

CHINA'S THIRD UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW AT THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

ON 6 NOVEMBER 2018, THE HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA WAS EXAMINED BY THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL, AS PART OF THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW (UPR) MECHANISM.



The Chinese delegation during the UPR session on 6 November. (Photo: UN Web TV)

During the interactive dialogue of the review – the third for China under this process – China had to respond to concerns raised by other UN Member States about its human rights abuses, including its crackdown on lawyers and human rights defenders, its violations of civil and political rights, including of minorities, the use of the death penalty, the situation in Hong Kong and the ICCPR ratification. The situation in Xinjiang was another important focus during this review, with a number of Western states referring to the recent report of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), that called upon the

Chinese government to release all Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities currently being held in mass so called “re-education” camps.

In all, 12 countries – Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States – also explicitly raised Tibet in their statements, calling in particular for religious freedom, unhindered access for international observers and the release of language advocate Tashi Wangchuk.

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TIBET BRIEF

NOVEMBER 2018

A REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

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It came as no surprise that the Chinese delegation bluntly rejected these criticisms, claiming the concerns were “politically driven”, and repeating its claim to a different path of human rights “with Chinese characteristics” – which can be understood as a concept that opposes the universality of human rights.

But in a more worrying development, the top-down and authoritarian Chinese development narrative – displayed in a photo exhibition organized by the Chinese mission in the UN building – was not only left unchallenged by the international community, but even unashamedly promoted by a number of states during this UPR session. South Africa, for example, praised the Chinese government as a “global

leader of people-centered development,” neglecting the fact that hundreds of thousands of Tibetan herders and nomads have been relocated, banned from their grasslands and discriminated against by Chinese policies for years. In another sign of China’s growing influence and the successful thwarting of scrutiny of its abuses, the Chinese was also the only delegation to receive applause upon the adoption of the UPR preliminary report.

Commenting on the session, ICT’s head of UN advocacy team and executive director of ICT Germany Kai Müller said: *“It should be clear to everyone that this was not just about the rights of Tibetans, Uyghurs or Chinese human rights defenders, but also about promoting to the world the Chinese system, which quite obviously discards human rights and the rule of law.”*

On 2 November, the Tibetan government-in-exile organised a meeting of representatives of Tibetans, Uyghurs and Mongols communities, human rights campaigners, diplomats and researchers, to discuss the situation in China and point to concrete problems. While China was undergoing its review on 6 November, around 1,000 Tibetan, Uyghur and Mongolian activists also marched from the Palais Wilson to the Broken Chair wooden sculpture in front of the Palais des Nations in Geneva. They called on the international community to hold China accountable for its appalling human rights record and demand that the basic rights of all people under Chinese control be respected.



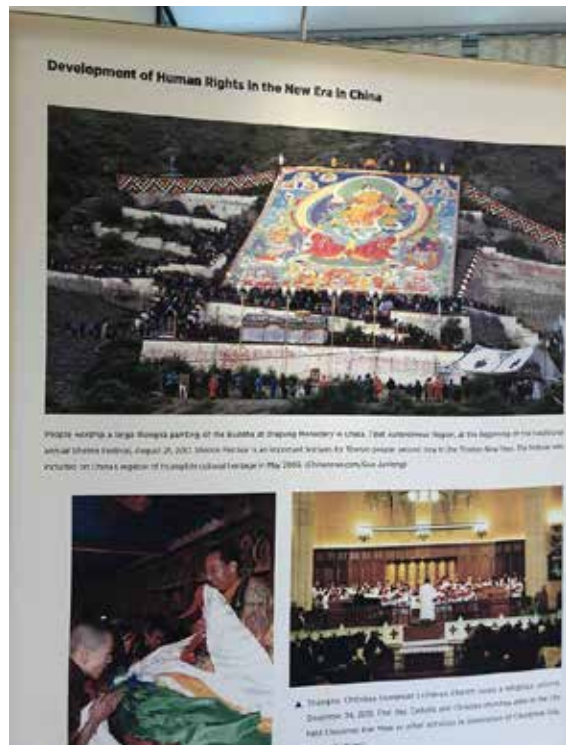
Tibetans, Uyghurs and Mongolian activists protesting in front of the UN building at the Place des Nations during China’s UPR on 6 November.

