



Tibetan Community in Switzerland & Liechtenstein

Tibeter Gemeinschaft in der Schweiz & Liechtenstein

## 10th anniversary of the Stupa on Mount Säntis



3rd September 2011  
9107 Schwägalp, Switzerland



ཕྱག་ལེན་ལུ  
OFFICE OF HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA

02 Aug 2011

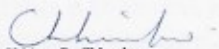
Mrs. Pasang Memmishofer  
President  
Tibetan Community in Switzerland and Liechtenstein  
Zurich  
Switzerland

Dear Pasang la,

Thank you for your email of 29 July along with an attached letter in Tibetan addressed to His Holiness seeking his blessings on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the installation of a Tibetan stupa (Choerten) on Mount Santis by the Tibetan Community in Switzerland and Liechtenstein. We note that the 10th anniversary function is being held on September 3, 2011.

His Holiness very much appreciates work of the strong and cohesive Tibetan community in Switzerland and Liechtenstein in keeping intact our distinctive Tibetan identity while integrating well with the people in their respective countries.

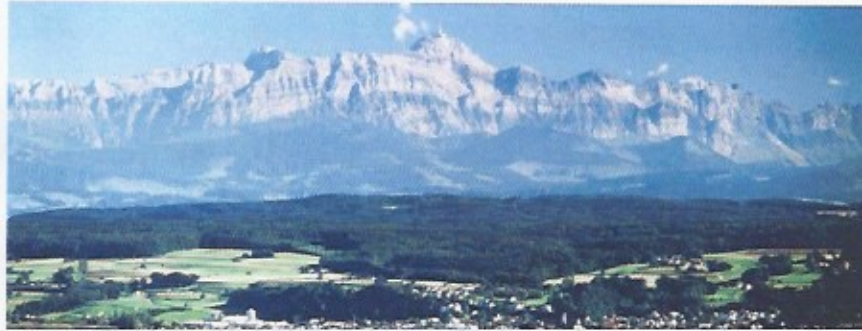
His Holiness sends his prayers and good wishes on this auspicious occasion.

  
Chhime R. Chhoekyapa  
Secretary



### Program

- 09.30am Gathering
- 09.45am Welcome speech by the President of the Tibetan Community in Switzerland & Liechtenstein, Mrs. Pasang Memmishofer
- 9.50am Purification and blessing ceremony of the Stupa by the Tibetan Monks of the Rikon Monastery
- 10.30am Significance of the Stupa in Tibetan Buddhism by the Abbot Geshe Thupten Legmen of the Rikon Monastery
- 10.40am Tibet on Säntis by Mr. Hans Gammeter
- 10.50am Building up of the Stupa by Kuschok Thupten Nyandak Rujang
- 11.00am Prayers
- 11.30am End



Mount Säntis located in the eastern part of Switzerland with its altitude of 2500 meters is well known for its extreme weather conditions and is called as well as the roof of the lake of Constance area with view of six Alpine countries. In summer Mount Säntis is a popular destination for hikes and mountain tours and the top of Säntis can be comfortably reached by a cable railway.

#### **Construction and inauguration of a Chörten (Stupa)**

After the failed uprising against the Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1959 His Holiness the Dalai Lama and over 85000 Tibetans were forced to flee into exile. The first Tibetan refugees came to Switzerland over 50 years ago and by now more than 4,000 Tibetans have found here a new home. In gratitude to the Swiss people and the government the Tibetans in Switzerland decided to build a Stupa as memorial on top of Mount Säntis for granting asylum.

The idea to build a Chörten came when the Säntisbahn AG requested to build a typical Tibetan construction as a permanent remembrance. The Stupa is to serve as a monument in a prominent place in Switzerland, presented by the Tibetan community, expressing the gratitude of Tibetan people and their good wishes for the new home country and for the Tibetans themselves it will have a religious meaning. Thus all ritual steps had to be done correctly.

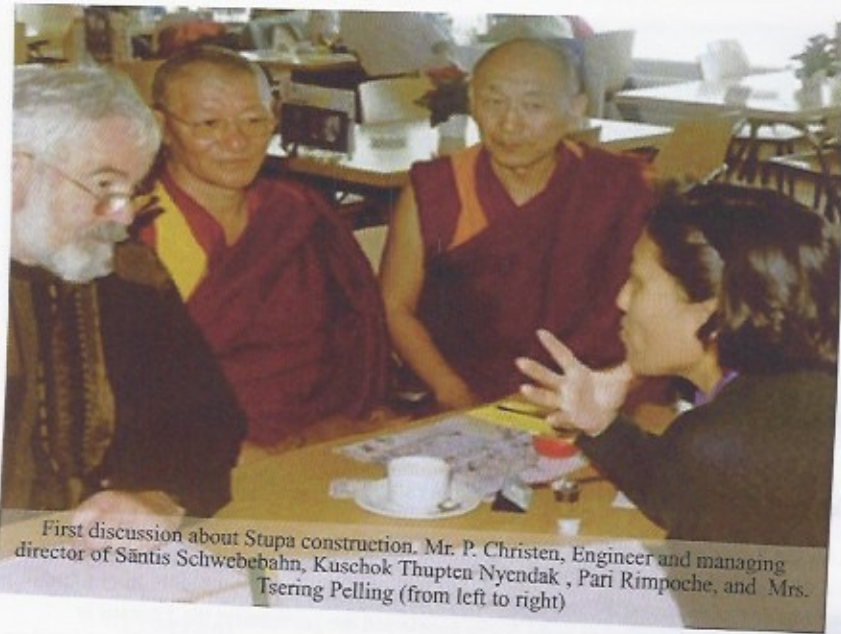
Due to the extreme climatic conditions on mount Säntis an appropriate material for the construction of the Stupa was essential with the selection of a solid natural stone construction (Tessiner Gneis, a stone originating from the southern part of the Swiss Alps), which is so light-coloured, that a white painting would not be necessary.

