[Commending Tibetan Freedom Torch and Global Human Rights Torch Relay]


WHEREAS, The Global Human Rights Torch Relay, Tibetan Freedom Torch, and the Beijing 2008 Torch Relay will all make stops in San Francisco in 2008; and,

WHEREAS, Peoples from all lands, including China, have come to the United States of America and passed through or settled in the of San Francisco seeking a better life, including religious and other fundamental human freedoms; and,

WHEREAS, The Charter of the United Nations was signed in the City and County of San Francisco in the War Memorial Opera House on June 26, 1945; and,

WHEREAS, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1947, recognizes the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world; and,

WHEREAS, The People’s Republic of China, as a United Nations Member State since October 25, 1971, is pledged to uphold the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and therein to achieve the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms; and,
WHEREAS, The Olympic Charter sets forth the conditions for the celebration of the Olympic Games and codifies the fundamental principles of Olympism, the goal of which is to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity; and,

WHEREAS, The support of the international community for China’s bid to host the 2008 Olympics and the granting of that bid was based on the pledge made by President of the Beijing Olympic Organizing Committee (BOCOG) Liu Qi stating: “To make the national capital peaceful and orderly, people must have a means of voicing their opinions, and the mechanism for solving social problems at the grassroots level will be improved”; and,

WHEREAS, Since receiving this honor, the Chinese government escalated persecutions of many groups. The groups persecuted, in part, are journalists, political dissidents, human rights attorneys, trade unionists, environmentalists, and victims of property confiscation, Falun Gong practitioners, “unofficial” church members of Christians and Muslims, Tibetan Buddhists.

WHEREAS, The Beijing 2008 Olympic Games has become a reason for political persecutions by Chinese government such as that of Yang Chunlin, an activist from Heilongjiang province, who was arrested in July 2007 and currently awaits trial for his signature in the petition by farmers protesting land seizures called, “We Want Human Rights, not the Olympics.”

WHEREAS, According to Human Rights Watch, freedoms of the media are under assault in China ahead of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. “The Chinese government’s attempts to intimidate and detain foreign journalists for simply doing their jobs shows contempt for Olympic ideas of fair play. The ongoing harassment and detention of journalists makes Beijing’s Olympic pledge on media freedoms seem more like a public relations ploy than a sincere policy initiative.”
WHEREAS, In October 2007, Ronggyal Adrak, a Tibetan nomad who was being prosecuted for publicly calling for religious freedoms and a visit to Tibet by the Dalai Lama, was found guilty of subversion and “inciting separatism” and has been sentenced five years in jail; and,

WHEREAS, According to Human Rights Watch, the increasing use of subversion charges, a state security offense, to silence dissent is consistent with official statistics from the Ministry of Justice, and reflects an increase of almost twenty percent of state security convictions between 2006 and 2007, for example: Hu Jia, a leading human rights activist, was formally arrested on January 30, 2008. Hu was taken by the police from his home on December 27, 2007, shortly after he gave testimony via webcam to the European Parliament in which he expressed his desire for 2008 to be “the year of human rights in China.”

WHEREAS, The United Nations Human Rights Counsel reported information on March 15, 2006 regarding allegations received of organ harvesting inflicted on a large number of unwilling Falun Gong practitioners for the purpose of making available organs for transplant operations. According to the report, vital organs including hearts, kidneys, livers and corneas were systematically harvested from Falun Gong practitioners at Sujiatan Hospital, Shenyang, Liaoning province and other locations” and,

WHEREAS, The Chinese government has sold millions of dollars worth of arms to the Sudanese government which have been used against civilians in Darfur; and,

WHEREAS, The Chinese government vetoed a draft resolution before the United Nations Security Council calling on the government of Burma to respect human rights and begin a democratic transition; and,

in Tibet. The Department also stated that the level of repression of religious freedom
remained high and that authorities continue to commit serious human rights abuses, including
torture, arbitrary arrest and detention, house arrest and surveillance of dissidents, and
arbitrary restrictions on free movement; and,

WHEREAS, U.S. House Representatives Dana Rohrabacher (CA), Joseph Pitts (PA),
Eleana Ros-Lehtinen (FL), Thaddeus McCotter (MA), John Doolittle (CA), Dan Burton (IN),
Frank Wolf (VA), and Christopher Smith (NJ) have co-sponsored House Resolution 610
(August 2007), calling for a boycott of the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games because of on-going
human rights violations in China; and,

WHEREAS, Last November 2007, U.S. Congressman Adam Schiff and eight of his
colleagues sent a letter to Liu Qi, Beijing Olympic Organizing Committee (BOCOG) President,
expressing their deep concern “about the lack of improvement of the human rights situation in
China. Despite explicit promises made by Chinese government officials in 2001, the Chinese
government has not taken serious steps to expand basic rights and freedom;” and,