Ahead of the review, ICT had submitted a [joint report](#) with FIDH (the International Federation for Human Rights) documenting the dramatic deterioration of the human rights situation in Tibet since China’s UPR. The submission focused in particular on the hyper securitization of the Tibetan plateau, the creation of an extremely repressive environment, the systematic and widespread use of arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment. The report also cited the increasing interference and controls over religion, and the recurrent violations of Tibetan’s economic, social and cultural rights, including those of Tibetan nomads. ICT also called on UN Member States to explicitly raise the worrying human rights situation in Tibet, both through written questions and during the interactive dialogue session with the PRC.

The report of the UN Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of China will be presented for adoption during the next session of the UN Human Rights Council in March 2019.

MORE ON THIS:

- [Video recording of the interactive dialogue of China’s third UPR](#)
- [Draft report of the Working Group on the UPR](#)



A panel at the exhibition organized by the Chinese Permanent Representation in the Palais des Nations seem to show that freedom of religion is protected in China. However, the country recently reinforced its control at the Tibetan Buddhist Institute of Larung Gar, and photos of the Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama are still banned in most parts of Tibet.

RETIRED SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE DALAI LAMA AND ICT EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN LODI GYARI PASSES AWAY



Lodi Gyaltzen Gyari

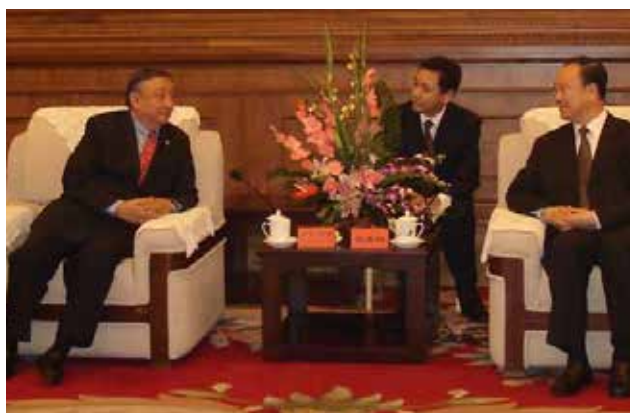
LODI GYARI, THE RETIRED SPECIAL ENVOY OF HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA, SENIOR OFFICIAL OF THE CENTRAL TIBETAN ADMINISTRATION AND EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET, PASSED AWAY ON 29 OCTOBER IN SAN FRANCISCO. HIS DEATH HAS PROMPTED MANY TRIBUTES FROM THE TIBETAN AND NON-TIBETAN WORLD.

An impassioned advocate for the Tibetan people, universal human rights and global democratic

reform, Lodi Gyari was appointed in May 1998 by His Holiness the Dalai Lama to initiate and lead a dialogue process with the government of the People's Republic of China. He not only conducted nine rounds of high-level talks in China and elsewhere (between 2002 and 2010) but also led an extensive behind-the-scenes diplomatic effort to sustain the process, expand the channels of communication, build trust with the Chinese leadership and maintain a broad international interest in the dialogue process.

Mr. Gyari successfully worked at the highest levels of the international arena. He was trusted, consulted and admired by many world leaders and members of the diplomatic corps. Heads of state, top government figures and policy makers consulted him on global and regional issues such as India-US relations, China-US relations and China-India relations because of his expertise, his deep knowledge of the region and his close personal connections with people in those countries.

"Rinpoche was an inspiring leader, a true Tibetan nationalist, and he dedicated his life to Tibet and the Tibetan people. With his untimely demise, we Tibetans have lost a true nationalist and a great compatriot," said Tempa Tsering, Board Member of the International Campaign for Tibet. A U.S. State Department official also expressed



Special Envoy Lodi Gyari (left) meeting with Chinese representatives Du Qinglin (middle) and Zhu Weiqun in November 2008 in Beijing.

its condolences: *"Mr. Gyari dedicated his life to serving as a staunch advocate for the Tibetan people, democratic principles, and human rights, including religious freedom. On this day, we remember Mr. Gyari for his tireless pursuit of a better future for all Tibetans."*



Lodi Gyari with ICT's Chairman of the Board Richard Gere and Director of ICT Europe Tsering Jampa, after the Geuzen Penning ceremony in Vlaardingen (The Netherlands), March 2005. (Photo: Reuters)