For the same reason it was done without gold decoration outside or a visible Buddha shrine. The stupa became as simple and pure as the traditional ones we know out of pictures from rural sites in the Himalayas.

Stonemasons in a nearby stone works were fascinated to prepare the building according to detailed plans (Monastic Institute Rikon). With a total height of about 3.5 meters the overall weight is about 10 tons.

Since this was too heavy to be transported in the cable train the Stupa is made of 6 solid elements of stone. These pieces of the Stupa had to be put together on the summit using a special glue.

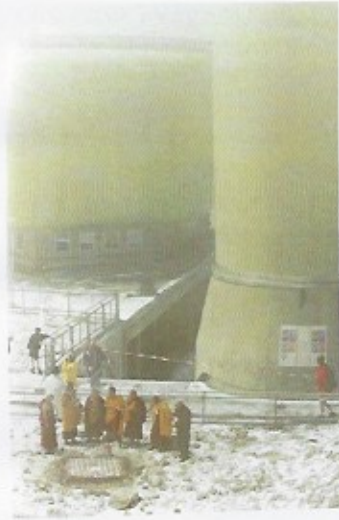




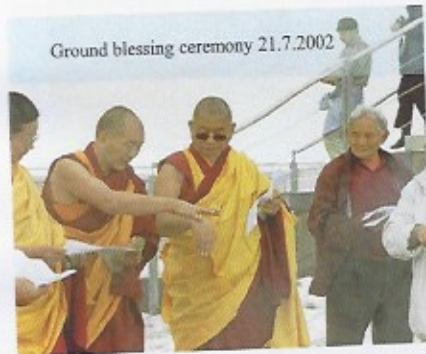
First discussion about Stupa construction. Mr. P. Christen, Engineer and managing director of Sántis Schwebebahn, Kuschok Thupten Nyendak , Pari Rinpoche, and Mrs. Tsering Pelling (from left to right)

As a first step a day long ground blessing ceremony took place on 21.7.2001, a cold, foggy summer day with some snow.

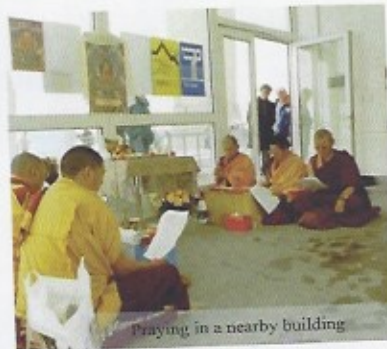




The beginning of the ground blessing ceremony on the future construction site



Ground blessing ceremony 21.7.2002



Praying in a nearby building



The construction site after the inauguration





For the filling of the stupa the following materials were received:

- from His Holiness the Dalai Lama: 2 statues (Avalokiteshvara, Yamantaka), 1 Buddha relic, 2 vases
- bought in India: 5 packages with holy texts
- donated from Tibetans in Switzerland: 24 statues, 20 holy books. Water from Manasarovar, Namtso, Kokonor, Gengitsch. Stone and earth from Samye, Ganden, Drepung, Sera, Varanasi, Boddhaya, Mount Kailash, Cherita and Kuschalnagar. 1 vase filled with gold, silver, copper, pearls, Tibetan 'sii-stone', corals, turquoise and 2 necklaces. 1 pistol and 1 sword.



For the filling of the stupa Patr Rinpoche, the late abbot of Rikon monastery accompanied by several monks stayed for a couple of days on Mount Säntis.

On 9.9.2001, a very cold Sunday, a lot of Tibetans and their Swiss friends gathered on Mount Sántis for the inauguration of the Stupa.



The late abbot of Rikon monastery Geshe Phuntsok Tashi, Pari Rinpoche and other monks reciting prayers during the inauguration ceremony of the Stupa





Preparation of the Stupa to the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on 16.07.2011



Repainting of the Stupa by volunteers of the Tibetan Community in Switzerland and Liechtenstein



Commemorative plaque expressing the gratitude of the Tibetan Community in Switzerland towards the Swiss public and government for granting a second home

Consecration of the Chörten by Ven. Abbot Geshe Thupten Legmen and Ven. Sharpa Choeje Rinpoche with monks from Namgyal Monastery (from left to right)



Volunteers after successful repainting of the Stupa



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OM MANI PÄDME HUM

Tibetan Community in Switzerland & Liechtenstein, Binzstrasse 15, CH-8045 Zurich, Switzerland  
[www.tibetswiss.ch](http://www.tibetswiss.ch)