



His Holiness the 14th

Dalai Lama

on
Environment

Collected Statements

1987-2017

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to millions of people across the world striving for a greener, healthier and more sustainable future for our planet.

**- Environment & Development Desk
TIBET POLICY INSTITUTE**

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The Tibet Policy Institute

Central Tibetan Administration

Dharamsala - 176215

H.P. INDIA

Tel: +91-1892-223556, 222403

E-mail: edd@tibet.net

Website: <http://www.tibet.net> and www.tibetpolicy.net



The three main commitments of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama are:

- * Promotion of human values,
- * Promotion of religious harmony,
- * Preservation of Tibet's spiritual heritage and protection of its environment.

Foreword

Since 1959, His Holiness the Dalai Lama has worked tirelessly to resolve the Tibet issue with Beijing through non-violence and has been recognised the world over as one of the most revered and respected spiritual teachers, an indefatigable champion of Tibetan freedom, and a committed spokesperson for the environmental movement. His Holiness was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989 in recognition of his non-violent struggle to resolve the Tibet issue with China, his teachings on peace, compassion and environmental conservation.

According to Buddhist teachings, there is a close interdependence between the natural environment and sentient beings. In keeping with Buddhist teachings and the Tibetan way of life, His Holiness the Dalai Lama in his Five-Point Peace Plan for Tibet proposed the creation of Tibet into a zone of nonviolence and a sanctuary of environmental protection.

This book is a collection of statements and speeches His Holiness the Dalai Lama made on the environment on different occasions from 1986 through 2017. We hope that this collection of speeches would be of benefit and a source of inspiration to all those who are interested in environmental issues and global ecological solutions. We hope this will provide a basis for a better understanding of our own individual's and humanity's collective responsibility, and be an inspiration for people to think globally and act locally.

This compilation of excerpts from speeches and teachings by His Holiness the Dalai Lama on the importance of environmental protection is dedicated to all those who continuously work for the ecological conservation of Mother Earth.

Environment and Development Desk

The Tibet Policy Institute

CONTENT

Foreword	G
1. An Ethical Approach to Environmental Protection	1
2. Five-Point Peace Plan for Tibet	3
3. Ecology and the Human Heart	13
4. Universal Responsibility and the Environment	17
5. The Importance of Tree Planting and its Protection	22
6. A Clean Environment is a Human Right	24
7. A Green Environment for Now and the Future	28
8. Spirituality and Nature	30
9. Thinking Globally: A Universal Task	32
10. Caring for the Earth	36
11. A Buddhist Concept of Nature	38
12. Universal Responsibility and the Inner Environment	45
13. Address at the Rio Earth Summit	52
14. An Essay on Mountains	59
15. The Sheltering Tree of Interdependence: A Buddhist Monk's Reflections on Ecological Responsibility	61
16. Environment Awareness: A Part of Daily Life	71
17. Practical Steps Towards Protection of the Environment ..	72
18. Hope for Tibet's Environment	75

19. Politics and Environment: An Interview	82
20. The Natural World	87
21. Wildlife: A Symbol of Freedom	94
22. Put Education above Wealth	96
23. Mother Sentient Beings	100
24. Be a Vegetarian	107
25. Stop Wearing Animal Skins	111
26. True Wealth is Having a Peaceful and Calm Mind	113

PART-II

1. Science, Spirituality and Environment.....	119
2. Importance of Tibet's Environment.....	121
3. Speech by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama at the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony	122
4. Earth Day Reflections.....	123
5. The Buddha in the Green Party!.....	132
6. Ethics and Enlightened Leadership	133
7. Talk during the River Ganges cleanup project	134
8. Talks to new arrivals.....	136
9. Non-violence and Spiritual Values in Secular India.....	139
10. Panel Discussion: The Global Impact of Climate Change	141
11. Mind and Life XXIII: Ecology, Ethics and Interdependence.....	146

12. Statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on Receiving the Templeton Prize.....	147
13. Global Systems 2.0: Ethics, Economy and Environment..	149
14. Address of H.H the Dalai Lama at Special International TSG meeting	151
15. Caring for the Environment above Political Differences ..	160
16. Spirituality & the Environment	162
17. Universal Responsibility & the Global Environment: An Environmental Summit.....	166
18. Conversation on Science, Happiness, and Well-Being.....	172
19. His Holiness’s Speech at the Tulane Universtiy.....	173
20. World Environment Day.....	174
21. Visiting the Lithuanian Parliament	175
22. Compassion & Respect in Today’s Society	175
23. His Holiness Addresses the Global Spa and	176
24. His Holiness Addresses an All Party Parliamentary Group in Japan	176
25. His Holiness’s Interviews for Mongolian Television	177
26. His Holiness on Environment and Climate Change	178
27. His Holiness addresses School Principals	179
28. Bounds of Ethics in a Globalised World	180
29. Talk on a Human Approach to Peace	180

30. Time Magazine Interview.....	181
31. Public Address in Berkeley	182
32. Non-violence and the Effects of Compassion in the 21st Century	183
33. His Holiness at Macalester College.....	183
34. His Holiness at the Capitol Hill.....	184
35. His Holiness’s Teachings in the Indian Capital.....	184
36. Public Talk in Koyasan	185
37. His Holiness’s teaching in Tokyo	186
38. His Holiness’s Visits to Norwegian Parliament	186
39. Teaching on Secular Ethics	188
40. Meeting with Tibet Supporters in Holand	188
41. His Holiness in Italy	189
42. His Holiness Visits Museum of ethnology	190
43. His Holiness addressing Tibet Support Group in Germany	190
44. His Holiness addresses Indian Merchants	191
45. A Meeting of Diverse Spiritual Traditions in India	191
46. One World, One Vision, One People	192
47. Education of the Heart.....	192
48. Meeting with the Canadian Parliamentary Friends	

of Tibet	193
49. Educating the Heart & Mind	194
50. Addressing the Tibetan Community in New York.	194
51. Meeting Italian Parliamentarians.....	195
52. One Day in Pune.....	195
53. His Holiness Addresses the International Luncheon.....	196
54. Interview for the TV2 television channel.....	197
55. Meeting Danish Parliamentarians	197
56. His Holiness at the 20th Shotön Opera Festival	198
57. His Holiness at the Global Environmental Forum for the Next Generation	199
58. Addressing Japanese Students.....	205
59. 2015 World Environment Day Message.....	205
60. Dalai Lama’s Message for COP21 - UN Climate Summit in Paris	206
61. Time Magazine Interview.....	208
62. Addressing the gathering at ‘Celebrating His Holiness’ Events	209
63. Addressing the Tibetan Community in Minneapolis.....	209
66. His Holiness Visits Springdales School and IIT, Delhi.....	211
67. His Holiness join 270 Religious Leaders to Sign	

Interfaith Climate Statement	211
68. Addressing the Annual Forum 2000 Conference.	213
69. Answering Questions during Public Talk at Milan	213
70. Addressing Japanese Parliamentarians	214
71. Addressing Tibetan Pilgrims at the Tsuglagkhang	214
73. Talk on Environment and Happiness.....	215
74. Talks at Guwahati University.....	216
76. 2017 World Environment Day Message.....	218
77. His Holiness Keynote Address at University of California San Diego.....	218

PART - I

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1. An Ethical Approach to Environmental Protection

Peace and the survival of life on earth as we know it are threatened by human activities which lack a commitment to humanitarian values. Destruction of nature and nature resources results from ignorance, greed and lack of respect for the earth's living things.

This lack of respect extends even to earth's human descendants, the future generations who will inherit a vastly degraded planet if world peace does not become a reality, and destruction of the natural environment continues at the present rate.

Our ancestors viewed the earth as rich and bountiful, which it is. Many people in the past also saw nature as inexhaustibly sustainable, which we now know is the case only if we care for it.

It is not difficult to forgive destruction in the past, which resulted from ignorance. Today, however, we have access to more information, and it is essential that we re-examine ethically what we have inherited, what we are responsible for, and what we will pass on to coming generations. Clearly this is a pivotal generation. Global communication is possible, yet confrontations take place more often than meaningful dialogues for peace.

Our marvels of science and technology are matched if not outweighed by many current tragedies, including human starvation in some parts of the world, and extinction of other life forms.

Exploration of outer space takes place at the same time as the earth's own oceans, seas, and freshwater areas grow increasingly polluted,

and their life forms are largely unknown or misunderstood.

Many of the earth's habitats, animals, plants, insects, and even micro-organisms that we know of as rare or endangered, may not be known at all by future generations. We have the capacity, and the responsibility. We must act before it is too late.

This message, dated June 5, 1986, marks World Environment Day, and that year's theme, Peace and the Environment. Reprinted from Tree of Life: Buddhism and Protection of Nature, Buddhist Perception of Nature, 1987.

2. Five-Point Peace Plan for Tibet

The world is increasingly interdependent, so that lasting peace-national, regional, and global-can only be achieved if we think in terms of the broader interest rather than parochial needs. At this time, it is crucial that all of us, the strong and the weak, contribute in our own way. I speak to you today as the leader of the Tibetan people and as a Buddhist monk devoted to the principles of a religion based on love and compassion. Above all, I am here as a human being that is destined to share this planet with you and all others as brothers and sisters. As the world grows smaller, we need each other more than in the past. This is true in all parts of the world, including the continent I come from.

At present in Asia, as elsewhere, tensions are high. There are open conflicts in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and in my own country, Tibet. To a large extent, These problems are symptoms of the underlying tensions that exist among the area's great powers. In order to resolve regional conflicts, an approach is required that takes into account the interests of all-relevant countries and peoples, large and small. Unless comprehensive solutions are formulated, that takes into account the aspirations the people most directly concerned, piecemeal or merely expedient measures will only create new problems.

The Tibetan people are eager to contribute to regional and world peace, and I believe they are in a unique position to do so. Traditionally, Tibetans are a peace-loving and non-violent people. Since Buddhism was introduced to Tibet over one thousand

years ago, Tibetans have practiced non-violence with respect to all forms of life. This attitude has also been extended to our country's international relations. Tibet's highly strategic position in the heart of Asia, separating the continent's great powers-India, China and the USSR- has throughout history endowed it with an essential role in the maintenance of peace and stability. This is precisely why, in the past, Asia's empires went to great lengths to keep one another out of Tibet. Tibet's value as an independent buffer state was integral to the region's stability.

When the newly formed People's Republic of China invaded Tibet in 1949/50, it created a new source of conflict. This was highlighted when, following the Tibetan national uprising against the Chinese and my flight to India in 1962. Today large numbers of troops are massed on both sides of the Himalayan border, and tension is once more dangerously high.

The real issue, of course, is not the Indo-Tibetan border demarcation. It is China's illegal occupation of Tibet, which has given it direct access to the Indian sub-continent. The Chinese authorities have attempted to confuse the issues by claiming that Tibet has always been a part of China. This is untrue. Tibet was a fully independent state when the People's Liberation Army invaded the country in 1949/50.

Since Tibetan emperors unified Tibet, over a thousand years ago, our country was able to maintain its independence until the middle of this century. At times Tibet extended its influence over neighboring countries and peoples and, in other periods, came itself under the influence of powerful foreign rulers - the Mongol Khans, The Gorkhas of Nepal, The Manchu Emperors and the British in India.

It is, of course, not uncommon for states to be subjected to foreign influence or interference. Although so-called satellite relationships are perhaps the clearest examples of this, most major power exert influence over less powerful allies or neighbors. As the most authoritative legal studies have shown, in Tibet's case, the country's occasional subjection to foreign influence never entailed a loss of independence. And there can be no doubt that when Peking's communist armies entered Tibet, Tibet was in all respects an independent state.

China's aggression, condemned by virtually all nations of the free world, was flagrant violation of international law. As China's military occupation of Tibet continues, the world should remember that though Tibetans have lost their freedom, under international law Tibet today is still an independent state under illegal occupation.

It is not my purpose to enter into a political/legal discussion here concerning Tibet's status. I just wish to emphasize the obvious and undisputed fact that we Tibetans are a distinct people with our own culture, language, religion and history. But for China's occupation, Tibet would still, today, fulfill its natural role as a buffer state maintaining and promoting peace in Asia.

It is my sincere desire, as well as that of the Tibetan people, to restore to Tibet her invaluable role, by converting the entire country comprising the three Provinces of U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo once more into a place of stability, peace, and harmony. In the best of Buddhist tradition, Tibet would extend its services and hospitality to all that further the cause of world peace and the well-being of mankind and the natural environment we share.

Despite the holocaust inflicted upon our people in the past decades of

occupation, I have always strived to find a solution through direct and honest discussions with the Chinese. In 1982, following the change of leadership in China and establishment of direct contacts with the government in Peking, I sent my representatives to Peking to open talks concerning the future of my country and people.

We entered the dialogue with a sincere and positive attitude and with a willingness to take into account the legitimate needs of the People's Republic of China. I had hoped that this attitude would be reciprocated and that a solution could eventually be found which would satisfy and safeguard the aspirations and interests of both parties. Unfortunately, China has consistently responded to our efforts in a defensive manner, as though our detailing of Tibet's very real difficulties was criticism for its own sake.

To our even greater dismay, the Chinese government misused this opportunity for genuine dialogue. Instead of addressing the real issues facing the six million Tibetan people, China attempted to reduce the question of Tibet to a discussion of my own personal status.

It is against this background, and in response to the tremendous support and encouragement. I have been given by you and other persons I have met during this trip, that I wish today to clarify the principle issues and to propose, in a spirit of openness and conciliation, a first step towards a lasting solution. I hope this may contribute to a future of friendship and cooperation with all of our neighbors, including the Chinese people.

This peace plan contains five basic components:

Transformation of the whole Tibet into a zone of peace.

Abandonment of China's population transfer policy which threatens the very existence of the Tibetans as a people;

Respect for the Tibetan people's fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms;

Restoration and protection of Tibet's natural environment and the abandonment of China's use of Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and dumping of nuclear waste;

Commencement of earnest negotiations on the future status of Tibet and of relations between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples.

Let me explain these five components.

I

I propose that the whole of Tibet, including the eastern provinces of Kham and Amdo, be transformed into a zone of "Ahimsa", a Hindi term used to mean a state of peace and non-violence.

The establishment of such a peace zone would be in keeping with Tibet's historical role as a peaceful and neutral Buddhist nation and buffer state separating the continent's great powers. It would also be in keeping with Nepal's proposal to proclaim Nepal a peace zone and with China's declared support for such a proclamation. The peace zone proposed by Nepal would have a much greater impact if it were to include Tibet and neighboring areas.

The establishment of a peace zone in Tibet would require withdrawal of Chinese troops and military installations from the country, which would enable India also to withdraw troops and military installations from the Himalayan regions bordering Tibet. This

would be achieved under an international agreement, which would satisfy China's legitimate security needs and build trust amongst Tibetans, Indians, Chinese and other peoples of the region. This is in everyone's best interest, particularly that of China and India, as it would enhance their security, while reducing the economic burden of maintaining high troop concentrations on the disputed Himalayan border.

Historically, relations between China and India were never strained. It was only when Chinese armies marched into Tibet creating for the first time a common border, that tensions arose between these two powers, ultimately leading to the 1962 war. Since then numerous dangerous incidents have continued to occur. A restoration of good relations between the world's two most populous countries would be greatly facilitated if a large and friendly buffer region separated them - as they were throughout history - by a large and friendly buffer region.

To improve relations between the Tibetan people and the Chinese, the first requirement is the creation of trust. After the holocaust of the last decades in which over one million Tibetans - one sixth of the population - lost their lives and at least as many lingered in prison camps because of their religious beliefs and love of freedom, only a withdrawal of Chinese troops could start a genuine process of reconciliation. The vast occupation force in Tibet is a daily reminder to the Tibetans of the oppression and suffering they have all experienced. A troop withdrawal would be an essential signal that in future a meaningful relationship might be established with the Chinese, based on friendship and trust.

II

The population transfer of Chinese into Tibet, which the government in Peking pursues in order to force a “final solution” to the Tibetan problem by reducing the Tibetan population to an insignificant and disenfranchised minority in Tibet itself, must be stopped.

The massive transfer of Chinese civilians into Tibet in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention (1949), threatens the very existence of the Tibetans as a distinct people. In the eastern parts of our country, the Chinese now greatly outnumber Tibetans. In the Amdo province, for example, where I was born, there are, according to Chinese statistics, 2.5 million Chinese and only 750,000 Tibetans. Even in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region (i.e., central and western Tibet), Chinese government sources now confirm that Chinese outnumber Tibetans.

The Chinese population transfer policy is not new. It has been systematically applied to other areas before. Earlier in this century, the Manchus were a distinct race with their own culture and traditions. Today only two to three million Manchurians are left in Manchuria, where 75 million Chinese have settled. In Eastern Turkestan, which the Chinese now call Xinjiang, the Chinese population has grown from 200,000 in 1949 to 7 million, more than half of the total population of 13 million. In the wake of the Chinese colonization of Inner Mongolia, Chinese number 8.5 million, Mongols 2.5 million.

Today in the whole of Tibet 7.5 million Chinese settlers have already been sent, outnumbering the Tibetan population of 6 million. In central and western Tibet, now referred to by the Chinese as the

“Tibet Autonomous Region”, Chinese sources admit the 1.9 million Tibetans already constitute a minority of the region’s population. These numbers do not take the estimated 300,000-500,000 troops in Tibet into account - 250,000 of them in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region.

For the Tibetans to survive as a people, it is imperative that the population transfer is stopped and Chinese settlers return to China. Otherwise, Tibetans will soon be no more than a tourist attraction and relic of a noble past.

III

Fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms must be respected in Tibet. The Tibetan people must once again be free to develop culturally, intellectually, economically and spiritually and to exercise basic democratic freedoms.

Human rights violations in Tibet are among the most serious in the world. Discrimination is practiced in Tibet under a policy of “apartheid” which the Chinese call “segregation and assimilation”. Tibetans are, at best, second class citizens in their own country. Deprived of all basic democratic rights and freedoms, they exist under a colonial administration in which all real power is wielded by Chinese officials of the Communist party and the army.

Although the Chinese government allows Tibetans to rebuild some Buddhist monasteries and to worship in them, it still forbids serious study and teaching of religion. Only a small number of people, approved by the Communist Party, are permitted to join the monasteries. While Tibetans in exile exercise their democratic

rights under a constitution promulgated by me in 1963, thousands of our countrymen suffer in prisons and labor camps in Tibet for their religious or political conviction.

IV

Serious efforts must be made to restore the natural environment in Tibet. Tibet should not be used for the production of nuclear weapons and the dumping of nuclear waste.

Tibetans have a great respect for all forms of life. This inherent feeling is enhanced by the Buddhist faith, which prohibits the harming of all sentient beings, whether human or animal. Prior to the Chinese invasion, Tibet was an unspoiled wilderness sanctuary in a unique natural environment. Sadly, in the past decades the wildlife and the forests of the Tibet have been almost totally destroyed by the Chinese. The effects on Tibet's delicate environment have been devastating. What little is left in Tibet must be protected and efforts must be made to restore the environment to its balanced state.

China uses Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and may also have stated dumping nuclear waste in Tibet. Not only does China plan to dispose of its own nuclear waste but also that of other countries, who have already agreed to pay Peking to dispose of their toxic materials.

The dangers this presents are obvious. Not only living generation, but also future generations are threatened by China's lack of concern for Tibet's unique and delicate environment.

V

Negotiations on the future status of Tibet and the relationship between

the Tibetan and Chinese peoples should be started in earnest.

We wish to approach this subject in a reasonable and realistic way, in a spirit of frankness and conciliation and with a view to finding a solution that is in the long term interest of all: the Tibetans, the Chinese, and all other peoples concerned. Tibetans and Chinese are distinct peoples, each with own country, history, culture, language and way of life. Differences among peoples must be recognized and respected. They need not, however, form obstacles to genuine co-operation where this is in the mutual benefit of both peoples. It is my sincere belief that if the concerned parties were to meet and discuss their future with an open mind and a sincere desire to find a satisfactory and just solution, a breakthrough could be achieved. We must all exert ourselves to be reasonable and wise, and to meet in a spirit of frankness and understanding.

Let me end on a personal note. I wish to thank you for the concern and support which you and so many of your colleagues and fellow citizens have expressed for the plight of oppressed people everywhere. The fact that you have publicly shown your sympathy for us Tibetans has already had a positive impact on the lives of our people inside Tibet. I ask for your continued support at this critical time in our country's history.

Thank you.

Address to the United States Congressional Human Rights Caucus in Washington, D.C., September 21, 1987.

3. Ecology and the Human Heart

According to Buddhist teaching, there is a very close interdependence between the natural environment and the sentient beings living in it. Some of my friends have told me that basic human nature is somewhat violent, but I told them I disagree. If we examine different animals, for examples, those whose very survival depends on taking others lives, such as tigers or lions, we learnt that their basic nature provides them with sharp fangs and claws. Peaceful animals, such as deer, which are completely vegetarian, are gentler and have smaller teeth and no claws. From that viewpoint we human beings have a nonviolent nature. As to the question of human survival, human beings are social animals. In order to survive we need companions. Without other human beings there is simply no possibility of surviving; that is a law of nature.

Since I deeply believe that human beings are basically gentle by nature, I feel that we should not only maintain gentle, peaceful relations with our fellow human beings but also that it is very important to extend the same kind of attitude toward the natural environment. Morally speaking, we should be concerned for our whole environment.

Then there is another viewpoint, not just a question of ethics but a question of our own survival. The environment is very important not only for this generation but also for future generations. If we exploit the environment in extreme ways, even though we may get some money or other benefit from it now, in the long run we ourselves will suffer and future generations will suffer. When the

environment changes, climatic conditions also change. When they change dramatically, the economy and many other things change as well. Even our physical health will be greatly affected. So this is not merely a moral question but also a question of our own survival.

Therefore, in order to succeed in the protection and conservation of the natural environment, I think it is important first of all to bring about an internal balance within human beings themselves. The abuse of the environment, which has resulted in such harm to the human community, arose out of ignorance of the importance of the environment. I think it is essential to help people to understand this. We need to teach people that the environment has a direct bearing on our own benefit.

I am always talking about the importance of compassionate thought. As I said earlier, even from your own selfish viewpoint, you need other people. So, if you develop concern for other people's welfare, share other people's suffering, and help them, ultimately you will benefit. If you think only of yourself and forget about others, ultimately you will lose. That is also something like a law of nature.

It is quite simple: if you do not smile at people, but frown at them, they respond similarly, don't they? If you deal with other people in a very sincere, open way, they behave similarly. Every body wants to have friends and does not want enemies. The proper way to create friends is to have a warm heart, not simply money or power. The friend of power and the friend of money are something different: These are not true friends. True friends should be real friends of heart, shouldn't they? I am always telling people that those friends who come around when you have money and power are not truly

your friends, but friends of money and power, because as soon as the money and power disappear, those friends are also ready to leave. They are not reliable.

Genuine, human friends stand by whether you are successful or unlucky and always share your sorrow and burdens. The way to make such friends is not by being angry, nor by having good education or intelligence, but by having a good heart.

To think more deeply, if you must be selfish, then be wisely selfish, not narrow-mindedly selfish. The key thing is the sense of universal responsibility; that is the real source of strength, the real source of happiness. If our generation exploits everything available – the trees, the water, and the minerals – without any care for the coming generations or the future, then we are at fault, aren't we? But if we have a genuine sense of universal responsibility as our central motivation, then our relations with the environment will be well balanced, and so will our relations with our neighbors, both domestic and international.

Another important question is: What is consciousness, what is the mind? In western world during the last one or two centuries there has been great emphasis on science and technology, which mainly deal with matter. Today some nuclear physicists and neurologists say that when you investigate particles in a very detailed way, there is some kind of influence from the side of the observer, the knower. What is this knower? A simple answer is: A human being, the scientist. How does the scientist know? With the brain, Western scientists have identified only a few hundreds so far. Now, whether you call it mind, brain, or consciousness, there is a relationship between brain

and mind and also mind and matter. I think this is important. I feel it is possible to hold some sort of dialogue between Eastern Philosophy and Western science on the basis of this relationship.

In any case, these days we human beings are very much involved in the external world, while we neglect the internal world. We do need scientific development and material development in order to survive and to increase the general benefit and prosperity, but equally as much we need mental peace. Yet no doctor can give you an injection of mental peace, and no market can sell it to you. If you go to a supermarket with millions and millions of dollars, you can buy anything, but if you go there and ask for peace of mind, people will laugh. And if you ask a doctor for genuine peace of mind, not the mere sedation you get from taking some kind of pill or injection, the doctor cannot help you.

Even today's sophisticated computers cannot provide you with mental peace. Mental peace must come from the mind. Everyone wants happiness and pleasure, but if we compare physical pleasure and physical pain with mental pleasure and mental pain, we find that the mind is more effective, predominant, and superior. Thus it is worthwhile adopting certain methods to increase mental peace, and in order to do that it is important to know more about the mind. When we talk about preservation of the environment, it is related to many other things. The key point is to have genuine sense of universal responsibility, based on love and compassion, and clear awareness.

Excerpt from My Tibet (Text by H.H.the Fourteenth Dalai Lama: Photographs and Introduction by Galen Rowell) Thames and Hudson Ltd., London, 1990 (pp 53-54).

4. Universal Responsibility and the Environment

As a boy studying Buddhism, I was taught the importance of a caring attitude toward the environment. Our practice of non-violence applies not just to human beings but to all sentient beings – any living thing that has a mind. Where there is a mind, there are feelings such as pain, pleasure, and joy. No sentient being wants pain: all wants happiness instead. I believe that all sentient beings share those feelings at some basic level.

In Buddhism practice we get so used to this idea of non-violence and the ending of all suffering that we become accustomed to not harming or destroying anything indiscriminately. Although we do not believe that trees or flowers have minds, we treat them also with respect. Thus we share a sense of universal responsibility for both mankind and nature.

Our belief in reincarnation is one example of our concern for the future. If you think that you will be reborn, you are likely to say to yourself, I have to preserve such and such because my future reincarnation will be able to continue with these things. Even though there is a chance you may be reborn as a creature, perhaps even on a different planet, the idea of reincarnation gives you reason to have direct concern about this planet and future generations.

In the West when you speak of “humanity,” you usually mean only our existing generation of human beings. Past humanity is already gone. The future, like death, has yet to come. Western ideas usually deal with the practical side of things for only this present generation of human beings.

Tibetan feelings about the environment are based entirely on religion. They are derived from the whole Tibetan way of life, not just from Buddhism. For example, consider Buddhism in Japan or Thailand, in environments different from ours. Their culture and their attitude are not the same as ours. Our unique environment has strongly influenced us. We don't live on a small, heavily populated island. Historically, we have had little anxiety with our vast area, low population, and distant neighbors. We haven't felt as oppressed as people in many other human communities.

It is very possible to practice the essence of a faith or culture without practicing a religion. Our Tibetan culture, although highly influenced by Buddhism, did not gain all its philosophy from Buddhism. I once suggested to an organization dealing with Tibetan refugees that it would be interesting to do some research on how much our people have been affected by their approach to life itself in Tibet. What are the factors that make Tibetans generally happy and calm? People are always looking for answer in our unique religion, forgetting that our environment is just as unusual.

Concern for the environment is not necessarily holy, nor does it always require compassion. We Buddhists express compassion for all sentient beings, but this compassion is not necessarily extended to every rock or tree or house. Most of us are somewhat concerned about our own house, but not really compassionate about it. We keep it in order so that we can live and be happy. We know that to have happy feelings in our house we must take care of it. So our feelings may be of concern rather than compassion.

The Tibetan Buddhist attitude is one of contentment, and there may be

some connection here with our attitude toward the environment. We don't indiscriminately consume. We put a limit on our consumption. We admire simply living and individual responsibility. We have always considered ourselves as part of our environment, but not just any part. Our ancient scriptures speak of the container and the contained. The world is the container – our house and we are the contained- the contents of the container. From these simple facts we deduce a special relationship, because without the container, the contents cannot be contained. Without the contents, the container contains nothing, it's meaningless.

In my Five-Point Peace Plan I have proposed that all of Tibet become a sanctuary, a zone of peace. Tibet was that once, but with no official designation. Peace means harmony: harmony between people, between people and animals, between sentient beings and the environment. Visitors from all over the world could come to Tibet to experience peace and harmony. Instead of building big hotels with many storeys and many rooms, we would make small buildings, more like private homes, that would be in better harmony with nature.

It is not at all wrong for humans to use nature to make useful things, but we must not exploit nature to make useful things, but we must not exploit nature unnecessarily. It is good to live in a house, to have medicines, and to be able to drive somewhere in a car. In the right hands, a machine is not a luxury, but something very useful. A camera, for example, can be used to make pictures that promote understanding.

But everything has its limit. Too much consumption or effort to

make money is no good. Neither is too much contentment. In principle, contentment is a goal, but pure contentment becomes almost like suicide, doesn't it? I think the Tibetans had, in certain fields, too much contentment. And we lost our country. These days we cannot afford too much contentment about the environment.

Peace and survival of life on earth as we know it are threatened by human activities that lack a commitment to humanitarian values. Destruction of nature and natural resources results from ignorance, greed, and lack of respect for the earth's living things. This lack of respect extends even to the earth's human descendants, the future generations who will inherit a vastly degraded planet if world peace doesn't become a reality and if destruction of the natural environment continues at the present rate.

Our ancestors viewed the earth as rich and bountiful, which it is. Many people in the past also saw nature as inexhaustibly sustainable, which we now know is the case only if we care for it. It is not difficult to forgive destruction in the past that resulted from ignorance. Today, however, we have access to more information. It is essential that we re-examine ethically what we have inherited, what we are responsible for, and what we will pass on to coming generations.

Clearly this is a pivotal generation. Global communication is possible, yet confrontations take place more often than meaningful dialogues for peace. Our marvels of science and technology are matched, if not outweighed, by many current tragedies, including human starvation in some parts of the world and extinction of other life forms. Exploration of outer space takes place at the

same time the earth's own oceans, seas, and freshwater areas grow increasingly polluted, and their life forms are still largely unknown or misunderstood. Many of the earth's habitats, animals, plants, insects and even microorganisms that we know as rare may not be known at all by future generations. We have the capability and the responsibility. We must act before it is too late.

Excerpt from My Tibet (Text by H.H.the Fourteenth Dalai Lama: Photographs and Introduction by Galen Rowell) Thames and Hudson Ltd., London, 1990 (pp 79-80) .

5. The Importance of Tree Planting and its Protection

I have remarked on several occasions about the importance of tree planting both in India, our current home, and in Tibet as well. Today, as a symbolic gesture we are having a tree planting ceremony here in the settlement. Fortunately, the movement towards a deeper commitment to environmental protection through planting new trees and taking care of the existing ones, is rapidly increasing all over the world. At the global level, trees and forests are closely linked with weather patterns and also the maintenance of a crucial balance in nature. Hence, the task of environment protection is a universal responsibility of all of us. I think that is extremely important for the Tibetans living in the settlements to not only take a keen interest in the cause of environmental protection, but also to implement this ideal in action by planting new trees. In this way, we will be making an important gesture to the world in demonstrating our global concern and at the same time making our own little but significant, contribution to the cause.