Born in Nyagrong (eastern Tibet) in 1949, Gyari was identified as a child as a reincarnated lama, and devoted himself to monastic study. After coming into exile, he became the editor of the Tibetan Freedom Press - a Tibetan-language periodical - and started the Voice of Tibet (now Tibetan Review), the first-ever English language journal published by a Tibetan. He was also one of the founders of the Tibetan Youth Congress, the

largest Tibetan exile organization seeking independence from China. He then served in the senior most elected and appointed positions of the Central Tibetan Administration - from Speaker of the Parliament to Cabinet Minister.

Mr. Gyari was a seasoned and skilled diplomat, who spent the majority of his professional career working directly for and on behalf of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people. The International Campaign for Tibet is deeply saddened by the passing of this key figure for the Tibetan struggle for justice, and wishes to express its condolences to his family and all those who knew him.

MORE ON THIS ISSUE:

- [Personal words of gratitude from Lodi Gyari on his retirement as ICT's Executive Chairman](#)
- [ICT's full tribute to Lodi Gyari, including a biography](#)

CONFERENCE ON ACCESS TO TIBET AND RECIPROCITY HELD IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

AT A CONFERENCE IT HELPED ORGANIZE INSIDE THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ON 21 NOVEMBER, THE INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET LED A DISCUSSION ON THE NEED FOR EUROPE TO EXPAND THE NOTION OF RECIPROCITY – OFTEN INVOKED BY EUROPEAN LEADERS AS A KEY PRINCIPLE IN ECONOMIC AND TRADE RELATIONS WITH CHINA – TO ENSURE THE RESPECT OF FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS AND TO PROMOTE UNFETTERED ACCESS TO TIBET.



The welcoming session included speeches by Vincent Metten, ICT's EU Policy Director, MEPs Cristian Preda and Thomas Mann as well as the former Special Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for Europe Kelsang Gyaltsen.

The conference, “Access to Tibet and the Practice of Reciprocity,” which was organized in collaboration with the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), followed the publication in May of [an ICT report revealing China's strategies of weaponizing access to Tibet in order to prevent international scrutiny of its human rights abuses there](#). It also built on an increasing awareness that the asymmetry in the EU-China relationship, combined with China's growing authoritarian influence in Europe, represent a serious threat to democracies and universal values.

The event was hosted by Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) Thomas Mann, chair of the Tibet Interest Group, and Cristian Dan Preda, vice chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights, who stressed that “the EU

should refer to reciprocity as a key principle in terms of our bilateral relations with China.” In a lively debate moderated by Gregory Bruno, a journalist who has spent many years living in and writing about China and Tibet, independent experts, journalists, a representative of the European External Action Service (EEAS), national parliamentarians and officials discussed the consequences of China's restrictions on access to Tibet, both for human rights in Tibet and for rights and freedoms in Europe.

Sharing their successful and unsuccessful experiences of visiting Tibet, speakers described the difficulties for journalists and independent observers to access Tibet, which allow the Chinese government to violate the fundamental rights of Tibetans without accountability. They also explored

ways in which the European Union and its Member States could promote reciprocity in their relationships with China beyond trade and economic relations. Contributing to the discussion via [video message](#), United States Representative Jim McGovern (Democrat-Massachusetts), the main sponsor of the [Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act](#), which was recently passed by the US House of Representatives and by the US Senate's Foreign Affairs Committee, presented the bill and suggested cooperation between the United States and Europe on the issue.



Some of the conference panelists. Top, from left to right: Henri Malosse, member of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC); Guillaume Arnell, French Senator and Vice-Chair of the Senate's Tibet group; Jonathan Hatwell, representative of the EEAS. Below: Matteo Mecacci, President of ICT and Ursula Gauthier, French journalist for L'Obs. Other speakers included Veerle de Vos, Belgian journalist at VRT, MEP Bas Belder, US Representative Jim McGovern and former UN Special Rapporteur on torture Manfred Nowak.

