

# Declaration on the position of the Dorje Shugden Devotee's Charitable & Religious Society

*regarding*

*the speech of His Holiness Dalai Lama given on January 12th, 2008, given in Mundgod, India*

## *Background information:*

The entire country of Tibet consists of provinces and regions. Likewise the great monastic universities are composed of a number of colleges (dratsangs), subdivided by departments (kangtsen). Each section of those communities traditionally venerate general and specific protector deities. About thirty years ago, His Holiness Dalai Lama began to develop a displeasure for the protector deity Dorje Shugden. Since 1996 he has been strongly campaigning against this deity and its devotees, thus creating divisions and animosities within the communities that had never before existed in Tibet's history. In an attempt to completely excommunicate the marginalized portion of the people, he called for 'votes' to be held within a few days, whether in future these newly divided groups of Tibetans should still live together, study together, or share any aspects of life together.

## **Declaration:**

*In a speech held on January 12th 2008 in Mundgod, H.H. Dalai Lama announced that he intends to have votes conducted in order to decide whether in future it should be permissible to venerate the Dharma protector Dorje Shugden and whether in future Tibetans should maintain any spiritual or material relation with anyone still venerating this deity.*

We here therefore declare, that the devotees of the Dharma protector Dorje Shugden do not agree to such proceedings and have no wish to participate in any such activities for the following reasons:

1. The action of the exile government, as announced by H.H. Dalai Lama, is not an honest proceeding. Due to many years of persistent threatening and pressure, the forming of what is now minority and majority is predetermined.
2. The intended proceeding are in complete contradiction to any democratic system. This action is called for from one side alone, without any dialogue with the other party and absolutely no mutual agreement.
3. The intended proceedings follow a manner we Tibetans call "get a decision by a single stroke of the sword". It is one person deciding for hundreds, by use of power, without even the slightest prior discussion with the involved. Therefore, these intended proceeding do not only contradict with any fundamental system of democracy, but they also disregard the basic human right of freedom of speech.

4. If the exile government were truly sincere to show a democratic nature of their policy, then why, until now, has there never been a call for a majority agreement by use of vote sticks for all those appointments by the power of the seal of H.H. Dalai Lama, both on religious and political levels? Therefore, at this time, the intended emergency proceedings can only be understood as pretentious, and thus by no means acceptable.

5. Since the founding of the renowned tradition of Glorious Mount Geden, or Gelug, by the omniscient master Je Tsongkhapa, various favourable and unfavourable situations may have occurred. However, a division of the sacred Sangha, the monastic community, under the pretext of voting over such an issue like the veneration of a protecting deity, has never occurred. Thus, this is inappropriate.

6. No-one is endowed with the right to destroy the Gelug community by messing with veneration or non-veneration of a protector. The exile government never saw any need for a majority agreement on the question whether it should be permissible for Tibetans to have spiritual or material relations with China. This being the case, for them to look for a majority agreement within the Gelug community on the banning of spiritual and material relations with the devotees of Dorje Shugden lacks all significance.

7. The exile government makes much effort in world-wide publicising its decision to abide 'within the great family of China', by abandoning Tibetan independence. Then what meaning is there in this pressure within the spiritual family of the Gelug tradition, the children of our most venerable founding father Je Tsongkhapa, to vote by wood sticks, whether or not to live together, sharing the spiritual and material resources with the devotees of Dorje Shugden? This contradicts all rules and systems, and defies the basic law of karma and effect.

8. We are deeply saddened by the exile government's political attempt, under the pretext of religion, misusing the various members of Gelug-tradition, to divide the tradition and make it totally inefficient.

9. Stick-vote in addition to election has no separate meaning. In particular in this proposed event all the adjudicators are ministers, deputies, and regional officers of the exile government, who are lay persons. It contradicts the rules of Vinaya to appoint such functionaries for the Sangha, be it in a direct or indirect manner. It is this kind of mixture of religion and politics in the actions of the exile government, that confuses and deceives our people.

10. Cabinet ministers, lead by Samdong Lama, some local representatives of the exile government, and deputies have informed the monastic dignitaries of Drepung monastery on the 19th December 2007, that in case the planned voting should produce legal affairs, violent clashes, or injuries, the exile government will cover all expenses. Observing this makes it clear that apart from identifying us as an enemy belonging to a different race, there is not the slightest recognition of us belonging to the same Tibetan people. Therefore, how can the exile government have the right to impose decisions on us? How can they justify the use of financial resources belonging to the Tibetan people to break the heads of our own people? As long as these questions are not clarified, there is no possibility for us to participate in any of the planned proceedings.

