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## Youth for Umaylam - The Middle Way Approach (Y4U)

### Celebrating His Holiness' 80th Birthday!



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*Edited by Lobsang Namru*

**Y**outh for Umaylam - The Middle Way Approach (Y4U) would like to wish a memorable celebration of the 80th Birthday of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. As Tibetans, we feel very fortunate to have you as our leader; a global champion of peace and non-violence. Your enduring faith and advocacy of a compassionate global community traverses cultural boundaries to inspire each individual to make transformative change in how we lead our daily lives. Since the age of sixteen when you assumed temporal and spiritual leadership of the Tibetan people, you have worked tirelessly to put the issue of Tibet on the global stage, and thereby improving the lives of countless Tibetans from an impoverished lot to one of the most successful refugee communities.

In the face of insurmountable odds, not once did you abandon the path

of peace and nonviolence in all spheres of lives. The Middle-Way Policy (Umaylam) is a testament to this; a wise, mutually beneficial and pragmatic approach that seeks genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people through peaceful conflict resolution. We wholeheartedly agree with you that the past 20<sup>th</sup> century was of "blood shed". We stand and strive with your vision of making the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a century of dialogue where conflicts are resolved to reach a mutually beneficial conclusion.

As a gift for your 80th birthday, we pledge to dedicate our lives to the Tibetan cause by championing the Middle Way Policy. We are certain that one day, in the near future, this approach will resolve the Tibetan issue.

Once again, happy 80th birthday, Your Holiness. We pray for your long life and look forward to celebrating many more birthdays with you.

### Y4U's Mission

**Y**<sub>4U</sub> works in solidarity with the Central Tibetan Administration and the Tibetan people to raise awareness and support for the Middle Way Approach through education, political advocacy, community engagement, youth empowerment, and peaceful conflict resolution.

*Seeking genuine autonomy for Tibetans through peaceful conflict resolution*

## *President's Letter*

Dear members, friends & the community,

On behalf of the Youth for Umaylam (Y4U) Board, we would like to thank you for your support as we move forward with our organization's mission. We, a group of 12 Tibetan Youth in Minnesota, first convened on October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014 to strategize a grassroots movement that aims to support, strengthen and promulgate the CTA's signature policy of Middle Way. Therefore, Y4U was born. Umaylam as a political strategy was first conceived by His Holiness the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama in 1974 as a guiding principle that would both be the means and end to the Sino-Tibetan issue. Therefore, we will engage in actions in accordance with our mission and motto: seeking genuine autonomy for Tibetans through peaceful conflict resolution.

In order to fulfill Y4U's mission, we will use a bottom-up approach to increase grassroots momentum for Umaylam. We understand that many of us share a common interest of contributing in some capacity towards the Tibetan cause. Thus, Y4U comes at a prime time that will harness the potential and activism in each of us.

In the first year of 2015 - 2016, Y4U will be laying the foundations that will sustain and strengthen the organization for the long-term. We will identify meaningful collaborations to increase our capacity and to create collective impact within our community, as well as the wider community. More importantly, we want our struggle to be strong for generations to come. We would greatly appreciate your continued support and encourage you all to join us in this collective effort by becoming a Y4U member or a friend of Y4U.

Sincerely,



Tendor Norbu

Y4U President

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## *About Us*



Y4U Founding Members

**W**e, a group of Tibetan Youth in Minnesota, have established Y4U in order to raise awareness about Umaylam - The Middle Way Approach because we saw the need to educate and clearly present a comprehensive understanding of Umaylam. Using a bottom-up approach, we will create opportunities to learn more about Umaylam and its importance to support a more peaceful state of self-governance in Tibet. Ultimately, this allows the Tibetan people to meet their basic needs and to preserve the unique Tibetan culture and identity. We strongly believe Umaylam is the most pragmatic solution that protects the vital interests of both China and Tibet.

