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## US and its glass house

**"D**o not unto others what you would not have them do unto you," our ancient sage Confucius once told us. We should follow this golden rule while dealing with other countries.

Condescending finger pointing is clearly against this principle. But the State Department of the United States points its fingers again, as it did before, at more than 190 countries and regions in its Country Reports on Human Rights Practices released on Wednesday.

The way the US makes accusations of human rights violations in other countries, it seems as if it were the best example for other countries to follow.

But when we look at the records of human rights abuses in the US, we can hardly believe how it could have the audacity to accuse other countries of human rights violations.

Think of how illicit immigrants are mistreated and how some foreigners, who are alleged "terrorists", have been tortured and illegally detained in the Guantanamo Bay Detention Camp.

According to the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 1.35 million high-school students in 2007 were either threatened or injured with a weapon at least once on school property.

In the history of colonialism, the atrocities committed by Western countries to people in their colonies were best examples of how they, as colonialists, abused human rights.

No country is free of human rights issues. Every country has work — much or less — to do.

But promotion of human rights

should never become an excuse for Western countries, the biggest developed country in particular, to intervene in other nations' domestic affairs and push forward power politics.

There is no reason for any country to act as the world guardian of human rights and thus place itself on a moral high ground to point fingers at other nations. It is not difficult to discover that any country doing so would have double standards — regard a problem as human rights abuse in other countries but never treat the same problem in its own country in the same perspective.

Chinese authorities proposed the concept of "harmonious world", the goal of minimizing inharmonious elements such as poverty, military conflicts and human rights abuses in different ways.

To realize this goal, countries, big or small, developed or underdeveloped, need to communicate on equal footing. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of any country needs to be respected. Military invasion of a nation in the name of relieving its people of human rights abuses is itself a violation of human rights.

Chinese authorities have started to attach more importance to the promotion of human rights after three decades of economic growth has substantially improved its people's living standards.

The Chinese government has reiterated that it welcomes sincere dialogues on human rights but not the interference in other nations' affairs in the name of human rights.

That should be the right way to build a harmonious world.

**There is no reason for any country to act as the world guardian of human rights and thus place itself on a moral high ground.**



PANG LI

## Leave the Jewish shelter area alone



CHEN WEIHUA

If there's one thing that makes the residents of Shanghai proud of their city, it's that it served as a safe shelter for some 30,000 Jews who fled the Nazi persecution during World War II.

I have visited the old Jewish ghetto area in Hongkou district several times in the last few years, mostly with my Jewish friends from all over the world.

Photos and videos displayed at the old Ohel Moshe Synagogue, now the Shanghai Jewish Refugee Museum, take you back 50 years. It is a wonderful introduction to the city's short, yet fascinating history.

For all my overseas friends, a visit to the Jewish quarter became the highlight of their trip to China. In an area of about a square mile, known as Little Vienna, the Jews found their home away from home.

Some Jewish folks growing up there in the 1930s and 40s still come back from time to time to commemorate this one of the few World War II memorial sites, where Jews started a new life, instead of being imprisoned and slaughtered.

Three years ago, Shanghai designated about 70 acres of the old Jewish quarter as a conservation zone, while the surrounding area would all be pulverized in a gigantic North Bund transformation project. But some visitors who go there these days are surprised to find that a number of historical Jewish houses will soon be demolished to make way for a road project.

Though the houses to be razed are not on the original protection list, Tongji University Professor Ruan Yisan, a well-known conservationist, believes that new findings have made these buildings precious cultural heritages. He called on the local authorities to revise its demolition and road construction plans in order to save these structures.



Ruan is a mastermind in conserving many old towns across China, such as Lijiang in Yunnan province, Pingyao in Shanxi province, Zhouzhuang and many canal towns around Shanghai.

Yet, given his fame, it's still not known whether the local government is willing to make necessary changes. Officials from the local Hongkou district government still seem to prefer wider roads to cultural heritages, repeating the city's many blunders of erasing history during the massive urban construction in the last two decades.

Blocks and blocks of old buildings that should and could be conserved for our children have been and are still being bulldozed in the city to make way for high-end apartments and office buildings that bring huge profits to both local governments and property developers.

With thousands of high-rises already dotting the city's skyline, it is obvious that Shanghai lacks no more fancy, but superficial new towers to excite people's eyes. Instead, it needs more heritage sites like the Jewish ghetto that will leave a long-lasting impression in people's hearts.

