



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/HRC/8/NGO/16
28 May 2008

ENGLISH ONLY

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
Eighth session
Agenda item 4

HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS THAT REQUIRE THE COUNCIL'S ATTENTION

**Written statement* submitted by the Society for Threatened Peoples,
a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[23 May 2008]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Human Rights Crisis in Tibetan Areas of the People's Republic of China

Since 10 March 2008, the 49th Anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day of 1959 until early May, thousands of Tibetans from all walks of life, staged over 100 protests in the Tibet Autonomous Region and traditional Tibetan areas of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan provinces of the People's Republic of China. China responded to this Tibetan Uprising with brutal military crackdown.

The Dalai Lama in his first formal statement said: "I believe the demonstrations and protests taking place in Tibet are a spontaneous outburst of public resentment built up by years of repression in defiance of authorities that are oblivious to the sentiments of the local populace. They mistakenly believe that further repressive measures are the way to achieve their declared aim of long-term unity and stability."

Extrajudicial or summary Killings

Although the official Chinese government media only highlights the unfortunate death of civilians mostly Chinese settlers on the 14 March disturbances in the Tibetan capital, Lhasa, Tibetans testimonies now state that more than 200 Tibetans have been killed, with the names of more than 60 victims identified. For example, a Tibetan eyewitness said that on the afternoon of March 14 in Lhasa, he saw four people carrying a Tibetan who had been shot dead. In the evening, a member of the family went to collect a child from school at around 6 pm, the source said: "The military was shooting at the locals who went to pick up their children. One woman got shot in her leg and one man was hit in the head or neck and he died. Later his brother wanted to get his corpse from the hospital, but the hospital didn't want to give it [to him]. Finally the brother got so desperate that he threatened to burn himself and the hospital if they didn't give his dead brother to his family. The hospital gave him his brother's body, but just a few hours after they came home the military came and took the dead body away." Many Tibetans have not even given the solemn right to offer the funeral prayers as the Chinese authorities took over the dead bodies for "post-modern" handing over only the ashes in plastic bags of the deceased.

On 15 March, in Phenpo county of the Tibetan Autonomous Region, many Tibetans were reportedly shot dead, including 23-year-old Tibetan farmer Jinpa. More than a thousand Tibetans had undertaken a peaceful demonstration on that day. On 16 March when Chinese troops opened fire on a peaceful demonstration in Ngapa Tibetan area of Sichuan province, at least eight Tibetans were shot dead. One source said that "30 Tibetans felled". One of those shot dead was Ms. Lhundup Tso, a 16-year-old school girl. On 18 March, in Karze itself three Tibetans were shot dead after more than 300 Tibetans staged a peaceful demonstration in the main market square. On 3 April, at least 11 Tibetans, including six women and a boy were shot dead after more than 350 monks of Tongkor Monastery led a demonstration some 60 kilometres from Karze town in Sichuan province.

Arbitrary Detentions

More than 4,000 arrests have been confirmed by the Chinese authorities in the form of "surrenders" from "wanted lists" and arbitrary detentions while other reports state that more than 5,000 have been detained. As of 25 April, the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and

Democracy (www.tchrd.org) provided a provisional list of 518 Tibetans detained since 10 March.

Enforced Disappearance

While 13 years of enforced disappearance of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, considered as the Eleventh Panchen Lama of Tibet, is an outstanding case of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance, the situation of disappearances in Tibet since 10 March, has now taken an alarming turn with some independent reports suggesting that as many as one thousand Tibetans have disappeared. One clear example is the unknown fates of the Tibetan monks who protested in front of foreign media on 28 March in Lhasa and 9 April in Lhabdrang (Xiahe) in Gansu Province. Another is the disappearance of Ms. Jamyang Kyi a popular Tibetan artiste and TV personality in Qinghai province.

