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# **The USA is encouraging China to make peace with Tibet – Australia should do the same**

On 12 July 2024 US President Biden signed S. 138, the “Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Dispute Act”<sup>1</sup> with Biden stating “My Administration will continue to call on the People’s Republic of China to resume direct dialogue, without preconditions, with the Dalai Lama, or his representatives, to seek a settlement that resolves differences and leads to a negotiated agreement on Tibet.”<sup>2</sup>

“This Act is a significant step towards peace in our region” says Dr Zoe Bedford, Executive Officer, Australia Tibet Council “the act is aimed to insist that China resumes dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama to resolve the ongoing dispute between China and Tibet. Tibet was an independent country, illegally occupied by China in 1950 and according to international law this is an open and ongoing conflict that all states must try to resolve”.

“The Dalai Lama has long called for a peaceful resolution and asked Tibetans to only use peaceful, non-violent means of struggle against the occupation of Tibet” Says Dr Zoe Bedford, Australia Tibet Council “If countries around the world would like to see a more peaceful future for humankind then Tibet’s peaceful struggle needs to be supported”.

“I would like to express my gratitude to the US congress for passing this historic Resolve Tibet Act. The signing of this Act by the President of the United States into law marks an important milestone. It ensures that the Tibetan people have the final say on the future of Tibet and sends a powerful message to China that the Tibet issue has to be resolved through negotiation instead of adopting policies of absolute control and assimilation.” Says Mr Karma Singey, representative in Australia of His Holiness the Dalai Lama “I would like to take this opportunity to request Tibetan- Australian and friends of Tibet in Australia to call on the Australian government to adopt a similar legislation to get China back on the negotiating table with Tibetan leaders and combat China's disinformation about Tibet.”

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The Australian All-Party Parliamentary Group for Tibet stated "Both the Senate and Congress in bi-partisan agreement, have passed the Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet Sino Conflict Act, this act recognises the Tibetan people's right to self-determination and to decide their own future.

This act affirms the USA State Department's responsibility to coordinate with other governments in a multilateral effort towards the goal of a negotiated resolution of the Sino-Tibet Conflict, with the stated goal of having the Chinese Government return in good faith to the negotiating table with the Dalai Lama to resolve the Sino Tibet conflict.

"We support the Australian government also working towards these efforts" said Susan Templeman MP, Senator Dean Smith and Senator Barbara Pocock in a statement"<sup>3</sup>

President Biden also stated, "I share the Congress's bipartisan commitment to advancing the human rights of Tibetans and supporting efforts to preserve their distinct linguistic, cultural, and religious heritage."

"The truth is if China is allowed to continue it's policy of cultural Genocide - by forcing Tibetan children into Chinese State-run boarding schools, stripping them of their connections to Tibetan language, religion and culture - if this continues for 10 to 15 more years Tibetan culture is in danger of being lost".

"Australia is re-establishing a trade relationship with China, we can not sacrifice the rights of Tibetan people's to self-determination in this effort to re-establish trade with China"  
Furthermore Dr Zoe Bedford says "If Australia believes in the virtue of non-violent, peaceful struggle, then the efforts of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Tibetans around the world should be supported. If we want peace in this world - then Australia needs to be more proactive in the promotion of the peaceful resolution of the struggle of Tibet."

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1 <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/138?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%22Tibet%22%7D&s=1&r=1>

2 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/07/12/statement-from-president-joe-biden-on-s-138-the-promoting-a-resolution-to-the-tibet-china-dispute-act/>

3 <https://www.atc.org.au/australian-parliamentarians-statement-on-the-dalai-lamas-birthday/>

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