

5th World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet
Chamber of Deputies of the Italian Parliament, Rome, 18 & 19 November 2009

Members of Parliaments from around the World gather in Rome to find a solution to the Tibet issue

19 November 2009: Yesterday, Matteo Mecacci, the President of the Italian Parliamentary Inter-Group for Tibet; Gianni Vernetti, the Vice-President of the Italian Parliamentary Group for Tibet and a former Under Secretary of State of the Italian Government and Gianni Alemanno, the Mayor of Rome, welcomed His Holiness the Dalai Lama and around 200 participants from around the world participating in the 5th World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet.

Matteo Macacci said, "I welcome you to the Chamber of Deputies of the Italian Parliament on the occasion of the 5th World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet. I am doing this because in the past, the Italian Parliament expressed full support for the Tibetan people's struggle for human rights. Human rights are an inalienable right of all people. As we say in Italy, if constant and consistent, a drop of water can dig a hole in a stone."

Gianni Vernetti in his address said, "This conference is made possible because there is an extraordinary institution, the Tibetan Parliament in exile. I have been to Dharamsala in India twice. I saw its functioning. The Tibetan people have chosen the ballot over bullets. Tibetans have been able to achieve this because of India, perhaps the greatest democracy in the world. Because of this, the Tibetans have achieved what they have achieved in exile. This is to inform you that the Italian Parliament has passed several resolutions on Tibet in the last 10 years and supported the Middle-Way Approach of His Holiness the Dalai Lama."

In his address, Penpa Tsering, the Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament-in-exile, said, "There are 200 participants from 29 countries, including members of the Italian Parliament. I see that the number of participants has risen. The Chinese government has put pressure on individual members of parliaments around the world to stop them from attending this convention. This is not a meeting of anti-Chinese forces. It is a meeting of peace and how the issue of Tibet could be resolved peacefully. We look forward to an action-oriented conference."

In response, His Holiness the Dalai Lama said, "At a time when we are passing through a difficult period, there are many people who show concern and express the willingness to do something. I appreciate the efforts of all people who come here to discuss ways and means to discuss the Tibet problem. "Yesterday, I visited two autonomous regions in Italy (South Tyrol and Trento). These autonomous regions have full freedom but yet remain within Italy. The Chinese constitution provides certain freedoms. If these freedoms are fully implemented, then conditions will improve".

His Holiness the Dalai Lama explained, "We have two hands. Our right hand is always there to reach out to the Chinese government. Then there is our left hand. There are many people who want to help. To them, we extend our left hand."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama said, "I have nothing to personally ask of the Chinese government. Even the continued existence of the institution of the Dalai Lama must be decided by the Tibetan people. The issue of Tibet is the issue of the six million Tibetans. Whether the Chinese government likes it or not, there is a problem in Tibet. If the Communist Party of China reduces censorship, things can be solved. If things become transparent, there will be less problems."

Later in the day, His Holiness the Dalai Lama at a press conference explained his three commitments in life: promotion of human values, inter-faith harmony and resolving the Tibetan issue. After this short presentation, His Holiness the Dalai Lama fielded questions from members of the international media.

At the plenary session, there was a recorded message screened for the participants from Vaclav Havel, the former president of Czechoslovakia and later the first President of the Czech Republic.

Richard Gere, the Hollywood actor and a friend of Tibet and His Holiness the Dalai Lama, read out a message of support from Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the US House of Representatives.

Further information and reports from the 5th World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet:

i) Fini to the Dalai Lama, Solidarity and closeness to Tibet

(AGI) - ROME, 18 NOV - "The Chamber of Deputies is attentively and with some concerns following what is happening in Tibet".

This was the address of the President of the Chamber, Gianfranco Fini, to the Dalai Lama today, received in the hall of the Montecitorio Library. During the meeting, carried out in private and lasting for over half an hour, and at which Fini's partner, Elisabetta Tulliani, was also present, the President of the Chamber expressed to the Dalai Lama "solidarity and closeness to him and to the Tibetan people".

http://www.agi.it/italy/news/200911181133-pol-ren1037-fini_to_the_dalai_lama_solidarity_and_closeness_to_tibet

ii) Tibet: Alemanno meets Dalai Lama

(AGI) - Rome, 18 Nov. - "First we had a meeting on our own with the Dalai Lama and then with Richard Gere: the idea is to organise an important event in Rome during the anniversary of the awarding of honorary citizenship to the Dalai Lama next February 9th", stated the mayor of Rome, Gianni Alemanno, while leaving Hotel Exedra where he met the Tibetan spiritual leader.