If we look around, we can now see that those houses in the monasteries and in various camps where people have planted fruit trees, now enjoy great benefits as a consequence of their action. First of all, if there is a tree in your courtyard it creates around it an atmosphere of natural beauty and serenity. It is also obvious that you can eat the fruits from the tree, sit under it and enjoy the cool shade. What was required on your part was a little patience to allow some time for the tree to grow up.

Finally, I would like to make a suggestion regarding the use of

your farmland in the settlement. In this settlement you have already initiated a project of planting fruit trees on farmlands. I think it is a very good plan. By planting fruit trees on your land, we can not only ensure that the farmland remains productive, but also you will have fruits to eat. In short, I would like to again emphasize that it is extremely important to plant new trees and protect the ones already growing around you.

Speech at a special ceremony held in Doeguling Tibetan Settlement, Mundgod, South India, on December 6, 1990. Adapted from Appropriate Technology for Tibetan's (ApTibet) Newsletter No. 5, September 1991.

6. A Clean Environment is a Human Right

Tibet should not be used for the production of nuclear weapons and the dumping of nuclear waste. Tibetans have a great respect for all forms of life. This inherent feeling is enhanced by our Buddhist faith, which prohibits the harming of all sentient beings, whether human or animal. Prior to the Chinese invasion, Tibet was a fresh, beautiful, unspoiled wilderness sanctuary in a unique natural environment.

Sadly, during the past few decades, the wildlife of Tibet has been almost totally destroyed and, in many places, irreparable damage has been done to its forests. The overall effect on Tibet's delicate environment has been devastating – particularly since the country's altitude and aridity mean that the process of restoring vegetation will take much longer than in lower, wetter regions. For this reason, what little is left must be protected and efforts made to reverse the effects of China's iniquitous and wanton destruction of the Tibetan environment.

In doing so, the first priority will be to halt the production of nuclear weaponry and, even more importantly, to prevent the dumping of nuclear waste. Apparently, China plans not only to dispose of its own but also to import other country's waste, in exchange for hard currency. The danger this represents is obvious. Not only living generations, but also future generations are threatened. Furthermore, the inevitable problems this would cause locally could so easily turn into a catastrophe of the global proportions. Giving waste to China, which might have access to large areas of lightly populated land but has only crude technology, will likely prove only a short-term solution to the problem.

If I were actually to vote in an election, it would be for one of the environmental parties. One of the most positive developments in the world recently has been the growing awareness of the importance of nature. There is nothing sacred or holy about this. Taking care of our planet is like taking care of our houses. Since we human beings come from Nature, there is no point in our going against Nature, which is why I say the environment is not a matter of religion or ethics or morality. These are luxuries, since we can survive without them. But we will not survive if we continue to go against Nature.

We have to accept this. If we unbalance Nature, humankind will suffer. Furthermore, as people alive today, we must consider future generations: a clean environment is a human right like any other. It is therefore part of our responsibility towards others to ensure that the world we pass on is as healthy, if not healthier, than when we found it. This is not quite such a difficult proposition as it might sound. For although there is a limit to what we as individuals can do, there is no limit to what a universal response might achieve. It is up to us as individuals to do what we can, however little that may be. Just because switching off the light on leaving the room seems inconsequential, it does not mean that we should not do it.

This is where, as a Buddhist monk, I feel that belief in the concept of karma is very useful in the conduct of daily life. Once you believe in the connection between motivation and its effect, you will become more alert to the effects, which your own actions have upon yourself and others.

Thus, despite the continuing tragedy of Tibet, I find much good in the world. I am especially encouraged that the belief in consumerism as an end in itself seems to be giving way to an appreciation that we

humans must conserve the earth's resources. This is very necessary. Human beings are in a sense children of the earth. And, whereas up until now our common Mother tolerated her children's behavior, she is presently showing us that she has reached the limit of her tolerance.

It is my prayer that one day I shall be able to carry this message of concern for the environment and for others to the people of China. Since Buddhism is by no means alien to the Chinese, I believe that I may be able to serve them in a practical way. The last Panchen Lama's predecessor once conducted a Kalachakra initiation ceremony in Peking. If I were to do the same, it would not be without precedent.

For as a Buddhist monk, my concern extends to all members of the human family and, indeed, to all suffering sentient beings.

I believe that this suffering is caused by ignorance, and that people inflict pain on others in pursuit of their own happiness or satisfaction. Yet true happiness comes from a sense of inner peace and contentment, which in turn must be achieved through cultivation of altruism, of love, of compassion, and through the elimination of anger, selfishness and greed.

To some people this may sound naïve, but I would remind them that, no matter what part of the world we come from, fundamentally we are all the same human beings. We all seek happiness and try to avoid suffering. We have the same basic needs and concerns. Furthermore, all of us human beings want freedom and the right to determine our own destiny as individuals. That is human nature. The great changes taking place everywhere in the world, from Eastern Europe to Africa, is a clear indication of this.

At the same time, the problems we face today – violent conflicts,

destruction of Nature, poverty, hunger, and so on – are mainly problems created by humans. They can be resolved – but only through human effort, understanding and the development of a sense of brotherhood and sisterhood. To do this, we need to cultivate a Universal Responsibility for one another and for the planet we share, based on a good heart and awareness.

Now, although I have found my own Buddhist religion helpful in generating love and compassion, I am convinced that these qualities can be developed by any one, with or without religion. I further believe that all religions pursue the same goals: those of cultivating goodness and bringing happiness to all human beings. Though the means might appear different, the ends are the same.

With the ever- growing impact of science on our lives, religion and spirituality have a greater role to play in reminding us of our humanity. There is no contradiction between the two. Each gives us valuable insights into the other. Both science and the teachings of the Buddha tell us of the fundamental unity of all things. Finally, I would like to share with my readers a short prayer, which gives me great inspiration and determination:

For as long as space endures,
And for as long as living beings remain,
Until then may I, too, abide
To dispel the misery of the world.

Adapted from the chapter Universal Responsibility and the Good Heart in Freedom in Exile: The autobiography of His Holiness the Dalai Lama of Tibet, Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1990 (pp 280-299).

7. A Green Environment for Now and the Future

In the past, the major need of people in this world was arable land. Man did not have to think about animate things. However, now the adverse effects on forests through over-population and the development of various chemical elements in the atmosphere have led to irregular rainfall and global warming. This global warming has brought changes in climate, including making perennial snow mountains melt, thereby adversely affecting not only human beings but also other living species.

This dangerous situation is being taken very seriously by the world. In the past the perennial snow mountains of Tibet had very thick snow. Older people say that these mountains were covered with thick snow when they were young and that the snows are getting sparser which may be an indication of the end of the world. It is a fact that climate change is a slow process taking thousands of years to realize its effect. Living beings and plant life on this planet also undergo change accordingly. Man's physical structure too changes from generation to generation along with the change in climatic conditions.

Because of the growth in the population, a large number of trees are cut for fuel, and to reclaim land for agricultural cultivation. In the case of Tibet, too, the Chinese have now destroyed its ancient trees in a similar way to shaving a man's head off. This is not simply the destruction of trees but it also means harming what belongs to the Tibetans. Similarly, the continuing decline in forests in many parts of the world, including America, is adversely affecting the

already changing global climate, thus upsetting the lives, not only of mankind, but also of all living beings.

Similarly, the harmful effect on the atmosphere brought about by chemical emissions in industrialized countries is a very dangerous sign. Although this is a new thing for us Tibetan, the world is paying a lot of attention to this problem. It is the responsibility of us, who speak of the welfare of all sentient beings, to contribute towards this.

Since I too have a responsibility in this matter, (i.e. to work for the protection of the environment and to see that the present and future generations of mankind can make use of refreshing shade and fruits of trees), I bought these seeds of fruit-bearing trees with part of my Nobel Peace Prize money to be distributed now, to people representing different regions (all the continents of the world are represented here) during this Kalachakra gathering. These seeds have been kept near the Kalachakra mandala for purification and blessings. Since these include seeds of apricot, walnut, papaya, guava, etc., suitable for planting under varying geographical conditions, experts in respective places should be consulted on their planting and care and, thus, you all should see my sincere aspiration is fulfilled.

This speech was made during the Kalachakra Initiation at Sarnath, India, on December 29, 1990, when His Holiness distributed seeds of fruit-bearing trees to encourage environmental protection through planting.

8. Spirituality and Nature

I think you came here with some expectation, but essentially I've nothing to offer you. Simply, I'll try to share some of my own experiences and my views. You see, taking care of the planet is nothing special, nothing sacred, and nothing holy. It is something like taking care of our own house. We have no other planet or house except this one. Although there are a lot of disturbances and problems, this is our only alternative. We can't go to other planets. For example, take the moon; it looks or appears beautiful from a distance but if you go there and settle there it is horrible. This is what I think. So you see, our blue planet is much better and happier. So, therefore, we have to care of our own place or house or planet.

After all, the human being is a social animal. I often tell my friends that they have no need to study philosophy, these professional, complicated subjects. By simply looking at these innocent animals, insects, ants, bees, etc., quite often I develop some kind of respect for them. How? Because they have no religion, no constitution, no police force, nothing. But they live in harmony through the natural law of existence or nature's law or system.

We human beings, what is wrong with us? We human beings have such intelligence and human wisdom. I think we often use human intelligence in a wrong way or direction. As a result, in a way, we are doing certain actions which essentially go against basic human nature. From a certain viewpoint, religion is a little bit of a luxury. If you have religion, very good; even without religion you can survive and you can manage, but without human affection we can't survive.

Although anger and hatred, like compassion and love, are part of our mind, still I believe the dominant force of our mind is compassion and human affection. Therefore, usually I call these human qualities spirituality. Not necessarily as a religious message or religion in that sense. Science and technology together with human affection will be constructive. Science and technology under the control of hatred will be destructive.

If we practice religion properly, or genuinely, or religion is not something outside but in our hearts. The essence of any religion is good heart. Sometimes I call love and compassion a universal religion. This is my religion. Complicated philosophy, this and that, sometimes create more trouble and problems. If these sophisticated philosophies are useful for the development of good heart, then good: use them fully. If these complicated philosophies or systems become an obstacle to a good heart then better to leave them. This is what I feel.

If we look closely at human nature affection is the key to a good heart. I think the mother is a symbol of compassion. Every one has a seed of good heart. The only thing is whether we take care or not to realize the value of compassion.

Address to the ecumenical Middlebury Symposium on religion and the environment, Middlebury College, Vermont, USA, September 14, 1990.

9. Thinking Globally: A Universal Task

Scientific predictions of environmental change are difficult for ordinary human beings to comprehend fully. We hear about hot temperatures and rising sea levels, increasing cancer rates, vast population growth, depletion of resources, and extinction of species. Human activity everywhere is hastening to destroy key elements of the natural eco-systems all living beings depend on.

These threatening developments are individually drastic and together amazing. The world's population has tripled in this century alone and is expected to double or triple in the next. The global economy may grow by a factor of five or ten including with it extreme rates of energy consumption, carbon dioxide production, and deforestation. It is hard to imagine all things actually happening in our lifetime and in the lives of our children. We have to consider the prospects of global suffering and environmental degradation unlike anything in human history.

I think, however, there is good news in that now we will definitely have to find new ways to survive together on this planet. In this century we have seen enough war, poverty, pollution, and suffering. According to Buddhist teaching, such things happen as the result of ignorance and selfish actions, because we often fail to see the essential common relation of all beings. The earth is showing us warnings and clear indications of the vast effects and negative potential of misdirected human behavior.

To counteract these harmful practices we can teach ourselves to be more aware of our own mutual dependence. Every sentient

being wants happiness instead of pain. So we share a common basic feeling. We can develop right action to help the earth and each other based on a better motivation. Therefore, I always speak of the importance of developing a genuine sense of universal responsibility. When we are motivated by wisdom and compassion, the results of our actions benefit everyone, not just our individual selves or some immediate convenience. When we are able to recognize and forgive ignorant actions of the past, we gain the strength to constructively solve the problems of the present.

We should extend this attitude to be concerned for our whole environment. As a basic principle, I think it is better to help if you can, and if you cannot help, at least try not to do harm. This is an especially suitable guide when there is so much yet to understand about the complex interrelations of diverse and unique eco-systems. The earth is our home and our mother. We need to respect and take care of her. This is easy to understand today.

We need knowledge to care for ourselves, every part of the Earth and the life upon it, and all of the future generations as well. This means that education about the environment is of great importance to everyone. Scientific learning and technological progress are essential for improving the quality of life in the modern world. Still more important is the simple practice of getting to know and better appreciate ourselves and our natural surroundings, whether we are children or adults. If we have a true appreciation for others and resist acting out of ignorance we will take care of the Earth.

In the biggest sense, environmental education means learning to maintain a balanced way of life. All religions agree that we cannot

find lasting inner satisfaction based on selfish desires and acquiring the comforts of the material things. Even if we could, there are now so many people that the earth would not sustain us for long. I think it is much better to practice enjoying simple peace of mind. We can share the earth and take care of it together, rather than trying to possess it, destroying the beauty of life in the process.

Ancient cultures that have adapted to their natural surroundings can offer special insights on structuring human societies to exist in balance with the environment. For examples, Tibetans are uniquely familiar with life on the Himalayan Plateau. This has evolved into a long history of a civilization that took care not to overwhelm and destroy its fragile eco-system. Tibetans have long appreciated the presence of wild animals as symbolic of freedom.

A deep reverence for nature is apparent in much of Tibetan art and ceremony. Spiritual development thrived despite limited material progress. Just as species may not adapt to relatively sudden environmental changes, human cultures also need to be treated with special care to ensure survival. Therefore, learning about the useful ways of people and preserving their culture heritage is also a part of learning to care for the environment.

I try always to express the value of having a good heart. This simple aspect of human nature can be nourished to great power. With a good heart and wisdom you have right motivation and will automatically do what needs to be done. If people begin to act with genuine compassion for every one, we can still protect each other and the natural environment. This is much easier than having to adapt to the severe and incomprehensible environmental conditions

projected for the future.

Now on a close examination, the human mind, the human heart, and the environment are inseparably linked together. In this sense, environmental education helps to generate both the understanding and love we need to create the best opportunity there has ever been for peace and lasting coexistence.

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10. Caring for the Earth

I am pleased to know the World Conservation Union is launching a world- wide campaign on the theme of Caring for the Earth on 21st October 1991.

The earth is not only the common heritage of all humankind but also the ultimate source of life. By over-exploiting its resources we are undermining the very basis of our own life. All around, signs abound of the destruction caused by human activity and of the degradation of nature. Therefore, the protection and conservation of the earth is not a question of morality or ethics but a question of our survival. How we respond to this challenge will affect not only this generation but also many generations to come.

In the case of such global issues as the conservation of the Earth, and indeed in tackling all problems, the human mind is the key factor. Whether they are problems of economics, international relations, science, technology, medicine or ecology, although these issues seem to be beyond any one individual's capacity, where the problem begins and where the answer must first be sought is within. In order to change the external situation we must first change within ourselves. If we want a beautiful garden we must first have a blueprint in the imagination, a vision. Then that idea can be implemented and the external garden can materialize. Destruction of nature resources results from ignorance, lack of respect for the Earth's living things, and greed.

In the first place we must strive to overcome these states of mind by developing an awareness of the interdependent nature of all

phenomena, an attitude of wishing not to harm other living creatures and an understanding of the need for compassion. Because of the interdependent nature of everything we cannot hope to solve the multifarious problems with a one-sided or self-centered attitude. History shows us how often in the past people have failed to cooperate. Our failures in the past are the result of ignorance of our own interdependent nature. What we need now is a holistic approach towards problems combined with a genuine sense of universal responsibility based on love and compassion.

I offer my best wishes and prayers for the success of this project in creating a better awareness of the need to care more about the Earth.

This statement, dated September 20, 1991, marked the launching of a campaign on the theme of Caring for the Earth on October 21, 1991 by the World Conservation Union.

11. A Buddhist Concept of Nature

Tonight I will say something about the Buddhist concept of nature.

Nagarjuna said that for a system where emptiness is possible, it is also possible to have functionality, and since functionality is possible, emptiness is also possible. So when we talk about nature, the ultimate nature is emptiness. What is meant by emptiness, or shunyata? It is not the emptiness of existence but rather the emptiness of true or independent existence, which means that things exist by dependence upon other factors.

So whether it is the environment that is inhabited, or the inhabitants, both of them are composed of four or five basic elements. These elements are earth, wind, fire, water and vacuum, that is space. About space, in the Kalachakra tantra there is a mention of what is known as the atom of space, particles of space. So that forms the central force of the entire phenomenon. When the entire system of the universe first evolved, it evolved from this central force which is the particle of space, and also a system of universe and would dissolve eventually into this particle of the space. So it is on the basis of these five basic elements that there is a very close inter-relatedness or interrelation between the habitat that is the natural environment and inhabitants, the sentient beings living within it.

Also, when we talk of the elements there are internal elements which are existent inherently within sentient beings; they are also of different levels- some are subtle and some are gross.

So ultimately according to Buddhist teachings the innermost subtle

consciousness is the sole sort of creator, itself consisting of five elements, very subtle forms of elements. These subtle elements serve as conditions for producing the internal elements, which form sentient beings, and that in turn causes the existence or evolution of the external elements. So there is a very close interdependence or interrelationship between the environment and the inhabitants. Within the meaning of interdependency there are many different levels that things are dependent upon casual factors, or upon their own parts, or the conceptual mind, which actually gives the label, the designation.

The topic that we are discussing today is the interrelationship or interdependence between the natural environment and the sentient beings living within it.

Now here, you see, some of my friends told me that basic human nature is something violent. Then I told my friends, I don't think so. If we examine different mammals, say those animals such as tigers or lions that very much depend on other's life for their basic survival these animals because of their basic nature have a special structure, their teeth and long nails, like that. So, those peaceful animals, such as deer, which are completely herbivorous, their teeth and nails are something different; gentler. So from that viewpoint, we human beings belong to the gentle category, isn't that so? Our teeth, our nails, these are very gentle. So I told my friends, I don't agree with your viewpoint. Basically human beings have a non-violent nature.

Also, about the question of human survival, human beings are social animals. In order to survive you need other companions; without

other human beings there is simply no possibility to survive; that is nature's law, that is nature.

Since I deeply believe that basically human beings are of a gentle nature so I think the human attitude towards our environment should be gentle. There fore I believe that not only should we keep our relationship with our other fellow human beings very gentle and non-violent, but it is also very important to extend that kind of attitude to the natural environment. I think morally speaking we can think like that and we should all be concerned for our environment.

Then I think there is another viewpoint. In this case it is not a question of morality or ethics, not that question; is a question of our own survival. Not only this generation, but for other generations, the environment is something very important. If we exploit the natural environment in an extreme way, today we might get some other benefit but in the long run we ourselves will suffer and other generations will suffer. So when the environment changes, climatic conditions also change. When it changes dramatically, economic structures and many other things also change – even our physical body. So you can see the great effect from that change. So from that viewpoint this is not only a question of our own survival.

Therefore, in order to achieve more effective results and in order to succeed in the protection, conservation and preservation of the natural environment, first of all, I think, it is also important to bring about internal balance within human beings themselves. Since negligence of the environment - which has resulted in lots of harm to the human community - came about by ignorance of the very special importance of the environment, I think it is very important

first of all to instill this knowledge within human beings. So it is very important to teach or tell people about its importance for our own benefit.

Then, one of the other most important things again, as I am always saying, is the importance of compassionate thought. As I mentioned earlier, even from ones own selfish viewpoint, you need other people. So, by showing concern for other people's welfare, sharing other people's suffering, and by helping other people, ultimately one will gain benefit. If one thinks only of oneself and forgets about others, ultimately one will lose. This also is something like nature's law. I think it is quite simple. If you do not show a smile to other people, and show some kind of bad look or like that, the other side will also give a similar response. Isn't that right? If you show other people a very sincere and open attitude there will also be a similar response. So it is quite simple logic.

Everybody wants friends and does not want enemies. The proper way to create friends is through a warm heart and not simply money or power. Friends of power and friends of money are something different. These are not friends.

A true friend should be a real friend of heart, isn't it so? I am always telling people that those friends who come to you when you have money and power are not your true friends but friends of money and power. Because as soon as your money and power disappear, those friends are also ready to say goodbye, bye-bye. So you see these friends are not reliable. Genuine and true human friends will always share your sorrow, your burdens and will always come to you whether you are successful or unlucky. So the way to create

such friend is not through anger, not mere education, not mere intelligence, but by the heart – a good heart.

So, as I always say if you think in a deeper way if you are going to be selfish, then you should be wisely selfish, not narrow mindedly selfish. From that viewpoint, the key thing is the sense of Universal Responsibility, that is the real source of strength, the real source of happiness.

From that perspective, if in our generation we exploit every available things: trees, water, mineral resources or anything, without bothering about the next generation about the future, that's our guilt, isn't it? So if we have a genuine sense of universal responsibility, as the central motivation and principle, then from that direction our relations with the environment will be well balanced. Similarly with every aspect of relationships, our relations with our neighbors, our family neighbors, or country neighbors, will be balanced from that direction.

Actually, in ancient times many great thinkers, as well as great spiritual masters were produced in this country, India. So, I feel in modern times these great Indian thinkers, such as Mahatma Gandhi as well as some politicians, implemented these noble ideas like ahimsa in the political arena. In a certain way India's foreign policy of non-alignment is also related to that kind of moral principle. So I think further expansion, or further development of these noble ideas, or noble actions, in this country is very relevant and very important.

Now in this respect, another thing which I feel to be very important is what is consciousness, what is mind? Up to now, specially I think in the Western world, during the last one or two centuries science

and technology have been very much emphasized and that mainly deals with matter.

Now, today, some of the nuclear physicists and neurologists have started investigating and analyzing particles in a very detailed and deep way. While doing so, they found out some kind of involvement from the observer's side which they sometimes call "the knower". What is "the knower"? Simply speaking it is the being, the human being, like the scientists through which ways do scientists know? I think through the brain. Now, about the brain, Western scientists have not yet fully identified the more than hundred billions of cells of the brain. I think out of a hundred billions only a few hundreds have been identified so far. So now the mind, whether you call it mind or a special energy of the brain, or consciousness, you will see that there is a relationship between the brain and the mind and the mind and matter. This I think is something important. I feel there should be some sort of dialogue between eastern philosophy and Western science on the basis of the relationship between mind and matter.

In any case, today our human mind is very much looking at or very much involved with the external world. I think we are failing to care for or study the internal world.

We need scientific and material developments in order to survive, in order to get benefits and in order to have more prosperity. Equally we need mental peace. Any doctor cannot inject mental peace: no market can sell mental peace or happiness. With millions and millions of rupees you can buy anything but if you go to a supermarket and say I want peace of mind, then people will laugh.

And if you ask a doctor, I want genuine peace of mind, not a dull one, you might get one sleeping pill, or some injection. Although you may get rest, the rest is not in the right sense, is it?

So if you want genuine mental peace or mental tranquility the doctor cannot provide it. A machine like the computer, however sophisticated it may be, cannot provide you with mental peace. Mental peace must come from the mind. So every one wants happiness, pleasure. Now, compare physical pleasure and physical pain with mental pain or mental pleasure and you will find that the mind is superior, more effective and more dominant. Therefore it is worthwhile to increase mental peace through certain methods. In order to do that it is important to know more about mind. That also, I always feel, is very important. I think that is all.

So when you say environment, or preservation of environment, it is related with many things. Ultimately the decision must come from the human heart, isn't that right? So I think the key point is genuine sense of universal responsibility which is based on love, compassion and clear awareness.

Transcript of an address at New Delhi, India, on February 14, 1992.

12. Universal Responsibility and the Inner Environment

First of all, I always think that it is very important to consider oneself as one human being or one member of a big human family. Because every human is basically the same irrespective of culture, religion, country or race. It means everyone has the right to be a happy person and the right to overcome suffering. After all the purpose of our very life, I consider, is happiness. This is our birthright.

Then, because of the changing situation today, the realization of oneness of all human beings is now very relevant. In ancient times, if you had that kind of perspective, good. If not, it did not matter. But now, today, in reality, whether we like it or not, every crisis is essentially linked to a global crisis. So talking about my nation, my continent, my family, my religion, my tradition is out of date. Therefore, there is really an urgent need to have a sense of Universal Responsibility and change of our Inner Environment.

This I consider to be the basic foundation of our positive motivation. The prime mover of every human action is the motivation or the determination.

Firstly, our motivation should be simple and sincere. Whether we achieve the goal or not does not matter so long as our motivation is very sincere and we make an attempt. Finally, even if we fail to achieve our goal we won't regret making the effort. If our motivation is not sincere, even if the objective is achieved the person will not be so happy or satisfied deep down. So motivation is very important.

So, any human action, whether the result is positive or negative,

largely depends on motivation. If the motivation is sincere then every human action can be positive- including political initiatives. If our motivation is not adequate, not pure, even religion becomes smeared.

So, therefore, things ultimately depend upon proper motivation. I consider the important thing is unshakable determination based upon a genuine sense of brotherhood and sisterhood, or a sense of Universal Responsibility based upon human compassion or affection. That is the proper mental approach. Our goal may not be achieved so easily this way- it may take more time and may face many obstacles. I think right from the beginning, we must adopt that kind of attitude. If one expects to achieve the goal because our motivation is good, our work will be easy, and everyone will come to help, that is not right attitude.

The world, unfortunately, is not pure; there are lots of negative forces. For 33 years I have been telling my fellow Tibetans that we should hope for the best but at the same time prepare with optimism for the worst.

An optimistic attitude is the key factor for success. Right from the beginning, if you hold a pessimistic attitude, even small things may not be achieved. Therefore, to remain optimistic all the time is very important.

As I mentioned earlier, many forms of human activity like religion, politics, technology, science and law, are supposedly meant for the betterment and happiness of humanity. Because of past experience many people feel that politics is something dirty. That is also a wrong concept. In a democratic country practicing democracy effectively, whether we like it or not, political parties must be there. Under such circumstances, if you remain removed from politics, just to criticize or complain or resent, that is not a wise way.

For example, in the field of religion there is also abuse. In the name of humanity, and also in the name of religion, some exploitations and abuses are there. How can you change that just sitting on the sideline? If you only criticize, there won't be much effect. Go into it and try to change things from within. That is the way.

I want to praise the NGOs a little. Basically, every human individual carries responsibility for the benefit or welfare of humanity and for the planet itself, because this planet is our only home. We have no alternative refuge. Therefore, everyone has the responsibility to care not only for our fellow human beings but also for insects, plants, animals and this very planet.

However, the initiative must come from individuals. But then, in order to make an impact, the unified mobilization of individual forces through various organizations is the only path. So various organizations become very important. I think at a government level action is sometimes not true to desires. This is due to certain policies or reasons and sometimes due to elected leaders being concerned about their re-election.

NGOs have more freedom and opportunity, so in many fields you can do many more and also you can create certain new ideas, new activities and act as a pilot. If this becomes something significant then the government will also follow your lead. Already some cases of this type have happened. So, therefore NGOs have a unique opportunity to contribute. Already you have contributed many things for humanity and planet and I hope you can continue your good work with full co-operation, confidence and determination.

Now, already the East-West division is there, mainly in economic

terms. The richer nations, sooner or later, will find some problems because of this gap. So, we have to find ways and means to reduce this gap. In this field both sides should have genuine discussion in the spirit of our world, rather than my nation or my continent. This is to the mutual interest of our mutual future. If one side adopts a defensive attitude, or another side seeks only to complain and criticize, that is not good. Come together and think in terms of one world. Both sides belong to that same world. With this attitude you can achieve many things.

Another thing while we are talking about the gap between richer and poorer nations. There is no point in neglecting ones own community. Among nations there is a big gap between rich and poor people, like India and Brazil. So, a terribly pathetic situation is there. Practically, these are dangerous and critical situations.

Today only one Super Power remains. Last year after the collapse of the Soviet Communist bloc, when I was returning from Europe to India, there was a high official from an African state on my plane. When we reached Delhi Airport we were together for a few minutes. I expressed to him that recent developments in the world are very hopeful and positive; now there is no more danger of a nuclear holocaust. I expected his response to be equally positive. But instead he raised another possibility. Before there were two superpowers, so the Third World can manage between the two. Now there is only one power so we have more fear, more anxiety.

We are not sure what kind of future lies ahead. I think and feel this is quite unfortunate. The reason is not because of the American system of liberty, democracy, and freedom but primarily because

of the US military forces. Perhaps economic power also has some relevance there.

Soon after the Gulf War happened I myself made some pledge or resolution that the rest of my life will be committed to the demilitarization of this planet.

Yesterday I heard through BBC that about 18 million people in Africa face the danger of starvation. Of course one immediate cause is drought but another cause is civil war in recent years. A lot of money is being spent on weapons and agriculture is neglected. All these unfortunate experiences are ultimately related to weapons. The military establishment or war is part of human history. But I think, today things are completely changed and now we must find some new way of thinking. After all, we have such beautiful human intelligence but this intelligence certainly is not meant for destruction. If we use our intelligence for destruction it is really unfortunate.

Once I expressed that I consider the worst event on this planet in this century was the October Revolution in Russia. Because, in order to achieve that revolution and in order to sustain that revolution, so much bloodshed happened. Although, as far as original Marxism is concerned, I've deep sympathy, because of its practice and eventual development the outcome was so terrible.

During a certain period weapons in general, and particularly nuclear weapons, did some good that we call deterrent. Now the Berlin Wall has collapsed and Soviet Communist Empire has collapsed. That leaves only Communist China. Now there is no danger from communism, so I think nuclear weapons did their job. Now the time has come to say farewell to these dreadful weapons. We don't need

them any more.

When we get seriously ill we need medicine and even some poison is needed. But as soon as one is cured then these poisonous medicines must be thrown out of the home. To keep them is really dangerous.

Now a quite favorable time has come and we should think seriously. First of all we should eliminate nuclear and biological weapons. Eventually we must think seriously about the very concept of war and military establishments. A recent Chinese proposal to totally ban nuclear weapons is good; whether they really stick to it or not is another question. They carried out a nuclear test recently. That is awful.

During one of my interviews with German television, one written question put to me was that Westerners very much fear death and Easterners don't fear death. Why is it? Then told the interviewer that I believed the contrary. You Westerners love war, you love these horrible weapons. These weapons kill, and war means death, and it is natural death. This is awful and it seems you have no fear of death! We Tibetans, in our time, saw soldiers and the military as something negative. That means we have more fear of death!