Shanghai acted brilliantly when it decided to keep some of the old shipyard and power plant workshops for its World Expo 2010. It just needs to show that wisdom and insight again to keep a few more houses in the Jewish quarter, such as a popular nightclub at the time known as the White Horse Inn, or Das Weisse Ross, and Café Atlantic and Horn's Imbiss-stube (Horn's Snack Bar).

Massive urban development has already wiped out much of the city's short history, taking away the very soul of the city.

It's time to stop such a serious crime under the name of modernization.

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## Dalai Lama should focus on Buddhism

By SHEN DINGLI

### CHINA FORUM

With his New Year message on Wednesday, the Dalai Lama once again proved his hostility toward his fellow Tibetans and his motherland.

As a long self-claimed Buddhist, the Dalai Lama should have focused on spreading Buddhist tenets and culture instead of showing an extreme interest in politics in an attempt to intervene in the country's political process under religious guise.

A few years ago, the Dalai Lama stopped playing any official role in the so-called Tibetan government in exile. That should have offered him a chance to be committed to Buddhism and make contributions for its development. Unfortunately, the Dalai Lama has chosen otherwise.

In his message to his compatriots on the eve of the Tibetan New Year, the Dalai Lama once again demonstrated his lack of basic knowledge about the country's legal system as well as a lack of common sense that religion is separated from politics worldwide.

Given his religious background and identity, the Dalai Lama should be disqualified from talking about politics at any time.

In his message, the Dalai Lama claimed that the large-scale "peaceful protests" launched in Tibetan-inhabited regions last year caused hundreds of deaths. His remarks are a serious denial of facts.

It is true that organized unrests and violence did occur in Tibet and beyond, but they were only confined to a small part of Tibetan-populated areas, not the whole area as the Dalai Lama claimed.

Enough material and facts indicate that an overwhelming part of the Tibetan region enjoyed a peaceful, stable and tranquil environment last year. Even last March, when Lhasa, the capital of the Tibet autonomous region, experienced a bloody riot, the rest of the region

still remained stable.

The Dalai Lama was also wrong when he used the phrase "peaceful protest". Available facts have indicated that participants in the violence chose to use sticks, clods, stones and swords not only against security forces, who always maintained self-restraint in trying to restore stability in the region, but also against civilians, including shop owners, tourists and passersby.

**Despite staying overseas for a long period as a religious figure, the Dalai Lama has never stopped his intervention in the country's politics.**

His remarks that "hundreds of Tibetans lost lives" also proved to be a sheer lie. To restore peace and stability, the local government maintained self-restraint from the beginning of the outbreak of the riot. Persuasive talks and warnings were used to deal with violence. In that round of violent clashes, a total of 18 civilians died, not hundreds as the Dalai Lama put it. And they were beaten or burned to death by the rioters. Obviously, there exists an ulterior intention behind his lie.

On Feb 11, the Dalai Lama claimed that "the situation in Tibet is very strained, and incidents might burst out". In his New Year message two weeks later, he demanded that Tibetans should not take any action in a hasty manner.

The change of tones are obviously aimed at creating and disseminating a tense atmosphere in Tibet in an attempt to tell more people it is time to rise up and

riot. Such practices will unavoidably cause people to heavily doubt whether the so-called Tibetan spiritual leader wants a peaceful and stable or a turbulent Tibet.

The answer is absolutely clear to all.

In his New Year speech, the Dalai Lama also hoped Tibetans care and value life and avoid violence. However, there are also exposed motives behind his words. On one hand, he aims to encourage extremist Tibetans to use violence, and on the other hand prepare a pretext in advance to evade his own responsibility in case unexpected things happen.

Since Chinese people have dealt with the Dalai Lama for ages, we are quite capable of grasping his overtones. Despite staying overseas for a long period as a religious figure, the Dalai Lama has never stopped his intervention in the country's politics.

Thus, he is completely incapable, morally or physically, to confront with the irreversible current of the national unity. Being such a busy person flying around the world, the Dalai Lama should have contributed to disseminating the essence of Buddhism.

However, he has chosen to sacrifice self-dignity and succumb to other countries' attitudes by distorting facts and fermenting riots. All his motives are doomed to failure.

As a religious figure, the Dalai Lama should conform to the historical trend of the national unification and focus on Buddhist teachings. His choice of a religious career should not be distracted by other affairs.

If he really cares about the Tibetans just as he said, the Dalai Lama should abide by the country's laws and sincerely put himself under the leadership of the central government, and take real actions to be a good Chinese citizen.

The author is director of the Center for American Studies at the Shanghai-based Fudan University.

