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Fact Sheet – The 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso

1933: The 13th Dalai Lama, Thubten Gyatso, dies at age 57. Dalai Lamas are believed to be manifestations of Avalokiteshvara, the Bodhisattva of Compassion and patron saint of Tibet. Bodhisattvas are enlightened beings who postpone their own nirvana and choose rebirth in order to serve humanity.

July 6, 1935: Lhamo Dhondup born to a farming family in a small hamlet in Taktser (Hong’Ai), in the northeast Tibetan region of Amdo (Qinghai Province), one of seven siblings to survive childhood.

1937: At age two, formally recognized as the reincarnation of the 13th Dalai Lama and renamed Jetsun Jamphel Ngawang Lobsang Yeshe Tenzin Gyatso (shortened as Tenzin Gyatso).

1939: Arrives in Lhasa in October after three-month journey from Amdo.

1940: Begins monastic education which consists of five major subjects (logic, Tibetan art and culture, Sanskrit, medicine, and Buddhist philosophy) and five minor subjects (poetry, music and drama, astrology, metre and phrasing, and synonyms). Formally enthroned as 14th Dalai Lama on February 22.

1942: Receives vows of novice monk.

1950: Assumes full political power one year following China’s intervention in Tibet. Flees Lhasa for Dromo (Yadong) in southern Tibet.

1951: 17-Point Agreement signed by Tibetan delegation in Peking on May 23. Meets in Dromo with a Chinese delegation led by newly-appointed Commissioner and Administrator of Civil and Military Affairs of Tibet, General Chiang Chin-wu. Returns to Lhasa in August.

1954: Attends peace talks in Beijing with Mao Zedong and other Chinese leaders including Chou En-lai, Chu The and Deng Xiaoping.

1956: First visit to India to participate in the 2500th Buddha Jayanti celebrations.

February 1959: Final examination in the Jokhang Temple, Lhasa during the annual Monlam (prayer) Festival. Passes with honors and is awarded the Geshe Lharampa Degree, the highest-level degree equivalent to a doctorate of Buddhist philosophy.

March 1959: In response to increasing tensions from an uprising within the region against Chinese control, at just 23 years of age, he and a small entourage depart from Tibet to India. Tibetan government formally reestablishes at Lhudup Dzong and repudiates the 17-Point Agreement.

April 1959: Stays briefly in Mussoorie, India, before taking up residence at Swarg Ashram in Dharamsala on April 30.

1959: Granted asylum by Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Asylum also extended to Tibetans who accompanied him into exile.

1963: Unveils a draft democratic constitution for Tibet, "The Charter of Tibetans in Exile" which enshrines freedom of speech, belief, assembly, and movement, and provides detailed guidelines on the functioning of the Tibetan government for those living in exile. First Tibetan Parliament in exile established in Dharamsala.

1967: First visits abroad since coming into exile, to Japan and Thailand.

1968: Moves residence to present day Thekchen Choeling (Byrne Estate) in Dharamsala.

1970: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, which currently houses more than 80,000 manuscripts and other resources on Tibetan history, politics and culture, opens in Dharamsala.

1973: Embarks on first visit to Europe including Italy, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Great Britain, West Germany and Austria.

1979: Second visit to Europe includes study of quantum theory with physicists Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker (1989 Templeton Prize Laureate), David Bohm, and, later, philosopher of science Karl Popper. Establishes contact with government of the People's Republic of China for the first time since coming into exile in 1959.

1983: Meets neuroscientist (and practicing Buddhist) Dr. Francisco Varela at the Alpbach Symposia on Consciousness.

1987: With Francisco Varela and entrepreneur Adam Engle, co-founds the Mind & Life Institute to create a dialogue and research collaboration between modern science and Buddhism. The Institute, headquartered in Boulder, Colorado, supports multi-disciplinary scientific investigation of the mind leading to the development and dissemination of practices that cultivate the mental qualities of attention, emotional balance, kindness, compassion, confidence and happiness. The first Mind and Life Conference held in October in Dharamsala includes six scientists from Europe and America and two Tibetan scholars. The dialogues become large public events documented in various books including *Consciousness at the Crossroads*, *The Dalai Lama at MIT*, *Destructive Emotions*, *Healing Emotions*, and *Sleeping, Dreaming and Dying*.

Delivers Five Point Peace Plan for Tibet that includes making the region a non-armed enclave and an environmental sanctuary with China responsible for defense and foreign policy.

1988: Delivers Strasbourg Proposal for Tibet to members of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, including an elaboration of the final point of the Five Point Peace Plan.

1989: Awarded Nobel Prize for Peace. The Nobel Committee notes that “in his struggle for the liberation of Tibet (he) consistently has opposed the use of violence. He has instead advocated peaceful solutions based upon tolerance and mutual respect in order to preserve the historical and cultural heritage of his people.” With the Prize award, establishes the New Delhi-based Foundation for Universal Responsibility, whose mission is encouraging the practice of nonviolence, improving communications between religion and science, securing human rights and democratic freedoms, and conserving and restoring the Earth.