So, I think our concept of building military establishments in the name of defense is wrong. I consider military establishments as the worst kind of human rights violation-but legalized. Then, at the same time, I think it is true that with five billion people there are bound to be some mischievous people. In future world community there will be also never be a 100 percent perfect society.

Therefore counter measures to that are also necessary. During the Gulf War crisis the main force came from America. Because of the

world situation the system of collective forces has already happened.

In future a police or military force should be created by nations big or small, irrespectively, by equally balanced forces. These collective forces should be controlled by collective leadership on an international basis. Forces can be mobilized everywhere. If we achieve this then there will be no more violent conflict between nations, no more civil war. On the other hand, we save a lot of money and also we save a lot of destruction. So fear in the world atmosphere can be reduced to some extent.

Even if we take every precaution to preserve our planet, this is simply not possible because of the population. According to scientists, if the present rate of population growth continues, there is a real danger and the situation is increasing in seriousness every day.

As a Buddhist monk, of course, I consider every human life is something very precious, almost like a jewel. Therefore, from that viewpoint, to control human birth is not appropriate. This is the individual case. If we look at the whole then obviously, because of its high population, eventually this planet simply can't provide sufficient requirements for human beings. So this is not a question of one individual, or two human beings, but the suffering of all humanity including other species. Therefore, and from a Buddhist viewpoint, it is absolutely worthwhile to think about, and seriously implement birth control.

Transcript of the address to the Parliamentary Earth Summit (Global Forum) of the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on June 6, 1992.

13. Address at the Rio Earth Summit

As the twentieth century draws to close, we find that the world has grown smaller. The world's peace have become almost one community. Political and military alliances have created large multinational groups, industry and international trade have produced a global economy. Worldwide communications are eliminating ancient barriers of distance, language and race. We are also being drawn together by the grave problems we face: overpopulation, dwindling natural resources, and an environmental crisis that threatens our air, water, and trees, along with the vast number of beautiful life forms that are the very foundation of existence on this small planet we share.

I believe that to meet the challenge of our times, human beings will have to develop a greater sense of universal responsibility. Each of us must learn to work not for his or her self, family or nation, but for the benefit of all mankind. Universal responsibility is the real key to human survival. It is the best foundation for world peace, the equitable use of natural resources and through concern for the future generations, the proper care of the environment.

I have come to this international gathering of environmental leaders in a spirit of optimism and hope. The meetings here represent a threshold for humanity; the chance for our emerging global community to cooperate in an unprecedented manner. Even though it appears that the Earth Summit may, in some respects, fall short of what is needed, the very fact that it has taken place represents a tremendous achievement. That is why it is so heartening to see so

many non-governmental organizations here. Your role in forging a better future is absolutely essential, and while this role is still, within the United Nations, limited, it is expanding.

So many non-governmental organizations are built by dedicated volunteers out of genuine caring for the fellow human beings. Your commitment represents the forefront of both social and environmental progress. All of the organizations represented here have particular wants and needs just, in fact, as individuals do. Without our collective efforts however, the gains made here would be significantly less.

Whether we like it or not, we have been born on this earth as part of one great family. Rich or poor, educated or uneducated belonging to one nation, ideology or another, ultimately each of us just a human being like everyone else. Furthermore, each of us has the same right to pursue happiness and avoid suffering. When you recognize that all beings are equal in this respect, you automatically feel empathy and closeness for them. Out of this, in turn, comes a genuine sense of universal responsibility; the wish to actively help others overcome their problems.

Of course, this sort of compassion is by nature, peaceful and gentle, but it is also very powerful. It is the true sign of inner strength. We do not need to become religious, nor do we need to believe in an ideology. All that is necessary is for each of us to develop our good human qualities.

The need for a sense of universal responsibility affects every aspect of modern life. Nowadays, significant events in one part of the world eventually affect the entire planet. Therefore, we have to treat each

major local problem as a global concern from the moment it begins. We can no longer invoke the national, racial or ideological barriers that separate us without destructive repercussions. In the context of our new interdependence, considering the interests of others is clearly the best form of self-interest.

Interdependence, of course, is a fundamental law of nature. Not only myriad forms of life, but the subtlest level of material phenomena, as well, is governed by interdependence. All phenomena, from the planet we inhabit to the oceans, clouds, forests and flowers that surrounds us, arise in dependence upon subtle patterns of energy. Without their proper interaction, they dissolve and decay.

We need to appreciate this fact of nature far more than we have in the past. Our ignorance of it is directly responsible for many of the problems we face. For instance, tapping the limited resources of our world—particularly those of the developing nations—simply to fuel consumerism, is disastrous. If it continues unchecked, eventually we will all suffer. We must respect the delicate matrix of life and allow it to replenish itself. The United Nations Environment Program warns, I'm told, that we are facing the most massive wave of extinction in 65 million years. This fact is profoundly frightening. It must open our minds to the immense proportions of the crisis we face.

Ignorance of Interdependence has not only harmed the natural environment, but human society as well.

Instead of caring for one another, we place most of our efforts for happiness in pursuing individual material consumption. We have become so engrossed in this pursuit that, without knowing it, we have neglected to foster the most basic human needs of love,

kindness and cooperation. This is very sad. We have to consider what we human beings really are. We are not machine-made objects. If we were merely mechanical entities, then machines themselves could alleviate all of our sufferings and fulfill our needs. However, since we are not solely material creatures, it is a mistake to seek fulfillment in external development alone.

Basically, we all cherish tranquility. For example, when spring comes, the days grow longer, there is more sunshine, the grass and trees come alive and everything is fresh. People feel happy. In autumn, one leaf falls, then another, then all the beautiful flowers die until we are surrounded by bare naked plants. We do not feel so joyful. Why is this? Because deep down, we desire constructive, fruitful growth and dislike things collapsing, dying or being destroyed. Every destructive action goes against our basic nature; building, being constructive, is the human way.

To pursue growth properly, we need to renew our commitment to human values in many fields. Political life, of course, requires an ethical foundation, but science and religion, as well, should be pursued from a moral basis. Without it scientists cannot distinguish between beneficial technologies and those which are merely expedient. The environmental damage surrounding us is the most obvious result of this confusion. In the case of religion, it is particularly necessary.

The purpose of religion is not to build beautiful churches or temples, but to cultivate positive human qualities such as tolerance, generosity and love. Every world religion, no matter what its philosophical view, is founded first and foremost on the precept that we must

reduce our selfishness and serves others. Unfortunately, sometimes in the name of religion, people cause more quarrels than they solve. Practitioners of different faiths should realize that each religious tradition has immense intrinsic value as a means for providing mental and spiritual health.

There is a wonderful verse in the Bible about turning swords into ploughshares. It's a lovely image, a weapon transformed into a tool to serve basic human needs, symbolic of an attitude of inner and outer disarmament. In the spirit of this ancient message, I think it is important that we stress today the urgency of a policy that is long overdue; the demilitarization of the entire planet.

Demilitarization will free great human resources for protection of the environment, relief of poverty, and sustainable human development. It is my hope that the United Nations can soon help make this a reality.

I have always envisioned the future of my own country, Tibet, to be founded on this basis. Tibet would be a neutral, demilitarized sanctuary where weapons are forbidden and the people live in harmony with nature. This is not merely a dream – it is precisely the way Tibetans tried to live for over a thousand years before our country was tragically invaded. In Tibet, wildlife was protected in accordance with Buddhist principles. In the seventeenth century, we began enacting decrees to protect the environment and so we may have been one of the first nations to have difficulty enforcing environmental regulations! However, mainly our environment was protected by our beliefs, which were instilled in us as children. Also, for at least the last three hundred years, we had virtually no

army. Tibet gave up the waging as an instrument of national policy in the eighth century.

I would like to conclude by stating that, in general, I feel optimistic about the future. The rapid changes in our attitude towards the earth are also a source of hope. As recently as a decade ago, we thoughtlessly devoured the resources of the world, as if there were no end to them. We failed to realize that unchecked consumerism was disastrous for both the environment and social welfare. Now, both individuals and governments are seeking a new ecological and economic order.

I often joke that the moon and stars look beautiful, but if any of us tried to live on them we would be miserable. This blue planet of ours is a delightful habitat. Its life is our life; its future our future. Indeed, the earth acts like a mother to us all. Like children, we are dependent on her. In the face of such global problems as the greenhouse effect and depletion of the ozone layer, individual organizations and single nations are helpless. Unless we all work together, no solution can be found. Our mother earth is teaching us a lesson in universal responsibility.

I think we say that, because of the lessons we have begun to learn, the next century will be friendlier, more harmonious, and less harmful. Compassion, the seeds of peace will be able to flourish. I am very hopeful. At the same time, I believe that every individual has a responsibility to help guide our global family in the right direction. Good wishes alone are not enough; we have to assume responsibility. Large human movements spring from individual human initiatives.

The sponsor of these events, the United Nations, was founded out of the need to prevent military conflict. I am very moved that its mission has grown to take on a new challenge – that of safeguarding the longterm health of our planet and ourselves. I hope and pray that in the days ahead, each of us does all we can to see that the goal of creating a happier, more harmonious and healthier world is achieved.

The full text of the address to the Parliamentary Earth Summit (Global Forum) of the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on June 7, 1992.

14. An Essay on Mountains

In Tibet, mountains are often considered the abodes of deities. For example, Amnye Machen, a mountain in northeastern Tibet, is regarded as the home of Machen Pomra, one of the most important deities of Amdo, my home province. Because all the people of Amdo consider Machen Pomra their special friend, many of them go round the foot of the mountain on pilgrimage.

Tibetans generally have shown little interest in scaling the peaks that surround them, perhaps out of deference to the presiding deities. However, I think there is a more practical reason. Most Tibetans have to climb far too many mountain passes to have any wish to climb higher than they must. When the people of Lhasa sometimes climbed for pleasure, they chose hills of a reasonable size and on reaching the top would burn incense, say prayers and then relax with a picnic.

Travelers in Tibet traditionally add a stone to the cairns at the tops of hills or passes with a shout of “Lha-gyal-lo- Victory to the gods”. Later ‘Mani stones’, stones carved with prayers and other scriptures may be added along with prayer flags. One practical outcome of this traditional sense for the environment is a deep-seated concern to protect it.

Only hermits, wild animals, and, in the summer, nomads and their herds actually live high amongst them, but in the simplicity and quiet of our mountains, there is more peace of mind than in most cities of the world. Since the practice of Buddhism involves seeing phenomena as empty of inherent existence, it is helpful for

a meditator to be able to look into the vast, empty space seen from a mountain- top.

In these stores of natural treasure our doctors found many of the precious herbs and plants from which they compounded their medicines, while nomads found rich pasture for their animals, so crucial to the Tibetan economy. But of even wider-ranging impact, the Land of Snow's mountains are the source of many of Asia's great rivers. The recent massive floods on the Indian sub-continent and in China can be attributed, in part, to the massive deforestation and environmental destruction that has followed China's violent occupation of Tibet.

For over 1,000 years we Tibetans have adhered to spiritual and environmental values in order to maintain the delicate balance of life across the high plateau on which we live. Inspired by the Buddha's message of non-violence and compassion and protected by our mountains, we have sought to respect every form of life, while our neighbors lived undisturbed.

These days when we talk about preservation of the environment, whether we mean the wildlife, forests, oceans, rivers or mountains, ultimately the decision to act must come from our hearts. So, the key point, I think, is for all of us to develop a genuine sense of universal responsibility, not only towards this beautiful blue planet that is our home, but also towards the innumerable sentient beings with whom we share it.

A Newsweek article from July 16, 1992 .

15. The Sheltering Tree of Interdependence: A Buddhist Monk's Reflections on Ecological Responsibility

During the course of my extensive travelling to countries across the world, rich and poor, East and West, I have seen people reveling in pleasure, and people suffering. The advancement of science and technology seems to have achieved little more than linear, numerical improvement; development often means little more than more mansions in more cities. As a result, the ecological balance- the very basis of our life on earth- has been greatly affected.

On the other hand, in days gone by, the people of Tibet lived a happy life, untroubled by pollution, in natural conditions. Today, all over the world, including Tibet, ecological degradation is fast overtaking us. I am wholly convinced that, if all of us do not make a concerted effort, with a sense of universal responsibility, we will see the gradual breakdown of the fragile ecosystems that support us, resulting in an irreversible and irrevocable degradation of our planet, Earth.

These stanzas have been composed to underline my deep concern, and to call upon all concerned people to make continuous efforts to reserve and remedy the degradation of our environment.

1

O Lord Tathagata

Born of the Iksvakus tree

Peerless One

Who, seeing the all-pervasive nature

Of interdependence
Between the Environment and sentient beings
Samsara and Nirvana
Moving and unmoving
Teaches the world out of compassion
Bestow thy benevolence on us

2

O the Savior
The one called Avalokitesvara
Personifying the body of compassion
Of all Buddhas
We beseech thee to make our spirits ripen
And fructify to observe reality
Bereft of illusion

3

Our obdurate egocentricity
Ingrained in our minds
Since beginningless time
Contaminates, defiles and pollutes
The environment
Created by the common karma
Of all sentient beings

4

Lakes and ponds have lost
Their clarity, their coolness
The atmosphere is poisoned
Nature's celestial canopy in the fiery firmament
Has burst asunder
And sentient beings suffer diseases
Unknown before

5

Perennial snow mountains resplendent in their glory
Bow down and melt into water
The majestic oceans lose their ageless equilibrium
And inundate islands

6

The dangers of fire, water and wind are limitless
Sweltering heat dries up our lush forests
Lashing our world with unprecedented storms
And the oceans surrender their salt to the elements

7

Though people lack not wealth
They cannot afford to breathe clean air
Rains and streams cleanse not
But remain inert and powerless liquids

8

Human beings
And countless beings
That inhabit water and land
Reel under the yoke of physical pain
Caused by malevolent diseases
Their minds are dulled
With sloth, stupor and ignorance
The joys of the body and spirit
Are far, far away

9

We needlessly pollute
The fair bosom of our mother earth
Rip out her trees to feed our short –sighted greed
Turning our fertile earth into a sterile desert

10

The interdependent nature
Of the external environment
And people's inward nature
Described in tantras
Works on Medicine, and astronomy
Has verily been vindicated
By our present experience

11

The earth is home to living beings;
Equal and impartial to the moving and unmoving
Thus spoke the Buddha in truthful voice
With the great earth for witness

12

As a noble being recognizes the kindness
Of a sentient mother
And makes recompense for it
So the earth, the universal mother
Which nurtures equally
Should be regarded with affection and care

13

Forsake wastage
Pollution not the clean, clear nature
Of the four elements
And destroy the well being of people
But absorb yourself in actions
That are beneficial to all

14

Under a tree was the great Saga Buddha born
Under a tree, he overcame passion
And attained enlightenment

65

Under two trees did he pass in Nirvana
Verily, the Buddha held the tree in great esteem

15

Here, where Manjusri's emanation
Lama Tson Khapa's body bloomed forth
Is marked by a sandal tree
Bearing a hundred thousand images of the Buddha

16

Is it not well known
That some transcendental deities
Eminent local deities and spirits
Make their abode in tree?

17

Flourishing trees clean the wind
Help us breathe the sustaining air of life
They please the eye and sooth the mind
Their shade makes a welcome resting-place

18

In Vinaya, the Buddha taught monks
To care for tender trees
From this, we learn the virtue
Of planting, of nurturing trees

19

The Buddha forbade monks to cut
Cause others to cut living plants
Destroy seeds or defile the fresh green grass
Should this not inspire us
To love and protect our environment?

20

They say, in the celestial realms
The trees emanate
The Buddha's blessings
And echo the sound
Of basic Buddhist doctrines
Like impermanence

21

It is tree that brings rain
Trees that hold the essence of the soil
Kalpa-Taru, the tree of wishes fulfillment
Virtually resides on earth
To serve all purposes

22

In times of yore
Our forbears ate the fruits of trees
Wore their leaves

67

Discovered fire by the attrition of wood
Took refuge amidst the foliage of trees
When they encountered danger

23

Even in this age of science
Of technology
Trees provide us shelter
The chairs we sit in
The beds we lie on
When the heart is ablaze
With the fire of anger
Fueled by wrangling
Trees bring refreshing, welcome coolness

24

In the trees lie the roots
Of all life on earth
When it vanishes
The land exemplified by the name
Of the Jambu tree
Will remain no more than a dreary, desolate desert

25

Nothing is dearer to the living than life
Recognizing this, in the Vinaya rules

68

The Buddha lays down prohibitions
Like the use of water with living creatures

26

In the remoteness of the Himalayas
In the days of yore, the land of Tibet
Observed a ban on hunting, on fishing
And, during designated periods, even construction

These traditions are noble
For they preserve and cherish
The lives of humble, helpless, defenseless creatures

27

Playing with the lives of other beings
Without sensitivity or hesitation
As in the act of hunting or fishing for sport
Is an act of heedless, needless violence
A violation of the solemn rights
Of all living beings

28

Being attentive to the nature
Of interdependence of all creatures
Both animate and inanimate
One should never slacken in one's efforts
To preserve and conserve nature's energy

69

29

On a certain day, month and year
One should observe the ceremony
Of tree planting
Thus, one fulfills one's responsibilities
Serves one's fellow beings
Which not only brings one happiness
But benefits all

30

May the force of observing that which is right
And abstinence from wrong practices and evil deeds
Nourish and augment the prosperity of the world
May it invigorate living beings and help them blossom
May sylvan joy and pristine happiness
Ever increase, ever spread and encompass all that is

This poem was released on the occasion of the presentation of a statue of the Buddha to the people of India by His Holiness the Dalai Lama , and to mark the opening of the International Conference on Ecological Responsibility: A Dialogue With Buddhism at New Delhi on October 2, 1993. (A booklet of the poem, in Tibetan and English, is distributed by Tibet House, New Delhi.)

70

16. Environment Awareness: A Part of Daily Life

This conference on ecology is extremely appropriate. I recognize the urgency of preserving the balance of the environment, and believe that if we neglect it, the world as a whole will suffer.

Because of the material wealth and resulting environmental problems seen in the West, some people say we need to discard the modern way of life. But I feel this is a bit extreme. We must use wisdom and understanding to tackle this ecological problem. I am very happy there are so many experts from different fields to inform the discussions of these issues.

I feel that it is extremely important that each individual realize their responsibility for preserving the environment, to make it a part of daily life, create the same attitude in their families, and spread it to the community. Because we in the Third World face so much poverty, we sometimes see the environmental issues as far away from us. But we must learn from the problems that are faced by the highly advanced nations to set the proper path from the beginning.

I look forward to the new ideas from this conference and hope it will bring about much benefit.

Quoted from His Holiness the Dalai Lama's address at the Consecration of the Statue of Lord Buddha and the International Conference on Ecological Responsibility—a Dialogue with Buddhism, Interim Report, 1993: Tibet House, New Delhi.

17. Practical Steps Towards Protection of the Environment

These days the environment- the source of life for all beings in the world including Tibet, the Land of Snows- is undergoing extensive degeneration. At this time it is extremely important that every human being, according to his or her ability, consistently puts effort into ensuring the conservation and protection of this planet's environment and its inhabitants.

The benefits of an undefiled environment are many; for instance, a healthy tree purifies the air and supplies oxygen for living beings to breathe. It harmonizes the elements and increases life expectancy. Its shade provides a refreshing place to rest. It brings rain at the right time. It nourishes crops and livestock, and balances the temperature. It contributes to an attractive landscape and continually replenishes its surroundings. It brings about natural development in the spheres of education, economics and so forth.

The drawbacks of a polluted environment include a decline in the pure, cool qualities of the oceans and lakes, so that the creatures dwelling in those places are disturbed. The loss of vegetation and forests causes degeneration in the earth's nourishment.

Rain does not fall when it is needed. Unprecedented fierce storms rage, and so on. So there are many disadvantages. From the Dharma point of view our teacher, the king of Shakya, was also born at the foot of a tree. He attained enlightenment under a tree, and finally passed away under a tree. Particularly in the Vinaya of the holy Dharma, fully ordained monks are taught how to nurture trees and so on. From that we can understand that planting and nurturing trees are virtuous

acts. Moreover, the wisdom deities of the non-mundane worlds, as well as various local devas, nagas and spirits, inhabit trees. That also leads us to understand that trees are by nature extremely important.

It is generally beneficial to plant various types of trees, as mentioned above. In particular, fruit trees provide a living and nourishment predominantly for humans, as well as benefit to many other sentient creatures. They help to improve health and increase appetite, and so forth. So it certainly is important to plant trees.

Likewise, planting flowers also is a pure virtuous act. For example, when making a mandala offering we pray that the ground may be covered with incense and strewn with flowers. Flowers assist us in accumulating merit and purifying obscurations, and also is an indispensable offering item everywhere in performing religious activities, such as the visualization of meditational deities. Moreover, if there are colorful flowers and then you offer them through visualization to the Triple Gem, the benefit of a swift accumulation of merit occurs. What is more, when people who are experiencing stress and an imbalance mind stroll for a while in a garden, their minds are benefited by becoming refreshed and filled with pleasure.

Therefore, the whole of society needs to take an interest in planting various kinds of trees and flowers around monasteries, schools, offices, hospitals, factories, restaurants, hotels and residences, on both sides of thoroughfares. In order to protect the growth of whatever has been planted in the best way, people should advise their children not to harm them. This definitely is a beneficial service to oneself and others and, in fact, to all living beings.

In Tibet previously there was a good tradition of instituting laws to

safeguard hills and valleys for unprotected and unsupported wild animals and birds and for the protection of various defenseless creatures. We should maintain the continuity of this tradition. At the present time a few thoughts less people hunt wild animals and catch fish and seals, through their craving for money and material goods. It is noble work for self and others, and for present and future lives, to stop all of this from happening.

Similarly, it is inappropriate randomly to discard fruit-peel, paper, plastic bottles, old cloths, food leftovers and other kinds of garbage. Nor should people urinate and defecate every where. Such things 64 spoil the beauty of the landscape and are a hazard to health and hygiene. There are some people, especially, who tie their worn cloths and fallen hair to the branches of trees. This looks extremely unattractive, so from now on this habit should be abandoned.

In short, this is a request that, through understanding the interdependent nature of the world and its inhabitants, people will implement practices based upon unmistakably accepting the correct means to cherish the potential of the vast natural realm.

May the attractive and healthy forests be increased in all the one hundred directions! May sentient creatures be freed from untimely death and live happy lives!

This message was delivered on Tibetan Democracy Day, September 2, 1994.

18. Hope for Tibet's Environment

I am very happy and feel especially honored to be speaking to a group of people who are really dedicated to environmental problems in general and the Tibetan environmental problems in particular. I express my deep appreciation to Senator Bob Brown.

Now, environmental problems are something new to me. When we were in Tibet, we always considered the environment pure. For Tibetans, whenever we saw a stream of water in Tibet, there was no question as to whether it was safe for drinking or not. However, it was different when we reached India and other places. For example, Switzerland is a very beautiful and impressive country, yet people say “Don't drink the water from this stream, it is polluted!”

Gradually, we Tibetans gained the knowledge and awareness that certain things are polluted and cannot be utilized. Actually, in India, when our settlements started in some places, large number of Tibetans fell ill with stomach problems as a result of drinking polluted water. So through our own experience and by meeting scientists we have become better educated about environmental issues.

When we look back at our own country, Tibet, it is a big country with a vast land area, with high altitude and a cold and dry climate. Perhaps these things provided some kind of natural protection to Tibet's environment—keeping it clean and fresh. In the Northern pastures, the rocky areas, the forested areas and the river valleys there used to be lots of wild animals, fish and birds. As a Buddhist country there were certain traditional laws in Tibet concerned with a complete ban on fishing and hunting.

I remember in Lhasa when I was young, some Nepalese did a little hunting and fishing because they were not very much concerned with Tibetan laws. Otherwise there was a real safety for animals at that time.

There is a strange story. Chinese farmers and road builders who came to Tibet after 1959 were very fond of meat. They usually went hunting birds, such as ducks, wearing Chinese army uniform or Chinese clothes. These clothes startled the birds and made them immediately fly away. Eventually these hunters were forced to wear Tibetan dress. This is a true story! Such things happened, especially during the 1970's and 80's, when there were still large numbers of birds.

Recently, a few thousand Tibetans from India went to their native places in Tibet. When they returned, they all told the same story. They said that about forty or fifty years ago there were huge forest covers in their native areas. Now all these richly forested mountains have become bald like a monk's head. No more tall trees. In some cases the roots of the trees are even uprooted and taken away! This is the present situation. In the past, there were big herds of animals to be seen in Tibet, but few remain today. Therefore much has changed.

The large-scale deforestation in Tibet is a matter of great sadness. It is not only sad for the local area, which has lost its beauty, but for the local people, who now find it hard to collect even enough fuelwood. Relatively, these are small problems; looking from a wider perspective, deforestation has other extensive negative consequences.

Firstly, many parts of Tibet are high and dry. This means that it takes longer for the land to recover compared to lower regions with humid climate, and the negative effects therefore last much longer.

Secondly, many of the rivers which flow through large areas of Asia, through Pakistan, India, China, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, rivers such as the Yellow river, Brahmaputra, Yangtze, Salween and Mekong, all originate in Tibet. It is at the places of origin of these rivers that large-scale deforestation and mining are taking place. The pollution of these rivers has a drastic effect on the down-stream countries.

According to Chinese statistics there are 126 different minerals in Tibet. When these resources were discovered by the Chinese, they were extensively mined without proper environmental safeguards, resulting in devastation of the environment. As a result, deforestation and mining are causing more floods in the lowlands of Tibet.

The deforestation of the Tibetan plateau, according to experts, will change the amount of reflection from snow into space (forested areas absorb more solar radiation) and this affects the monsoon of the next year, not only in Tibet, but in all surrounding areas. Therefore, it becomes even more important to conserve Tibet's environment.

I think the climate change in Tibet will not affect Australia immediately. So your concern for Tibet is a genuine altruistic one. Concern from China and India may not be genuine, as it directly relates to their own future. The Tibetan environment is very delicate and it is very important. Unfortunately, as you know, in the Communist world, in countries such as the former Soviet Union, Poland and the former East Germany, there were many pollution problems in the past resulting from carelessness, simply because factories are growing bigger and production is rising with little regard to the damage this growth causes to the environment. The situation is the same in the People's Republic of China. In the

1970's and 1980's there was no awareness of pollution, although now I think some awareness is developing. So I think the situation was initially to do with ignorance.

According to some information, it seems that during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) temples in China proper suffered less destruction than in other areas. This may not be due to government policy, but rather may be the result of discrimination by local officials. So it seems that Chinese officials have neglected the environment in the places where ethnic groups are living.

Another story comes from the Dingri region of southern Tibet. Five years ago a local Tibetan told me about a river that all the villagers used for drinking. There were also Chinese living in the area. The Chinese residents belonging to the People's Liberation Army (PLA), were informed not to drink the water from the river, but local Tibetans were not informed. Tibetans still drink the polluted water. This shows that some form of negligence is going on, and obviously is not because of lack of awareness, but due to other reasons. In this light, any concern from other human brothers and sisters for our unfortunate situation, unfortunate people and their environment is very gratefully received and very important.

Then talking about the environment more generally, it comes to mind that one key factor in the future is human population. Look at India and China, there are so many people. The standard of living is very low. It is very difficult to explain or educate the masses about the environment when their most pressing concern is survival.

For example, in our second home in the Kangra Valley, (Himachal Pradesh, India), the local Indian villager's survival depends on

cutting wood and slate mining. On the eastern side of Dharamsala we have large-scale slate quarries. Some of my Indian friends told me that I should speak-out about the huge environmental damage that these quarries cause, but it is very difficult. For at least a few hundred families livelihood depend solely on these activities. Unless we show them new ways of earning their livelihood, it is very difficult to stop them. Therefore, the population explosion is ultimately a very serious matter. So family planning is crucial, especially in the developing world.

Then there are industries such as the meat industries, where killing of animals takes place on a large-scale. This is not only cruel, but it has very negative effects on the environment. There are industries which produce constructive machineries. There may be some justification for their existence. But those which produce destructive things such as war machines, do great damage.

Some companies and governments actually make profit from these activities, but the nature of their production is a destructive one. For example, a bullet is designed to kill a person, not as a decoration piece! All these war machines look very beautiful. When I was small, these machines seemed beautiful to me, even small toys like tanks and machine guns seemed very beautiful, very smart, don't you think? The whole military establishment: their uniforms, their discipline, everything seems very striking and very impressive, but the very purpose of this organization is to kill. So we must think of these matters if we are to be truly concerned about the environment, not only for this generation, but for future generations as well.

I think all these things are inter-related. As I mentioned earlier,

family planning should be encouraged. From a Buddhist perspective it is quite simple. Each human life is very precious. From this perspective it is better to avoid or control birth, but today there are 1.5 billion precious lives—too many precious lives! As a result it is not only one or two precious human lives that are at stake, but the question is of the survival of humanity at large. So therefore the conclusion we arrive at is that we must take family planning very seriously, if we are to save the prosperity of the entire humanity, preferably through non-violent means, not through abortion or killing, but by some other means. I often half jokingly say... more monks and nuns. That is the most non-violent and effective method. So if you can't become a monk or a nun, then practice other non-violent methods of birth control.

Then there is the question of how to reduce military establishments. The groundwork we must do is to promote non-violence. But this is not enough because we have so many conflicts in this world. So long as humanity remains, so will conflict.

One way of promoting non-violence against warfare and the production of weapons is to promote ideas of dialogue and compromise, and the spirit of reconciliation. I think we must promote these ideas at the family and community level. It is much more practical to solve problems through dialogue rather than through confrontation.

So the concept of dialogue must begin at the family level. As individuals we must look within, investigate, analyze and then try to overcome contradictory ideas. We must not lose hope or despair of the irritating conflict we find inside ourselves. So these are some of

the ways in which we can ultimately solve environmental problems.

Finally, I want to tell you that self-confidence and enthusiasm are the key to a successful life, and to succeed in any activity one is engaged in. We must be determined and must have an optimistic outlook, then even if we fail we will have no regrets. On the other hand, lack of determination and effort will cause double regret. Firstly because the objectives were not realized, and secondly because you feel guilty and regret at not having made full effort in the realization of the objectives.

So therefore, whether we commit ourselves or not it is an individual choice. Once you have made up your mind, you must go forward with a single-minded devotion in spite of the obstacles. This is very important.

Finally I would like to express my deep appreciation to all participants and those who organized this conference. I very much appreciate it. I would also like to express my deep appreciation on behalf of the six million Tibetan people whose lives are very much in danger due to pollution. Some children are already suffering from illness because of air pollution. There is tremendous anxiety and suffering, and their voices may not be heard widely. They simply express their grievances within the confines of their small homes. I would like to express my deep appreciation on behalf of all these innocent people.

Thank you!