The mayor explained that the event "will involve the entire city of Rome and will launch an international message in support of the Tibetan cause".

http://www.agi.it/italy/news/200911182035-cro-ren1096-tibet_alemanno_meets_dalai_lama

iii) Dalai Lama thanks Obama for support

By Guy Dinmore in Rome
The Financial Times, November 18 2009

The Dalai Lama, Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, on Wednesday expressed his appreciation for the support given to him by Barack Obama, the US president, while in China, as members of the exiled government said they were hopeful that stalled talks with Beijing would resume soon.

Speaking in Rome at an international parliamentary conference on Tibet, the Dalai Lama said the Obama administration had been "very supportive", as had the previous Bush and Clinton administrations. He noted the appointment by the White House of a special Tibet coordinator.

For full article see: <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/d783be2a-d461-11de-a935-00144feabdc0.html>

iv) Italian Parliamentarians issue letter of support for Dalai Lama

Arrival in Rome today of Tibetan leader
November 17, 2009

114 Parliamentarians have signed a letter welcoming the Dalai Lama to Rome for the World Parliamentarians Conference on Tibet, which opens tomorrow. The letter, initiated by Hon Matteo Mecacci (PD), President of the Parliamentary Inter-group for Tibet, expresses the hope that the Italian government will fully acknowledge the significance of the Dalai Lama's tireless work in seeking a genuine autonomy and an end to repression in Tibet. It also thanks the President of the Chamber of Deputies, Gianfranco Fini, for allowing the International conference to take place in the Italian Parliament.

The Dalai Lama arrives in Rome today to address the 5th World Parliamentarians Convention on Tibet at the Chamber of Deputies, the Italian Parliament. In the sole press availability of his two-day visit to the city, the Dalai Lama will speak to press at 1300 hours on Wednesday, November 18 at the press room of the Chamber of Deputies (Sala del Mappamondo). The opening and closing ceremonies of the conference are also open to the media.

A full copy of the letter and its signatories is below:

His Holiness the Dalai Lama,

We Deputies and Senators,

Take this opportunity to welcome you to Italy, to Rome, and to the Italian Chamber of Deputies.

We thank you for choosing to honor the 5th World Parliamentarians Convention on Tibet with your participation, which will take place next week in the Italian Chamber of Deputies. We are thankful for this and, in particular, to the President of the Chamber of Deputies, the Honorable Gianfranco Fini, who has allowed this international meeting to take place within the confines of the Italian Parliament, which will have the honor of hosting, along with you, more than 60 parliamentarians from 30 different countries around the world.

Over the course of the past decades, which have seen you as an active force in the international political scene, we have come to value how your faith in non-violence as a non-ideological political instrument for the promotion of peace, human rights, and democracy has strengthened, notwithstanding the terrible and tragic difficulties that you have had to face along with your people, and that unfortunately do not seem destined to diminish.

After receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989, you stated: "I feel honored, humbled and deeply moved that you should give this important prize to a simple monk from Tibet. I am no one special. I accept the prize with profound gratitude on behalf of the oppressed everywhere and for all those who struggle for freedom and work for world peace. I accept it as a tribute to the man who founded the modern tradition of non-violent action for change Mahatma Gandhi whose life taught and inspired me. And, of course, I accept it on behalf of the six million Tibetan people, my brave countrymen and women inside Tibet, who have suffered and continue to suffer so much... I believe all religions pursue the same goals, that of cultivating human goodness and bringing happiness to all human beings. Though the means might appear different, the ends are the same."

Today, as then, your decision and that of the representatives of the Tibetan people in exile, to assure through dialogue, a true political, cultural, social and religious autonomy for the Tibetan population, represents a forward-looking choice of great value and political wisdom, not only for the issues regarding Tibet, but for the entire world.

We hope that Italy, beginning with its official institutions, will use the occasion to accept and appreciate, now more than on past occasions, the profound and universal significance of the non-violent struggle for the complete freedom of the Tibetan population within the evolution and civil progress of all the peoples of China.