## ***What Is The Middle Way Approach?***



**T**he Middle Way Approach for Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People (“Umaylam” in Tibetan) is a policy conceived by His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 1974, in an effort to engage the Chinese government in dialogue and find a peaceful way to protect the unique Tibetan culture and identity. It is a policy adopted democratically through a series of discussions held over many decades by the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) and the Tibetan people.

**It is a win-win proposition**, which straddles the middle path between the status quo and independence – one that categorically rejects the present repressive and colonial policies of the Chinese government towards the Tibetan people while not seeking

separation from the People’s Republic of China.

It is a pragmatic position that safeguards the vital interests of concerned parties: for Tibetans, the protection and preservation of their identity and dignity; and for China, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the motherland. It has enabled direct contact between the envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Chinese government in 1979 making possible, for four fact-finding delegations of exile leadership, to travel extensively within Tibet and the holding of exploratory talks in 1982 and 1984. From 2002 to 2010, nine rounds of formal talks and one informal meeting took place between the envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and representatives of the Chinese leadership.

(Source: [www.mwa.tibet.net](http://www.mwa.tibet.net))

## ***What Form Will Genuine Autonomy Take?***



1. Tibetans are seeking a form of self-governance which would allow them to meet their basic needs (see below) but not challenge the unity and stability of the People's Republic of China.
2. Tibetans are seeking a form of autonomy where they share customs and the same value system, language, way of life and geography.
3. Uniting Tibetans under a single administrative unit would be a more efficient and effective form of governance than the existing structure where Tibetans are divided into the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and neighboring provinces with a Chinese majority, i.e. Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu and Yunnan.
4. The Chinese authorities claim that it is the Tibetan leadership's intention to expel "all Chinese" from Tibetan areas. In fact, the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People clearly articulates that this is not the case: "Our intention is not to expel non-Tibetans. Our concern is the induced mass movement of primarily Han, but also some other nationalities, into many Tibetan areas, which in turn marginalizes the native Tibetan population."
5. The Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People calls for Tibetan areas to have a Tibetan majority for the preservation and promotion of the unique Tibetan identity. A Tibetan regional administration would govern the protection and promotion of the 11 Basic Needs of Tibetans.

### **11 Basic Needs:**

*language, culture, religion, education, environmental protection, utilization of natural resources, economic development and trade, public health, public security, regulation on population migration and cultural, educational and religious exchanges with other countries.*

(Source: [www.mwa.tibet.net](http://www.mwa.tibet.net))



## Y4U's Launch Event



*Kasur Lobsang stressing the importance of unity*

**A**fter months of deliberation, Y4U held its launch event on May 23rd, 2015 at the Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota's community center. The turnout for the event was great with approximately 150 people in attendance, involving all age groups.

The 3-hour program was divided into two parts; the first half of the program was allocated to the Y4U founders as they introduced the organization, and the second half was reserved for our Keynote Speaker: Kasur Lobsang Nyandak Zayul. The founders presented the history, structure, and mission of the organization. The presentation was given in both English and Tibetan to accommodate all age groups as well as non-Tibetan audience members.

Next, Kasur Lobsang presented on the topic of Umaylam. He continually stressed the importance of being tolerant and maintaining a sense of unity amongst our Tibetan community, despite our differences in views. He mentioned that in a meaningful democracy, individuals should have a space for varying views. Ultimately, it is important that the youth stay politically engaged in the Tibetan cause. A short Q&A session followed his presentation.

The launch event was a huge success; it was a stepping-stone for Y4U to transparently share the organization's goals and mission with the Tibetan community.