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's speech at the "Endangered Tibet" Conference in Sydney, Australia, on September 28, 1996.

19. Politics and Environment: An Interview

Dalai Lama: In general, I feel that laws should serve as guidelines for the proper use of human initiative, creativity and ability.

Fabien: Do you think that democracy is helping laws to evolve in this way?

Dalai Lama: Yes, in democratic countries, legal systems should work that way and generally do. But these laws nevertheless partially contradict the Buddhist principle of interdependence, since they do not include “democratic rights” for the environment and the animal realm. Most legal systems refer only to human rights and do not consider the rights of animals or other beings that share the planet with us. Laws that protect human rights and values and indicate proper ways to use human ability are not in contradiction with karma or causality – not in the Western sense where the same causes have the same effect, but in the Buddhist sense where each effect proceeds from a cause that also needs to be considered.

In reality, the problem is that for most “powerful” people there is a difference between the principle of the law and its application. Almost all legal systems condemn killing. This notion occurs in most countries of the world. Yet in practice, powerful people treat killing as they treat lying. For politicians, small lies are prohibited, but large lies are accepted. For a Buddhist, this is a very obvious contradiction. The same applies to killing. When a man who is desperate kills another person, this small act is defined as murder. It is wrong. But the man who kills or gives orders to kill thousands of people is a hero! That is very unfortunate.

Most religious systems condemn murder, rape, and theft. In my opinion, religious principles are based on natural human attitudes and feelings. Their essential function is to inspire human beings to develop basic human qualities. Thus it seems logical that most laws would be consistent with the principles of positive karma. But in order for both religious and secular laws to conform to the principles of interdependence, we need to widen their perspective to include protection of the environment and the animal realm. This is how we can apply the Buddhist view of interdependence to a broader vision of law and order.

Dalai Lama: [...] In any case, all the natural resource specialists with whom I have spoken warn me that this gap between the “haves” and “have-nots” should be reduced. At present there are around 5.5 billion human beings on earth. If the living standard of the southerners were raised to the level the northerners are presently enjoying, what would happen to the world’s natural resources? This situation would not be sustainable. China, for example, has a population of 1.2 billion. If each family were to have two cars, the environmental damage would be unimaginable. Nine hundred million people live in India.

The Western concept of increasing the GNP each year must change, and fast. The principle itself contradicts all natural and logical laws.

Fabien: Do you think Westerners should also have fewer cars?

Dalai Lama: Certainly. They need to develop a sense of contentment and more consideration towards others. Things should be done in a more just, equal manner. In the meantime, the birth control question must also be addressed. The southern countries must curb their

population growth.

Fabien: Efficient birth control mainly depends on standard of living. The more access to education women have, the fewer children they produce, statistically speaking. So, education seems to be the best way to curb the population explosion.

Dalai Lama: That's very good. But what education? To tell you the truth, I think the first thing the southerners must do is recognize the negative consequences of the present Western concepts of life and economy. We have to correct or remould this erroneous belief in the value of an ever-increasing GNP.

Likewise, although some factories and industries are now adopting new ways to protect the environment, the northerners are inflicting a lot of damage on the world's environment. This prompts me to say that from a global point of view the money produced by the northern world is still insufficient.

[...] In the early part of this century, everyone foolishly thought that nature's resources were limitless and at the disposal of humanity. Today ecological ideology even influences political parties. All these changes stem from the experience we have acquired as human beings. In the same way, the concept of human rights, whether individual or general, such as the right to selfdetermination for a given group, has evolved. These ideas are now universally recognized. Such progress gives me hope for the future.

Fabien: Do you think that one individual can change the world?

Dalai Lama: Yes. **Fabien:** In that case, the best thing to do is to start trying to improve oneself. **Dalai Lama:** It seems quite simple.

First, it is important to realize we are part of nature. Ultimately, nature will always be more powerful than human beings, even with all their nuclear weapons, scientific equipment, and knowledge. If the sun disappears or the earth's temperature changes by a few degrees, then we are really in trouble.

At a deeper level, we should recognize that although we are part of nature, we can control and change things, to some extent, due to our intelligence. Among the thousands of species of mammals on earth, we humans have the greatest capacity to alter nature. As such, we have a twofold responsibility. Morally, as beings of higher intelligence, we must care for this world. The other inhabitants of the planet—insects and so on—do not have the means to save or protect this world. Our other responsibility is to undo the serious environmental degradation that is the result of incorrect human behaviour. We have recklessly polluted the world with chemicals and nuclear waste, selfishly consuming many of its resources. Humanity must take the initiative to repair and protect the world.

Of course, when we say, “humanity” or “society”, it's obvious the initiative must come from individuals. It is wrong to expect our governments, or even God, to give us any guidance on these matters.

[...] Actually, I'm quite optimistic. Take the example of environmental problems. The scientists and associations that defend the environment have repeatedly informed us about the ecological problems now facing the earth, like global warming and widespread pollution of our water and air. Now, awareness is growing worldwide. New techniques are evolving so that we can avoid pollution without changing the process of industry or

the economy. During a recent visit to Stockholm, my friends told me that ten years before the fish had practically disappeared from the nearby river. Now they are regenerating, simply because the industrial plants along that river have made some effort to protect the environment. In other words, they managed to improve the situation without destroying the industry. I was recently in the Rohr region of Germany, a centre of industry. One large company showed me a film on the different means they were taking to reduce pollution and recycle waste material. Without changing their entire structure, they were causing much less damage to the environment.

Concern for ecology grows with the proper and widespread dissemination of information. People have gradually become convinced that the situation is serious and that we must take care for our planet. I've noticed that now, in some hotels, we are asked to not waste electricity or water. This is a good start. Likewise, the media must speak of the importance of altruism in every human activity. It must be discussed again and again, in newspapers, in the movies, on the radio, on TV. I think there is plenty of momentum to do this. Medical and scientific fields should support the theory of altruism. Ecologists will support it, as the peace movement, providing the educational systems are also improved so that children become less violent. Then, even the police force will change, and everyone will gradually begin to think and act with more kindness, altruism, and compassion.

Excerpts from Imagine All the People: A conversation with the Dalai Lama on Money, Politics and Life as it Could Be, Wisdom Publications, Boston, 1999.

20. The Natural World

If there is one area in which both education and the media have a special responsibility, it is, I believe, our natural environment. This responsibility has less to do with questions of right or wrong than with the question of survival. The natural world is our home. It is not necessarily sacred or holy. It is simply where we live. It is therefore in our interest to look after it. This is common sense. But only recently have the size of our population and the power of science and technology grown to the point that they have a direct impact on nature. To put it another way, until now, Mother Earth has been able to tolerate our sloppy house habits. However, the stage has now been reached where she can no longer accept our behaviour in silence. The problems caused by environmental disasters can be seen as her response to our irresponsible behaviour. She is warning us that there are limits even to her tolerance.

Nowhere are the consequences of our failure to exercise discipline in the way we relate to our environment more apparent than in the case of present-day Tibet. It is no exaggeration to say that the Tibet I grew up in was a wildlife paradise. Every traveller who visited Tibet before the middle of the twentieth century remarked on this.

Animals were rarely hunted, except in the remotest areas where crops could not be grown. Indeed, it was customary for government officials annually to issue a proclamation protecting wildlife: Nobody, it read, however humble or noble, shall harm or do violence to the creatures of the waters or the wild. The only exceptions to this were rats and wolves.

As a young man, I recall seeing great numbers of different species whenever I travelled outside Lhasa. My chief memory of the threemonth journey across Tibet from my birthplace at Takster in the East to Lhasa, where I was formally proclaimed Dalai Lama as a four-year-old boy, is of the wildlife we encountered along the way. Immense herds of kiang (wild asses) and drong (wild yak) freely roamed the great plains. Occasionally we would catch sight of shimmering herds of gowa, the shy Tibetan gazelle, of shawachukar, the white-lipped deer, or of tsoe, our majestic antelope. I remember, too, my fascination for the little chibi, or pika, which would congregate on grassy areas. They were so friendly. I loved to watch the birds: the dignified gho (the bearded eagle) soaring high above monasteries and perched up in the mountains; the flocks of geese (nangbar); and occasionally, at night, to hear the call of the wookpa (the long-eared owl).

Even in Lhasa, one did not feel in any way cut off from the natural world. In my rooms at the top of the Potala, the winter palace of the Dalai Lamas, I spent countless hours as a child studying the behaviour of the red-beaked khyungkar which nested in the crevices of its walls. And behind the Norbulingka, the summer palace, I often saw pairs of trung trung (Japanese blacknecked cranes), birds which for me are the epitome of elegance and grace, that lived in the marshlands there. And all this is not to mention the crowning glory of Tibetan fauna: the bears and mountain foxes, the chanku (wolves), and sazik (the beautiful snow leopard), and the sik (lynx) which struck terror into the hearts of the normal farmer – or the gentle-faced giant panda (thom tra), which is native to the border area between Tibet and China.

Sadly, this profusion of wildlife is no longer to be found. Partly due to hunting but primarily due to loss of habitat, what remains half a century after Tibet was occupied is only a small fraction of what there was. Without exception, every Tibetan I have spoken with who has been back to visit Tibet after thirty to forty years has reported on a striking absence of wildlife. Whereas before wild animals would often come close to the house, today they are hardly anywhere to be seen.

Equally troubling is the devastation of Tibet's forests. In the past, the hills were all thickly wooded; today those who have been back report that they are clean-shaven like a monk's head. The government in Beijing has admitted that the tragic flooding of western China, and further afield, is in part due to this. And yet I hear continuous reports of round-the-clock convoys of trucks carrying logs east out of Tibet. This is especially tragic given the country's mountainous terrain and harsh climate. It means that replanting requires sustained care and attention. Unfortunately there is little evidence of this.

None of this is to say that, historically, we Tibetans were deliberately 'conservationist'. We were not. The idea of something called 'pollution' simply never occurred to us. There is no denying we were rather spoiled in this respect. A small population inhabited a very large area with clean, dry air and an abundance of pure mountain water. This innocent attitude toward cleanliness meant that when we Tibetans went into exile, we were astonished to discover, for example, the existence of streams whose water is not drinkable. Like an only child, no matter what we did, Mother Earth tolerated

our behaviour. The result was that we had no proper understanding of cleanliness and hygiene. People would spit or blow their nose in the street without giving it a second thought. Indeed, saying this, I recall one elderly Khampa, a former bodyguard who used to come each day to circumambulate my residence in Dharamsala (a popular devotion). Unfortunately, he suffered greatly from bronchitis. This was exacerbated by the incense he carried. At each corner, therefore, he would pause to cough and expectorate so ferociously that I sometimes wondered whether he had come to pray or just to spit!

Over the years, since our first arriving in exile, I have taken a close interest in environmental issues. The Tibetan government in exile has paid particular attention to introducing our children to their responsibilities as residents of this fragile planet. And I never hesitate to speak out on the subject whenever I am given the opportunity. In particular, I always stress the need to consider how our actions, in affecting the environment, are likely to affect others. I admit that this is very often difficult to judge. We cannot say for sure what the ultimate effects of, for example, deforestation might be on the soil and the local rainfall, let alone what the implications are for the planet's weather systems. The only clear thing is that we humans are the only species with the power to destroy the earth as we know it. The birds have no such power, nor do the insects, nor does any mammal. Yet if we have the capacity to destroy the earth, so, too, do we have the capacity to protect it.

What is essential is that we find methods of manufacture that do not destroy nature. We need to find ways of cutting down on our use of wood and other limited natural resources. I am no expert in

this field, and I cannot suggest how this might be done. I know only that it is possible, given the necessary determination. For example, I recall hearing on a visit to Stockholm some years ago that for the first time in many years fish were returning to the river that runs through the city. Until recently, there were none due to industrial pollution. Yet this improvement was by no means the result of all the local factories closing down. Likewise, on a visit to Germany, I was shown an industrial development designed to produce no pollution. So, clearly, solutions do exist to limit damage to the natural world without bringing industry to a halt.

This does not mean that I believe that we can rely on technology to overcome all our problems. Nor do I believe we can afford to continue destructive practices in anticipation of technical fixes being developed. Besides, the environment does not need fixing. It is our behaviour in relation to it that needs to change. I question whether, in the case of such a massive looming disaster as that caused by the greenhouse effect, a fix could ever exist, even in theory. And supposing it could, we have to ask whether it would ever be feasible to apply it on the scale that would be required. What of the expense and what of the cost in terms of our natural resources? I suspect that these would be prohibitively high. There is also the fact that in many other fields— such as in the humanitarian relief of hunger—there are already insufficient funds to cover the work that could be undertaken. Therefore, even if one were to argue that the necessary funds could be raised, morally speaking this would be almost impossible to justify given such deficiencies. It would not be right to deploy huge sums simply in order to enable the industrialized nations to continue their harmful practices while

people in other places cannot even feed themselves.

All this points to the need to recognize the universal dimension of our actions and, based on this, to exercise restraint. The necessity of this is forcefully demonstrated when we come to consider the propagation of our species. Although from the point of view of all the major religions, the more humans the better, and although it may be true that some of the latest studies suggest a population implosion a century from now, still I believe we cannot ignore this issue. As a monk, it is perhaps inappropriate for me to comment on these matters. I believe that family planning is important. Of course, I do not mean to suggest we should not have children. Human life is a precious resource and married couples should have children unless there are compelling reasons not to. The idea of not having children just because we want to enjoy a full life without responsibility is quite mistaken I think. At the same time, couples do have a duty to consider the impact our numbers have on the natural environment. This is especially true given the impact of modern technology.

Fortunately, more and more people are coming to recognize the importance of ethical discipline as a means to ensuring a healthy place to live. For this reason I am optimistic that disaster can be averted. Until comparatively recently, few people gave much thought to the effects of human activity on our planet. Yet today there are even political parties whose main concern is this. Moreover, the fact that the air we breathe, the water we drink, the forests and oceans which sustain millions of different life forms, and the climatic patterns which govern our weather systems all transcend national boundaries is a source of hope. It means that no country, no matter

either how rich and powerful or how poor and weak it may be, can afford not to take action in respect of this issue.

As far as the individual is concerned, the problems resulting from our neglect of our natural environment are a powerful reminder that we all have a contribution to make. And while one person's actions may not have a significant impact, the combined effort of millions of individuals' actions certainly does. This means that it is time for all those living in the industrially developed nations to give serious thought to changing their lifestyle. Again this is not so much a question of ethics. The fact that the population of the rest of the world has an equal right to improve their standard of living is in some ways more important than the affluent being able to continue their lifestyle. If this is to be fulfilled without causing irredeemable violence to the natural world—with all the negative consequences for happiness that this would entail—the richer countries must set an example. The cost to the planet, and thus the cost to humanity, of ever-increasing standards of living, is simply too great.

Excerpt from Ancient Wisdom, Modern World: Ethics for the New Millennium by Tenzin Gyatso, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. Published by Little, Brown and Company, London, 1999 (pp 195–202).

21. Wildlife: A Symbol of Freedom

Peace and the survival of life on earth, as we know it, are threatened by human activities, which lack a commitment to humanitarian values. Destruction of nature and natural resources results from ignorance, greed and lack of respect for the earth's living beings. This lack of respect extends even to the earth's human descendents, the future generations who will inherit a vastly degraded planet, if world peace does not become a reality, and destruction of the natural environment continues at the present rate.

Our ancestors viewed the earth as rich and bountiful, which it is. Many people in the past also saw nature as inexhaustibly sustainable, which we now know is the case only if we care for it. It is not difficult to forgive destruction in the past that resulted from ignorance. Today, however, we have access to more information, and it is essential that we re-examine ethically what we have inherited, what we are responsible for, and what we will pass on to coming generations.

Clearly this is a pivotal generation. Exploration of outer space takes place at the same time as the earth's own oceans, seas, and fresh water areas grow increasingly polluted, and their life forms are still largely unknown or misunderstood. Many of the earth's inhabitants such as animals, plants, insects, and even microorganisms that we know are rare, may not be known at all by future generations.

A clear example of our failure to exercise discipline in the way we relate to our environment, of which I am personally aware, is present-day Tibet. It is no exaggeration to say that the Tibet I grew up in was a wildlife paradise. The chief memory of my three-month journey

across Tibet from my birthplace at Taktser, in the east, to Lhasa, where I was formally proclaimed the Dalai Lama as a four-year-old boy, is of the wildlife we encountered along the way.

We always considered our wild animals a symbol of freedom. Nothing held them back; they ran free. Without them something is missing from even the most beautiful landscape. The land becomes empty, and only with the presence of wild animals can it gain its full beauty. Nature and wild animals are complementary. People who live among wildlife without harming it are in harmony with the environment. Sadly, the profusion of wildlife that once thrived in the region is no longer to be found. Partly due to hunting, but primarily due to loss of habitat, what remains is only a fraction of what there was.

Therefore, whenever I have the opportunity, I always stress the need to consider how our actions, in affecting the environment, are likely to affect others. I admit that this is very often difficult to judge; but what is clear is that we humans are the only species with the power to destroy the earth, as we know it. The birds have no such power, nor do the insects, nor does any other mammal. Yet if we have the capacity to destroy the earth, so, too, do we have the capacity to protect it, and I believe we have an urgent responsibility to do so.

Reprinted from Heaven and Earth and I, Ethics of Nature Conservation in Asia, published by Penguin Enterprise, New Delhi, in association with Asian Conservation Alliance, Wild Life Trust of India and International Fund For Animal Welfare, 2002 (pp 20-21).

22. Put Education above Wealth

Since time immemorial, Tibet is a land specially blessed by Chenre-zig, the Bodddhisatva of Compassion. Judging from numerous sutras of Buddha Shakyamuni to biographies of Buddhist scholars who visited Tibet, it is clear that an extraordinary relationship was forged between Tibet and Chenre-zig. Notwithstanding the minor differences in our age-old traditions, if we look at things from a wider perspective, we will realise that Tibetan children can recite the six-syllable Buddhist mantra (Om Mani Padme Hun) without being taught to do so.

Tibetans are, by nature, very polite. Having a warm heart definitely makes a difference. Although they have the tendency to eat non-vegetarian food, they also have a rich tradition, which teaches them to have compassion even for a tiny insect like an ant. Earlier when Tibet was free, the country was endowed with rich traditions and values. Crimes, such as taking the life of a human being, were rare. It was very unsettling for people then to see such incidents.

Likewise, the country's long-held convention, which considered preservation of the environment sacred, prohibited any act of violence on wild life. Tibet's authorities also accorded legal protections to wildlife by issuing decrees, which prohibited the killing of wild animals. I know a few lamas who studied in various monasteries in Tibet. They fled the country in 1959 and since then have lived in exile in India. The lamas told me that when they returned to Tibet to see their relatives, they were shocked not to see the herds of wild animals that once moved freely in the plains

of Tibet without any danger.

What can we say about other things when taking the life of a person is considered “normal” in Tibet? Our “new friends” in Tibet have taught Tibetans many things, which produced terrible results in the overall conditions of Tibet.

In the west, people own cattle farms and fisheries. Thousands of their animals are later slaughtered for consumption. In Asia, large numbers of poultry farms have been set up. The birds in these farms are mercilessly culled, when they carry risk of deadly diseases like bird flu.

Also, in Tibet, the Chinese authorities have set up fisheries, pigsties and poultry farms. Their sole aim is to make profit or raise people’s income and wealth. Such development makes one very disturbed and sad. In short, we should never abandon the values and principles that have been passed on to us by our forefathers—values that espouse empathy and warm-heartedness. We need material development, as well as modern education. However, if we continue to become estranged from our ethical values and principles, then we will be plunged deeply into the ocean of suffering, because Tibetans will then start indulging in deceit, harassment and other immoral acts. At the moment, because of the Chinese restrictions, Tibetans are already torn apart by unbearable sufferings and fear.

With Tibet’s economy improving slightly, Tibetans have started taking an interest in material things, and retired officers have started demanding staff quarters. These demands are all justified. But some have developed a craving for jewellery and ornaments. I have noticed this on Lhasa Television and in some of the pictures from

Tibet. Some Tibetans, both men and women, have put on heavy necklaces made of gold, turquoise and amber. They also flaunt their wealth by putting on clothes trimmed with animal skins. If we think wisely, then we will realise that putting on such heavy ornaments and clothes adorned with animal skins is of no use. They are rather a huge burden on our bodies because of their enormous weight.

In the west, many people are against clothes made of animal skins. They launch campaigns, calling for a ban on such clothes. These campaigners are not Buddhists. Still they have compassion for these poor animals and fight for their protection. These acts are worthy of appreciation. In some areas of Tibet, people are compelled to use lambskin as robes to beat the bitter winter cold. Theirs is a different case. Otherwise, it is an act of absurdity to show off one's wealth by wearing clothes trimmed with animal skins and heavy ornaments, which are basically unnecessary and also expensive. Such practice will also leave a bad impression on the minds of other people. If you think deeply, it becomes apparent that such acts display nothing but stupidity.

Instead, you should develop an interest in education, which are of two kinds: modern as well as traditional Tibetan education based on the principles of love and compassion bequeathed to us by our ancestors. If you truly want honour and self-esteem for yourselves, these two kinds of education will help you achieve them. It is absurd to gain prestige by covering yourself in dress made of animal skins.

In most societies, it is usually the less educated people who wear ornaments and gaudy dresses. As far as Tibetans are concerned, we have a rich culture, which itself is a big honour for us. Instead

of paying attention to this honour, if you maintain an interest in jewellery and gaudy dress, then you will become a source of huge embarrassment.

Tibetans are making a huge mistake by taking an interest in such clothes and ornaments, thus squandering the little opportunity they have in pursuing education. Therefore, it is extremely important that along with bringing one's country to the path of development and prosperity, Tibetans must ensure that they avoid needless luxurious items and in particular acts that undermine the country's rich culture and traditions.

Translated from His Holiness the Dalai Lama's speech in Tibetan to newly arrived Tibetans from Tibet in Dharamsala during the Monlam teachings on March 18, 2005.

23. Mother Sentient Beings

I am very happy to be here with you all. I would like to thank the Wildlife Trust of India for their initiatives in wild life conservation. Till now we have been talking about human rights only. I think it would be good if we could expand that to include rights of other living beings as well. By doing that, we can show our concern about the rights of all sentient beings.

The world today is like one big family. As human beings living in this world, it is not enough to be concerned only about our food. We need a clean and beautiful environment as well. For that we need trees, lakes, animals, birds and other species. Just being concerned about our own food and shelter will deprive us much of the beauty that surrounds us, leaving us alone with no friends. There are so many things that make our own small world beautiful. For example, different animal species surviving in their natural habitats all contribute to making our world more beautiful. We must, therefore, show concern for all these things. We are, after all, human beings, not animals.

I think most of the animals live in a small area. So their main concern is food, shelter and security. Human nature is much more complex. Our life is much more sophisticated. We are not only concerned with food and shelter. We need a more beautiful environment to live in and to be comfortable with. Animals, birds, trees, etc. are like ornaments that further decorate our beautiful world.

I think that between the birds and animals in cages and those in wild forests, the latter appear much more beautiful. In cages, birds

and animals are denied freedom whereas those in the forest have freedom. We cherish their freedom. Therefore, if we wipe out the environment and the living creatures, because of our greed and lack of respect for them, then the lives of our future generation will be in jeopardy. So, it is in our own interest, as human beings, to preserve the environment and protect these animals.

Of course, all Buddhist teachings and traditions lay emphasis on the importance of Mahakaruna or Great Compassion. Therefore, people who believe in the rights of all sentient beings should also care for the rights of other sentient beings on this planet. As followers of the Bodhisattvayana School of Buddhism, we believe that all sentient beings have served us as our mothers at one point of time in our previous lives. In fact, we simply describe them as “mother sentient beings”. Therefore we must show respect to all forms of life in the same way we do to our own mother.

The introduction of Buddhism in Tibet has completely transformed the Tibetan way of life. Prior to this, Tibetans perhaps were performing rituals involving animal sacrifice. Even today, in the name of worshipping local deities, such rituals are performed in some of the remote areas of Tibet. However, generally speaking Tibetans are a peaceful and compassionate people, although there are many of them, including myself, who are non-vegetarians.

My own story goes like this: When I turned 65, I gave up nonvegetarian food. But after two years, my health started deteriorating. This compelled me to consume some meat again. Nevertheless, right from the beginning, from the time when I was in Tibet, I worked very hard to promote vegetarianism in Tibetan

society. In the late 1940s, all the food served during Tibet's official festivals used to be vegetarian. In India most of the prominent Tibetan monastic institutions have now started serving vegetarian food to their monks.

The Buddha's message of *Mahakaruna* has been deeply ingrained in our way of life for more than thousand years. When Tibet was free, the Gaden Phodrang government issued a decree, prohibiting the killing of wild animals, except wolves and rats. Rats and wolves were not covered by this decree, obviously for pragmatic reasons, because these two animals were anathema to Tibetan farmers and nomads—rats destroyed crops and wolves hunted livestock.

In Tibet, before the Chinese occupation, areas near lakes controlled by the Tibetan government had a rich bird life. The government assigned and paid people to safeguard these birds and their eggs. Environmental protection in those days was not spurred by the kind of preservation awareness we have today. It was rather influenced by the Buddha's teaching of safeguarding the life of all living beings.

Traditions and cultures have generally evolved in two different ways. There are some that have evolved in the context of social and economic milieus. Such traditions, cultures and way of life undergo changes when the socio-economic contexts in which they have evolved changes. There is no need to make any effort to preserve them. However, there are other kinds of traditions and values—values that attach importance to compassion and respect to all forms of life. Such traditions and values need to be cultivated and strengthened.

In our daily life, we do realise that a compassionate heart leads to a peaceful mind. Compassion is also the driving force behind

a good heart, good sleep, and a better digestion. In other words compassion brings about a happy life. Therefore, these traditions are very important and beneficial for mankind. We should make every possible effort to preserve them.

Applying external force, like our Chinese brothers do to us, is inhuman. We have intellect. Through this we can figure out what is positive and negative for us. This in turn leads us to conviction and then to positive acts.

In the exile Tibetan community, and also in Tibet, there is a lack of comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the Buddha's real message. In the exile Tibetan community, this is due to the negligence and inadequate learning of Dharma. As time passes by, more and more young Tibetans, and even some older ones, are slowly but surely becoming estranged from these deeper inner values of Buddhism. I think this is nothing but self-destruction. It is extremely shameful. In Tibet, due to the presence of large number of Chinese, there are many obstacles and difficulties in preserving our values and traditions. But in exile, we are in a free country. Despite this, our traditions and values are eroded due to our negligence and carelessness. This is indeed very sad. We have to make sure that we preserve these rich traditions and values. This is not just for the sake of preserving the Tibetan culture itself, but for our own personal interest as well.

If we carry out scientific research on the brains of Tibetans with deeper inner values and those who are just armed with modern education, it will reveal a huge difference in the mental attitude of these two different peoples. We will come to know that the former

enjoys a far better mental tranquillity than the latter.

In Tibet we had a generation that had deep knowledge of our culture and Buddhist teachings. That generation, with the exception of a handful, was wiped out in the late 1950s and early 1960s. And now due to a lack of teachers, and also due to strict control and restrictions in Tibet, it is difficult to revive and preserve Tibetan culture and Buddhist teachings. Still there are some Tibetans who show a keen interest in preserving our Buddhist culture. This is not because they have gained deeper understanding of Buddhism, but because of their nationalistic feelings of being Tibetan. However, this is not the proper way to preserve it. The only appropriate way in which we can preserve Tibetan Buddhist culture is by having a genuine awareness of its value and significance. Only by realising that preservation of these values is in our own interest, can we develop genuine interest and appreciation for our culture.

We should not be content in promoting the spiritual and political cause of Tibet, which needs to be carried out from generation to generation. In terms of our own personal spiritual development, we need to continue our efforts from this to the next life.

However, in matters of making money and gaining material things, people tend to stretch their limits, even making endless sacrifices.

Such limitless pursuit of materials things, eventually, causes unwanted and unexpected problems. In Tibet, some people are very keen to put on clothes adorned with animal skins, even decorating themselves with expensive jewellery. Some Khampas (Tibetans from eastern Tibet) love to put on hats made of fox fur, with the sort of tail hanging loosely from their hats. Wearing such clothes is an

act of absurdity. If your economic condition improves, you must use the money for education, to sharpen your brain, to further generate warmheartedness towards others. Using money for ornaments and jewellery for external show but lacking intellect is a shallow practice. Tibetans should always keep in mind that we are going through a difficult period. We must stop making fools of ourselves. Time is running out for us.

Recently I heard news about a few Tibetans involved in animal skin trades. Driven by human greed and lack of moral obligations, such illegal activities are against the essence of Dharma and traditional Tibetan values. Therefore, this type of conference we are having here today, is very useful for educating our people and highlighting the importance of respect for all forms of life. We should conduct our daily lives according to these principles. That is very important.

I feel a great deal of satisfaction and appreciation to all of you for having organised this kind of conference. Recently, I came across some Chinese from Mainland China, who were dedicated to wildlife conservation. I also received a book, with pictures of animals being slaughtered in Tibet, probably for their skins and bones. I showed the book to the Chinese and posed the idea that instead of eliminating these animals for money, why not save them to create tourist hotspots. In doing so, I said, they would earn more money in the long run. The sad situation also remains a bit similar throughout the Himalayan ranges, from Ladakh to Sikkim to Tawang. So, the preservation of the Himalayan areas is the need of the hour.

I would also like to make a simple suggestion. I have made this suggestion on a few occasions when I visited Ladakh. I will make

this suggestion again, though I am a bit hesitant to do it. Nowadays people are setting up poultry farms. Although I never saw pigsties, I did see fisheries and rabbit farms somewhere in Kullu and Manali. These farms might generate profits for you, but generally as a Buddhist, who respects all forms of life, you would do well to quit this profession. Of course, it is a different case if you cannot survive without this profession. Otherwise, I would suggest you to look for an alternative source of livelihood.

During my journey from Dharamsala to Pathankot, I noticed many restaurants that kept birds in cages. Watching them suffering in those cages, I felt very sad. I was helpless. I could not buy them, as I do not have enough space to accommodate all those birds. The only thing I could do for them was to say some prayers.

In India vegetarian food is extremely delicious; even more delicious than Chinese vegetarian dishes, which are often prepared with fake meat. On one occasion during my visit to America, a Vietnamese organisation invited me to give teachings on the Buddha Dharma. The lunch they served me looked something like pork and fish. But I realised, with the help of someone, that they were serving me fake meat. The vegetarian food that is served in India is not fake, but genuine. It also tastes good, though it is a bit too oily sometimes. We should therefore make every possible effort to promote vegetarianism in the Tibetan community and also in other Buddhist communities such as in Ladakh.

Transcript of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's speech during the Tibetan Wildlife Conservation Awareness Programme, organised by the Wildlife Trust of India, New Delhi, on April 6, 2005.

