



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

### **Written statement\* submitted by 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.

[31 May 2021]

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\* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



## **Human Rights Situation in the Tibet Autonomous Region, China and adjacent areas where Tibetans live**

Society for Threatened People is concerned about the worsening situation of human rights in the Tibet Autonomous Region and adjacent areas where Tibetans live. The Government of the People's Republic of China has been consistently violating various facets of the basic human rights of Tibetans with impunity. The suppression of Tibetans by the Chinese Government has forced 155 Tibetans to self-immolate in Tibet Autonomous Region and adjacent areas where Tibetans live since 2009 as a mark of peaceful protest against the atrocities perpetrated on Tibetans.

### **Violation of Right to Freedom of Expression**

There is absolutely no freedom of expression in the Tibet Autonomous Region and adjacent areas where Tibetans live. Tibetans are subjected to high-tech surveillance and censorship. They do not have access to free information and no platform to develop and discuss ideas. Tibetans cannot freely express their thoughts and opinions and those who try to do are punished and persecuted. Tibetans are arrested, tortured and sentenced arbitrarily for expressing their dissent or airing their grievances.

Recent arrests of Tibetan Intellectuals:

In recent months there have been many arrests of intellectuals on charges of anti-state activity underscores Beijing's continuing drive to destroy the influence of men and women whose views of life in Tibetan regions of China go against official narratives.

Gangkye Drubpa Kyab, a well-known writer in Tibetan areas of Sichuan also called Gangme Thak, was arrested in Kardze's Sertha (Seda) county on March 23, and had been jailed on political charges before.

Sey Nam, from Kardze's Sertha county, who is a writer and environmental activist, was taken into custody on April 2.

The long-time activist and former political prisoner Tsering Dolma was also arrested in Kardze on April 2, and had been detained at least twice before in 2008 and 2012 after she took part in protests.

Go Sherab Gyatso, a 46-year-old monk at Kirti monastery in Sichuan's Ngaba (Aba) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, was taken into custody by state security agents on Oct. 26 in Sichuan's capital Chengdu. He had authored a book, *We Need to Wake Up*, and published several articles describing restrictions on Tibetans' freedom of expression under Chinese rule.

Torture/Custodial Deaths:

A 19-year-old Tibetan monk, Tenzin Nyima from Dza Wonpo died on 19 January, 2021 after being severely beaten and tortured by the Chinese authorities for staging peaceful protests in November 2019. Tenzin Nyima was arbitrarily detained on 9 November 2019 and was briefly released in May 2020 before being rearrested on 11 August, 2020. While in custody Tenzin Nyima was tortured by the Chinese officials. He suffered severe beatings resulting in serious injuries and was not even given proper food leading to a deteriorated health, so much so that he was unable to move or speak. In early October, 2020 prison authority informed Tenzin Nyima's family of his serious health condition and told them to take him from the prison. On taking to hospital the doctors declared his condition critical and the injuries were beyond treatment and later succumbed to his injuries on 19 January 2021.

Kunchok Jinpa, 51, passed away on 6 February 2021 in a hospital in Lhasa after being tortured in prison. He was arrested for sharing information about the protests in village against illegal land grabs. He was tortured in prison while serving 21 year sentence.

Enforced disappearances:

A Tibetan monk from Ngaba region who was arbitrarily arrested by the local Chinese authorities almost a year and a half ago continues to remain untraceable. Rinchen Tsultrim, a monk at Nangshig monastery in Ngaba and a strong advocate of Tibetan language preservation was detained on 1 August 2019. Along with Rinchen Tsultrim, two other monks from Kordo, Ngaba county were detained but released after a few days. However, Rinchen Tsultrim was taken away to an undisclosed location by the Ngaba county police and his family members have not been able to trace his whereabouts and health condition since then.

#### Arbitrary Arrests and Sentencing:

The well-known language rights activist, Tashi Wangchuk was arrested and sentenced to 5 years in prison for “inciting separatism” only because he spoke to the New York Times about his intention to march to Beijing to ask for the rights to preserve the Tibetan language in schools. His appeals against the sentencing were dismissed and is even denied of his rights to meet his lawyer to discuss his case. He was recently released from prison however, is subjected to house arrest.

Sonam Palden, a monk from Kirti Monastery was arrested in Ngaba county in September 2019 for posting critical views on China’s policy on Tibetan language on WeChat, a social messaging app.

The land rights advocate and anti-corruption activist A-nya Sengdra was imprisoned and sentenced to seven years in detention in December 2019 for defending the rights of the local Tibetan nomads.

Lhundrub Dakpa, a popular Tibetan singer from Kham Driru in Nagchu has been sentenced by Chinese authorities to six years in prison for singing Tibetan songs criticising China’s repressive policies in the Tibet Autonomous Region and adjacent areas where Tibetans live in June 2020. Lhundrub Dakpa was held in arbitrary detention for more than a year during which he was subjected to beatings and harsh interrogations.

#### Arbitrary Detention:

Wanchuk from Shigatse Prefecture was detained in March 2019 for sharing Tibetan books on Wechat.

Tsering Dorjee, resident of Peleb village in Tashi Zom Township, was detained on 20 February 2019 for having a phone conversation with his younger brother who is in exile about the importance of Tibetan language. He was subjected to torture in detention.

Another Tibetan woman Tsering Tso was arbitrarily detained on 12 November 2020 and subjected to ill-treatment and inhumane interrogation for her vocal advocacy work against corrupt local Chinese officials. She is currently released however is under intrusive surveillance by the Chinese Communist Party.

#### Violation of Religious Expression:

Chinese authorities recently banned religious offering of “sangsol” in front of the Jokhang temple, one of the holy sites in Lhasa for Tibetan Buddhists. The Tibetan prayer flags were banned and forcefully removed by the Chinese authorities. Tibetan children are banned from engaging in religious activities during vacations and elderly retired Tibetans are prohibited from going on kora (circumambulation of religious shrines) and from participating in religious activities. Tibetans are also banned from keeping the pictures of the Dalai Lama or praying to him.

Society for Threatened Peoples therefore calls upon the UN Human Rights Council to urge the Government of the People’s Republic of China to:

- Guarantee and enforce freedom of expression of Tibetans;
- Stop the practice of arrests, torture, incommunicado detention, harassment of Tibetans and release all Tibetan political prisoners;
- Guarantee fair trials, an independent judiciary and access to legal counsel to all Tibetans,

- Allow an independent fact-finding mission to assess the human rights violations perpetrated against Tibetans in the Tibet Autonomous Region and adjacent areas where Tibetans live,
  - Fulfil its obligations accepted by it to protect and guarantee the basic human rights of Tibetans including their language rights, religious freedom, freedom of speech and expression, movement and assembly in the Tibet Autonomous Region and adjacent areas where Tibetans live during its third cycle of the UPR.
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