*Y4U founders presenting its election process to the audience*



*Group picture after the event*

*A special thanks to all the donors, sponsors, volunteers, and the community at the event*

## Logo Description



*Designed by Phurbu Dolma*

1. The sun on top symbolizes the 14th Dalai Lama, who conceived Umaylam (the Middle Way Approach in Tibetan) in 1974.
2. Then, the snowcapped mountain represents the common identity of the Tibetan People being from the land of the snows (Ghang-chenpas).
3. Next, the Kelsang Choekung (the butter lamp) symbolizes the hope for a transition to a peaceful state of self-governance for the Tibetan areas.
4. The two hands working in collaboration represents the continued support for dialogue in order to find a common ground that meets the vital interest of both China and Tibet.
5. The 5 colors incorporated in the logo are the 5 colors of the prayer flags, which stresses the importance of preserving the unique Tibetan identity.

## Get Involved

Y4U welcomes you! Join us in our effort by becoming a member, a friend of umaylam, or a volunteer.

### Membership:

**A**ll members must be ethnically Tibetan. Proper documentation is needed, such as a Green Book (Chatrel), a parent's Green Book, or a Tibetan Association membership. If you are interested in becoming member, please fill the application form (see back page) and mail it to us.

#### ***Members' Roles and Responsibilities include the following:***

1. To uphold the mission of the organization.
2. To help organize and support group events.
3. Can vote to elect board members.
4. Can participate as a committee member.
5. Must not have conflict of interest with Y4U's mission.
6. Eligible to run for board of directors position.

#### ***Membership Fee:***

All Members must pay an annual membership fee of \$20 per fiscal year starting on May 5th. An active member must have membership dues up-to-date.

### Friends of Umaylam:

**F**riends of Umaylam are those who share the same beliefs and mission of Y4U but are ineligible to be a Member. The purpose of Friends of Umaylam is to allow them the opportunity to participate in the organization. All Friends of Umaylam must pay an annual membership fee of \$10 per fiscal year starting on May 5th.

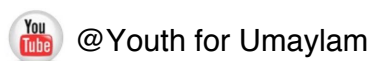
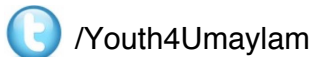
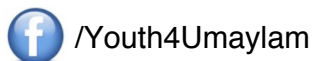
#### ***Friends of Umaylam's Roles and Responsibilities include the following:***

1. To uphold the mission of the organization.
2. To support and engage in group events.
3. Can participate as a committee member.
4. Ineligible to run for any board positions and do not hold any voting rights.
5. Must not have conflict of interest with Y4U's mission.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact us at [info@youth4umaylam.org](mailto:info@youth4umaylam.org).

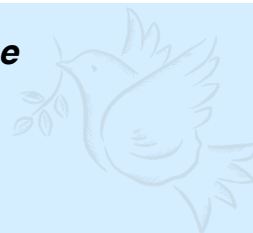
## Looking Ahead

**Y**4U strives to build upon the current momentum of our political activism with diverse events to raise awareness and support the Middle Way Approach. We hope to do this by lobbying at the state capitol, dialoguing with the Chinese community, creating engaging programming for the younger generation and creating access to information through social media and our website. We hope you join us in our endeavor.



**"I remain convinced that most human conflicts can be solved through genuine dialogue conducted with a spirit of openness and reconciliation"**

**- His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama**



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Youth for Umaylam - The Middle Way Approach (Y4U)

## Y4U Membership Enrollment/Renewal Form

I would like to get involved with Youth for Umaylam.

Member Information:

མིང། / Name - First: \_\_\_\_\_ Last: \_\_\_\_\_

ཁ་རྒྱུ་ / Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

ཁ་པར་མཇུག་ / Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_

སྤྱི་འཕྲིན་ / Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you ethnically Tibetan? Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Y4U Membership \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ Friends of Y4U \$10 \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Status: New: \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to Y4U.

----- Office Use Only -----

ID # \_\_\_\_\_ Year Paid: \_\_\_\_\_ Receipt #: \_\_\_\_\_

Disclaimer: We hold the right to review ethnicity through Green Book (Chatrel) verification or local Tibetan Association membership. Members will be required to provide Green Book or a local Tibetan Association Membership document if elected to the Y4U board.