24. Be a Vegetarian

My greetings and Tashi Deleg to all of you. Once again, I am here in Delhi. It has been a long time since I came across new arrivals from Tibet. It has been almost three weeks since I left Dharamsala. I will soon leave for Ladakh and then for America. I will not be in Dharamshala for the next few weeks. I know that new arrivals from Tibet do not have a few weeks to wait for me. They are likely to face problems, being in a new place. Since it is difficult for you to come to meet me at my hotel, I came here to see all of you, especially the new arrivals from Tibet. I am also glad to see a few local Tibetan residents of Delhi here.

An important thing I would like to tell you all is that I have heard of Tibetans in Tibet wearing expensive ornaments. I have seen videos of Tibetans wearing ornaments made of turquoise, coral and amber. Wearing such expensive ornaments does not serve any purpose. Tibetans do not even look good covered in such expensive ornaments. In the regions of Amdo and Kham, people frequently use skins of tiger, leopard and otter to adorn their garments. This is very unfortunate. Because of the surge in the use of tiger and leopard skins in Tibet, some Tibetans in India are involved in crimes, such as killing tigers and selling their skins in Tibet. This brings the whole Tibetan community into disrepute.

A few months ago, a newspaper in Mysore ran an article that described Tibetans indulging in animal skin trades. These Tibetans bring disgrace to the whole community. Now restrictions have been placed on Tibetans in India. Having so much interest in such worldly

things as ornaments and jewellery is of no use. We cannot do much about nomads using lambskin. They have been used to using it for so long. For them it is a matter of survival since they live in harsh and inhospitable regions of Tibet where the weather is extremely cold during winter. Otherwise, having so much passion for wearing ornaments and animal skins for the sole purpose of flaunting one's wealth is inappropriate.

Although Tibet is the land where Buddhism flourished, the nomads had to live on meat as they have no other choice since the supply of vegetables and even tsampa (roasted barley flour) was limited in their regions. Now the situation has changed. Vegetables are found in nomadic regions of Tibet. They are also good for health. During audiences, so many people take vows from me to quit smoking and meat consumption. This is commendable. It would also be good if you could at least reduce your meat consumption.

I am often told by Tibetans arriving from Tibet that the Potala Palace is now surrounded by meat shops and that blood stains of animals can be seen everywhere around the palace. Snakes and fish are being slaughtered for consumption. In the past such things were unheard of in Tibet. Hunting wildlife and fishing was not allowed then. Tibetans who went fishing were looked down upon, except for those near the areas of Yamdrok Lake.

Since the Chinese invasion of Tibet, Tibetans have started eating all kinds of meat. I met a monk from Kham, who told me about how people sold fish in front of the Potala Palace. With tears rolling down his cheek, he narrated to me the following incident: "There was a man selling fish in front of the Potala Palace. He kept his fish,

alive and kicking, in a tin box. As one Tibetan customer arrived, the man pulled a fish out of the tin box and pressed its eye to the nail affixed to the wooden board, just in front of him. The man then cut open the body of the fish with a razor-sharp knife to remove its waste, and then sold it.” He further told me that Tibetans have now learnt such evil practices and requested me to advise Tibetans to refrain from engaging in them.

Less meat consumption means good health. I knew a monk in America who often consumed meat, as well as lots of cream. All of a sudden he succumbed to death from a heart attack. This example is a profound lesson that we should take care of our diets. Despite its purported good taste, too much fat is harmful to our health. Here in India, campaigns are in full swing to promote vegetarianism amongst the Tibetan community. This is indeed commendable.

In Vinaya, eating meat is not prohibited. But in other Mahayana sutras, it is strictly forbidden. Chinese Mahayana followers have shown a deep interest in vegetarianism. Tibetans are known for eating meat. I know they are used to it. Some Tibetans complain about dizziness and nausea when they stop eating meat. Such cases are understandable. Otherwise, it would be good for Tibetans if they stopped consuming meat.

In big cities, lots of animals are already being slaughtered for meat. It would be good if this was gradually reduced. I do not think consumption of meat by a few Tibetans has any direct effect on the surge in the slaughter of animals. It still remains to be seen whether we can justify consuming meat, based on the Buddhist concept of *sNang Sum Dapai Sha*, which declares that the consumption of

meat is not sinful provided we meet three conditions: that we have not seen or heard of animals being slaughtered for us, nor suspect to have been slaughtered for us.

Nevertheless, it is less sinful if you say some prayers before consuming meat of animals already slaughtered for somebody else. According to the Buddhist scholar, Acharya Lekden, consumption of the meat of an already dead animal is not sinful. He justified this by putting forward the argument that by the time the meat is consumed, the harm has already been done to the animal.

Despite this, we must make every possible effort to promote vegetarianism amongst Tibetans. I am thankful to those who have made such initiatives here in India. It would be far better if more such campaigns were organised in the future.

Translated from His Holiness the Dalai Lama's speech in Tibetan to newly arrived Tibetans from Tibet in Delhi, on August 16, 2005.

25. Stop Wearing Animal Skins

Lately, I have seen pictures of Tibetans wearing expensive ornaments and animal skins during festivals and formal gatherings in Tibet. Honestly speaking I was very much embarrassed when I saw them. I wondered how much knowledge those Tibetans possessed within themselves. Indeed if they did then they could be referred to as smart fellows, both from within and outside. Otherwise, they would only embarrass themselves by such an outward show of expensive ornaments and animal skin.

Tibetans should focus on developing inner wisdom. Whether they pursue religious or secular ends, they should be equipped with education. Wearing animal skins and heavy ornaments also puts an enormous burden on their bodies. They are also of no use in enhancing one's physical wellbeing.

I also saw a picture, showing a Tibetan with a huge ring on his finger. I wondered if he could move that finger freely. Surely, that Tibetan faces immense difficulty using his finger to prepare pak (roasted barley flour mixed with tea)—the staple diet of Tibet. Such acts indicate backwardness. They could become a laughing stock even for people with little intellect. We Tibetans are a sensible people and have a rich civilisation. We must build a reputation for ourselves by showing feats of excellence in both the traditional and modern fields of education. Otherwise, we are only ridiculing ourselves by flaunting outfits adorned with animal skins and expensive ornaments.

I have heard that wearing heavy ornaments and animal skins during festivals and gatherings has become a sort of fashion in Tibet.

Because of this trend, I have heard of poor Tibetans having to borrow money to buy such clothes and ornaments. This is indeed very unfortunate. I therefore call upon Tibetans to avoid such stupid acts.

Similarly, our reputation is being tarnished by news of a few Tibetans involved in the animal skin trade. This illegal activity is spurred by the increasing fascination and demand amongst Tibetans in Tibet for animal skin. We have also come to know that lately the Chinese government has shown some interest in protecting the environment. Towards this end, they have even enforced strict restrictions on the killing of wild animals. This is commendable and needs to be acknowledged. During such times, we Tibetans should not become careless about these issues.

Translated from His Holiness the Dalai Lama's speech in Tibetan during the 45th anniversary of the founding of Tibetan Children's Village, Dharamshala on October 23, 2005.

26. True Wealth is Having a Peaceful and Calm Mind

Dharma literally means transformation of the human mind. It does not matter whether or not one believes in the afterlife. But at least in this life, the less disturbed one's mind is, the more happiness one will gain. If we could make a little positive change to our minds, we would not only become better human beings but also bring more happiness to our society. As long as human society enjoys peace and tranquillity, animals around us will feel less threatened.

Tibetans should stop hunting wild animals. As soon as we give up wearing clothes trimmed with animal fur, there will be less violence against animals. Throughout the world, fish are caught in very large numbers. Unbridled human greed has spurred the number of fisheries, poultry farms and pigsties around the world. Of late, these hapless creatures have been slaughtered for carrying deadly diseases such as mad cow disease and bird flu.

In the old days, Tibet had an abundance of wildlife. Animals such as kiang (wild ass), tsoe (Tibetan antelope), gowa (Tibetan gazelle), naa (blue sheep), drong (wild yak) could be found in large numbers. Over the decades, however, many of these animals have been hunted. As a result, some of them have now become extinct. Recently, there has been a surge in environmental awareness amongst the people. The Chinese government has also developed an interest in this issue. This is encouraging.

Despite this, trading in meat has also rapidly increased in Tibet, especially in nomadic areas. Animals like naa (blue sheep), punag (refers to male and female yaks), sheep and goats are being traded

in markets. It is our ignorance, greed and lack of compassion, which leads to the slaughter of such large numbers of animals. The existence of birds and animals enhances the beauty of our natural surroundings. Moreover, our survival, as environmentalists say, depends upon the environment. Things were different when our world had a much smaller population. However, in today's world of booming population, negligence of the environment is tantamount to deliberate destruction of our own homes. Flowers, plants and trees make our environment clean and beautiful. It is very sad if these are destroyed for commercial purposes.

Some insensitive Tibetans in Tibet wear outfits adorned with tiger, leopard and otter skins. It appears that guardian deities of Tibet decorated with such outfits are influencing them. They imitate the clothes worn by these deities, without even having an iota of knowledge about them. Such behaviour, indeed, makes every one of us feel embarrassed.

Many Tibetans are also fond of flaunting their wealth by wearing heavy gold rings on their fingers. Such rings studded with precious stones are very popular in Tibet. Some even wears such enormous rings that it is difficult for them to move their fingers. Their fingers appear as if they are injured and plastered with bandages. Mother Nature has gifted us fingers in such a way that we can move them freely. So it is better to keep them as they are. I sometimes joke with Tibetans putting on such rings that since they cannot move their fingers freely, they will have difficulties preparing pak (roasted barley flour mixed with tea)—the staple food of Tibet.

These days in India, we Tibetans are not considered to be humble.

Almost 46 years have passed since we came into exile in India. To date we have built a good reputation for ourselves. However, of late, a few individuals involved in illegal activities such as murder, smuggling and trading in animal skins have brought disgrace to the whole Tibetan community. Our community has made progress in the field of education. We have made improvements in our economic conditions also. But instead of being contented with our lives and becoming better human beings, we seem to be becoming worse. If this trend continues, then imagine what sort of a future we will create for our people! I am just an individual, which is not a big deal. However, Tibet's responsibilities rest on my shoulders. Tibetans indulging in illegal activities at a time when I am getting old makes me feel as if it does not matter whether I remain alive or not.

Until now I have done my best. I have maintained hope in everyone. I also pray for unity amongst Tibetans in and outside of Tibet as that will surely bring about some positive results for the Tibetan cause.

I am not sure where I will be in my next life. But I also feel that it is not worth remaining in this life, due to a few Tibetans who continue to bring the whole community into disrepute. I do not make any ideal claim of what I have done for the Tibetan cause. We Tibetans need to be very careful of ourselves. These days we are flooded with news of Tibetans indulging in illegal activities. Stories of Tibetans involved in animal skin trade are often published in the leading newspapers of India. In exile, we have been concentrating all of our efforts into reversing such trends. We are calling for a ban on killing wild animals. We also appeal to the people to invoke compassion for animals. Even campaigns promoting vegetarianism have been launched in the

communities. Most of our monastic institutions have stopped serving meat in their kitchens. Campaigns against trading in animal skins are also in full swing. I really appreciate these campaigns.

I have emphasised this so many times before. I once again emphasise to all of you, particularly those from Tibet, that flaunting clothes trimmed with animal skins is nothing but an act of stupidity—a source of embarrassment to you and your fellow Tibetans.

True wealth is having education and knowledge of Dharma. True wealth is having a peaceful and calm mind. It is fine if you invite the wrathful deities to earth by wearing such clothes and expensive jewellery. Otherwise, it is nothing but an act of stupidity. Make sure all of you pass on this message to your fellow Tibetans when you return to Tibet after the teachings. Tell them that the Dalai Lama is embarrassed and ashamed of Tibetans wearing clothes made of animal skins.

We should realise that sometimes it is the local Chinese leaders who are deliberately urging Tibetans to put on their “best and finest” clothes during festivals. Unfortunately some innocent and silly Tibetans seem to follow the urgings of these Chinese, and thus show up with clothes trimmed with animal skins and expensive jewellery. I have also seen some pictures from Tibet, in which Tibetans wear animal skins and heavy jewellery around their necks. They look awful in those pictures. Such pictures reflect nothing but how stupid and silly Tibetans really are. Therefore, all Tibetans should be careful of such things in future.

Translated from His Holiness the Dalai Lama's speech in Tibetan during the Kalachakra Initiation held in Amravati, South India, on January 9, 2006.

PART - II

His Holiness the 14th

Dalai Lama
on
Environment

Collected Statements
2007-2017

1. Science, Spirituality and Environment

Throughout this book, I hope I have made the case that one can take science seriously and accept the validity of its empirical findings without subscribing to scientific materialism. I have argued for the need for and possibility of a world view grounded in science, yet one that does not deny the richness of human nature and the validity of modes of knowing other than the scientific. I say this because I believe strongly that there is an intimate connection between one's conceptual understanding of the world, one's vision of human existence and its potential, and the ethical values that guide one's behavior. How we view ourselves and the world around us cannot help but affect our attitudes and our relations with our fellow beings and the world we live in. This is in essence a question of ethics.

Scientists have a special responsibility, a moral responsibility, for ensuring that science serves the interests of humanity in the best possible way. What they do in their specific disciplines has the power to affect the lives of all of us. For whatever historical reasons, scientists have come to enjoy a much higher level of public trust than other professionals. It is true, however, that this trust is no longer an absolute faith. There have been too many tragedies related either directly or indirectly to science and technology for the trust in science to remain unconditional. In my own lifetime, we need only think of Hiroshima, Chernobyl, Three Mile Island or Bhopal in terms of nuclear or chemical disasters, and of the degradation of the environment - including the depletion of the ozone layer - among ecological crises.

My plea is that we bring our spirituality, the full richness and simple wholesomeness of our basic human values, to bear upon the course of science and the direction of technology in human society. In essence, science and spirituality, though differing in their approaches, share the same end, which is the betterment of humanity. At its best, science is motivated by a quest for understanding to help lead us to greater flourishing and happiness. In Buddhist language, this kind of science can be described as wisdom grounded in and tempered by compassion. Similarly, spirituality is a human journey into our internal resources, with the aim of discovering how to live according to the highest possible idea. This too is the union of wisdom and compassion.

Since the emergence of modern science, humanity has lived through an experiment between spirituality and science as two important sources of knowledge and well-being. Sometimes the relationship has been a close one - a kind of friendship - while at other times it has been frosty, with many finding the two to be incompatible. Today, in the first decade of the twenty-first century, science and spirituality have the potential to be closer than ever, and to embark upon a collaborative endeavor that has far-reaching potential to help humanity meet challenges before us. We are all in this together. May each of us, as a member of the human family, respond to the moral obligation to make this collaboration possible? This is my heartfelt plea.

Excerpt from the book 'The Universe in a Single Atom', page 219-221, authored His Holiness the Dalai Lama, page, and first published in 2005

2. Importance of Tibet's Environment

I want to explain the very nature of the Tibetan Problem. Firstly, geographically, people call Tibet as the 'Roof of the World' and also 'Land of Snow'. As a result, many major rivers such as Mekong and Yellow Rivers flow from Tibet to countries like Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and China. So this vast Asian continent is covered by these big rivers and their original source comes from Tibet. Therefore, one aspect of Tibetan issue is the preservation and protection of environment.

As a result of large scale deforestation since 60's, there are unprecedented floods in China proper as well as in Bangladesh and India. According to experts, these unusual floods have connection with the large scale of deforestation inside Tibet. Fortunately, since sometimes back, Chinese Central Government took some restrictions, however, through corruptions and through connections, some Chinese who simply think about making money found ways and means to still carry some means to cutting trees.

Then, about exploring minerals and major resources, of course it is worthwhile to use natural resources but there should be careful planning without damaging the environment. But that's lacking. So one aspect of Tibetan issue is 'environment issue' which is not a concern for only 6 million Tibetan people but I think for the whole northern India. I think their life is very much depended on these major rivers. There are already facing scarcity of water, as well in china proper. Therefore, concerning about environment issue of Tibet is very much connected to millions of people in that continent.

Of course you Australians have no relevance about Tibet Rivers, you are completely independent. But you have your own problems. Lot of drought or something like that, isn't it? So regarding global warming, while no force can stop it, but with that situation, we need to pay very special attention and special care about that environment of that part of the world.

Transcript of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's speech on 'The importance of Tibet's Environment', hosted by Australia Tibet Council (ATC), Australia in June 2007

3. Speech by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama at the U.S. Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony

President Bush, Speaker Pelosi, Senator Byrd, my fellow Laureate Elie Wiesel, Honorable Members of Congress, Brothers and Sisters.

It is a great honor for me to receive the Congressional Gold Medal. This recognition will bring tremendous joy and encouragement to the Tibetan people, for whom I have a special responsibility. Their welfare is my constant motivation and I always consider myself as their free spokesperson. I believe that this award also sends a powerful message to those many individuals who are dedicated to promoting peace, understanding and harmony

With respect to my own homeland Tibet, today many people, both from inside and outside, feel deeply concerned about the

consequences of the rapid changes taking place. Every year, the Chinese population inside Tibet is increasing at an alarming rate. And, if we are to judge by the example of the population of Lhasa, there is a real danger that the Tibetans will be reduced to an insignificant minority in their own homeland. This rapid increase in population is also posing serious threat to Tibet's fragile environment. Being the source of many of Asia's great rivers, any substantial disturbance in Tibet's ecology will impact the lives of hundreds of millions. Furthermore, being situated between India and China, the peaceful resolution of the Tibet problem also has important implications for lasting peace and friendly relation between these two great neighbors.

Part from Transcript of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's speech during the US Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony, White House, Washington, United States, on October 17, 2007

4. Earth Day Reflections

Today the theme of the talk is 'the Sustainability issues' on the eve of Earth Day. Environment issues, I think that is - for me also a new thing. When we were in Tibet, because of climate condition - for example, water is always pure. When we came outside, people say that water is polluted and you cannot drink it; I was little bit surprised. Then eventually, as a result of meeting with some scientist and experts, I then realized environment issues are so important based on two reasons.

First, taking care of our planet, our environment is something like taking care of our own home. If someone, burn their own furniture in order to get warmth/heat is foolish. Similarly, without consideration about environment issues and simply utilizing natural resources in maximum ways-including trees and waters - these things are something like that of burning your own furniture of your own house. So we have the responsibility to take care of our own environment since this is our only home.

The other day I mentioned that the moon; people through ancient time - dark sky in night - it is something like a source of inspiration; it is beautiful and often taken inspirations by poets. But moon is not some kind of reservation for our next home - if something happens here, and even though we can go there easily, settling there is impossible. Moon is something like, 'leave it there, look and enjoy it'. If we really have to go there and settle, it is impossible. So this blue planet is our only home.

Also because of the population - in ancient time, I think there is limited number of may be 1 billion or 2 billion human beings. It is okay. Just consuming and utilizing natural resources in maximum way is alright but now there are over 6 billion human beings and also the life style is becoming more sophisticated. So therefore, many years ago, I think in England-while meeting some experts on natural resources - they told me that the present number of population was then near 6 billion.

If the living standard of the underdeveloped country, the poorer countries raises up to the living standard which the northern world enjoys, then it is a big question whether natural resources will

sustain or not. Now there are over 6 billion human beings already, so this is serious matter. Then basically, I always feel - particularly from the Buddhist view point - that each individual human life is very precious but now the question is not just about one precious life's concern but the entire 6 billion precious lives. That's the concern, and so therefore, I think it is a serious matter and we should think seriously.

Then the second point is the environment issues. When we see violence, bloodshed in television it immediately strikes our mind and so the feeling of the importance of non-violence immediately comes. But then the environment issues are not like that; it is something invisible, gradually becoming worse year by year and then eventually when you actually get the feeling of some difficulties in eye, difficulties in breathing and certain new illness occurs, then maybe it is too late. Therefore, we need special attention, particularly on education- the importance of the awareness of the environment.

Then non-violent method- of course that also should be essential part of our life but particularly taking care with a sense of responsibility about environment should be part of our life; our daily life including using like electricity and water. The other day, I also mentioned that from my own side (may be silly contribution) I never took bath in a bathtub since few decades but due to some skin problems many years ago I do this, otherwise I use only shower. I say that is a small contribution from my part to the conservation of water. Then every time while leaving hotel room, I always put out the light. So these become habit and are small way of making contribution.

Now in terms of Global warming some factor may be beyond our control but according to experts certainly some of our human behavior makes contribution to Global Warming. The amount of melting ice in the North and South Pole is really very serious and is really threatening. I think many big cities like Calcutta, or Shanghai or Tokyo may one day submerge. At least, Dharamsala, my place in India on the Himalayan foot has no danger and it's quite safe. (Laughs!) So that is really a serious matter and when we really think carefully now, there is a possibility that things can change if we take care.

I think more than 20-30 years ago when once I was in Stockholm, my friend told me that about 10 years ago the river in the center of Stockholm city had no fish because of pollution due to some factories around. But then for last 10 years these factories took special measures - may be bit expensive - but took special measures to reduce environmental effects. After 10 years, some fish began to appear now. It made differences, our effort made differences. Therefore, I think regarding environment issues, firstly it is important to educate and make awareness, and then introduce responsibility upon each of us and that should become part of our daily life. Then it will really make some affect.

Also one time in Germany, I was sort of visiting one big factory and the concerned people explained certain equipments that they use specially for recycling. There were also measures built into the system that would decrease the pollution. So I think there are technology and method to reduce these effects. So that part about ecology is now perhaps completed.

Thank you very much. I want to express - organizers and this university, I very much appreciate. Then to the audience, if you find some point which you feel worthwhile to think more or implement, then think more, experiment, further investigate and then implement. And then those audience who feel not much of interest, then forget it. No problem. Laughs!!! Thank you and good night.

Question and Answer

Question: What is your advice to help us maintain the hope given the magnitude of the challenge?

Dalai Lama: I think overall, I believe the world, including environment - within the 20th century, some positive development took place. We can see big differences between early part of the 20th century and the later part of the 20th century. Now for example, environment issues; in early part of the 20th century, I think that nobody has concern about environment but during the later part of the 20th century, the environment issues became very significant. Even there are political parties like green party in many countries: 'Is there any green party in America? If there is any green party then I want to join.' So I think awareness about the environment issues is much greater and much increased. This itself is a source of encouragement and a source of hope, so please continue to work in this field and make more people know about it.

Educate more people through media, through newspaper and through seminar talks. I think that is important particularly in educational institutions. As I mentioned earlier, from kindergarten, the new generation should be educated about the concept of dialogue,

concept of sense of responsibility to take care of environment; I think these things should become part of their life through education. I think that's important.

Question: Rich countries consume too many natural resources and the poor face tremendous suffering from unmet needs. Is the concept of what is sustainable different for Rich and poor nations in terms of Human sustainability, ecological sustainability or spiritual sustainability?

Dalai Lama: I think this issue brings one very serious issue. That is gap the between rich and poor at global level as well as national level. America is a very rich country, but within American community the number of billionaires is increasing, and the poorer sections of people are sometimes becoming poorer and I think many areas still remain poor.

One time in Washington at one party gathering, I mentioned that it is extremely important to look seriously at this gap. At that time, this very place is the richest country's capital Washington, but is surrounded by poor people. So this gap is not only morally wrong but practically it is also a source of problem. People from the poorer section sometimes get frustrated, then that frustration turns into anger and anger turns into violence. It is a big problem and then the richer families are also getting fear. So we have to address very seriously about how to reduce this gap.

The poorer section should work harder with self-confidence instead of self frustration and anger. I think training, education and work are important. Then the richer side should provide them education, training, equipment and opportunity. I think both the sides have the

responsibility to reduce this gap. Now on global level, Northerners have surplus of resources and to Southerners, especially in Africa and some other places, even basics necessities are not adequate. Same Human being, on the same planet, under the same rights but there is big gap. It is really very sad.

Now regarding sustainability, whether it is suitable for American or not, I really feel American lifestyles or those affluent countries or communities lifestyles need some practice of contentment. Because the other part of the world now obviously, China, India and some other Asian countries together make up almost a quarter of the human population. At least India and China together have more than 2 billion human beings. Then like American standard, if each person has one car, which means over two billion cars and that is difficult. Pollutions as well as natural resources, everything seems very difficult. So these unequal lifestyles also have to change, and the poorer section of the people's living standard must be raised.

Then as I mentioned earlier, natural resources are obviously not sufficient but there is possibility of clean energy or new energy resources through science and technology. Still look at China, utilizing coal immensely because they are poor. They have to utilize these but for long run it is very harmful. So they have to raise their living standard. This is really complicated.

Some time ago, I was in Japan and I mentioned that your lifestyle after the Second World War; 'each year and every decade your economy increased, so sooner or later one day you may find delimitations and it is better to prepare for that.' Then after few years, this situation happened exactly. Some Japanese company's

leaders even committed suicide. Like that, now in American there are also some difficulties with economy (recession). So it is better to know the limitation of the material development.

I think realistically speaking; as inner value is concerned there is no limitation, so it is better to have no contentment. External material development in any case there is limitation, so it is better to have contentment. But usually we just do the opposite. We are contended with spiritual inner development and do not care much about it, but we are never contended with external material values even though there is limitation. We always want more and more. So i think that some lifestyle have to change. But that is not my business. E cycling materials is very good. I think that new technology, new methods and new awareness nowadays are wonderful like recycling of materials is very good.

Question: Hundreds of millions of people live near the Himalayan Mountains and are dependent on the rivers fed by glaciers that are now disappearing. From your perspective, how can the people and government form these region resolve this crisis?

Dalai Lama: Many experts show some warning signal and the amount of melting glaciers which are quite rapidly increasing. And sometimes water levels in big rivers rise very high for certain period of time although it is usually low. Major rivers in Asian continent like the Sind, Ganges, Brahmaputra, Mekong and Yellow River cover almost whole Asia.

These rivers are the basis of lives of billions of human beings and so these are very important. These rivers major sources are from the Tibetan Plateau. For many years my Indian friends and experts are

really showing serious concerns for the special care of the ecology of Tibetan Plateau, including preservation of these forests.

Fortunately during the period of Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji, he gave some instructions to take special care about these forests. Since then there are efforts officially but unofficially sometimes through corruptions, carelessness is still happening. So that is true and very important to pay special attention about the preservation of resources of these waters.

Question: All over and other leaders assert that a shifting consciousness is needed on a global scale to solve the problem of Global Warming. What roles should formal religions play in this shift of consciousness?

Dalai Lama: I think at least among 6 billion human beings, they are quite big portion of religious believer and religious follower. So naturally, certain guidance from religious traditions is very helpful.

Once, one environmental organization sent some information about global warming to late pope through me. I brought those materials and put it in his front, and I briefly mentioned these things. So I think religious leaders or traditions naturally have certain potential to bring awareness.

As far as Buddhist's are concerned, I usually tell them that Buddha was born not in his palace but under a big tree, of course that is not his choice but his mother's choice. He got enlightenment not on rock, not on mountain, but on the bank of Ganges under one Bodhi tree. Then his death was not in a monastery but he lay down under a big tree. So this shows that Buddha have some special interest about ecology.

And also in Vinaya, they are certain sort of stories; Buddha told some group of monks that ‘you should take care of these plants and trees and when you leave, you should tell the next group of monk coming to your place about how to take care of these things.’ It’s been 2550 years since Buddha Shakyamuni, and now we can consider him as one of ancient ecologist.

Special Peter M. Wege Lecture, Delivered by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama at the University of Michigan, US, April 20, 2008

5. The Buddha in the Green Party!

If we think carefully about it, we come to the conclusion that if the Buddha Shakyamuni were to return among us and join a political party, it would be the Green Party! (Laughs) He would be an ecologist! (Laughs)

After all, the Buddha was not born in a paradise, but in a garden. When he became enlightened, it wasn’t in an office, a house, or a temple, but in the shade of a tree, the Bodhi Tree. And when he died, it was at the foot of two trees that the Buddha entered great nirvana.

Reprinted from the book, ‘The Dalai Lama, My Spiritual Autobiography’, Personal Reflections, Teachings and Talks collected by Sofia Stril-Rever. Teaching given in Sarnath, India, January 14, 2009

6. Ethics and Enlightened Leadership

I think the World is now experiencing some disturbances due to Global Economy and there is also some bad news about ecology. Some Chinese academicians describes three Poles; North Pole, South Pole and Third Pole, where Third Pole means the Tibetan Plateau. Because of high altitude the ecology of Tibetan Plateau is very unique, and it is as important as North and South Pole. Therefore, they describe Tibet as Third Pole.

Although these changes are part of nature, time will never stand still and it is always changing. I think from the evolution point of view, change is gradual; diverse species of mammals, and also birds, some insects and human beings also can adapt according to new change. But certain change, by certain I mean that if there are some dramatic changes within decades then it is really serious matter in terms of both ecological problems as well as economy problems.

Last year, on one occasion in Europe, when I met my friend who is Italian businessman, out of my curiosity, I asked him about economy. Sometimes people express that the market oriented economy is something beyond human -control-market forces they say - but the market economy itself is a human creation. So, I wondered that how something which is created by human seems beyond human control and asked him ‘what is that?’ Then I asked him ‘what are the causes of these economic crises?’ He answered that too much greed, speculating without knowing precisely, hypocrisy and lack of transparency are some of the causes of economic crisis.

Then in ecology, there are certain changes according to scientist

because of pollutions from factories and other harmful activities. So, that is also related with our behavior. These two serious problems; economy problem and ecology problem are rapidly changing and are both related to the actions of human being.

Transcript of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's speech on Ethics and Enlightened Leadership at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, organized by the Dalai Lama Center For Ethics and Transformative Values, MIT, United States, April 30, 2009

7. Talk during the River Ganges cleanup project

I really enjoyed all these speeches given by different speakers and the speeches are all very interesting. I really appreciate. Well, in my own case, I just want to make few points.

I think mainly for physical comfort, ecology is very important. Many parts of the world are really facing scarcity of water, for instance in Africa and many other places. Therefore taking care of ecology is very essential. This small planet is our only home.

To give you an example, moon looks beautiful in the night sky. I think throughout centuries, poets and writers referred the moon as beauty in their works. But if we really try to go and settle there on the moon, it must be horrible. There is no possibility to live there, whatsoever. So, this is our only home and we have to take care of it. We have the responsibility to think about our future generation's comfort. Therefore, the need for special care about ecology is very essential.

Now here the Himalaya, the Snow Mountains, glaciers and forests

are very important for the ecology of this continent. So, we need special care for the preservation of forest and water. When we talk about water and the river, of course, spiritually, something very sacred (River Ganges), anyways, several crores (10 Millions) of people's lives depend upon these waters or rivers. So we must take special care about these rivers.

