

DALAI LAMA



The Dalai Lama is a Buddhist monk and the spiritual leader of the Tibetan people. Tibet has been controlled by China for over 50 years. He has lived in India since 1959 when he had to escape Tibet. Many Tibetans have been imprisoned or killed because they have spoken out against the Chinese occupation of their country.

As a Buddhist, the Dalai Lama disagrees with the use of violence. In order to preserve the history and the culture of the people he represents, he has always encouraged peaceful solutions based on tolerance and mutual respect. The Dalai Lama has developed his philosophy of peace from a great respect for all living things and from the idea that we all have a responsibility for each other and the world. He has come forward with constructive and forward-looking proposals for the solution of international conflicts, human rights issues and global environmental problems.

The Dalai Lama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989. In his acceptance speech, the Dalai Lama referred to the fact that in the previous week, a number of Tibetans were once again sentenced to prison. Their only "crime" was the expression of the widespread desire of Tibetans for their country's independence. He added that violence can only breed more violence and suffering and that the struggle for independence must remain non-violent and free of hatred.

As a Buddhist monk, his concern extends to all beings who suffer. He believes all suffering is caused by ignorance. He is convinced that everyone can develop a good heart and a sense of universal responsibility with or without religion. With the ever growing impact of science on our lives, religion and spirituality have a greater role to play in reminding us of our humanity. Each gives us valuable insights into the other. Both science and the teachings of the Buddha tell us of the unity of all things. He believes all religions have the same goal of helping people to become better humans and bringing happiness to the world.