Torture

China's official practice of inflicting widespread torture has been described as "breaking the will" of the person by the Special Rapporteur on Torture following Mr. Nowak's mission to China. Since China's ratification of the Convention it is well documented that almost one hundred Tibetan political prisoners died as a direct result of torture and ill-degrading treatment in prison. Since 10 March China again used the same policy to silence Tibetans with reports already emerging of Tibetans dying after torturous interrogation sessions.

Independence of Judiciary and Lawyers

Tibetans have never seen the sun here! However, when more than 20 Chinese lawyers volunteered to defend Tibetans arrested since 10 March they were threatened by the Chinese authorities. One of 18 Chinese lawyers who signed an open letter offering their services as criminal defence lawyers to the accused Tibetans said that he didn't know whether the Tibetans sentenced had received enough legal assistance. Another lawyer who signed the letter, Teng Biao, said the government had pressured them to withdraw their offer of assistance, telling them that the "Tibet issue is very sensitive".

Freedom of Opinion and Expression

On 9 April when the Chinese authorities took foreign journalists for a controlled-tour to a Tibetan region of Gansu Province, one Tibetan monk held a white banner which said: "We don't have freedom of expression." One recorded video clip of the monks' bold protest now available on "www.youtube.com" was transcribed as follows: "We want human rights!" "We want human rights, don't we?" "Yes," respond monks in unison. Monks are repeatedly shouting: "We want human rights, we want human rights!" This is intermingled with shouts saying: "We don't have human rights." A monk shouts repeatedly in Chinese: "We want human rights, we want human rights!" Another monk off the camera shouts in Chinese: "The Dalai Lama must return!"

Defamation of the Dalai Lama

Even before the disturbances erupted in Lhasa on 14 March, the Chinese authorities through their official news agency Xinhua reportedly blamed the Dalai Lama as having instigated the current Tibetan Uprising. While the majority of the inhabitants of the world

recognize the Dalai Lama as a messenger of compassion, peace and reconciliation, the Chinese authorities labelled this man of peace in such derogatory remarks which reminded 29 Chinese scholars of the Cultural Revolution when they stated in their 22 March appeal on Tibet: "In our opinion, such Cultural-Revolution-like language as "the Dalai Lama is a jackal in Buddhist monk's robes and an evil spirit with a human face and the heart of a beast" used by the Chinese Communist Party leadership in the Tibet Autonomous Region is of no help in easing the situation, nor is it beneficial to the Chinese government's image."

Patriotic Re-education Campaign

In response of the Tibetan Uprising unseen since 1959, the Chinese authorities intensified this campaign whereby Tibetans, beginning with monks and nuns were forced to condemn the Dalai Lama in meetings reminiscent of the Culture Revolution. Desecration of the Dalai Lama's images at several religious institutions in Tibet following military raids, of which visual evidence is now available on the internet, is one proof of this scenario. But the steadfast courage of the Tibetan people in refusing to denounce their leader when provoked resulted in further human rights violations by the Chinese authorities with senior spiritual teachers suffering the most.

We welcome that the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights had asked for fact-finding mission to ascertain the ground realities of the situation following the violent crackdown on more than 100 demonstrations (covering over 60 counties) and its impact in the "Tibet Autonomous Region" and Tibetan areas of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan provinces in present-day PRC. China's refusal to receive the High Commissioner should be seen as a clear sign of non-cooperation by Beijing to UN human rights mechanisms.

In the light of the above facts indicating the urgent human rights crisis confronted by the Tibetan people, we appeal to Council members to address the ongoing gross and systematic human rights violations against Tibetans by holding a Special Session on this situation so that the Council can embark on urgent measures to immediately end military crackdown against the Tibetan people.

Society for Threatened Peoples calls on the Human Rights Council to urge the PRC to:

- address the ongoing gross and systematic human rights violations against Tibetans by holding a **Special Session** on this situation so that the Council can embark on urgent measures to immediately end military crackdown against the Tibetan people.

- - - - -