Additionally, rivers that don't flow in India like river Mekong, Yellow river, also Sindhu river or something which goes into Pakistan; all these major rivers on which I think over billion people's lives depend. The ultimate source of these rivers is Tibet. According to the scientist, the rate of global warming at the Global average level is 0.1 (°C/Decade) but the rate of warming in Tibetan plateau is 0.3 (°C/Decade). Because of the dry climate and its high altitude, the rate of melting snows and ice are quite rapid.

Within my lifetime I noticed many changes. In earlier times, the mountains are filled with snow but now days the snows are much reduced. Moreover, people coming from or around the areas of Brahmaputra, flowing just beside Lhasa informed me that its water level have reduced very much. So these are serious matters.

Therefore, some Chinese ecologist has described Tibet as the 'Third pole', because the effect from global warming to Tibetan plateau is as much as to that of South Pole and North Pole. So, we really need special care. Chinese communist government, previously like that of Soviet Union, doesn't care about ecology. Now because of their own experience, they are showing some interest or some concern about ecology and I hope that they pay more serious attention further. This is our hope and our prayer.

As far as India, Indian thoughts like ahimsa, and India's religious harmony, as I mentioned yesterday, I think that these values have a great potential to help humanity, to build happy, harmonious, friendly, compassionate and nonviolent society. So India has great potential to help in the form of these ways.

In the meantime, there still are drawbacks within India. Poverty, ignorance, illiteracy and beside that some part of cultural heritage are actually out dated. In my view, we must realize these, recognize these things because time is changing and the world situation is also changing. Therefore, we have to pay more attention to these drawbacks or habits and try to change these things. And then we will be in a better position to offer to the rest of the world. These things are the ones I want to share. Thank you and that's all.

Transcript: H.H the Dalai Lama's talk on Environment at Rishikesh at the function of River Ganges cleanup project dated April 14, 2010.

8. Talks to new arrivals

About consumption of meat, individual consuming meat depends upon oneself, regarding health issues and all. It does not matter that much. But consuming meat in monastery is not good and I advice to eventually stopping it. In India, major monasteries as a whole are vegetarian, but individual consuming meat has their own freedom. In Tibet also, we should promote the same system.

Once upon a time, Shakar Choedup Rangdol when coming from Do-mey to U-tsang to visit Lhasa, he saw a mud slaughterhouse for

killing sheep in front of the big monastery of Drepung, and another in the north side of Lhasa in front of Ramoche. After seeing many animals killed in front of these big monasteries, he warned that he will report them to Gyalwa-yab-sey (supreme authority). These are in written folklore.

In earlier times in some nomadic areas, availability of even tsampa (roasted barley flour) is not guaranteed. Some nomads crush and power chura (Tibetan Dried Cheese) and eat them in place of tsampa. These cases are different since they have only meat to eat. But nowadays, vegetables and wheat are increasingly becoming available. Therefore, consuming meats, especially in Monasteries should stop, and should try best to promote vegetarianism. Additionally, those families sponsoring puja should try to sponsor vegetarian diets.

The three great Gelug monastic Universities (Gaden, Drepung and Sera) are completely vegetarian, but some individual monks do eat meat. We have to make an example. We Tibetan Buddhist seriously study and practice Mahayana, and practice compassion deeply but some outsiders without knowing about us, simply say that Tibetan monks eat meat. This kind of view generally comes. That's why, as a whole monastic body, we should try to become vegetarian, but some individuals eating meat does not matter. For instance, they are some Chinese monks who do not eat meat during gathering with other monks but they eat when they are alone. Therefore, when it comes to individuals, it does not matter much.

I also asked you guys not to drink chang (Tibetan Barley wine), and even if you drink, don't drink till you're drunk. Tsampa is very

good for health, you should eat tsampa. If majority of Tibetans eats tsampa more, then farmers will plant more barley crops. Therefore, this is very important.

I heard that due to forced settlement of Nomads nowadays into permanent houses built specially for them have lots of negative impacts on the environment. Many of Tibetan traditions, especially those of nomadic traditions from thousands of years are naturally very sustainable with environment. For example, Yak dung is used as fuel in cooking fire and it is also helpful for the enriching the nutrients of soils. Yaks hoof are useful for grasses as well. Then I heard a new thing about Yaks Protesting. Quite surprised after hearing it, I asked how Yaks protests? Yaks are used to migrating from place to place with the nomads, but when nomads are settled by Chinese government, Yaks can no longer go from place to place like they used to. Because of that they protest by not eating grass and they just lay down on the ground. (laughs!)

These are really important in terms of environment. Nomads who are settled in permanent houses first feel good and enjoy with some money in their pocket, but then after finishing their money and without knowing how to make money, they face lots of problems later. Unfortunately, we cannot do much against these Chinese policies. We have to be careful and be aware about these things.

When the nomadic areas are emptied by settling the nomads permanently, their place is mined. Once I met one nomad whose place is mined. He told me that locals aware of the harmful effects of mining notified the district authorities about it but they turn out

to be corrupted by Chinese businessman and so they refused to take actions. Then later they filed case against mining in court and they actually won the case. So politically it is a different thing, but regarding environment it can be reasoned and legally fought peacefully against mining. So, they are ways like this.

I saw one photo of a place near Lhasa, around Gyama County where they constructed a new factory. I was told that after construction of this new factory, many animals died in the nearby areas of that place. It was caused by the pollution of streams and water sources by poisonous chemicals released from the factory. Animals after drinking from these polluted water, many of them died. Cases like this happen in many areas. These cases, it should be reported to respective authorities with proper reason and proof. In some places actions are indeed taken by the authorities. Therefore, you should think thoroughly regarding these things.

Translated from His Holiness the Dalai Lama's speech in Tibetan to newly arrived Tibetans from Tibet in Delhi, in 2011.

9. Non-violence and Spiritual Values in Secular India

Now, I'm quite sure, more often that major disasters are caused because of the global warming. Then I think here in India and many parts of the world there is scarcity of water. That is also a very serious matter in America and in Africa of course. I want to share.

The major rivers, which cover almost whole Asia, their ultimate source is from Tibetan Plateau. Some Chinese environmentalist

described the Tibetan plateau as “the Third Pole”, i.e. South pole... north pole... because the effects of global warming... the Tibetan plateau is affected as much as the north and south pole. So he described the Tibetan plateau as the Third Pole.

So now, according to that Chinese scientist, he mentioned; the rate of warming on the global level is 0.1 and on Tibetan plateau is 0.3 (Centigrade/decade). So, since millions of Indians use water that comes from the Himalayan glaciers, you have certain right to show your concern about the ecology of that plateau.

Now that India is free country, I think you should express more serious concern. That’s I think is important. This has nothing to do with politics. Just it is everybody’s interest, including Chinese people and these Indonesian countries also. Also, the Mekong River comes from Tibet and the Yellow river also comes from Tibet. So that’s something very important. I want to share with the audience to think more and express your genuine concern for these things. Thank you!!

H.H Dalai Lama addresses the audience in New Delhi, India and encourages Indians to “show genuine concern” for their environment, particularly the issues of water scarcity and the warming of Tibetan Plateau, on April 3, 2011

10. Panel Discussion: The Global Impact of Climate Change

My own sort of story or experience is when we were in Tibet; we have no idea about the importance of environment or the pollutions. Everything is very clean, for example, when we travel long distance on a horse or sometimes on yak, and when we feel thirsty, when some river or some streams come by, we immediately drink from it without having any idea that if the water is polluted one that you cannot drink.

Then after I came to India, and when some people say that we cannot drink it, I am little bit surprised. Then gradually as a result of meeting with environmental scientist I really developed some kind of very specially interest and also realized that this is not just academic sort of subject, but this is a question of our life, our survival, not only individual but the entire planet. If something really goes wrong then the entire humanity and billions and billions of other species or mammals will be affected. So this is something very serious. I often express that this blue small planet is our only home. No other planet has been found; perhaps after sometime we may find some suitable planet and then we may immigrate if this planet really goes hopeless. (Laughs!) But that is also just a hope, difficult and not very sure. So therefore, the only thing is this our home and we have to take care of it.

And also another thing is, violence, bloodshed, war and also starvations, when we saw their pictures, we response immediately saying, ‘Ahhh! How bad, we have to do something’. Unlike them, the climate sort of this problem is invisible. Now in some big cities,

you need mask, and there is some irritation in eyes or some problems in lungs, especially to young children. It may then be too late, I only escape from that area and prefer some other area. So this climate sort of condition, environment problems are really very serious. So we have to develop serious concern about it through education and awareness. Here scientists like you (Richard Somerville and Veerabhadran Ramanathan) are truly a guru or teacher making clearer awareness and understanding about the importance of the environment, and your explanation on the basis of data is very convincing and is very important.

Still we are lacking full effective co-operation; this is the issue of humanity, not just this nation or that nation, but for the entire planet. So we need somewhat worldwide movement which is very essential, like that of Copenhagen Summit held in Denmark. Some nations give their own national interest more priority than global issue but that actually is short sightedness. No matter one individual country is big or great, it still is part of the world. Therefore, it is common interest of each individual nation and each individual person. So through awareness we have to educate; more precise and detailed explanation is very essential. You (Richard Somerville and Veerabhadran Ramanathan) have the ability to show clear instruction or guidance, where earlier you (Veerabhadran Ramanathan) mentioned that how we can immediately take measures of reducing the soot released in air. I visited the Ulan Bator, the Mongolian Capital for several times, which generally has cold climate. There, each family uses coal for fire and so there is very thick sort of smoke. And now they say that it is very dangerous from the health point of view, like that in China and also in India.

Then usually, my main effort is toward entire humanity because basically we are social animals, so each individual's future depends on the rest of the humanity. Particularly nowadays, not only nation to nation but also continent to continent are heavily interdependent. So the reality itself now really tells us that we need full cooperation. The cooperation under order is difficult, but cooperation based on clear realization that we are one or oneness of humanity, a sense of global responsibility. Once we develop that realization of oneness of humanity, then amongst us trust and respect will come. Without trust how one can develop friendship and without friendship how one can develop genuine meaningful cooperation. So ultimately, realize that several billion human beings are all same human being, and everyone has the right to walk out suffering.

So from each one individual should think, how I can make some contribution regarding better world, a better humanity. In order to develop that sort of attitude, if u keep extreme self-centered attitude and short sightedness, then don't bother about what is happening; just thinking about oneself is short sightedness. Actually we are part of world, so for our only interest, we have to take care of the rest of the world. Through education and through awareness, my own sort of part, I always try to promote some kind of sense of concern on the wellbeing of the rest of the humanity, and rest of the sentient being on this planet. Then for that, you need some sort of sense of oneness, of humanity and sense of global responsibility.

Questions from audience

Question: Jeff Sherman- Throughout civilizations history, we

have been at conflict: governments, religions, politics, business, even academia. Although conflict can spark creativity, it fails for problems requiring global cooperation. So how can societies shift perspectives from conflict driven to cooperation driven policies?

Dalai Lama: I think, for example, in the previous century during early part of 20th century, nobody talks about environment or the importance of environment. But through awareness and education, now awareness among people is much more increased. Now then in early part of 20th century, I think sense of coexistence is not there, but then after the Second World War, two blocs with nuclear weapon, to some extent nuclear weapon worked deterrence. So, coexistence is happened. Totally different system, different ideology, but share same planet and peace, therefore, live together.

I always admire the spirit of European Union. Previously, the member states of EU fought for their own sovereignty or these things. Then I think under the leadership of Adenauer (Konrad Adenauer) from then West Germany, and then I think Jean Monnet from France. I think that under main leadership of these two, the EU is developed. These are through awareness that the common economic interest is more important for long run than individual country. For example, look at German currency ‘deutschemark’, which is very strong, but they considered the common interest is more important than their national interest. I mean national interest is also important and related with that. So these are through education, awareness and thinking widely.

Now obviously, I think that sensible person will automatically raise question in their mind, ‘what is wrong with our existing way of life?’

There is prosperity and every year there is some development. Now recently, you are facing some problems, for instance, in Europe, euro crisis was quite serious and here in America also there was some problem. I think now economic condition has some improvement or improving, isn't it? So you simply sort of concerned about your big building, big house, big car and big salary and feel that it is the meaning of life. No, certainly not!! So, among my friends, some are quite rich, may be billionaires, but as an individual some are very unhappy person. Then the question of why they are unhappy comes. They have plenty of money and because of that money, got quite fame and lot of artificial friend too. Still the person fails to bring inner peace. Why?

So we must use human intelligence to bring questions, which I think is very important. We should not take everything for granted. Sometimes we think like we have everything and it goes continuously forever. I think that's a mistake. Time is changing, the reality is changing too and one factor is human population is increasing, which is very serious matter. So usually, I half-jokingly express that we need genuine non-violent birth control. That is I mean more monks, more nuns. (Laughs!)

Speech of His Holiness the Dalai Lama during the Panel Discussion about the 'Global Impact Of Climate Change', University of San Diego, CA, United States, April 18, 2012

11. Mind and Life XXIII: Ecology, Ethics and Interdependence

I hope that some state develops new life style. For example, Baltic States like Estonia! People are cycling in the early morning. NY, etc. always cars – this lifestyle is unrealistic. The poor people will uplift their living-standard at some point. They should have access to a good life style! Not an American lifestyle... Sustainable economy and equitable society in small states should be more.

We should think long-term! Example- Athletes also have to train in order to be good later! Also a monk would prefer to sleep and to relax instead of studying... we have to make sacrifices present interests in order to benefit the majority in the future.

Talking of Human rights – does have some implication that human beings have special rights, rights to use other animals for our benefit. That we cannot say! As far as right for a pleasant life or existence, all sentient beings have equal rights! One reason could be our intelligence – we should have more rights! Otherwise all beings have same rights!

Brief opinions by H.H in between the presentation given by experts, adapted from the Transcripts of Mind and Life XXIII, Residence of H.H the Dalai Lama, Dharamsala, April 29, 2012

12. Statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on Receiving the Templeton Prize

It is an honor for me to have been awarded the Templeton Prize. When I first heard of the Templeton Foundation's decision, I really felt it was in recognition of my small service to humanity, in promoting non-violence, respect and harmony among the world's different religious traditions, and encouraging greater understanding between modern science and Buddhist science.

On the one hand, I have totally dedicated my life to bringing about a closer understanding among our different religious traditions. On the other hand, in a world in which many of the problems we face are man-made, I have tried to encourage the finding of ways and means to solve these various problems strictly through non-violence and dialogue.

The twentieth century was a very important period in human history, a time when we made great developments, but it was also a century of great bloodshed. If the violence of the twentieth century had resulted in a better world, there might have been some justification for it. But that was not the case; the result of such immense violence was suffering. If we learnt from common sense and past experience, we should understand that whenever we face problems we need to tackle them in a non-violent way. I believe it is very important that we try to make this twenty-first century a century of dialogue. In addition to non-violence in our relations with each other, we also need to employ a much greater sense of non-violence in relation to the environment, because a healthy natural environment is essential

to the survival of life on our planet.

Another area of interest to me has been exploring the exchange of ideas between science and spirituality, particularly between such fields as neuroscience and Buddhist science. For nearly thirty years, I have engaged in dialogues with scientists, specialists in many fields, discussing not only what reality is, but the still more important question of how it may influence ethics and human values.

I am grateful too to the Templeton Foundation for inviting me here to London to receive the Prize and the opportunity to meet many old friends in this historic location.

THE DALAI LAMA

Dated: 14 May 2012

Reprinted from www.dalailama.com: Statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on receiving the Templeton Prize, awarded by the Templeton Foundation

13. Global Systems 2.0: Ethics, Economy and Environment

My own case- when we were in Tibet, we have no idea about the importance of ecology. I am always telling people that in Tibet you can drink water from everywhere. After I reached India and also after visiting some different countries, they say that ‘you cannot drink this water because it is polluted.’ After meeting some ecologist/environmentalist and scientist, I learned that this is a very serious matter.

When we see pictures from some areas in Africa and India of starvation and malnutrition, or violence such as war and bleeding, it immediately strikes in our mind. But the degenerating environment is not that kind of visible and it is invisibly worse. Once we actually experience some kind of difficulties like eyes or breathing problem, then it is too late. Therefore, after I learnt these things from experts, I realized that this is a very serious matter. So then, after decades I always point out that we have the responsibility to take care of our own planet. If something really serious happens, then there is no other planet to escape. This world is full of trouble or a house of trouble but this is our only home. Therefore, we have to take serious care of the world as our own room. If coal and some furniture are burned in your own room, then how will you feel? So, it’s like your own home and all these can be possible through giving education.

Again I think that we need more sense of concern for other human beings. For our children and grandchildren, we have the responsibility to think about their future and their life. Even animals really carefully think about their own youngster’s survival

and growth to some extent. We human beings have marvelous intelligence, so we have to use that brilliance and should have long term vision. I think everything is by giving education. Scientists should tell more about the environment issues and media people also should make clear presentation that the preservation of our environment is for our own interest. The protection of environment is not a matter of luxury but it is a question of our own survival. So everything is dependent on education.

Once an environmental organization in Hong Kong gave me one responsibility or mission; they gave me an old piece of document about environment. They wanted me to put it on the desk of H.H the Pope John Paul II. I did put it on his table, but I don't know whether he read it or not. So I think to some people, message from religious leaders may be more effective whereas for other kind of people, data from specialist or scientist are more convincing. So that is my view.

These are very much related to knowledge or wisdom, a realistic sort of look. And then usually we forget about the moral concern of the very being of others and we just think of 'me, me and me.' Almost sometimes people consider the whole 21st century as century of 'me'. I think we should educate people that we are social animals and we are part of that humanity, so each one of us has the moral responsibility to think more about others wellbeing for our own in-terest. These should not be done by just giving short lecture but a systematic way of education from kindergarten up to the university level is needed. Usually I call secular ethics should be educated right from the beginning, and then I think our intelligence will get

some kind of proper guidance. That's it. Thank you!!!

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's talk during panel discussion, Global Systems 2.0 titled 'Ethics, Economy and Environment', Massachusetts Institute of Technology, organized by the Dalai Lama Center For Ethics and Transformative Values, MIT, United States. October 15, 2012

14. Address of H.H the Dalai Lama at Special International TSG meeting

Dear brothers and sisters. I think that we Tibetans indeed carry some difficult job, struggle, entirely based on the principle of non-violence and compassion. We are actually passing through difficult period. In such period, you as a part of the international community came here to express your deep concerns and support. Therefore, 'thank you'. Then personally, I am speaking now as a citizen of Tibet or a simple Buddhist monk of Tibet. I am already retired from political responsibility, as you know, not only my own retirement, but also almost four centuries old tradition of the Dalai Lama institution. Eventually automatically, head of both temporal and spiritual, I now voluntarily, happily and proudly ended that kind of tradition. So I come here as just one simple ordinary Tibetan. Lobsang Sangay la, elected political leadership and Harvard educated, I always introduce him as my boss politically. In the meantime, there is no possibility of resigning from Dalai Lamaship, that's why I am still his spiritual leader.

Now the main reason for 'why i came here is - my respect to you

all'. I always consider our supporters are not pro-Tibetan but rather pro-justice and pro-non-violence. You are supporters who are actually standing firmly on the principle of non-violence. So it is my duty to pay my respect to you for coming here.

Firstly, I think that on global level, there are number of people or community who really experience difficulties, sometimes including violence. Now unfortunately, in many cases although their causes are just cause but they use violence and as a result, more negative consequences always happen. So like Tibetan struggle, the way of non-violence is simply carried right from the beginning. I consider these Tibetans who are self-burning certainly have the courage and determination to sacrifice their life. So they can easily harm other people but I think although these people practice a little bit of violence, in principle they still practice non-violence. Therefore, your support given to the Tibetan cause is sort of encouragement or moral support and also at the practical level support as much as you can. Such struggle carried strictly on non-violence basis should be succeeded or otherwise those others who are facing this similar kind of problem will say, 'oh!! - Non-Violence is useless, nothing can be achieved.' Sometimes people are more interested in violent movement, and they think those people who are trying and giving effort for mutually agreeable solution are weak. I think that is totally wrong. I always consider violence is a result of anger and anger comes from being weak inside. If you have more confidence and inner strength, then there is more chance for talk. If you have lack of self-confidence then usually rely on the use of gun.

Actually, non-violent struggle is the sign of inner strength. So in any way, on global level, I think such movement including Tibetan struggle, carried strictly through non-violent way should be succeeded. Already the number of Chinese brothers and sisters; since we strictly follow non-violent way and also trying to find mutually agreeable solution, lot of Chinese intellectuals, those Chinese who involve in democratic movement - many of them are expressing solidarity and now that number increasing. So therefore, as I think of global level, one should think.

Then about the Tibetan issue itself, whenever I talk or explain about Tibetan issue since many years, i always say that when people usually heard about Tibetan problem, it is about human rights violation or some other. But I feel Tibetan problem is about some different aspect.

One aspect is ecology. Lots of damage is done inside Tibet. Firstly, lot of deforestation and then secondly, exploiting natural resources extremely without caring about the impact on environment. Some of my Indian friends say that, because of high altitude and dry climate, once the ecology is damaged, it takes longer period to recover. So the Tibetan ecology is quite delicate.

Then geographically, people usually call Tibet 'Roof of the World'. It is true that when we look at the map, Tibet is highest. So naturally and basically cold climate, there are lot of snows. Then major rivers which cover from Pakistan up to china, their ultimate source comes from Tibet, Tibetan Himalayan Snow Mountains or Tibetan plateau. So these rivers flow in countries such as Pakistan, Northern India, Bangladesh, Burma and China itself. I think billion human

lives depend on these rivers. Now already there are clear signs that because of damage on environment including deforestation, the rivers sometimes create lot of flood and sometimes the water level basically reduce. Like the famous lake Kokonor, its water level is reduced according to many people. When i come from my place Kumbum to Lhasa, one day around 4'oclock I remember clearly walking on edge of the Kokonor lake. I also remember finding one dead fish there which is quite big. My age then is four year old. The lake is clean and blue. Now it seems that according to some people who visited this area, the water level of the lake is much reduced.

Once one Irish ecologist showed me one article wrote by one Chinese ecologist, who described Tibetan Plateau as Third Pole because the affect from Tibetan plateau to global warming is as much as South Pole and North Pole. Therefore, he described Tibetan plateau as Third Pole. Then the same article mentioned that the global warming rate in the rest of the world is 0.1centigrade/decade whereas in Tibetan plateau it is 0.3centigrad/decade. So the ecology of Tibet is something really important.

Look at former Soviet Union; they concentrated about big factories and heavy industries, and not much concerned about ecology. So negligence of that period still has some problem in Russian federation today. Tibet also, I think originally, many Chinese don't have much idea about importance of ecology or preservation of these ecology (Tibetan Ecology). But later I remember that during the Prime Minister Zhu Rongji's time, I heard him giving some instructions to protect environment of those delicate areas like stop deforestation or cutting trees. But then because of corruption,

local officials and some businessman through their corrupt way, I think that these instructions are not implemented fully. Then many Chinese companies are very hungry and greedy to exploit natural resources including water resources. So I think that ecology is one of the important aspects of Tibetan Issue.

Regarding the political issue, once mutual understanding is reached, within short period or within few weeks we can solve it easily but once ecological damage is done, then even political situation can't change it. So I think I feel more serious about it and therefore, our friends please think more on this aspect.

Second aspect is about Tibetan culture. Since, Buddhism reached Tibet and particularly the Buddhism with Nalanda's tradition; Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Buddhapalita and Asanga, all of whom are great Indian thinkers, philosophers and logicians. So Tibetan Buddhist tradition is mainly based on these traditions, including Pali tradition also, but mainly Sanskrit tradition. Before Buddhism reached Tibet, Bon is there. I think before Buddhism reached, Bonism, including medicine, and also there are different sort of knowledge already.

Anyway, Buddhism which we follow is not just prayers and some meditation, but I think lot of academic subjects. So it is quite clear that the unique Nalanda tradition uses human intelligence in a maximum way, through that way transforms our emotions but not through prayer or not of faith. Here Buddha himself made it very clear said that 'Oh my follower, you should not accept my teaching out of faith, but rather out of thorough investigation and experiment and research.'

So that way of approach is quite similar to scientific way of approach. I myself am a student of Nalanda tradition and for the

last 53 years I had many opportunities meeting and exchanging with Buddhist brothers and sisters from different Buddhist countries. Then it became quite clear that the Tibetan Buddhist tradition is quite sophisticated and there are lots of involvements of study as an academic subject, not just prayer.

In some Tibetan monastery, they spent whole day doing rituals without knowing the meaning. I think that is a waste of time and I am quite critical of that kind of practice. I think in last several centuries, some monasteries went like that way. I think that's quite backward and we should think more seriously and realistically. Sometimes, superstitions are also involved. But pure Nalanda tradition has no rule of superstitions and blind faith rather investigate everything.

Therefore, nowadays we have very serious sort of dialogue with modern scientist. They are neither Buddhist nor religious people, but when we talk, we have common attitude to carry investigation of what is reality. So far modern science and their investigation are mainly on matters which we can calculate and do measurement. Now in last few years, i think over one decade, the number of top Scientist, are now really showing interest about mind and emotion. The information is not only in Buddhist tradition, but also in ancient Hindu tradition. I think those traditions where practice of Shamatha and Vipasana is done; naturally explanation of mind is there. So only in ancient Indian sort of spiritual traditions there are more materials about mind and emotion, and about how to tackle these things. And particularly in Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism is quite sophisticated. So Buddhism, without question, is one important spiritual tradition of the world.

Then Buddhist culture, I usually make distinction between Buddhism and Buddhist culture. Buddhism is related with individual case, individual practice but Buddhist culture like Christianity and Christian culture, Islam and Islam culture are two different things. Faith is for individual and culture is related to society. One example is of Tibetan Muslims; for last three or four centuries, Muslims came from Ladakh and they settled in Tibet. So usually they are considered Tibetan Muslim and they also consider themselves as Tibetan Muslim. In fact, this summer when I visited Srinagar, where I met Tibetan Muslims. Even though they are practitioner of Islam, they kept Tibetan language very intact. When I met students of Tibetan Muslim, as a student, they speak Tibetan very well. That is how they kept in their family. So they are religiously Islam or Muslim, but as far as their culture is concerned, they are very much in the Tibetan Buddhist cultural atmosphere, so they love Tibetan language.

Sometimes Tibetan families in America and in some different countries, I was told that they speak more English in their home; the parents speak English because they want to help their children practice English language. In Srinagar, those Muslim Tibetans deliberately try to keep Tibetan language. But those Tibetan Buddhist families in some area don't care about Tibetan language. Muslim Tibetans they really carry serious and effective preservation of Tibetan language. Anyways, I always make distinction between Buddhist culture and Buddhist religion or faith. So Buddhist faith only for Buddhist, but Buddhist culture is related to community including like these Tibetan Muslim.

Therefore, to some extent I usually describe Tibetan Buddhist culture as culture of peace, culture of non-violence and compassion. So that is really worthwhile to preserve. I think that now the moral things, peaceful culture, truthful culture and compassionate culture is very much damaged in China. Therefore, I think in future millions of young Chinese also will get some benefit from the preservation of Tibetan Buddhist culture. Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhist culture, I think is directly linked to at least 13-14 million people; the whole Himalayan range, Mongolia, Bhutan, northern Nepal and at least three republics in Russian Federation (Kalmykia, Buryatia, and Tuva). They use to study Buddhism through Tibet and their prayers and chanting are also in Tibetan.

Therefore, preservation of Tibetan Buddhism is directly linked with interest of these people. And also I think that Buddhist Culture on global level may have potential to make some contribution for a better, happier and non-violent world. At different places and countries, I always talk about the importance inner peace and inner peace is entirely based on warm heartedness, irrespective of believer or non-believer. People are showing increasing interest in my talks about these, including scientist. Nothing special came from my mind, but from the Tibetan culture.

So therefore, I think preservation of Tibetan Buddhist culture, is not only for 6 million Tibetan people, but also for larger community. Therefore, preservation of Tibetan Buddhism and Buddhist culture is really important and really worthwhile to preserve. And I think we need some special effort because some of the narrow minded Chinese communist official mentioned in one party meeting that the

ultimate source of the danger of separation of Tibet from mainland China is Tibetan Buddhist faith. It's silly! Now I heard that in China proper, the Buddhist population is over 300 or 400 million. Then this should be also a source of threat. No! I don't think there is any threat. So therefore, we need some special effort. Some of the narrow minded officials, they deliberately try to minimize Tibetan culture and Tibetan Buddhist faith. Once serious damage is done, it will take again longer period to recover and then I think millions of Chinese Buddhist will feel regret. I really feel that way. Therefore, this is one aspect of Tibetan cause.

Then politically, also, Peoples Republic of China, and India, these two nations are most populated. India is most populated democratic country and the China most populated totalitarian system. That's a big difference but I think the whole world's trend is more openness, more democracy, more freedom and rule of law. So no matter how powerful PRC is, they have to go along with world trend. Perhaps, I think new leadership may realize that reality, as Deng Xiaoping stated 'seeking truth from fact'. I think the fact is like that and the world goes like that. They have to adapt to reality and adopt a policy on the basis of reality otherwise unrealistic sort of policy always fail to bring results. Therefore, good relations between China and India (Sino-Indian relation) should be based on mutual trust and genuine friendship. It is very important point in fact. I think both countries will directly have immense benefit and lots of money can be saved. For that reason, so long as Tibet issue remained same like this kind of situation; Chinese government is compelled to station large number of soldier that will automatically create suspicion in this country (India). So politically, I feel that Tibet issue is quite

important factor in order to develop genuine friendship between these Asian giants based on mutual trust.

So then these are the points I would like to mention to you. About the current situation of Tibet and for the basic aspects of solving Tibetan problem, you (elected political leadership –Lobsang Sangay) have already mentioned and I have nothing to add. So, politically whatever he says, I think in most cases I will say, ‘oh absolutely, right’. (Laughs!) May be I will agree with him 99.5% of the time but may be little disagreement sometimes which is ok. I always enjoy or use freedom of speech when we discuss sometimes, and previously with Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche- then although my position is semi-retired, sometimes while discussion; there is some disagreement little bit here and there but that is healthy sign. Now I have nothing to say. That’s all. Thank you!!!

Speech given by His Holiness the Dalai Lama during Special International Tibet Support Group Meeting at Upper Tibetan Children’s Village School Hall, Dharamsala, India. November 17, 2012

15. Caring for the Environment above Political Differences

Of course Global issues are very serious. In India, where I live, for the last 40 years (or more than), the climate pattern is changing. In early sixties, we used to have quite thick snowfall but decade by decade it’s becoming lesser and lesser. So in many parts of India, climate conditions are now changing, particularly in the last few years, there is big change. And European continent is also

experiencing weather change. According to scientist, this is due to global warming. So this is very serious matter.

Look at those big ices in North and South Pole, the amount of melting is also very serious. And Snow Mountains and Glaciers in Tibet are also rapidly melting. Basically, I am not an expert but I have serious concern about that.