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Matteo Mecacci, President of the International Campaign for Tibet, said, *"Tibet is one of the least accessible regions in the world for journalists and independent observers. Its complete isolation is essential for the Chinese government to continue to oppress the Tibetan people and deny them, outside of international scrutiny, basic human rights. Also, the Chinese government takes advantage of the opportunities provided by democratic societies to spread its propaganda and stifle an open discussion on Tibet. It is urgent that democratic governments fully implement the principle of reciprocity in their relations with China and require unfettered access to Tibet."*

The presentations at the conference, including exchanges of views with the participants,

will be collected in a policy paper that will include concrete recommendations on how to rebalance the asymmetrical EU-China relationship, particularly in the field of access to respective territories. The paper will then be disseminated to policy-makers in Europe. During the conference, Kelsang Gyaltzen, former Special Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for Europe, also delivered a tribute to Lodi Gyari, ICT's former president and executive chairman, who passed away at the end of October and had many friends among parliamentarians, diplomats and political leaders in Europe.

MORE ON THIS:

- [Video recording of the conference "Access to Tibet and the Practice of Reciprocity"](#)

ICT'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY MARKED IN BRUSSELS

ON 21 NOVEMBER, ICT AND FIDH'S JOINT CONFERENCE ON ACCESS TO TIBET AND RECIPROCITY IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT WAS FOLLOWED BY A COCKTAIL RECEPTION AT THE BIBLIOTHÈQUE SOLVAY, IN THE HEART OF THE EUROPEAN UNION QUARTER IN BRUSSELS, TO MARK ICT'S 30TH YEAR OF EXISTENCE.



The special gathering brought together human rights and Tibet activists, EU and national officials and parliamentarians and members of the Tibetan Community in Belgium. Highlights of the event included the photo exhibition "Tibet, in the shadow of the roof of the world" by Portuguese artist [Carlos Brum Melo](#), a young photographer who traveled to Tibet in 2017, as well as traditional Tibetan music and dances. A small video focusing on ICT's work was also screened –click [here](#) to watch it!

PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS ON TIBET REESTABLISHED IN FRANCE AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

THE INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET HAS WELCOMED THE RECENT ESTABLISHMENT OF TWO PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS ON TIBET IN FRANCE AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC, AN IMPORTANT SIGN OF THE CONTINUOUS SUPPORT FOR THE TIBETAN PEOPLE IN EUROPE.

The new Czech Parliamentary Group for Tibet, which was created at the initiative of Dana Balcarová (Pirate Party) and Marek Benda (Civic Democratic Party), was officially launched on 9 October, coinciding with the visit to Prague of the Central Tibetan Administration's President Lobsang Sangay. It brings together more than 50 representatives from both Chambers of the Czech Parliament, making it the largest parliamentary group for Tibet in Europe.

Also, this month in France, the Study Group on Tibet of the National Assembly (the French Parliament's lower house) - created back in June 1990 - was also fully reinstated. It is now composed of 17 deputies from various political groups and chaired by Elisabeth Toutut-Picard, a health and environment specialist and member of President Macron's La République En Marche! Party. This new group will work alongside its counterpart in the French Senate, the International Information Tibet Group, headed by Senator Michel Raison and composed of 23 Senators.

ICT REPORT USES SATELLITE IMAGES TO REVEAL PRISON STATE IN TIBET'S CAPITAL

A NEW REPORT BY ICT REVEALS CHINA'S DOUBLE-EDGED DRIVE TO REMAKE LHASA INTO A DREAM TOURIST DESTINATION, WHILE REMODELING THE CITY AS AN URBAN HUB OF HYPER-SECURITIZATION.



The black box of Tibet's prison system: Detention center notorious for torture next to five-star global brand hotel.

The report, [China's control state in Lhasa](#), published on 4 October, uses satellite imagery to evidence the expansion and modernization of prison and detention facilities in Tibet's ancient capital, in a political climate of tightened control and total surveillance.

It also illustrates the coexistence of this security-state with the development of mass tourism in Tibet, citing the example of the five-star InterContinental Lhasa Paradise - owned by a British hotel chain that claims to have a 'commitment to Responsible

Business'. The luxury hotel is directly adjacent to the most notorious detention center in Lhasa, the Gutsa Detention Center, with a reputation for brutal torture of Tibetan monks, nuns and laypeople.

