:

As per the government in exile, Tibet has still not lost its statehood. It is considered an independent nation under illegal occupation. With this in mind, a number of Chinese activities can be seen as illegal.

The first action was in 1949, when the People's Liberation Army of the PRC first crossed into Tibet. After defeating the small Tibetan army, the Chinese Government imposed the "Seventeen-Point Agreement for the Peaceful Libera-

⁵ <https://freetibet.org/about/legal-status-tibet>

tion of Tibet" on the Tibetan Government in May 1951. Since it was signed under duress, the agreement was void under international law. The presence of 40,000 troops in Tibet, the threat of an immediate occupation of Lhasa and the prospect of the total obliteration of the Tibetan state left Tibetans no choice.

If Tibet is under unlawful Chinese occupation, China's illegal presence is an object of serious international concern. Further, Beijing's large-scale transfer of Chinese settlers into Tibet is a serious violation of the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, which prohibits the transfer of civilian population into occupied territory.

Finally, regardless of Tibet's legal or international status, the issue of human rights violations in their region are objects of international legal concern. Added to this are the questions of the right of self-determination and the right of the Tibetan people to maintain their own identity and autonomy.

Current status and recent developments:

The situation in Tibet still remains largely the same as has been previously described. The disputed region is still under the control of the Chinese Communist Party, with even local decision making power lying in the hands of Chinese officials. The residents of Tibet are denied various fundamental rights and free-

doms, and any assertion of Tibetan identity or form of dissent are promptly and strictly suppressed - including manifestos and expressions of Tibetan religious identity. Further, the State promotes policies that encourage migration from other parts of China into Tibet, thus systematically reducing the ethnic Tibetan population.

Even over the last year, a number of repressionist developments have taken place. These include inter alia:

- Significant structural reforms were introduced - ones that placed the party's United Front Work Department more explicitly in charge of policy areas like religious affairs and ethnic minorities, including in Tibet.
- Over the course of the year, Chinese officials continued to consolidate control over Larung Gar, a major centre for Tibetan Buddhist learning. They have expanded CCP⁶ cadres' management of the centre and increased the political education components of the curriculum in the wake of large-scale demolitions and evictions of monks and nuns that began in 2016.
- Amid tighter restrictions on passports for Tibetans, significantly fewer Tibetan pilgrims were able to travel to India to hear teachings of the Dalai Lama in 2018 compared with previous years.

⁶ Chinese Communist Party

- Orders have been passed to middle and primary schools, mandating that the language of instruction be Chinese and not Tibetan. Tibetan can now only be taught as a second language in selected schools of the region.
- Political prisoners are increasingly being denied access to legal counsel.
- Nuns and monks practicing Tibetan Buddhism have been forced to take examinations on Chinese law.
- Over 20 Political Prisoners have died in both Chinese and Tibetan prisons.
- A number of violative propaganda policies have been followed, such as providing aid to poor Tibetans on the condition that they learn the names of CCP leaders, and pledge allegiance to the party.
- People found even humming the Tibetan national anthem have been sent to, and tortured in police custody.⁷

⁷ These are some of numerous developments that have taken place. For further information, Delegates are encouraged to access:

- https://tibet.net/situation-in-tibet-updates/?fbclid=IwAR1h0nv9-MDa_q7SeO53aIUt-BKoTZPYtVogbYnQk3-MfT-zr71Rnp3lhaZI
- <https://freetibet.org/news?fbclid=IwAR3wYrLmF5O-rN2Jqecz3DLhopofFBCFu4yofUcc8-pAWJmvSrT1U62C19aY>
- <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2019/tibet>

Existing Legislation and UN Activities:

While there isn't much concrete legislation specifically with regard to Tibet, certain action has been taken.

The first comes in the UN General Assembly Resolution 1353 (XIV), 1959. Here, the General Assembly, while keeping in mind the principles of the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, expressed its concern for the denial of fundamental freedoms to the people in Tibet. In essence, this Resolution called for the fundamental rights of the Tibetan people to be respected, and for them to be free to live their distinctive cultural and religious lives.

The next legislation was the UN General Assembly Resolution 1723 (XVI), 1961. This Resolution called upon the previous Resolution (1353), and once again expressed its anxiety over the hardships of the Tibetan people, and their large scale exodus as refugees in neighbouring countries. The most important part of this Resolution lay in its second clause: *“Solemnly renews its call for the cessation of practices which deprive the Tibetan people of their fundamental human rights and freedoms, including the right to self-determination.”* The inclusion of the Tibetan people's right to self-determination was critical for the recognition of Tibet in the international sphere.

Then, in 1965, the General Assembly, calling upon the aforementioned Resolutions, passed Resolution 2079 (XX). The crucial addition to this Resolution was in Clause 3: “*Declares its conviction that the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Tibet and the suppression of the distinctive cultural and religious life of its people increase international tension and embitter relations between peoples.*” This clause accepted the severity of the condition of the Tibetan people, and acknowledged the role of the international community in the Sino-Tibetan conflict.

Besides these, there haven't been any landmark resolutions on the question of Tibet. While a number of civil society⁸ and international organisations are urging the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council, and the International Court of Justice to take some form of action, the lines are still blurred about Tibet being an internal conflict in China. More importantly, with the absence of international support behind Tibet's claims, action against China is a tough task.

⁸ <https://www.tibetpolicy.eu/category/policy-center/united-nations/>

Questions to be considered:

Since Tibet is a highly contentious issue, and one that lacks recent legislation - this committee must consider certain essential questions during debate, and while trying to negotiate a resolution.

- What is the role of religion and religious differences in the Sino-Tibetan conflict?
- How relevant is the Five Point Peace Plan in mediating peace between China and Tibet?
- What is the interplay between the principle of self-determination and sovereignty in international law?
- What is the role of the human rights violations in Tibet with regard to decolonisation?
- Evaluation of Chinese neocolonialism

Conclusion:

Once again, while this background guide attempts to provide an insight into the SPECPOL Agenda, it is by no means a conclusive measure of the issues to be addressed in committee, or the extent of the problems discussed. Delegates are

urged to merely use this as a starting point - a beginner's guide, before delving into further, more substantial and more specific research.

The name of the Special Political and Decolonisation Committee is extremely suggestive - the work of the Committee is grounded in the ideals and principles of impartiality, universality, and constructive international dialogue and cooperation. The mandate of this committee includes the acknowledgement of the right to self-determination, as well as on peacekeeping. This includes various other issues such as cultural rights, education, and identity politics. Thus, as representatives of your nations, and as part of a cooperative, constructive committee, it is in your hands to find solutions to the Sino-Tibetan conflict, as well as find ways to help those already affected by the conflict - those who have been persecuted for decades.

As members of the SPECPOL, this mandate is your advantage - whether it is the power to make recommendations, negotiating measures, or evaluating fundamental questions - you have the power to find an effective solution.

The fate of over six million people is in your hands. Good luck.

POSITION PAPERS DUE:

Deadline: 21st July, 2019; 6:00 pm

Submit at: sbsmun2019@gmail.com