I think the whole Galaxies and our Solar System is always moving. So in anyway, after few billions of years, our sun will also disappear and the whole world too. That's the end, isn't it? From that perspective, there is not much use to fight about silly things like my interest and your interest, my place and your place, my religion and your religion. Think more about the whole planet and six billion human beings and consider all as one entity. You will be much happier and it is much reasonable. I always keep telling people that the very concept of 'We and They' are no longer relevant to this world.

H.H the Dalai Lama speaks with Richard Holbrooke, Strobe Talbot and Richard Armitage in a conversation on current events at Brookings Institution, Washington DC, United States. March 5, 2013

16. Spirituality & the Environment

Firstly, spiritual elder brothers and sisters, and then brothers and sisters! It is the first engagement of the program in this beautiful city, this university, the interfaith sort of circle.

Then about environment: 'I think according to theistic religion, whole planet is created by god, 'god's creation'. We must respect and protect that. If we love god and if we respect god, then we must respect and take care of whole planet since it is god's creation instead of just exploiting as much as you can regardless of the effects. So I think religious people and religious believers should take more serious concern about the degenerating ecology'.

Discussions about environment and spirituality

Moderator: Going back to your opening remarks, H.H, you talked about hope, and working together instead of 'We versus They.' You have travelled the world over in 6 continents, dozens of countries. You have heard over from scientist and environmentalist who have told you that the climate is changing as a result of human activity. Are you hopeful, H.H, that we can work together as humanity to save the planet, to heal the planet in time and what can we do to inspire each other to work for solutions?

Dalai Lama: In Buddhist literature, we usually talk about eons and eons. Eventually our whole galaxy will disappear and that's the part of the movement of natural cycle. So looking from distant, we see

a tiny world, our world is part of the whole galaxies and it is like that. However, our general average life is around 100 years, so we have to take serious concern about our century and we have to take serious care about the future of our children, grand-children. Of course I am monk and have no children but those people who have children and grand-children should take seriously about their future.

Now this global warming, I think if it is part of natural cycle, then we can't do much. But to some extent our behavior have some connection according to ecologist. Therefore, we have certain responsibility since all our activities use natural resources like water and electricity. Therefore, it is our responsibility to take care of our planet like taking care of our own home or our own room since this planet is our only home. Even though, with the help of technology we can go to moon, mars or some other planet but it is almost certainly impossible to settle there. So this planet is our only home.

Human population within this century will reach 10 billion which is a very serious matter. In the meantime effort should be given to reduce the huge gap between rich and poor on both the global and national level. Otherwise I think it is not only morally wrong but practically also a source of problem. We have to deal with that. That means that people whose living standard is under poverty or poor must be raised.

Sometimes back, I think 20 years ago on one occasion in Oxford at some discussion- at that time there are 6 billion population - some expert told me that the living standard of the southern world is little difficult - poorer section of people – and if their living standard is

raised up to the standard that northern people enjoy, then the amount of natural resources for 6 billion should be questionable – then for 10 billion there is no question. So we have to think for long term. Just out of greed if we consume regardless of the effects, I think that kind of lifestyle should be checked. And then taking care about environment should become part of our daily life.

My own sort of insignificance, silly contribution is every moment when I leave hotel room, I always put out light. Then I never use bath tub to preserve water, but I take showers in morning and evening always; two showers and one bath tub, I don't know if it is effective. (Laughs!!) These things should be part of your daily life. Then as mother (Grandmother Agnes Baker Pilgrim) mentioned, teach and show other people, your family members and your community a sense of caring for our planet and that ecology should be part of their life.

Moderator: When you were a young boy in Tibet, what was your relationship to the environment? How did it influence your thoughts about some of these things and then how did it change when you left Tibet and became what you call citizen of the world? How did that change your relation with the environment??

Dalai Lama: When I was in Tibet, I think till my age is 24. I think some people call Tibet as the roof of the world and it is very clean because of the small population, their lifestyle also quite simple. So everything is very beautiful in their Natural form like that. And then from my childhood, I love flowers and sometimes I cultivate-do gardening. Only after I came to India, gradually when I first heard that this water you cannot drink, I was really surprised. In Tibet,

whenever we pass through rivers or streams, we always enjoy it without problem. So then I began to learn that even though water looks like water but it is still much polluted. Even fish and other water animals have sometimes difficulty to live. I remember that one time in Stockholm, in the center of the city there is one river, some of my friend mentioned that now fish in the river began to reappear because of the special care about pollution. Although factories are still there, they had put some special effort to not pollute the water. As a result of that, now some fish has gradually appeared. Previously, there is no fish. Therefore, gradually I develop keen interest about environmental issues. I learned through and from scientist. So my awareness of environment is through education.

I think media should make clear it is everybody's interest in taking care of environment and sometimes even necessary, if our daily lifestyle indirectly affects ecology we should reduce these things. That I feel like myself, full of ignorance. Then get some knowledge which will reduce that ignorance. That is only through educating. Wherever I give talk, I always talk about ecology and its importance.

Few years ago I saw one article written by a Chinese ecologist, which was brought to me by one Irish ecologist. In that article it mentioned about global warming; the rate of global warming on global level is 0.1centigrade/decade and in Tibetan plateau the rate of warming is 0.3centigrade/decade. So it is little higher on Tibetan Plateau. Then he mentioned the effect of global warming from the Tibetan plateau is as much as South Pole and North Pole. That's why he described Tibetan Plateau as Third Pole. It seems that person has done really serious study, so that he had concluded like that.

Therefore, as a Tibetan, it is very important to know the delicate situation of the Tibetan plateau and about ecology. I hope many Chinese particularly those exploiting natural resources without proper care of ecology, I think should be educated. Then major rivers which cover almost whole Asia, their ultimate source come from Tibetan plateau. Therefore, I think over billion Human Beings life depends on these rivers, so it is very important. So I always keep telling these things, so perhaps part of my commitment is towards ecology, but I have never studied about ecology.

Transcript of Talks by His Holiness Dalai Lama during the Environmental Summit on 'Spirituality and Environment', Interfaith Event sponsored by the University of Portland and Maitripa College, Hosted by Maitripa College, Portland, United States. May 9, 2013

17. Universal Responsibility & the Global Environment: An Environmental Summit

In early part of my life, I don't know about the environmental issues. Then gradually as a result of my own experience, and mainly meeting with specialist in environmental issues I realized it is really very serious matter. In a way, protection or taking care about the world simply means like taking care of one's own home.

And then things always change, after thousands of years, planets own position has changed. After all, the whole Universe, the Milky Way galaxy itself is moving. According to one scientist, another galaxy is coming in the same direction in which our galaxy is moving. After

few billions of years, there will be a clash but there is no need of any concern or any worry. So things are impermanent. Of course, these things will not happen within next few centuries, and I don't think there is any danger of this kind.

In anyway, things are moving and changing at different positions and these climate changes have some disturbances. However, many experts say that we are responsible in emissions of CO₂ and also deforestation. And sometimes it is necessary to use dams but we have to consult with specialist and scientist very cleverly otherwise just for electrical power there will lots of consequences about environment. Then these things are really serious matter. To some extend our own behavior also makes some differences and in that case we have the responsibility.

In 1959 I escaped from Tibet to India but now the whole world has some problem and there is no other place to escape. I always keep telling people that the moon throughout centuries was an inspiration for poets and looks beautiful at night sky but if we go and try to settle there, it is impossible, horrible and there is no hope. So, this is our only home and we have to take care of it not only our generation but for the next generations also. I am a Buddhist monk, so I have no worries about my children's and their life. (Laughs!) You have to think seriously about their life time in the future. Unless we take maximum care about our environment, I think major disasters in any case will increase.

Then the most serious problem is population increase. According to some experts report, I heard that at the end of this century the population will reach 10 billion. Now the population is 7 billion and

in the next few decades it will reach 10 billion.

Then in the meantime, I always feel really serious concern about the gap between the rich and the poor. At the global level, there is huge gap between the rich and the poor, and there is big gap at the national level also. Like America, richest powerful nation but at the same time there are still many poor people. One time in Washington talk, I mentioned that in the suburbs of the capital of one of richest nation (Washington), there are many poor people which is not only morally wrong but practically also wrong. Therefore, we have to think how to reduce this gap. That does not mean that the richer should be poor but the living standard of the poorer section of the people should be raised.

Then regarding natural resources, there are already some problems. And at the end of this century there will be around 10 billion people, so I think there will be lots of problems. So we have to think very seriously about the future of humanity.

I think that Environment issue is one of the key factors. I just mentioned in one television interview that due to global warming, ice at the North and South Pole are quite rapidly melting and the sea level is rising. And also the climate is changing nowadays and there are more frequent earth quake also.

With all these, we should be somewhat alert. With alertness, our mind will wake up and have a holistic view, and will think of long term interest. Sometimes we simply forget about the long term interest and just simply focus on immediate interest due to greed and impatience. I think we have to develop new way of life, new way of thinking which is important. I feel like that. Otherwise, I am not a specialist

or an expert. So I am waiting for the specialist's presentation and guidance. Thank you!!

Discussion: Question to H.H the Dalai Lama by the Moderator

Moderator: His Holiness, what the secular world and other faiths can learn from particularly the Buddhist understanding of environment?

Dalai Lama: I think those founders of different religion traditions, most of them 2000 years ago; at that time ecological problems are not there. However, like I think in Jainism, one of the ancient Indian spiritual tradition very much respect any form of life. In Hinduism also, they respect nature. So this is very much related and I think these things are very relevant in today's world.

Then in Buddhism, Buddha was born under one tree instead of in the palace. Then when Buddha was enlightened, it was not in some cave but under a tree and his final death was not in the monastery but again under a tree.

Moreover, in the monastic precepts, it is mentioned that the monks should cultivate and plant trees. And during those times there have no permanent resident, so they go here and there. So, the next group of monks coming to the place should take care of those plantations carried by previous group. So that shows that Buddhist's are very much interested or concerned about ecology. Now in Thailand or some other Buddhist countries, some monks are very much active regarding the preservation of forest.

Then usually, I keep telling people about one unique concept in Buddhist philosophy, that is interdependency or interconnectedness in which I believe. That concept is from Buddhist tradition but it is

applicable in every field like economy, environmental issues or global issues. The reality is that everything is interdependent.

Therefore, I may repeat again that if you think only about your own family, it is like animal thinking, since animals never think outside their own group. We have this special brain and we have the ability of reasoning and thinking about long term interest. Now today, global economy is not based on one nation but on the whole world is interrelated and the whole world is facing similar environmental problems. So therefore, we have to use our human intelligence and think about these things.

Now for example, in Buddhist concept we call the entire sentient being as mother sentient being. All sentient beings are very dear to oneself as your own mother of this life. That's why we call as mother sentient being. Therefore, for the time being forget about other galaxies and think about just our own world here with 7 billion human beings and their future, which is very much interdependent. Whether we like it or not, that is the reality.

So the century old thinking of just 'we and they', I think that is out dated. We must change the concept of 'we' to the entire 7 billion human beings and the entire species of mammals on this planet is part of me. So I think that through awareness about simply how to build a happy society, happy humanity on this small planet and to think about the rest of the human's wellbeing, without thinking about next life, heaven or nirvana are something necessity to develop a happy future.

I think only human beings can do those things, not other animals. If we look from certain view point, too much materialistic way of life is simply like other animals. If we use our unique thinking of our

mind, thinking of long term interest and larger term, then we have truly become human being.

All these are not through prayer, not through blessing but through education. So education is the key factor. I think the existing education system is not adequate. If you look from certain angle, existing education system is very much oriented towards material value. Of course, on the personal level, I myself don't have any modern education but I am criticizing and I think it is a bit presumptuous. (Laughs!!) Thank you!!

Transcript: Speech and discussion by His Holiness Dalai Lama during the Environmental Summit on 'Universal Responsibility and the Global Environment', Hosted by Maitripa College, Portland, United States, morning session. May 11, 2013

18. Conversation on Science, Happiness, and Well-Being.

“I think at least within this century if we make constant effort with clear vision through education. I think possibility is there. So that's why we are working how to introduce in modern education system the secular ethics as a part of curriculum from kindergarten up to the university level. That, I feel, is the key thing. Altruism just a few sort of explanation is not sufficient. Systematically we have to educate people. I already describe we are selfish, that's right. But selfish should be wise selfish rather than foolish selfish. Usually are thinking selfish just think of oneself. Actually you are losing your friend, losing many good things. Think more about other's well-being. You get maximum benefit. So that is wise selfish. So that also is not through (spiritual) teaching or blessing but through education. We have ability to think long term interest, short term interests. I think through education we can change, like that. So I think it's very possible. And in anyway, whether it's possible or not, certain things at a certain level, at a certain period, see something unthinkable, but time changes and then new reality. Now I think the thinking more the inner world, inner values. The circumstances now create, you see, some sort of more number of mental problems. Actually some people say now whole world is facing some kind of moral crisis. It's true. So therefore the circumstance itself now is showing us and the environment also. Mother Nature -- mother planet or Mother Nature itself now showing us you should be taking more serious care about mother planet. So the new reality will force us we have to think more widely way, more holistic way, more compassionate way. So these entirely depend on awareness, education. So now I

feel the problem is how to introduce in system of education field these ethics. Not something... you see I think the origins carry the same ethics but that is based on faith. Although the former pope mentioned, the German pope mentioned faith and reason must go together. So really, i think that is really true but usually we to some extent use our reasons, then depend on faith. So then only those people who really have sincere faith, it worked. On other people I think difficult.”

Speech during a public teaching by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, requested by Geshe Sopa and Deer Park, Madison, Wisconsin, USA. May 14, 2013

19. His Holiness’s Speech at the Tulane Universtiy.

“His Holiness spoke about how little he likes formality, keeping in mind that there is no formality around the two most important events in our lives, when we are born and when we die. Global climate change and the ups and downs of the global economy are problems that affect us all. They are not confined to state of national boundaries.”

Extract from a speech by His Holiness at the 179th Tulane Unified Commencement Ceremony, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA. May 18, 2013 -

20. World Environment Day

While I am encouraged by the huge increase in awareness of our need to take greater care of our natural environment, we continue to face challenges. Therefore, if our aim is to make the world a better place for the present and future generations and to make our way of life more sustainable, the general public must become more actively involved. We must learn to work together to take care of this planet which is our only home. And we must learn to make more prudent and judicious use of the limited resources it makes available to us. In the past, we took part in destroying the environment because we didn't know any better. But today we have access to so much more information to help us understand the damage we do to environment through our reckless and irresponsible behavior. That's why it's essential that we take the opportunity to reassess what we have inherited, what we are responsible for now, and what we hope to pass on coming generations. I offer my greetings to everyone participating in activities to mark World Environment Day, with my prayers that the day will not only be a success, but that you will also enjoy yourselves.

This is a message from His Holiness the Dalai Lama on World Environment Day. June 5, 2013

21. Visiting the Lithuanian Parliament

His Holiness agreed with a questioner that the environment and ecology are very serious. However, unlike scenes of war and bloodshed that make us flinch immediately, we do not readily see the damage to the environment that is taking place in front of us.

His Holiness suggested that since environmental issues have such a bearing on so many people, with more than 1 billion people dependent on rivers that rise in Tibet, the delegation should examine how much damage has already been done.

Answering a question during His Holiness's address to an assembly of invited guests at the Vilnius City Hall, Vilnius, Lithuania. September 12, 2013.

22. Compassion & Respect in Today's Society

“He elaborated that as human beings we are social animals. Like other creatures, ants and bees, for example, our survival depends on the rest of our community. Today's reality is that the whole world is interdependent. Problems like climate change affect us all, ignoring boundaries. Because of climate change natural disasters are likely to occur, also, natural resources will become scarce and the gap between rich and poor continues to increase. These are challenges we have to face thinking of humanity as one family and working together as one.”

Extract from a Public Speech by His Holiness at the Tipsport Arena, Prague, Czech Republic. September 14, 2013

23. His Holiness Addresses the Global Spa and

“Our stand is not to seek independence but genuine autonomy. We want to modernize Tibet. But we must be able to preserve our fragile natural environment, whose waters serve a billion people in Asia, and we must be able to protect our culture, language and religion.”

His Holiness answering a question during a public address at the Beacon Theater, New York, USA. October 20, 2013

24. His Holiness Addresses an All Party Parliamentary Group in Japan

“His Holiness voiced the firm hope that the 21st century would be a century of peace. He conceded that there would continue to be problems as the world’s population continues to grow, as the effects of climate change become more drastic, and as natural disasters multiply. But such problems have to be faced together. He said that the Copenhagen summit on climate change had been disappointing because too many governments chose national interests over the interests of the whole world. Such problems will only be surmounted by talk; we have to engage in dialogue. This is why His Holiness is encouraging young people to think of making the 21st century a century of dialogue.”

“He stated that at a time when China still seems to be facing an ethical crisis, as a Tibetan he is concerned about the status of Tibetan culture, which he regards as a culture of peace. In addition to that

is the issue of Tibet's ecology. The Tibetan environment plays such an important role in the world's climate that one Chinese ecologist referred to it as the Third Pole. This is not something that concerns only Tibetans, for the rivers that raise in Tibet affect a billion people elsewhere in Asia."

He said, "So this is an outline of concerns that I will pursue for the rest of my life,"

His Holiness addresses an All Party Parliamentary Group at the National Diet Building, Tokyo, Japan, November 20, 2013

25. His Holiness's Interviews for Mongolian Television

Gused Tserenpill for Buddha World asked His Holiness about the environment and His Holiness appreciates the need to take care of the environment because this planet is our only home. He said we need to work out new strategies in the face of climate change, pointing out that when it's cold you don't burn the furniture. To do this requires intelligence."

Extract from an interview His Holiness gave to Gused Tserenpill of Buddha World from Mongolia, New Delhi, India. December 5, 2013

26. His Holiness on Environment and Climate Change

“Concern for the environment is very important,” His Holiness remarked as he began his lecture. “But it’s something I only learned about as a separate issue once I’d arrived in India as a refugee. In the past our human population was relatively small, but more recently it has grown significantly and our lifestyle has dramatically changed. There are clear signs that the climate is changing. In my lifetime glaciers have melted and snow on the mountains has reduced. Natural disasters associated with global warming have increased. I don’t know to what extent human lifestyle has affected this, but we have to look into what effective actions we can take. As for myself, I promised Sunderlal Bahuguna I would do what I could to support environmental protection in the Himalayas.”

He said “we have to ask ourselves if the way we live is sustainable. Considering the combined population of India and China is more than 2 billion, he asked his listeners to imagine a world in which each of those 2 billion had their own car. Similarly he suggested we urgently find ways of preserving natural resources for coming generations.”

His Holiness delivering the keynote address at the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment’s 10th T N Khoshoo Memorial Award ceremony at the Chinmaya Mission in New Delhi, India. December 7, 2013.

27. His Holiness addresses School Principals

“As human beings we all want to live a happy life, we want our days to be happy and we’d even prefer to have happy dreams. What’s more we have a right to achieve such happiness. In order to do so, I believe we need to develop a clearer sense of the oneness of humanity; what we have in common. Many of the problems we face today are our own creation. The sense we have of ‘them’ and ‘us’ leads to violence and deception. It also leads to corruption. If you respect others and have a concern for their well-being, this will not occur. “Regarding violence, prayer alone will not put an end to it. Violence comes about because we lack inner peace. And clearly, we can only create peace in the world on the basis of our own inner peace. The main disturbance in our minds that leads to our dividing beings into ‘them’ and ‘us’ is our self-centered attitude. Yet the reality today is that we are interdependent.”His Holiness cited the disasters that are occurring as a result of climate change as affecting us all, regardless of national and other boundaries. Without a sense of the oneness of humanity our man-made problems will only increase.”

His Holiness address at the All India Principal’s Conference of the Heads of Anglo-Indian Schools in India at Bishop Cotton School, Bangalore, Karnataka, India. January 5, 2014

28. Bounds of Ethics in a Globalised World

“Violence only brings suffering and pain. Yet we have factories dedicated to weapons production. Is the manufacture of weapons that will destroy others’ lives a responsible way of doing business? Shouldn’t we be thinking of making this a century of peace? Even if we do, it doesn’t mean there won’t be any problems, there will. Population is set to rise, natural resources are going to become scarcer, and climate change will give us trouble. To deal with these problems we must apply non-violence. Some think that non-violence is a sign of weakness, but Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King used it to good effect.”

His Holiness’s address at the International Conference on Bounds of Ethics in a Globalised World at Christ University, Bangalore, Karnataka, India. January 6, 2014

29. Talk on a Human Approach to Peace

“When we see pictures of the earth from space, we see no boundaries between us, just this one blue planet; a place where climate change affects us all, where the global economy brings us all together. In the past, Tibet surrounded by mountains cherished its isolation, as I suspect Assam did too. But, such isolation is outdated. Today, we need to take into account the well-being of the whole of humanity and we need to work to preserve the health of the planet.”

“The role of the Tibetan plateau in climate change His Holiness spoke about the findings of a Chinese ecologist who noted that Tibet was as important as the North and South poles. Consequently, he referred to Tibet as the Third Pole. He expressed the hope that the President and new government in China will take a more realistic view of this.”

Extract from His Holiness's address to 5000 people gathered at the LBS Founders' Commemorative Lecture on a 'Human Approach to Peace'. at the Nehru Stadium in Guwahati, Assam, India. February 2, 2014

30. Time Magazine Interview

To a question about whether the USA is backing away from addressing human rights issues in its dealings with China, His Holiness recommended that the free world engages with China, but stands firm on its moral principles. He said that to slacken its resolve about moral principles or a sense of truth would be a great loss. He added that there is a need for all nations to address climate change. Extreme weather is already affecting millions of farmers. He pointed out that the last Copenhagen summit on climate change failed because too many countries put their short term national interests ahead of the global interest. He warned that we have to take scientists' predictions seriously.”

“As to whether the global economic crisis has brought about a greater sense of responsibility, His Holiness said that the reality is that we now have a global economy. Like it or not we have to

approach it with a sense of global responsibility. He repeated that in a similar way, preservation of the environment and dealing with global climate change requires that we put the global interest before local or national interest.”

His Holiness's response to a question during an interview by Elizabeth Dias of Time magazine, Washington DC, USA. February 19, 2014

31. Public Address in Berkeley

“Respected Congresswoman, brothers and sisters, we really need this sense of brotherhood and sisterhood. It is our self-centeredness that is the cause of many of the world’s problems. We too are social animals like those ants and bees that have a sense of community and work together by nature without the guidance of religion or law. The environmental crisis makes us part of one world, as does the global economy. Our population is growing; natural disasters are increasing making ever clearer our need to acknowledge the oneness of humanity.”

An extract from His Holiness's address to around 3000 people at the Berkeley Community Theater in Berkeley, California, USA. February 23, 2014.

32. Non-violence and the Effects of Compassion in the 21st Century

“Because of climate change and increasing natural disasters, the world’s 7 billion people must learn to work together. This is no longer a time, His Holiness said, to think only of ‘my nation’ or ‘our continent’ alone. There is a real need for a greater sense of global responsibility based on a sense of the oneness of humanity.”

Extract from His Holiness public address at the Inglewood Forum on ‘Non-violence and the Effects of Compassion in the 21st Century, Los Angeles, CA, USA. February 25, 2014

33. His Holiness at Macalester College

“His Holiness suggested that among the many problems we face are the huge gap between rich and poor that is morally wrong and practically a mistake. There have to be creative ways to deal with it. In many parts of the world too, there is rampant corruption, which is like a cancer on society. Natural disasters and climate change, the global economy, are all things that affect us all. Things will become more complicated, so those who are young today, the 21st century generation, will have to be even more determined. They are our source of hope.”

Extract from His Holiness’s address to about 3500 students at the Macalester College in St Paul, Minnesota, USA. March 2, 2014

34. His Holiness at the Capitol Hill

“We have kept the Nalanda tradition alive and along with its knowledge of the mind and emotions that scientists are eager to learn from today. This is timely, since across the materially developed world, people experience too much stress. Fuller understanding of the mind and emotions can be very useful. An additional aspect of my concern for Tibet relates to the environment.”

Extract from His Holiness’s conversaton with House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi and Speaker of the House John Boehner during their meeting in the Speaker’s ceremonial office on Capitol Hill in Washington DC, USA. March 6, 2014.

35. His Holiness’s Teachings in the Indian Capital

“Pointing out that the climate change, environmental problems and the global economy all indicate our need to work together, His Holiness stressed the importance of focusing on the whole of humanity. This is why our education systems must include a sense of ethics. In order to retain a universal appeal, such ethics need to have a secular basis. He cited the example of India’s secular constitution, which far from dismissing religion expresses respect for all religions and the right of those who choose to have none. This secular approach reflects the religious harmony that has flourished in India for thousands of years.”

Extracts from His Holiness teaching organized by Foundation for Universal Responsibility. New Delhi, India. March 21, 2014

36. Public Talk in Koyasan

“The question of the environment and climate change are a global issue too, not just of concern to Europe, Asia, Africa or the Americas. We should think of everyone not just me or us. What happens on this one blue planet where we live affects us all. We need to take the benefit of the whole of humanity into account, rather than thinking of ‘us’ and ‘them’, which becomes the basis for dividing people into friends and enemies and the prospect of war. We need to deal with the injustice in the world; the gap between rich and poor which sees the poor dismissed as almost of no importance. And responsibility lies with us 7 billion human beings, not on the shoulders of the Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed or Krishna. When I attended a gathering to pray for world peace in Hiroshima some years ago, I said that world peace will not come about by merely praying for it, we have to take action. And I believe taking action is something Japanese understand. So, that’s what I have to say, thank you.”

Extract from His Holiness Public Talk at the Koyasan University Auditorium. Koyasan, Japan, April 15, 2014

37. His Holiness's teaching in Tokyo

“As to whether the world is getting better or worse, he noted that there is a steady movement to seek peace, growing opposition to the existence of nuclear weapons. Where no one used to talk about the environment, it is now on everyone's lips. Scientists who once only paid attention to material things are now paying attention to the mind and its functions. His Holiness expressed optimism that people are generally becoming more mature. In connection with the disasters that have taken place in East Japan, like the flooding in Queensland, and even the difficulties in Tibet, he mentioned Nagarjuna's advice that if you allow yourself to remain depressed you will never overcome the trouble that afflicts you.”

Extracts from His Holiness interaction with the Soto community in Tokyo, Japan. April 16, 2014

38. His Holiness's Visits to Norwegian Parliament

“Regarding the environment, he said that a Chinese ecologist had estimated the significance of Tibet to be equivalent to that of the North and South Poles, so he had described Tibet as the Third Pole. Asia's major rivers ultimately have their source in Tibet and 1 billion people depend on their waters. One Chinese Prime Minister acknowledged that the unprecedented flooding in China was a result of deforestation in Tibet. “

“To a question about how he sees the future of an autonomous

Tibet, His Holiness said that as early as 1974 he and his advisers had decided that they needed to talk to China and that they could not seek independence. Tibet was historically a separate country, but what is past is past. He expressed admiration for the European Union whose members are prepared to be part of a greater whole. He said Tibetans want the Chinese authorities to grant the rights and privileges to Tibetan areas already mentioned in the Chinese constitution. These include human rights and environmental issues, for example where mining is being undertaken contrary to the wishes of the local people.”

“As everybody knows, I’m a Buddhist monk,” His Holiness concluded, “committed to promoting human values, inter-religious harmony and the preservation of Tibet’s Buddhist culture and natural environment.”

“He said Tibetans want the Chinese authorities to grant the rights and privileges to Tibetan areas already mentioned in the Chinese constitution. These include human rights and environmental issues, for example where mining is being undertaken contrary to the wishes of the local people.”

Extract from His Holiness’s address to members of the Norwegian Parliamentary Group for Tibet at the Norwegian Parliament in Oslo, Norway. May 9, 2014.

39. Teaching on Secular Ethics

“He said that the effects of climate change and the global economy extend beyond national boundaries. To deal with problems like corruption and the huge gap between rich and poor requires secular ethics. He mentioned that pilot projects are going on to design a curriculum to incorporate secular ethics into the education system. He does not expect to see the results of this work, but, if it is successful, those belonging to the 21st century generation may see a new way of thinking emerge that will result in this really becoming a century of peace.”

“To a question about climate change he pointed out that we have to be more alert. Whereas the sight of obvious violence makes us recoil, damage to the environment and climate change take place more stealthily. We are often not aware of it until it has already happened and it is difficult to restore.”

Extract from His Holiness public talk to an audience of over 11,000 people at the Ahoy Stadium in Rotterdam, Holland. May 11, 2014.

40. Meeting with Tibet Supporters in Holand

“There are several aspects of the Tibetan question, among which I’d like to talk to you about the damage being done to Tibet’s delicate natural environment. I read a report by a Chinese ecologist that compared Tibet’s significance to that of the North and South Poles; he described Tibet as the Third Pole. This is because Asia’s

major rivers rise in Tibet and more than 1 billion people depend on their waters. Damming the Brahmaputra, for example, will have effects on both India and Bangladesh. I appeal to supporters like you to assemble a group, experts among them, to go to Tibet to examine what is happening, to assess what damage has already been done and what precautions could prevent it getting worse. The information would be shared with the Chinese authorities who are often not properly informed.”

Extract from His Holiness's Talk while meeting with a group of Tibet supporters in Rotterdam, Holland. May 12, 2014

41. His Holiness in Italy

Speaking about environmental protection, His Holiness said that unlike the effects of violent action that is visible for all to see, the effects of damage to our environment is gradual and not noticed until it's quite late to repair. He advised everyone to make environmental protection and caring for the environment a part of one's everyday life.

Extract from His Holiness's Speech at a formal program to bless the future site for Lhungtok Choekorling Monastery in Pomaia, Tuscany, Italy. June 13, 2014

42. His Holiness Visits Museum of ethnology

His Holiness the Dalai Lama visited the Museum of Ethnology, Hamburg, where an exhibition entitled ‘Tibet - Nomads at Risk. He was appreciative of the photographs depicting the nomads’ way of life, traditions and the threats that put them at risk. He talked about the negative effects of deforestation, reckless mining for minerals, and the forced settlement of nomads that ultimately leaves them at a loss.

His Holiness’s address during a visit to an exhibition entitled ‘Tibet - Nomads at Risk’ at the Museum of Ethnology, Hamburg, Germany. August 25, 2014

43.His Holiness addressing Tibet Support Group in Germany

His Holiness expressed his deep appreciation of the TSG’s support, adding that he knew how active they have been. He spoke about different aspects of the Tibetan issue from the need to preserve the natural environment and the effect of climate change in Tibet, with consequences for 1 billion elsewhere in Asia who depend on Tibet’s rivers. He also highlighted his concern to preserve Tibetan culture, a culture of peace and non-violence, and Tibet’s Buddhist traditions. His Holiness mentioned that he has devolved all his political responsibilities to a young, dynamic elected leader, Dr Lobsang Sangay, who was sitting in the front row before him.

