

# What's behind the Obama-Dalai Lama meeting?

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In 1991, President George H. W. Bush became the first US president to meet the Dalai Lama in public. There were 11 meetings between US presidents and the Dalai Lama before Barack Obama took office.

While Obama promised to bring change to America during his election campaign, change has not yet been seen with regards to this issue. Some are now asking about the motive behind Thursday's meeting between the two. Liu Yue takes a closer look.

The Japanese monthly magazine Choice was right to the point in describing Obama's move as playing the "Tibet Card" in an attempt to get out of the administration's political and economic plight at home and abroad.

It said that by playing the Tibet Card, Obama is trying to gain more support as he faces a much tougher midterm election.

Ted Carpenter, Vice President for Defense and Foreign Policy studies at the CATO Institute, said the Dalai Lama's campaign with the West "seems designed to generate international diplomatic pressure for, at the least, a greater-than-now political autonomy for Tibet or even for outright independence from China."

In the view of Martin Jacques, a senior scholar at the London School of Economics, Obama's move reflects his worries about the decreasing U.S. influence and the increasing influence of China in the international arena.

Pierre Picquart, an expert on China from the University of Paris, said Obama's meetings with political figures such as the Dalai Lama are intended to set up a barrier to China's development while securing the U.S. dominance in the world.

He said that Westerners are sometimes so captivated by the Dalai Lama's preaching of "religion" and "freedom" that they take it for granted without thinking about his real intentions.

Obama pledged to build "a positive, cooperative and comprehensive U.S.-China relationship for the 21st century" during his high-profile China visit last November. But his pledge has failed to hold water merely three months later.

China's Xinhua News Agency said that so long as their Cold War mentality remains unchanged, the U.S. leaders are inclined to play these cards against China time and time again.

**Editor:** Zhang Ning | **Source:** CCTV.com