1991: Meets with author and astronomer Carl Sagan at Cornell University for talks on science and belief, and again the following year in India. When asked by Sagan if there were any conceivable scientific finding that would make him no longer consider himself a Buddhist, he answers, “Buddhism is not so much a religion, but a ‘science of the mind’ or an ‘inner science’ ... there is much benefit to learning from [scientists’] findings.” *Freedom in Exile: The Autobiography of the Dalai Lama* published. *Mind Science: An East-West Dialogue* published.

1992: Initiates direct elections of Kalons (Ministers) by the Assembly of Tibetan People’s Deputies (Kalons were previously appointed by the Dalai Lamas). *Gentle Bridges: Conversations with the Dalai Lama on the Sciences of the Mind* published.

1994: Stanford University hosts informal symposia with the Dalai Lama and faculty members including molecular biologist Helen Blau, behavioral scientist David Spiegel, physicist Steven Chu, neurobiologist Russell Fernald, along with computer scientists, philosophers, anthropologists and theologians. They engage in extended dialogues on philosophical, ethical and religious issues raised by their research.

1996: *The Good Heart: A Buddhist Perspective on the Teachings of Jesus* published.

1997: *Healing Emotions: Conversations with the Dalai Lama on Emotions and Health* published. *Sleeping, Dreaming and Dying* published.

1998: *The Art of Happiness: A Handbook for Living* published.

1999: *Ancient Wisdom, Modern World: Ethics for a New Millennium* published. *Consciousness at the Crossroads: Conversations with the Dalai Lama on Brain Science and Buddhism* published.

2001: Science for Monks established to encourage the teaching of science in Buddhist monastic centers of higher learning in India. The partnership between the Sager Family Foundation and the Library of Tibetan Works & Archives engages Indian and Western scientists to explore connections between Tibetan Buddhist traditions and science, and teach methods of scientific inquiry in physics, quantum mechanics, cosmology, biology, neuroscience, and mathematics. First direct democratic elections held by the Tibetan people for the post of Kalon Tripa (senior Minister). *Visions of Compassion* published.

2004: *Destructive Emotions: A Scientific Dialogue with the Dalai Lama* published. *The New Physics and Cosmology* published. *The Wisdom of Forgiveness* published.

2005: The Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education is created at Stanford University after another visit to Stanford and dialogues among the Dalai Lama, scientists in the fields of neuroscience, psychology, and medical science, and other contemplative scholars. The discourse resulted in recognition that engagement between the cognitive science disciplines of neuroscience and psychology, and Buddhism and other contemplative traditions, could contribute to understanding of the human mind and emotion. Housed at the Stanford Institute for Neuro-

Innovation and Translational Research at the School of Medicine, the Center supports and conducts rigorous scientific studies of compassion and altruistic behavior.

Speaks to 14,000 participants at the Society for Neuroscience annual meeting in Washington, where he calls for “secular ethics that embrace the key ethical principles, such as compassion, tolerance, a sense of caring, consideration of others, and the responsible use of knowledge and power – principles that transcend the barriers between religious believers and nonbelievers, and followers of this religion or that religion....”

With friend and co-author Victor Chan, co-founds and lends his name to the Dalai Lama Center for Peace and Education in Vancouver, British Columbia. *The Universe in a Single Atom: The Convergence of Science and Spirituality* published.

2006: *The Dalai Lama at MIT* published.

2007: Awarded the United States Congressional Gold Medal in October recognizing his role as one of the world’s foremost moral and religious leaders advocating for peace. Named Presidential Distinguished Professor at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, his first university appointment.

2009: Contributes \$150,000 to the Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education at Stanford University, the largest personal donation he has ever given to a scientific venture. *Leader’s Way: Business, Buddhism and Happiness in an Interconnected World* published.

2010: Launches Common Ground project with HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad of Jordan, based on the book *Common Ground between Islam and Buddhism*, commissioned by Prince Ghazi and authored by Reza Shah-Kazemi. *Toward a True Kinship of Faiths: How the World’s Religions Can Come Together* published.

2011: On March 10, announces intention to relinquish political responsibility and proposes changes to the constitution of the Tibetan government in exile to remove the Dalai Lama’s role as head of state, to be replaced with an elected leader. Signs the amendment of the Charter of Tibetans on May 29, vesting the Central Tibetan Administration and its democratic leadership with all political powers and responsibilities formerly held by the Dalai Lama, who remains the spiritual leader of Tibet. This ends the tradition (since the 5th Dalai Lama in 1642) of the Dalai Lamas holding dual responsibility of spiritual and temporal powers. *Beyond Religion: Ethics for a Whole World* published.

2012: Awarded the 2012 Templeton Prize.

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