## College grads need help

A college student who was to graduate soon committed suicide because she had failed to find a job, and thought she wouldn't be able to handle the pressure of the competitive job market. The recent case is just another warning that college students need much more psychological help and assistance in securing jobs than we imagine, says an article on the website www.xinhuanet.com. The following is an excerpt:

Liu Wei, a 20-something girl, who was to graduate from a college in Shijiazhuang in the summer of this year, killed herself recently.

In a diary that was found Liu had written that she was good for nothing, and all the knowledge she had acquired through the years in school and college was useless. She was unable to land a job. And her family was drowned in debt to support her education.

Though Liu's suicide is an extreme case, it is still a warning that college students are desperate for help as the cutthroat competition becomes even stiffer amid the economic downturn. They need psychological counseling.

Colleges as well as the society should reach out to them, calm them

### FROM THE CHINESE PRESS

down, besides creating more jobs for fresh graduates.

## Knowledge of additives needed

Hotlines to report illegal food additives can only be useful if the public has the basic knowledge of additives, says an article in Wuhan Evening News. The following is an excerpt:

According to the website of the Ministry of Health, the national hotline to report illegal food additives has recently been set up for the public in the wake of the toxic milk powder scandal.

The scandal has taught people a lesson that melamine is used by dairy producers as a type of additive and that it's better for them to carefully read the ingredients on a packet before buying it.

But most people still can't tell safe additives from the harmful ones, which defeats the very purpose of the hotline.

The government needs to popularize the knowledge of additives among people through websites and television programs that can help people understand what are unsafe food additives.

## Pressure can't be postponed

The decision to recruit more graduates should be based on the need for talents in the future rather than an expediency to mitigate the current employment pressure, says an article in the Beijing Times. The following is an excerpt:

It is reported that the Ministry of Education will allow universities to recruit 50,000 more graduates this year, and the quotas will be mainly set aside for senior students in colleges, who are facing the choice of either plunging themselves into the gloomy job market or continuing their studies.

It's good news for those students who are planning further studies. Meanwhile, the decision to recruit graduates also gives them a cushion against the job-finding predicament being faced by millions of Chinese students. Besides, the move will stimulate the consumption of these students since they will pay tuitions fees as well as room and board charges.

But it won't seem appropriate if the expansion is not based on the real needs of the society for academic talents. If it is designed just for easing the current employment pressure, it will not solve the problem, but only delay it.

## Green turning point

The Chinese economy bid farewell to years of double-digit growth but became more energy efficient than expected last year.

If high-speed economic growth is not supposed to return to China anytime soon, the country should seize the chance to accelerate its pursuit of long-term energy efficiency goals.

Buried deep in the annual report the National Bureau of Statistics issued on Thursday is a little surprise that the country's energy consumption per unit gross domestic product fell 4.59 percent in 2008. It is for the first time that the country has managed to reach an annual target of cutting energy intensity by at least 4 percent so as to raise its overall energy efficiency by 20 percent in the five-year period between 2006 and 2010.

Though the slowdown of China's economic growth from 13 percent in 2007 to 9 percent last year justified concerns that the global financial crisis and economic recession have hit the country too hard, the progress the country achieved in energy conservation still offered a good cause for optimism.

A 4.59-percent cut in energy intensity last year, compared to about 5-percent for the previous two years together, will give a needed shot in the arms of advocates who once worried that the country may have fallen too far behind its schedule of energy conservation. It indicates that China is

still pressing ahead with its five-year energy saving plan.

Some people insisted that higher energy efficiency, largely as a result of the sudden deceleration of heavy industries later last year, was temporary and therefore reversible.

That may be part of the truth, but they failed to grasp the importance of the change of China's growth pattern to improve energy efficiency.

As the deepening global financial crisis and economic recession forces China to shift more rapidly away from its dependence on export for growth to boost domestic demand, it is well predictable that industrial restructuring in favor of energy conservation will only gather steam in coming years.

In fact, the annual statistical report also showed that the growth of the value added of the service sector last year has surpassed that of the industrial sector for the first time since 2003. A more robust service sector will not only better support domestic consumption but also help improve the country's energy efficiency.

Nevertheless, it is also premature to take for granted continuous improvement of energy efficiency as China speeds up industrial restructuring.

Chinese policymakers, who are busy with rolling out massive stimulus measures for various industries, must do their most to ensure that all the new investment will be carried out with a higher energy efficiency standard.

**The progress the country achieved in energy conservation still offered a good cause for optimism.**