

## **Tibetan Buddhist Statement - Kagyu School of Tibetan Buddhism**

His Holiness the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje, head of the Kagyu School of Tibetan Buddhism, sent the following letter to his followers in advance of Losar, or New Year:

*Buddhism teaches equanimity. We have to show compassion to all sentient beings. All life is equally sacred. Lord Buddha himself in a previous life gave his body to feed a hungry tigress.*

*Some people have said to me that tigers are a dangerous species and the world would be better off without them, but we need to think carefully. We know the importance of trees and of forests. Within the forest ecosystem there are natural protectors, and the tiger is one of them. You could call the tiger one of the forest's police force. We know from recent reports that there may be as few as 3200 tigers left in the wild in all of Asia. It is no longer a matter of protecting them; we urgently need to save them from extinction now.*

*When we consider things deeply, we realize that human beings are far more dangerous than tigers, in terms of the harm they have done to the earth, its environment, and to each other throughout human history.*

*In the start of this new year, Year of the Tiger, I request all of you to avoid eating, using or wearing any products that may contain tiger parts and to do what you can to prevent illegal wildlife trade from happening.*

*Losar Tashi Delek! Enjoy the Year of the Tiger.*