February 25th marks the beginning of the Tibetan Year of the Earth Ox, a year of steadiness and stability. According to tradition, this stable energy should help calm the storm of past troubles and allow us to build a solid foundation for future progress.

Losar is a time of new beginnings for Tibetans, full of hope and the spirit of renewal. Tibetans greet the New Year with prayers, ceremonies, dancing, and feasting in celebration of the possibility and promise that Losar offers. All of us at the Tibetan Aid Project hope that you will also have cause for celebration at this auspicious time, and that the New Year brings you joy, abundance, and good health.

As the year of the Earth Mouse comes to an end, the Tibetan Aid Project and its sister organizations are participating in the 20th annual World Peace Ceremony, which takes place from January 27th to February 5th. Over 10,000 monks, nuns, and laypeople have gathered at the site of the Buddha’s enlightenment in Bodh Gaya, India to pray for peace and for the well-being of all mankind. In the twenty years since the first World
Peace Ceremony, over 2.5 million Tibetan texts, 110,000 prayer wheels, and one million sacred art prints have been distributed to the Tibetan community. This is an extraordinary achievement, made possible chiefly through the generous support of people like you.

The most significant aspect of this great achievement, however, is one that cannot be measured or counted. The books that Tibetans receive at the World Peace Ceremony help strengthen the Tibetan spirit. In an era when the Tibetan identity is defined by culture as much as geography, the sacred texts and other items that you provide help keep Tibet’s spiritual and cultural traditions alive. Although we cannot replace the teachers, ideas, and opportunities that have been lost to violence and repression, these texts open new paths to surviving Tibetans, who will carry their culture confidently into the future.

It is this sense of hope and renewal that brings thousands of Tibetans to the World Peace Ceremony each year. These men and women come from all over the Himalayas, traveling for days and weeks by train, bus, cart, or even on foot to reach Bodh Gaya. There they become active participants in the renewal of their culture, adding their voices to the chorus chanting for peace and their own dash of color to the landscape of orange, red, and yellow robes among the ancient monuments. When they carry the texts home, the load is lightened by the knowledge of what these books will mean for the future of the Tibetan people.

Tibetans have come a long way since the takeover of their country irreversibly changed their way of life fifty years ago. Their lives are not easy, yet they retain hope even in difficult times. Losar and the World Peace Ceremony provide opportunities to let go of the past and embrace a brighter future. The Tibetan culture will never be the same as it once was, but it gains strength and new depth with every book that makes its way into Tibetan hands.

We hope that you will consider making a donation to continue this effort in the new year. Though many of us face uncertainty in our own lives, your generosity helps create a better future for Tibet and, we hope, for all of humanity.

Warm regards on behalf of all of us here at TAP,

Rosalyn White
Executive Director

2425 Hillside Ave, Berkeley, CA 94704
www.tibetanaidproject.org
800.338.4238 or 510.848.4238
tap@tibetanaidproject.org