11. Before announcing these proceedings of majority agreement, in the monasteries, schools, and various organisations, it has been propounded that continued veneration of the protector Shugden is considered a criminal act. Many persons have been expelled from their places, although they are in the same situation of refugee, thus forcing them to become double refugees. And when it occurs that they have no-more base, when they have to wander from country to country, can those

responsible bear their physical and mental sufferings even for one day? Even if those victims cannot be recompensated for all their loss, until the general announcement of their readmission to the respective groups and organisations, there is no way that proceedings of majority-agreement can be accepted.

12. His Holiness has said many times: "What I have started, I will bring to the end." So there is obviously no need for a vote, besides, there is no agreement from our side. We can only state our dismay at exile government's deliberate pursuit of such religio-political activities, causing senseless conflicts and troubles among the people, and causing only sorrow for Tibet's friends and delight for its enemies.

13. Many times, without any ill-will towards anybody, we have requested to allow us to venerate our own deity. But never have we requested anyone else to venerate our deity. Therefore, such voting has no purpose. For example, if a person called Lobsang venerates protector Shugden, this will not harm a person called Tenzin. In the same way, if a person called Tenzin venerates protector Nechung (Tibet's state protector), this will not harm a person called Lobsang, otherwise the law of Karma would be fallible - because then a person would encounter a karmic result of a cause it never accumulated. Not knowing a simple Buddhist philosophical point like that is impossible among the great logic-scholars of our Geden tradition. However, due to the supreme status and power of the speaker, there is no possibility even to utter a differing view. As a result many weird situations have occurred: some people had to give a signature five times, others had to swear three times, however, the pledge in a person's heart, which cannot be erased under the pretext of signature giving and swearings, is the witness of truth. This Dorje Shugden Devotee's Charitable Organisation, through the experience of many years, expresses full understanding for such helpless situations, without grudges, disappointments, or any other unwholesome thoughts.

14. Our veneration for this protector of Dharma is all in all - at the beginning, middle, and at the end - exclusively a practice of Dharma, and has no relation to political intentions of any kind. It is a baseless, unjust, and ill-intended allegation against us, to accuse us of bringing danger to the life of His Holiness, or to accuse us of political links with China. In all those many years since we came to India, such intrigues have been used by the exile government to cheat the government of India, the Tibetan people, and many others in the world. Whoever appeared undesirable to the exile government was harassed with such allegations. Thus many qualified, experienced, and capable people have been ruined, this is a fact never to forget. But time has taken a change, and it is the time for the exile government to become aware of consequences and its power-limits. From the side of our people, we take full responsibility to state with completely clear conscience, that we are in no way creating danger for the precious life of His Holiness, and that we do not have and do not entertain any direct or indirect political connections with China. This we have clearly stated in the past and this we are again clearly confirming here today - and we are requesting every honest, unbiased, truthful person to stand as our witness - and appeal for understanding, that we cannot participate in any proceedings of the exile government, as long as these unjust allegations are not ceased.

15. By humbly joining our two palms, we appeal to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, to please give his assistance, protection, and blessings for allowing us to experience in all sincerity the freedom of our own religious faith, the basic human right of freedom of speech, and in the name of democracy, that no devotee of Dorje Shugden will have to go through the suffering of being expelled from one's place.

16. The final point, which should be kept in mind by our own people: This great nation of India where we live, is a true democratic country, which protects the most important basic rights that human race deserves, such as freedom of faith and freedom of speech. We all should always be well aware of this, and be grateful for this immeasurable kindness of allowing us to live here until now in peace and security. While being aware of this favourable situation, we are also confident in our firm believe in everlasting care and protection given to us by the government and people of India. With heartfelt friendship for the people of India, with respect of the law, and towards any brothers and sisters belonging to our beloved snow-land Tibet, without causing any troubles, without keeping any grudge, without lamenting for any grief, without exchanging any complaints, without contributing for any disharmony, we should abide together in a noble, friendly, and dignified manner, even if it is not possible to merge like milk an water. Likewise, every devotee of Dorje Shugden, wherever they may be in the world, may they give mutual support and assistance. Our people should have a deep knowledge of the rules and regulations of the country in which they live, and lead a life completely in accordance with it. From now on and in the future, if we are treated with the same abuse and maltreatment, may the devotees of Dorje Shugden dwelling in various distances in the world, and any honest and kind person understand our difficulty of becoming a double refugee, and thus listen to our desperate call for help.

Delhi, January 23, 2008