



**HOUSE OF COMMONS**  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

31<sup>st</sup> January 2024

*Dear Constance,*

**RE: TIBET - PERSECUTION OF BUDDHISTS**

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns about the persecution of Buddhists in Tibet. I have read your comments with interest.

First, thank you for your kind invitation to attend the Westminster Hall debate held on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2023. Unfortunately, owing to prior, longstanding diary commitments, I was unable to attend, although please rest assured that I will continue to follow the issues raised closely.

I share your concerns about the persecution of Buddhists and freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) in Tibet, and would like to outline some of the work that the UK Government is doing to support the rights of Tibetans.

China is one of 32 Human Rights Priority Countries for the UK, and I know that the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office recognises that China is systematically violating Tibetans' rights and repressing Tibetan language and culture. There are also disturbing reports of forced labour. This is deeply troubling, and the UK Government consistently raises its concerns directly with the Chinese authorities at the highest levels. Indeed, the former Foreign Secretary did so in a meeting with the Chinese Vice President in May 2023.

Furthermore, the UK Government works with partners to draw international attention to the human rights situation in Tibet. Recent examples include the 8th November G7 Foreign Ministers statement, and the UK's Item 4 statement at the UN Human Rights Council in September. At the United Nations Human Rights Council in June 2023, the UK also made a statement urging China to reverse its ongoing, serious, and systematic human rights violations in Xinjiang and Tibet.

More broadly, the UK Government works within international organisations and networks to promote and protect FoRB where it is threatened, including the UN, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Council of Europe, and the International Religious Freedom or Belief Alliance.

Everyone, everywhere, deserves to enjoy fundamental human rights, and China should respect those rights in Tibet, in line with its own constitution and the international frameworks to which it is a party. Until it does so, I am reassured that the UK will continue to hold it to account.



Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*With best wishes,*

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**