"The contrast could not be more profound," ICT President Matteo Mecacci said, "a hellish prison that makes Tibetans shudder to recall what they endured within its cells, and a luxury hotel named Paradise on the Roof of the World. There can surely be no more sobering example of the priorities of the Chinese government in Tibet."

The Chinese government reiterated its intention to increase tourism in Tibet during a Tourism and Culture Expo held in Lhasa in September, while emphasizing at the same time how security concerns are paramount, given the significance of Tibet as an important "security barrier".

TIBETAN MAN CALLS FOR DALAI LAMA'S LONG LIFE AS HE SETS HIMSELF ON FIRE

A YOUNG TIBETAN NAMED DORBE SET HIMSELF ON FIRE ON 4 NOVEMBER IN NGABA (CHINESE: ABA), AMDO, SAYING "MAY THE DALAI LAMA LIVE LONG! MAY WE SOON BEHOLD HIS GOLDEN COUNTENANCE!" BEFORE HE DIED.



According to Kanyag Tsering and Lobsang Yeshe, two Kirti monks in exile in India who passed on the news of the self-immolation, Dorbe was 23 and from Jakorma (Chinese: Xiakunma) village in the pastoral Choejema (Chinese: Qiujima) township of Ngaba county in present-day Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) Tibetan and

Images that emerged showed Dorbe in traditional Tibetan dress beside a nomad tent.

Qiang Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan province. Ngaba is the area where the wave of Tibetan self-immolations began. The Kirti monks said that no further details were known, due to intense restrictions on information flow in the area and grave dangers for Tibetans who speak to those in exile.

Dorbe's death is the second reported self-immolation in Tibet this year, and the 154th since 2009.

PRAYER FESTIVAL CANCELLED AMID TIGHTENING CONTROL AT FAMOUS TIBETAN BUDDHIST INSTITUTE

CHINESE OFFICIALS HAVE CANCELED THE PRAYER FESTIVAL OF DECHEN SHEDRUB AT THE FAMOUS LARUNG GAR INSTITUTE IN EASTERN TIBET, ACCORDING TO AN OFFICIAL NOTICE STATING THAT THERE WOULD BE NO MORE LARGE RELIGIOUS GATHERINGS HELD THERE.



This view over Larung Gar shows where demolition has cut a swathe through the religious center's landscape, depicted from a new fenced viewing point.

The announcement, which follows the demolition of monks' and nuns' homes, and mass expulsions at Larung Gar from July 2016, appears to be a result of the appointment of 200 Party cadres and lay officials to key positions at the institute announced in 2017.

These officials have effectively taken over all management, finances, security, admissions, and even the choice of textbooks.

The official notice indicates that the purpose of Larung Gar is for religious study and education rather than religious practice, and that devotees from other areas are not welcome. It is evidence of a further

tightening of control in an already oppressive climate against religion.

The Dechen Shedrub religious festival fell this year on 30 October, and lasted around eight days. Traditionally large numbers of

devotees would gather together at Larung Gar for the festival. It was cancelled in 2016 at the height of the demolitions, and once before in 2009, after the protests and crackdown in the area and across Tibet in 2008. Last year, the authorities promised the festival would be permitted and monks had begun preparations, but it was suddenly cancelled before prayers were due to begin.

Reports indicate an ever-present awareness among monks and nuns of police and security officials in civilian clothes, with one visitor saying that they saw a group of Chinese in civilian clothing in a bus outside the main temple – with a pile of handguns visible in the vehicle. The same visitor, who had travelled to Larung Gar in the past, said: *"The place feels so different to before, so empty, not just of monks and nuns but also Tibetan pilgrims, there were even very few Chinese people there. It felt sad, broken."*



POLITICAL PRISONER FOCUS FORMER POLITICAL PRISONER PALDEN GYATSO PASSES AWAY

THE INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET MOURNS THE LOSS OF VEN. PALDEN GYATSO, WHO ENDURED MORE THAN 30 YEARS OF TORTURE AND IMPRISONMENT IN CHINESE PRISONS AND LABOR CAMPS IN TIBET AND DIED ON 30 NOVEMBER IN DHARAMSALA, INDIA, AT THE AGE OF 85.