Hon. Matteo Mecacci (PD)
President of the Parliamentary Inter-group for Tibet

Hon.Gianni Vernetti (MISTO)
Vice President Parliamentary Inter-group for Tibet
Sen.Lucio Malan (PDL)
Vice President Parliamentary Inter-group for Tibet

On. Ferdinando Adornato (UDC), On. Angelo Alessandri (Lega Nord), On. Sesa Amici (PD), On. Roberto Antonione (PDL), Sen. Asciutti Franco (PDL), On. Giovanni B. Bachelet (PD), Sen. Mario Baldassarri (PDL), On. Luca Barbaresi (PDL), On. Mario Barbi (PD), On. Pier Paolo Baretta (PD), On. Marco Beltrandi (Radicali-PD), On. Rita Bernardini (Radicali-PD), On. Anna Maria Bernini Bovicelli (PDL), On. Isabella Bertolini (PDL), Sen. Maria Teresa Bertuzzi (PD), On. Michaela Biancofiore (PDL), On. Paola Binetti (PD), On. Giampiero Bocci (PD), On. Costantino Boffa (PD), Sen. Emma Bonino (Radicali-PD), On. Margherita Boniver (PDL), On. Chiara Braga (PD), On. Sandro Brandolini (PD), Sen. Alessio Butti (PDL), On. Gabriella Carlucci (PDL), Sen. Valerio Carrara (PDL), On. Susanna Cenni (PD), Sen. Vannino Chiti (PD), On. Pasquale Ciriello (PD), On. Lucia Codurelli (PD), On. Furio Colombo (PD), Sen. Giampiero D'Alia (UDC), On. Cesare Damiano (PD), Sen. Roberto Della Seta (PD), On. Benedetto Della Vedova (PDL), On. Marcello Di Caterina (PDL), On. Anita Di Giuseppe (IDV), Sen. Nicola Paolo Di Girolamo (PDL), On. Giovanni Dima (PDL), Sen. Sergio Divina (Lega Nord), On. Gianpaolo Dozzo (Lega Nord), On. Stefano Esposito (PD), On. Fabio Evangelisti (IDV), On. Maria Antonietta Farina Coscioni (Radicali-PD), On. Enrico Farinone (PD), On. Pierangelo Ferrari (PD), Sen. Alberto Filippi (Lega Nord), Sen. Marco Filippi (PD), Sen. Anna Finocchiaro (PD), Sen. Maurizio Fistarol (PD), Sen. Salvo Fleres (PDL), Sen. Andrea Fluttero (PDL), On. Benedetto Fucci (PDL), On. Laura Froner (PD), Sen. Mirella Giai (UDC), On. Giuseppe Giulietti (MISTO), On. Maria Luisa Gneccchi (PD), Sen. Manuela Granaiola (PD), On. Franco Laratta (PD), On. Touadi Jean Leonard (PD), On. Beatrice Lorenzin (PDL), Sen. Luigi Lusi (PD), On. Riccardo Migliori (PDL), On. Mimmo Lucà (PD), On. Gianni Mancuso (PDL), Sen. Alberto Maritati (PD), On. Giovanna Melandri (PD), Sen. Pietro Marcenaro (PD), Sen. Andrea Marcucci (PD), On. Antonio Martino (PDL), On. Marco Marsilio (PDL), On. Donella Mattesini (PD), On. Federica Mogherini (PD), On. Enrico Montani (Lega Nord), On. Carmen Motta (PD), On. Delia Murer (PD), Sen. Enrico Musso (PDL), On. Alessandra Mussolini (PDL), On. Franco Narducci (PD), On. Fiamma Nirenstein (PDL), On. Carmine Patarino (PDL), Sen. Andrea Pastore (PDL), Sen. Marco Perduca (Radicali-PD), On. Caterina Pes (PD), On. Guglielmo Picchi (PDL), On. Guglielmo Picetti (PDL), Sen. Adriana Poli Bortone (UDC-SVS-AUT.), Sen. Donatella Poretti (Radicali-PD), On. Fabio Porta (PD), Sen. Guido Possa (PDL), On. Enzo Raisi (PDL), Sen. Luigi Ramponi (PDL), Sen. Antonino Randazzo (PD), On. Simonetta Rubinato (PD), On. Antonio Ruggia (PD), On. Andrea Sarubbi (PD), On. Alessandra Siragusa (PD), On. Gerardo Soglia (PDL), On. Marcello Tagliatela (PDL), On. Walter Tocci (PD), On. Mario Tullio (PD), On. Maurizio Turco (Radicali-PD), On. Walter Verini (PD), On. Raffaello Vignali (PDL), Sen. Luigi Vimercati (PD), On. Marco Zacchera (PDL), On. Elisabetta Zamparutti (Radicali-PD), Pierfelice Zazzera (IDV).

END

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