Extract from His Holiness address to members of the Tibetan Community in Germany and the Tibet Support Group at the Laeiszhalle in Hamburg, Germany. August 26, 2014

44. His Holiness addresses Indian Merchants

“Whenever I meet anyone I think of them as just another human being. Many of us face a lot of problems, the majority of which are our own creation. They arise because we focus too much on the secondary differences between us, rather than on what unites us as members of one human family. If we take all humanity into account there should be no quarrels between us. Climate change is something that affects us all, while the global economy too functions beyond national boundaries or the limits of this or that faith.

Extract from His Holiness’s address on ‘Secular Ethics’ at the Indian Merchants’ Chamber’s 108th Foundation Day Celebrations in Mumbai, India on September 18, 2014.

45. A Meeting of Diverse Spiritual Traditions in India

“When natural disasters take place I think people generally feel helpless. We need to look at things from a wider perspective, acknowledging that we are part of nature.”

His Holiness contributing to a group discussions on the theme ‘Environment, Education and Society’. at the meeting of Diverse Spiritual Traditions in India. New Delhi, India. September 21, 2014

46. One World, One Vision, One People

“Dear brothers and sisters,” His Holiness began, “that is what we all are 7 billion human beings, brothers and sisters, each born from a mother and surviving in dependence on each other. In the past people were self-sufficient and able to live in isolated communities, but today we are much more interdependent. Climate change and the functioning of the global economy present challenges that affect us all, which we have to face together.

Extract from His Holiness address at the Indian Habitat Centre in New Delhi, India. Invited by Rajeev Chandrasekhar MP and the Ashoka University. September 22, 2014

47. Education of the Heart

“We have to recognize that we live in a world that is interdependent. What affects others affects us too. Climate change, for example, has no respect for national boundaries. And yet we don’t feel concern for the other 7 billion human beings, we don’t think of them as part of one human family. How can we overcome this negligence? By law, through the media, or through religion? Affection, a sense of community and a sense of concern for others are not some kind of luxury. They’re about the survival of humanity. The ultimate source of happiness is within us; the calm mind that makes us relaxed, improves our health and makes for happier families and communities.”

“He said, it’s urgent because too often we only become aware of the damage we are doing to the environment once it is too late to stop it. We need education and we need happiness, just as we need clean air.”

Extract from His Holiness’s address at the forum on Science of Education of the Heart at the Vancouver Convention Center in Vancouver, Canada. October 21, 2014.

48. Meeting with the Canadian Parliamentary Friends of Tibet

Before leaving Vancouver at the end of his four day visit to Canada, His Holiness the Dalai Lama met with 10 Canadian MPs from the Parliamentary Friends of Tibet.

His Holiness thanked them all for their support, reminding them of the wider ramifications of the Tibet issue. A Chinese ecologist regarded Tibet as so significant from an environmental point of view that he referred to it as the Third Pole, on a par with the North and South Poles. As the source of several of Asia’s major rivers, the Tibetan plateau is of importance to about one billion people downstream. He also noted Tibet’s historical role as a buffer state between India and China, the world’s two most populous nations.

His Holiness’s address to members of the Canadian Parliamentary Friends of Tibet during a meeting in Vancouver, Canada. October 24, 2014

49. Educating the Heart & Mind

“He cautioned that we should not expect results overnight. Change can take decades, but by the end of the 21st century we should have been able to create a happier, more peaceful world. The 20th century was an era of violence, but we can make this century an era of peace. When we face problems, we should solve them in a human way through dialogue. We need to find mutually agreeable solutions and we have to find ways to protect the environment too.”

Extract from His Holiness’s public talk at the TD Gardens in Boston, MA, USA, organized by Tibeian Association of Boston. November 1, 2014.

50. Addressing the Tibetan Community in New York.

“Whenever I can, I meet Chinese. Many years ago I encouraged the setting up of Sino-Tibetan friendship groups and they have been quite effective. Today, there are 400 million Chinese who call themselves Buddhists, many of whom have an interest in Tibetan Buddhism. Others concern themselves with preserving the natural environment and ecology of Tibet. Relations with ordinary Chinese have improved. The Tibetan issue appears to be a struggle between the gun, the use of force, and the truth. It may appear that in the short term the gun is more effective, and yet in the end the truth will prevail.”

Extract from His Holiness’s address to the Tibetan community at the Javits Center in New York, NY, USA. November 5, 2014

51. Meeting Italian Parliamentarians

“Since 2001 I have been semi-retired,” he told the parliamentarians, “and since 2011 I have completely retired from political responsibility. Now I concern myself only with the preservation of Tibetan culture and spirituality, which is a culture of peace and non-violence, and the protection of the Tibetan environment. On a human level, I consider we are all the same. I don’t think of myself as anything special, just as another human being. You politicians too, working for the happiness of the people of Italy, of the European Union, can contribute to making a better world for all 7 billion human beings.”

Extract from His Holiness’s meeting with a group of Italian parliamentarians, including the Chair of the Human Rights Committee and a Vice President of the Senate. Rome, Italy. December 13, 2014

52. One Day in Pune

His Holiness the Dalai Lama was invited as the Chief Guest by the Chanakya Mandal Pariwar (CMP). The CMP is a Network Organization and Public Charitable Trust working in the fields of Career Guidance, Competitive Exam Training, Entrepreneurship Building and Personality Development.

In the auditorium a short Upasana or meditation was held to the gentle chanting of the syllable Om. Next, former students who are now in active service brought small pitchers of water drawn from 29 water

bodies, ranging from Manasarovar to the Brahmaputra and poured them into a single kalasha at the front of the stage.

His Holiness said “Regarding the water that had been gathered from across the country, His Holiness asked what it is that makes it sacred. He answered that it’s because life depends on these rivers. Many of the great rivers of Asia rise on the Tibetan plateau and in their flow they support more than 1 billion people from Pakistan to Vietnam.”

Extract from His Holiness’s address at Chanakya Mandal Pariwar in Pune, Maharashtra, India. December 31, 2014.

53. His Holiness Addresses the International Luncheon

His Holiness pointed out that climate change has shown us that we all share the same planet. And to illustrate our basic value to each other he asked his listeners to think of someone struggling to survive alone in the desert. It would be very hard and if he then encountered someone else he would greet him simply as another human being with no regard for his nationality, faith, education or social status. His Holiness said it is on such a basis that he thinks of himself as just another human being, not as someone special called His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. He said he sees himself as part of the human community, which is why he never feels lonely. As a human being his first commitment is to helping other human beings live a happy life. That’s a basis for friendship.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama addressing the International Luncheon held in conjunction with the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington DC on February 4, 2015.

54. Interview for the TV2 television channel

“In an interview with Mette Holm for the TV2 television channel, she asked about his expected meeting with Danish politicians. His Holiness told her he would like to see a delegation of experts go to Tibet to investigate the ecological situation. He hoped they could assess what damage has already been done and what steps can be taken to avert further damage.

An Interview with Mette Holm for the TV2 television channel, Copenhagen, Denmark. February 11, 2015

55. Meeting Danish Parliamentarians

With regard to his homeland, His Holiness expressed concern for the ecology of the Tibetan plateau, labeled by one Chinese ecologist, the Third Pole. Asia’s major rivers rise in Tibet affecting the lives of 1 billion people downstream. He hoped the parliamentarians would support experts making an objective assessment of the current ecological situation there. He also expressed concern for the well-being of Tibetan culture, which, as a culture of peace and compassion, is something China also needs. He recalled a meeting with Chinese writers and intellectuals who told him that moral standards in China were lower than they had been for 5000 years. Xi Jinping recently mentioned in Paris and New Delhi the important role Buddhism has to play in reviving Chinese culture.

When one member of the group voiced the paradox that His Holiness counseled them to reduce Chinese suspicions and yet merely meeting with him might stoke them, His Holiness replied:

“You can report what we discussed about the environment, that we are not seeking independence, that what we seek for Tibetans are the rights already provided for in the Chinese constitution. Don’t worry, we’ve had relations with the Chinese for more than 2000 years and I’ve been dealing with them since the 1950s.”

Extract from His Holiness’s meeting with a group of Danish Parliamentarians representing all eight parties present in parliament. Copenhagen, Denmark. February 12, 2015

56.His Holiness at the 20th Shotön Opera Festival

“We Tibetans have our own civilization, much influenced by India, as evidenced by the 300 volumes of scriptures translated largely from Sanskrit and Pali. Today, only we Tibetans have a complete transmission of the Nalanda tradition. This is of interest not only to Tibetans, but also to our Chinese Buddhist brothers and sisters and others.

“Although religious practice is a personal matter, Tibetan Buddhist culture involves the community. It’s a culture of peace and non-violence and today a culture of peace is in everyone’s interest. Buddhist culture includes a strong sense of concern for others. Indeed, it also involves concern for the natural environment, taking account of the animals, birds and insects that are even more affected

by climate change than we human beings. From when we first became refugees we have tried to preserve this culture, trying to combine traditional values with modern ways. As a Tibetan social gathering this festival is part of that effort.”

“From my own point of view, when I was young I especially enjoyed the Shotön because it gave me an opportunity to spend time with my mother and I looked forward to it as five days off from my lessons. I’m happy to see that the younger generation still take pleasure in it now.”

Extract from His Holiness’s brief interview with the BBC, at the 20th Shotön Opera Festival at TIPA, Dharamsala, HP, India, 27 March 2015

57. His Holiness at the Global Environmental Forum for the Next Generation

His Holiness joined a panel taking part in a Global Environmental Forum for the Next Generation before an audience of 1100 at the Yomiuri Hall. Once introductions were complete, His Holiness was invited to speak.

“Brothers and sisters, it’s a great honour to be with you once more and able to meet old friends again. It is our tradition, and I think it’s yours too, that once we have got to know each other, our friendship lasts until our final day. I feel moved to be meeting many of you again.

“Today the topic is the environment, which is something I’m still learning about. When I first arrived in India, I had no idea about

the importance of the environment, but gradually I have come to understand its significance. One factor here is our increasing population. It's 7 billion now and some say it may reach 10 billion by the end of this century. In this context, large numbers of people live in poverty. There is a huge gap between rich and poor, which we have to close and ensure more equality.

“Then there is our rapidly changing climate, and natural disasters that appear to be on the increase. The need to take care of nature and the environment is urgent. It's a matter of human survival because this planet is our only home. We have to take ecology seriously. Although the climate does change naturally, the rate and extent of recent change is an evident result of human activity. We need to learn more about this and what we can do about it.

“If we compare changes in the climate and damage to the environment to war and violence, we can see that violence has an immediate impact on us. The trouble is that damage to the environment takes place more stealthily so we don't see it until it is often too late. Trying to restore it at that point is very difficult. We need to educate ourselves and make caring for the environment, even in small ways like remembering to turn off the lights when we leave the room, a part of our lives.”

He suggested that we reassess our life-style in order that poor people's standard of living is raised and resources are used more equitably. For example, His Holiness said, countries spend vast sums of money on weapons. Nobody wants war; war means killing. It's like a fire for which the fuel is human beings. It's a fire that can consume us all. War is a part of human history, but the ideas that

create it, the sense of ‘my country’, ‘my people’, ‘us’ and ‘them’ are no longer relevant in the globalized world in which we live.

“We need to think of all human beings, who, like us, want to live a happy life. My future depends on others, and theirs depends on me.”

He said that Japan, as the one country to have suffered nuclear attack, has taken the lead in opposing nuclear weapons. In a recent meeting of Nobel Peace Laureates in Rome, delegates were shocked by the description of the nuclear winter that would follow a nuclear exchange. It was decided that it was no longer enough to speak out against these weapons; there needs to be a timetable for their elimination and pressure on those who possess them to meet it.

“I strongly approve of your opposition to nuclear weapons and urge you to keep it up.”

Professor Ryuichi Yamamoto of Tokyo University made a clear presentation of the hazards of climate change. Global temperatures are rising. There are floods in England, drought in Australia, tsunamis in Indonesia. While cold waves sweep some parts of the United States, California is undergoing the worst drought in the region for 1200 years. There is clear loss of polar ice and as it goes on sea levels will rise.

One solution is suggested by Professor Akira Miyawaki of Yokohama University, who advocates the dense planting of indigenous trees. Professor Miyawaki was indisposed and his presentation was made on his behalf by Professor Nikawa Makoto. He explained that Miyawaki isn’t content only to give advice, he acts. In his view life is what is important and forests have many ways to protect life.

He has planted forests in the vicinity of polluting power stations, but he has also observed that when earthquakes destroy buildings, trees more often than not, remain standing. Therefore a forest is a place of shelter.

Having planted 40 million trees so far, Miyawaki considers he is planting for the future and his approach to dense planting results in 20 years in the kind of mature forest that might take 200 years to grow if left to itself. He views tree planting as way to protect loved ones. He tells a story of a little girl whose parents were concerned because she never laughed. He involved her in planting trees and she began to smile. Miyawaki believes in creating a forest of life to protect humankind.

Dr Murakami Kazuo, an old friend of His Holiness's, told the audience that the key word he was going to talk about was 'genes', which he described as switches that turn actions on or off. In recommending that we turn off negative genes and turn on positive ones, he said that a change of heart can surprise our genes. We can turn them on by changing our state of mind. He is a proponent of the positive power of laughter. He showed evidence of experiments he has conducted with rats. Tickling them releases their stress and activates their positive genes. He said he is conducting research into the similar therapeutic value of prayer, focusing on monks at the Shingon Monastery on Mount Koya.

Murakami concluded that part of our trouble is that we only think of ourselves and our own country. He said we have to learn to live simpler more modest lives.

Invited to comment, His Holiness said how impressed he was with

the Professors' work. The account of planting trees prompted him to remember a suggestion he has made in Australia that if trees were steadily planted inland from the coast it would be possible to make the land more productive. Similarly, he has speculated about the possibility of colossal solar energy installations in the Sahara, where there is abundant sunlight, to drive desalination plants. The freshwater thus produced could then be used to green the desert, providing crops for millions of people.

“One of my friends in India,” His Holiness said, “the Gandhian environmentalist and leader of the Chipko movement, Sunderlal Bahuguna, asked me whenever I can and wherever I am to spread the word about the importance of planting trees and caring for them. And I agreed to do so, as I am doing now.

“One of the important aspects of caring for the environment is taking a sufficiently broad view. A few years ago the results of a summit in Copenhagen were disappointing because too many participants put national interest ahead of the world's interest. They overlooked the obvious fact that if the world is doing well, we all do well.

“Instead of wasting millions of dollars of weapons we dare never use, the money should be put to more positive ends. And it's no use waiting for our leaders to take action, we the people have to take action to show our disapproval of these instruments of war and violence. This is in our interest, because invariably when things go wrong it's ordinary people who suffer.”

As the meeting was coming to an end, Professor Ryuichi Yamamoto suggested that panels like this one, consisting not only of scientists, but also experts in ethics, should be convened to advise.

An environmental declaration was read out in Japanese and English which began with a basic understanding that the natural environment of our planet is facing a serious crisis. It went on to specify guidelines for action:

1. Maintain a serious interest in and moral conduct towards the global environment and carry out ongoing environmental education and awareness-raising activities so that an international ethics panel can be established.
2. Plant three trees per person or provide the support for those trees to be planted to restore a green earth.
3. Turn on the genes of altruism through smiles and prayer to lead humble lives in harmony with all of nature.

Thanks were offered to the members of the audience who had turned out on a Monday; to Professor Murakami for inviting His Holiness; and to His Holiness for sharing his precious time. A final appeal was made:

“As His Holiness suggests, let’s not wait, but stir ourselves to action.”

His Holiness participated as panalist at the Global Environmental Forum for the Next Generation, Yomiuri Hall in Tokyo, Japan. April 6, 2015.

58. Addressing Japanese Students

“In today’s reality the old divisions between ‘us’ and ‘them’ are no longer relevant. Our world is deeply interdependent, both in terms of our economies and the problems like climate change that challenge us all. The reality has changed, but we still tend to see things the old way. This is why, although we don’t wish to do so, we make problems for ourselves. Our thinking is narrow and short-sighted. We don’t see things in a holistic way. There is a gap between our perceptions and reality. You Japanese, for example, have the potential to contribute to the well-being of the whole of Asia, the whole of humanity, rather than limiting your concern to just these islands. Please try to take a broader view.”

Extract from His Holiness’s address at the Aichi Gakuin University in Nagoya, Japan. April 7, 2015.

59. 2015 World Environment Day Message

“Because we all share this planet earth, we have to learn to live in harmony and peace with each other and with nature. This is not just a dream, but a necessity”.

His Holiness Message on World Environment Day. June 5, 2015.

60. Dalai Lama's Message for COP21 - UN Climate Summit in Paris

Brothers and sisters of this small planet. Now we are in the 21st century. In spite of the huge developments in technology and science, we have also created lots of human-made problems. So I often say that these problems which were created by human beings, logically, we human beings ourselves have the responsibility to reduce these problems and finally eliminate these problems. We ourselves have created these problems but we rely on praying to God or to Buddha, for solution. This I think is little bit illogical. These problems are our creation, so we cannot seek solution to these problems from above.

Now, on top of these man-made problems, we have climate change and environment problem. I think, to some extent, the position of the whole galaxy is changing. As a result, the position of our own planet, this blue planet is also changing, and thereby the sun's own situation is also changing. I think this is also in some way related to the environment.

Moreover, according to experts, we human beings are also responsible for the change in weather conditions and global warming. Hence, this is not a question of one nation or two nations. This is a question of humanity affecting the whole world.

Our world is our only home. If this blue planet, due to global warming or some other sort of environmental problem, cannot sustain itself, then there is no other planet where we can move or shift.

So this is our only, only home. Therefore, you see, we have to take

serious concern about the protection of environment and also serious concern about global warming.

In this respect, I always say, Tibet is usually called the Roof of the World. According to some experts, because of Tibet's high altitude and dry climate, if its ecology is damaged, it takes a much longer time to recover. So therefore, environment situation in such an area is very delicate. Many Indian environmental experts also told me the same thing.

Some Chinese environmentalists, you see, they have described Tibet or the Tibetan Plateau as the Third Pole, because the impact of the Tibetan plateau on global warming is as much as the South Pole and the North Pole. So they described Tibet as a Third Pole.

These are not political statements but rather the findings of experts and scientists. So therefore, you see, this is not something concerned only with the Tibetan people. This concerns over a billion human life, including mainland China. And also the southern areas of Himalaya, including Pakistan, Bangladesh and then India.

Over a billion people depend on these rivers which flow from Tibet through China to south Asia. Therefore, you see, the protection, or serious concern towards the protection of Tibet's environment is not only concerned with the people of a particular area but a larger number of people in this part of the world.

And then also, some experts say, the ecological condition of the Tibetan Plateau also affects other parts of the world. So therefore, it's something very important. That's what I want to share. So these are not a political matter or a religious matter. These are

ultimately, related to the survival of humanity, or question of a healthy world, healthy planet.

So this is what I want to tell you. And then as I mentioned earlier, environment is the responsibility of the entire humanity. Then among the human beings, the older generation, usually I describe as the generation of 20th century, we are almost fading, including myself.

So now generation of the 21st century, the young brothers and sisters, you should take more active role in protecting this planet, including Tibet's environment. That's what I want to share with you.

Transcript of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Video Message for COP21 UN Climate Summit in Paris, Dharamsala. October 20, 2015

61. Time Magazine Interview

To a question about whether his holiness had met with Pope Francis? If you could have meeting with Pope Francis, what would you want to talk to him about?

His holiness said he haven't met with Pope Francis. But he admired Pope for showing his genuine concern about the environment. Wonderful! And he said a spiritual leader should speak on environment as these are global issues.

His Holiness's Response to a Question during an Interview by Elizabeth Dias of Time Magazine, Washington DC, USA. July 6, 2015.

62. Addressing the gathering at ‘Celebrating His Holiness’ Events

“His Holiness declared that he is of course a Tibetan. However, he made clear that he has not only retired personally from all political responsibility, but has happily and voluntarily brought an end to the involvement of Dalai Lamas in political affairs. His concern today is for Tibet’s ecology. Tibet’s role in climate change is equivalent to that of the North and South poles, prompting some to refer to Tibet as a Third Pole. High altitude makes Tibet’s ecology particularly fragile and once damaged harder to restore.”

Extract from His Holiness speech at ‘Celebrating His Holiness’ events at New Delhi, India. January 4, 2016

63. Addressing the Tibetan Community in Minneapolis

“I’m also a Tibetan, (As) I’ve been nurtured by Tibetans since I was small, I can never give up the cause of Tibet. In 2001 I semi-retired from political responsibility and in 2011 completely retired. I did this to promote democracy. Still, Tibetans both within Tibet and outside have placed their hopes in me, but now my responsibility is to work to protect Tibet’s natural environment, which is fragile and delicate because of the altitude and dry climate. Because they see it as important to global climate change as the North and South Poles, some environmentalists have referred to the Tibetan Plateau as the Third Pole. Special care needs to be taken of it.”

Extract from His Holiness’s address to the Tibetan Community in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA. February 21, 2016

64. Panel Discussion: Nobel Laureates on Human Rights

His holiness observed that climate change and the ups and downs of the global economy are problems that affect us all. They are not confined to national boundaries. Focusing on secondary differences between us like race, religion, nationality and gender, stokes our inclination to divide people into ‘us’ and ‘them’, which easily becomes a basis for conflict. He stressed that if we remember the oneness of humanity and think of each other as brothers and sisters we can overcome that potential for violence.

Extract from His Holiness speech during the panel discussion about Nobel Laureates on Human Rights, Geneva, Switzerland. March 11, 2016

65. His Holiness Speaks At the American Embassy School

His Holiness explained that “human beings are social animals, who cannot survive on their own without the support of a community. Therefore, he said, to think only of our own benefit is narrow minded, whereas taking care of others is like a farmer’s tilling the soil of His fields to ensure a good crop. He pointed out that where small communities in the past were largely self-sufficient, we are now very interdependent. We need each other. In the meantime, climate change affects us all wherever we are, and our global economy is interdependent. This is why we need a sense of concern for all the 7 billion human beings alive today.

Extract from His Holiness address to the young American Embassy school students, New Delhi, India. April 8, 2016

66. His Holiness Visits Springdales School and IIT, Delhi

“In fact, although many in Japan, Europe and North America say they are fed up with violence, what is taking place in North Africa, the Middle East and elsewhere is a symptom of the mistakes we made in the 20th century. Hundreds of people are dying every day of violence and starvation. To remain indifferent would be immoral. As human beings we are social animals. Our well-being is dependent on others. We function in a global economy, while climate change is affecting us all with no regard for national boundaries.”

Extract from His Holiness talks at the Springdales school diamond jubilee, New Delhi, India, April 9, 2016.

67. His Holiness join 270 Religious Leaders to Sign Interfaith Climate Statement

Nobel Peace Laureates His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu joined over 270 leaders of the world’s major religions including Buddhism, Christianity, Islam and Judaism to express support for a strong climate action on Monday, 18 April. It was submitted in New York to the U.N. climate Chief Christiana Figures.

The interfaith statement comes ahead of the gathering of national leaders at the United Nations on Friday, 22 April, to sign the landmark climate pact agreed in Paris – a necessary step towards its entry into force.

“Caring for the Earth is our shared responsibility. Each one of us has a “moral responsibility to act,” as so powerfully stated by the Pope’s Encyclical and in the climate change statements by Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, and other faith leaders,” the interfaith statement reads.

“Humanity is at a crucial turning point. We as faith communities recognize that we must begin a transition away from polluting fossil fuels and towards clean renewable energy sources. It is clear that for many people significant lifestyle changes will have to be made. We must strive for alternatives to the culture of consumerism that is so destructive to ourselves and to our planet,” it says.

“We must reflect on the true nature of our interrelationship to the Earth. It is not a resource for us to exploit at our will. It is a sacred inheritance and a precious home which we must protect. United with the shared hope that arises from faith, we the undersigned believe that the means, desire, and will to care for Earth and all life can and will become action as our political leaders ratify the promises made in Paris and thus safeguard the greater promises of this generation and of all those to come,” the statement concludes.

The interfaith statement further added six call-to-actions urging governments to reduce heat-trapping greenhouse gas emissions, use of 100 percent renewable energy by 2050 and funding to help developing nations adapt to the hazards of a changing climate such as drought, extreme heat, dangerous storms, and rising sea levels.

His Holiness join with 270 Religious Leaders to sign Interfaith Climate Statement. April 18, 2016.

68. Addressing the Annual Forum 2000 Conference.

“I am deeply concerned about protecting Tibet’s natural environment and for the preservation of our rich Buddhist knowledge. Conversation with other Buddhists has convinced me that the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, derived from the Nalanda tradition, is the most comprehensive presentation of the teachings of the Buddha. Keeping it alive is really worthwhile and of interest not only to Tibetans, but also to many among the 400 million Buddhists in China. Since Tibet’s is a culture of peace and compassion, it is well worth preserving.”

Extract from His Holiness address to the gathering at Hradcanske Square to celebrate 20th Anniversary Founding Of Forum 2000, Prague, Czech Republic. October 17, 2016

69. Answering Questions during Public Talk at Milan

To a question about what we can do about climate change? His Holiness said he believed it is possible at least slow it down if we really make an effort to take the necessary steps together. He cited evidence that since appropriate measures were adopted to reduce damage to the ozone layer, inhibiting HFC gases and so forth, it has recovered significantly.

Extract from His Holiness Avalokiteshvara Empowerment and public talk at Milan, Italy. October 22, 2016

70. Addressing Japanese Parliamentarians

His Holiness the Dalai Lama reiterated that as one of seven billion human beings on this planet, he is committed to create a peaceful and happy 21st century. Secondly, as a Buddhist monk, he is fully committed to promote harmony between different religious traditions, as they all have same message of compassion and love. Thirdly, as a Tibetan he is fully committed to the preservation of Tibet's environment, rich heritage of knowledge and culture.

Extract from His Holiness addresses over 200 Parliamentarians at the Japanese House of Representatives' Congress Hall, Japan. November 18, 2016.

71. Addressing Tibetan Pilgrims at the Tsuglagkhang

Harking back to Tang dynasty records, His Holiness recalled that Tibet was one of three great empires, along with the Chinese and Mongolian. He recalled that Songtsen Gampo maintained peaceful relations with the Chinese, taking one of their princesses as a wife and that Trisong Detsen's mother was Chinese. There were other times when Tibet fought with China. However, since today China can bring necessary economic and material development to Tibet, there is benefit to be gained from remaining with the People's Republic of China. But, he said, Tibetans must be free to preserve their culture and language and protect their environment. Despite the claims of hardliners in the Chinese government, this does not make him a 'Splittist'

His Holiness address to the Tibetan pilgrims at the Thekchen Chöling, Dharamsala, HP, India. November 30, 2016

72. Visits National Law School of India University

His Holiness mentioned that not only has he retired from responsibility for Tibet's temporal affairs and devolved it to an elected leadership, but he has also put an end to any future Dalai Lama's taking on such a role. However, he made clear his concern for Tibet's natural environment, not just out of consideration for Tibetans, but also for the more than one billion people across Asia who depend on water from rivers that rise in Tibet.

Extract from His Holiness address to the student of National Law School Of India University, Bengaluru, Karnataka. December 15, 2016.

73. Talk on Environment and Happiness

While lauding the river conservation campaign launched by MP Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, who also participated in the programme, the Dalai Lama said the people should think holistically as far as global warming was concerned.

“The environment has been changing across the world. Our approach should be holistic. CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan has been making efforts for conservation of river Narmada. People should actively participate in such campaigns to make them successful,” he said.

The Tibetan spiritual leader said, “Our ancestors were living here on the earth. Our future generation will live here. We need to save

water, carry out plantations.”

Extract from His Holiness address to the gathering at ‘Namami Devi Narmade-Sewa Yatra,’ Which is aimed at conserving Narmada river, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India. March 19, 2017.

74. Talks at Guwahati University

“Different parts of the world depend on each other. The global economy is heavily dependent. Meanwhile, climate change brings dangers that threaten us all. The widening gap between rich and poor and such inequities as the caste system, a custom that is out of date, are issues we can only tackle together. This is why we need to remember that in being human we are the same, instead of focusing on secondary differences of faith, race or nationality. This is also why I consider myself to be just one among 7 billion human beings, because to dwell on being the Dalai Lama would be to isolate myself from others.

Extract from His Holiness talk at the Guwahati University during Brahmaputra River Festival. April 2, 2017.

75. Indians have Right to Show Concern About Tibet’s Ecology

The Tibetan leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama has said that Indians, particularly among the Himalayan region, have the rights as

well as responsibility to show concern about the ecology of Tibet.

Particularly Indians, you see, have certain rights to show about Tibetan ecology because rivers that comes from Tibet (are) used by Indians so you have some rights to express your sense of concern,” the Dalai Lama told the gathering.

The Noble laureate who has been a vocal advocate of climate change and environmental preservation told the club members most of whom belong to the Himalayan belt to spread awareness and education on the importance and preservation of the environment in the region where most of the rivers that sustain Asia originate from and also encourage afforestation in the region.

“Himalayan mountains and beyond are the source of all major rivers which I think over billion human lives depend on these rivers. So as a member of the Himalayan club, you must tell the locals to take care of the environment and encourage planting more trees”, the octogenarian leader said.

Tibet has been regarded as the “Water Tower of Asia “with majority of the major rivers originating from Tibetan glacial reserves, most of which are now at risk due to global warming as well as rampant damming of rivers by China affecting downstream countries adversely.

Extract from His Holiness address to a group Called ‘Himalayan Club’ at his residence in Mcleod Ganj, Dharamsala. April 24, 2017.

76. 2017 World Environment Day Message

“We depend on each other for our survival. In terms of the threats we all face from climate change, national boundaries have no meaning. Looking at our small blue planet from space no such boundaries can be seen. This is the reality today. On this World Environment Day we have to think of the environment in terms of the welfare of the whole of humanity”.

His Holiness Message on World Environment Day. June 5, 2017

77. His Holiness Keynote Address at University of California San Diego

His Holiness referred to the problems currently prevailing in the world such as climate change as man-made and said it can only be resolved when we undertake a common effort to combat a common problem.

“Human beings are social animals and heavily interdependent. Climate change threatens us all. It’s one of those natural challenges that teach us that we must work together, making a common effort to reach a common goal. A more peaceful world and a more peaceful century require that we rely not on weapons but developing a widespread inner peace,” His Holiness said.

Extract from His Holiness keynote address at the commencement ceremony for the class of 2017, University of California San Diego. June 17, 2017

Researchers at Environment and Development Desk:
Zamlha Tempa Gyaltzen, Dechen Palmo, Tenzin Palden

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