Palden Gyatso was born in Panam, in central Tibet and became a monk at Gadrug Gompa in Shigatse, where he studied there until he was 16. In 1959, when China crushed the Tibetan uprising against its occupation, Palden Gyatso was arrested along with thousands of other monks, accused of being a reactionary and sentenced in 1960 to a

seven-year prison term. He escaped from prison three years later, but was caught at the Indian border and imprisoned again, held in leg irons with a metal bar that made it almost impossible to walk. He completed his prison term in 1975 but was sent to a labor camp for prisoners. He escaped again in 1979 but was soon caught putting

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THREE MONKS DETAINED FOLLOWING SOLO-PROTESTS IN NGABA

THREE YOUNG MONKS OF THE NGABA AREA, EASTERN TIBET, HAVE BEEN DETAINED AFTER THEY STAGED PEACEFUL SOLO-PROTESTS AT THE BEGINNING OF SEPTEMBER, ADDING TO A TREND THAT BECAME PROMINENT IN RECENT YEARS.



Tenzin Gelek and Dorjee Rabten

On 5 September, Dorje Rabten, aged about 23, staged a public protest in Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) county town, shouting pro-Tibet slogans, according to Kanyag Tsering and Lobsang Yeshe, from the Kirti Monastery in Dharamsala, India. A monk at the Kirti Monastery in Tibet, he was arrested by police and is now in detention. The next day, another monk from Kirti Monastery, 18 year-old Tenzin Gelek, staged a similar protest in the county town, calling for freedom in Tibet, according to the same sources. He was also immediately arrested and is now in detention. Tenzin Gelek, from Me'uruma, appears to have posted two messages on social media before his protest, and is the author of many other posts under a pseudonym. It is not known where he is being detained. There was a third protest in September by a monk in the county town, who was arrested, but the details are not yet known.

Incidents of one-person protests became a pattern in 2014 and 2015 in Ngaba, the same area where the wave of self-immolations began in 2009 when Kirti monk Tapey set himself on fire. There have also been a number of solo protests in Kardze (Chinese: Ganzhi), in Sichuan, where a number of self-immolations have occurred, demonstrating the continued determination of a young generation of Tibetan monks and lay people.

Some of the Tibetans sentenced for such protests are now being released, but according to two Kirti monks in exile village police stations are taking them back into detention for a week or so for 're-education'.

MORE ON THIS:

- [Brave solo protests show Tibetans' remarkable courage and steadfast loyalty to the Dalai Lama](#)

up anti-Chinese posters and sentenced to another nine years in prison. In August 1992, he finished his prison term; 13 days later, he escaped from Tibet to India, where he found asylum.

While in detention, Palden went under unimaginable torture and maltreatment for his refusal to 'reform' and give up his Buddhist faith and identity, a reality he later described in his book "Fire under the Snow". Palden and other prisoners held in Drapchi at that time were forced to work for nine hours a day, frequently harnessed in a yoke and made to plough the land. Hunger became the cruelest punishment. But prisoners could not stop working, otherwise they would be beaten almost to death.

Having reached the safety of exile, Palden did not give up, but persisted and wasted no opportunity to tell the world the truth about Tibet. He became known in the West after visiting Britain, Italy, Portugal and the US in 1995, bringing with him a collection of torture implements, some still stained with blood that he smuggled from Tibet after bribing a Chinese prison official.

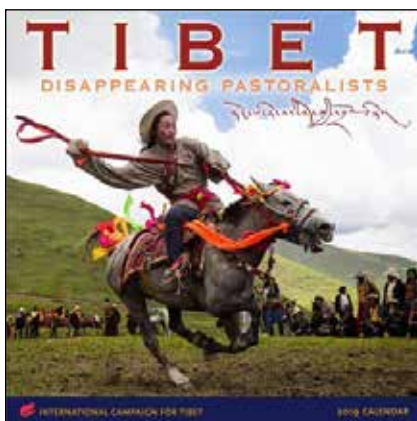
Palden Gyatso's passing had a deep emotional impact on Tibet supporters across the globe, many of whom retained connections with him for many years afterward. The Dalai Lama described Palden's life as "one of the most extraordinary stories of suffering and endurance," saying that he was "an inspiration to us all."

UPCOMING EVENTS

10 DECEMBER:
Human Rights Day

ICT'S 2019 CALENDAR: DISAPPEARING PASTORALISTS

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