

Harper right to meet Dalai Lama say Canadians

CTC[Wednesday, September 26, 2007 23:32]

Montreal, 25 September – Close to nine in ten Canadians support Prime Minister Stephen Harper's reported decision to meet with the Dalai Lama when he visits Ottawa next month, regardless of whether it jeopardizes Canada's trade relationship with China, according to a SES Research poll conducted from July 28th to August 4th for the Canada Tibet Committee (CTC).

"While a handful of commentators are now rattling their well worn sabers that a meeting will set back China's current 'dead slow' approach to the cause of democracy, an overwhelming majority of Canadians recognize that China has failed to deliver on any of the countless overtures that have been made to promote an open and democratic China," said CTC Executive Director Dermot Travis today. "From a seat at the United Nations, to the WHO, the WTO and the Beijing Games, China has reciprocated to international concessions with domestic crackdowns."

Support for a meeting with the Prime Minister cuts across all party lines and regions and only seven per cent of Canadians oppose a meeting, according to the SES poll.

The Dalai Lama has already met with foreign heads of state and government, including last week's meeting with the German Chancellor, the Australian Prime Minister, the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of New Zealand (2007), the King and Queen of Jordan (2006), the Foreign Ministers of Italy, and the Czech Republic (2006), the President of the European Parliament (2006), and with U.S. Presidents Bill Clinton and George Bush.

Trading relationships between these countries and China have continued, notwithstanding China's bluster. The Dalai Lama uses these opportunities to advance his stated goal of an autonomous Tibet within China.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama will visit Ottawa from Sunday, October 28th to Tuesday, October 30th before leaving for Toronto. The Dalai Lama will give a Public Talk on Global Citizenship through Universal Responsibility on Sunday, October 28th, 3:00 PM at the Ottawa Civic Centre and a Talk in Toronto on October 31st.

<http://www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=18030&t=0>