

August 8, 2008

Participants, 2008 March for Tibet's Independence
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Friends:

On behalf of the members of the Formosan Association for Public Affairs nation-wide, I congratulate you with completing the "2008 March for Tibet's Independence."

Today marks the opening of the Olympic Games in Beijing. And the Chinese leaders seek the glory of the Olympics. But in view of China's continued repressive behavior, in Tibet and elsewhere, it is a disgrace that the Olympic Games were awarded to Beijing in the first place, and it is a disgrace that China will bask in the glory of the Olympics over the next two weeks.

Next year marks the 50th anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising. Since the brave and patriotic Tibetans fought with their lives to seek liberty and freedom in 1959, half a century has passed, yet the brutal repression, human rights abuse and cultural genocide by the Communist Chinese regime continues in Tibet today.

This repression in Tibet is part of a systemic effort by the Chinese leadership to subdue and eliminate any criticism of its repressive rule, be it in Tibet and East Turkestan, or China's propping up of failed regimes in Burma, Sudan and Zimbabwe.

The same spirit that rose up 50 years ago against communism in Tibet, against oppression, and tyranny was lit up again in Tibet this past March. Monks and civilians revolted to protest China's systematic repressive policy. Like wildfire, the March uprising spread with lightning speed and attracted electrifying support from all over the world. The light from this fire of freedom has paled the light of the Olympic torch. The light from this fire of freedom has put China's flaws, mistakes, and ugliness in the spotlight.

The Formosan Association for Public Affairs joins you in demanding that the Chinese government respect the fundamental human rights of the peace-loving Tibetan people.

Tibet and Taiwan may be far apart geographically. However, the peoples of Tibet and Taiwan share the very same important goal. We both wish to be free from Chinese threat and oppression.

My Tibetan friends, the Formosan Association for Public Affairs supports your cause. As a token of our solidarity with the International Tibet Independence Movement, and now as a tradition, I would like to present you with this banner advocating "FREE TIBET NOW". (Presentation). My friends, this banner is made in Taiwan. It symbolizes the joining of hands of the people of Tibet and of Taiwan.

Long Live Tibet! Long Live Taiwan! Thank you.

Sheldon Lee, President, Illinois Chapter
Formosan Association for Public Affairs