WHEREAS, The Global Human Rights Torch Relay (HRTR) started in Athens, Greek
on August 9, 2007 has traveled Europe, Australia and Africa and will make its stop in San
Francisco on April 5, 2008. Over 35 countries and more than 100 cities are part of the relay
that will span across Europe, Asia, North America, Africa and Australia and continue until
August 2008, but highlights the message that the “The Olympics & Crimes Against Humanity
Cannot Co-exist in China;” and,

WHEREAS, The Tibetan Freedom Torch will start in Athens, Greece on March 10,
2008 and is planned to travel to over 50 cities worldwide, including traveling through Europe,
North and South America, Australia, and Asia, and will make its stop in San Francisco on
April 8, 2008. The Tibetan Freedom Torch is a symbol of the hopes and aspirations of the
WHEREAS, The Beijing 2008 Torch Relay purposely designated San Francisco as its first and only stop in all of North America. While the publicity of this stop can cover up the human rights crisis inside China, this stop will also provide the people of San Francisco a lifetime opportunity to help 1.3 billion Chinese people gain more freedoms and rights; and,

WHEREAS, The Olympic Charter calls for "respect for universal fundamental ethical principles" and "the harmonious development of man, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity... Any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on grounds of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement"; and,

WHEREAS, San Franciscans has a long record for fighting for the advancement of human rights for all people; and,

WHEREAS, The arrival of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Torch is a historic opportunity to reaffirm human dignity and promote fundamental human rights for all people and urge the Government and People’s Republic of China to take substantial measures to improve the human rights situation in China and Tibet; and,

WHEREAS, During the week of March 10, 2008, over one thousand monks from the three largest Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in Lhasa, Tibet, staged peaceful protests for Tibetan freedom and justice, were all brutally squashed by Chinese soldiers; and in the aftermath of which, protests spread to hundreds of other parts of Tibet participated by monks, nuns, lay people, university students and school children and was met with similar violence: and,

WHEREAS, The Committee of 100 for Tibet, which is comprised of Nobel Laureates, heads of states, artists, scholars, and other prominent international figures, has stated that as
a result of the violent crackdown, there are confirmed reports of over 100 Tibetans killed, and it is feared that that number of killed and jailed may be in the thousands; and,

WHEREAS, The Dalai Lama, who the United States Congress recognizes as the true representative of the Tibetan people as expressed by Senate Resolution 41/House of Representative 145 of the 102\textsuperscript{nd} Congress and affirmed by House Resolution 1779/Senate 852: The Tibetan Policy Act of 2001, has urged his followers to refrain from any violence and appealed to the Chinese government to immediately stop its brutal crackdown on peaceful protestors: and,

WHEREAS, U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has called the violent response of the Chinese police forces to the peaceful protests in Tibet "disgraceful", and has called for strong condemnation from the United States Government and the international community; and,

WHEREAS, The United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Pope Benedict XVI and Amnesty International have all called for the Chinese government to exercise restraint, and to stop the use of excessive force; and now therefore be it

RESOLVED, The San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges our federal representatives to call for an international inquiry to investigate these recent atrocities and urges the Chinese government to allow independent media in Tibet; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges Mayor Gavin Newsom to express his concern regarding the recent human rights atrocities in Tibet when he hosts the Beijing Olympics torch in the City on April 8 and 9 and to urge the government of the People's Republic of China to genuinely comply with the principles of tolerance and respect as symbolized by the spirit behind the Olympic games; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges Mayor Newsom to provide full access to Tibetans and other human rights advocates to protest the passing of
the Olympic torch in San Francisco, and not to limit their movement to such areas as
"First Amendment Areas"; and be it

    FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the Olympic Committee
to boycott the Beijing 2008 Olympics Opening Ceremony if there is no cessation of violence
from Chinese security forces against peaceful protestors and other critics of the Chinese
government; and be it

    FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors commend the efforts of the
Human Rights Torch Relay and the Tibetan Freedom Torch in raising awareness about the
human rights situation in China; and, be it

    FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors urges the
City's representative who will officially receive the 2008 Summer Olympic Games Torch to
welcome the Torch in the explicit spirit of Olympism, consistent with the United Nations
Charter established in this City, and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human
Rights; be it

    FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges the above City Official
to also make publicly known that the 2008 Summer Olympic Games Torch is received with
alarm and protest at the failure of China to meet its past solemn promises to the
international community, including the citizens of San Francisco, to cease the egregious
and ongoing human rights abuses in China and occupied Tibet.

    FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors urges our representatives in
the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives to take an active role in supporting all efforts
to stop human rights violations in China and throughout the world.

April 1, 2008 Board of Supervisors — ADOPTED

Ayes: 8 - Ammiano, Daly, Dufty, Maxwell, McGoldrick, Mirkarimi, Peskin, Sandoval
Noes: 3 - Alioto-Pier, Chu, Elsbernd
I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on April 1, 2008 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Angela Calvillo  
Clerk of the Board

Date Approved

Mayor Gavin Newsom
Date: April 17, 2008

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution, not being signed by the Mayor within the time limit as set forth in Section 3.103 of the Charter, became effective without his approval in accordance with the provision of said Section 3.103 of the Charter.

[Signature]
Clerk of the Board

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080391