

China's Second Universal Periodic Review at the UN Human Rights Council



Chinese delegation, China's UPR, October 22, 2013

On October 25, 2013 the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group adopted its report on the People's Republic of China (PRC).

The **Human Rights Council** (HRC) held its seventeenth UPR session during which 15 States had their human rights records examined under this mechanism. On October 22, 2013 the PRC underwent its second review.

Kai Müller, Executive Director of **ICT Germany**, said *"The international community must hold China accountable for its poor human rights record in Tibet and ensure that China fulfills its obligations to universal human rights."* Commenting on the UPR session **Mr. Müller** said, *"The fact that eleven UN Member States spoke out to urge China to improve the human rights of Tibetans has sent a clear and unambiguous message to the Chinese government that their counter-productive policies violating the human rights of*

Tibetans are not going unnoticed".

On October 22, Canada, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Iceland, Japan, New Zealand, Poland, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States explicitly raised Tibet in their [statements](#). The delegates cited the lack of religious freedom, minority rights, and access of UN officials to Tibet, and called on China to resume dialogue with the **Dalai Lama**. The session's webcast is available [here](#). Not surprisingly, the

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PRC's delegation stated that remarkable progress had been made in the field of human rights in Tibet. Yet, it only cited statistics on the increase of GDP and life expectancy, and decrease of illiteracy rate. In addition, it stressed that the self-immolations having occurred in Tibet were instigated by the **Dalai Lama** clique. The delegates of the **PRC** also said that the fundamental reason for the lack of progress on talks and engagement with

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the **Dalai Lama** was due to his ongoing demand for the independence of Tibet. Interestingly, the **PRC** explained that it had been impossible to accommodate all requests for visits by foreign delegations due to the harsh geographic and climatic conditions on the Tibetan plateau.

Moreover, China had to respond to questions concerning its overall human rights issues such as the **ICCPR** ratification, anti-discrimination laws, a moratorium on executions and greater transparency around its capital punishment system, harassment of human rights defenders and civil society organizations, as well as judicial transparency and arbitrary detentions.

Countries not renowned for their championing of human rights such as Cuba and Venezuela praised China for its allegedly improved human rights record, highlighting its efforts in the fields of the right to self-determination and minority rights protection. Some States even called upon China to improve its stability maintenance approach. For example, Pakistan recommended to “strengthen actions against criminals who intimidate or help those who commit self-immolations”, and Sri Lanka urged to “continue counter terrorism and ethnic separatism”.

The **International Campaign for Tibet** (ICT) had called on UN Member States to explicitly raise the worrying human rights situation in Tibet through both written questions and during the interactive dialogue session with the **PRC**. **ICT**'s recommendations touched upon numerous issues such as access to Tibetan areas for UN officials, police brutality, restrictions on freedom of religion and the right to education, among others. Prior to the review, **ICT** had also submitted a [joint report](#) with the **International Federation for Human Rights** (FIDH), focusing on China's crackdown on Tibetan Buddhism, as well as [an ICT analysis](#) which finds that China's report to the Council ignores the wide range of human rights problems in Tibetan areas that have been documented by the UN and numerous governments. Instead, China's report resorts to false platitudes, claiming it is “fully respecting freedom of religious belief in ethnic regions in Tibet.”



Joint ICT-FIDH-HRIC side event at the UN Human Rights Council, October 21, 2013

On the eve of China's **UPR**, **ICT** held a joint side event with **FIDH** and **Human Rights in China** (HRIC) on “Challenges to Civil Society by China's Security Laws” at the **HRC** in Geneva.

The panel focused on civil society's role in advancing progress and addressing China's human rights challenges, as well as the challenges to fundamental rights and freedoms presented by national security laws. Speaking at the event, Mr. **Kai Müller**, pointed out the extreme difficulties Tibetans face in order to engage with civil society under Chinese policies. Government authorities tightly restrict phone and internet communications in Tibetan areas, especially where self-immolation protests have occurred. Moreover, Mr. **Müller** said, “state security laws have been very often used to persecute politically-engaged Tibetans and that many of the verdicts, which led to the imprisonment of Tibetan citizens, have been imposed on grounds of separatism or ‘splittism’.”



Tibetan activists' protest in front of the UN building at Place des Nations in Geneva during China's UPR, October 22, 2013

Since its first **UPR** in 2009, **ICT** has witnessed only limited progress, if not a deterioration of the human rights situation in Tibet, involving almost every sphere, from the intensification of the military presence on the ground, and increased control on Tibetans' daily lives to the undermining of Tibetan culture, religion and language.

During China's first **UPR** in 2009, only four States – namely the Czech Republic, New Zealand, Switzerland and the United Kingdom – made recommendations on Tibet. ■

UN Committee on the Rights of the Child Reviews China's Record

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child reviewed China's record, including in Tibet, as part of its compliance review under the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child \(CRC\)](#) on September 26 and 27, in Geneva.



UN Rights of the Child Committee review of China, September 26 and 27, 2013

On October 4, the Committee adopted its final report on the review, with concluding observations and recommendations. In the report, the Committee once again expressed its concern over the deteriorating situation of human rights in Tibet, highlighting the *"continuous violations of rights and discrimination against Tibetan children."* The Committee was also deeply disturbed by the escalation of self-immolations by Tibetan children, and urged China to:

- Engage in a genuine dialogue with children as well as religious and community leaders in the **Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR)** in an effort to halt self-immolations and protect the inherent right to life, survival and development of all Tibetan children;

- Take urgent measures to resolve the deep-rooted grievances of Tibetan children and their families, notably by reassessing and reforming the current policies and programs, which have led to the immolations and protests by children in the **TAR**;
- Ensure that Tibetan children injured after self-immolating have full access to free medical treatment and that their conditions are independently verified and publicly reported; and
- Refrain from arresting, detaining Tibetan children and implementing security measures that may exacerbate the situation and ensure that children arrested or sentenced for 'instigating' or 'inciting' self-immolation can fully access their right to legal aid and fair trial.

The report also condemned the restrictions on Tibetan children to study and practice their religion, such as the measures imposed on Tibetan monasteries and nunneries, as well as the frequent practice of torture and ill-treatment of Tibetan children for exercising their fundamental rights to freedom of religion, assembly and expression. In this context and reflecting the discussions held during the formal session, the Committee expressed its concern about the situation of the 11th Panchen Lama, **Gedhun Choekyi Nyima**, stating that China *"has not allowed any independent expert to visit and confirm his whereabouts, fulfillment of his rights and well-being."* In addition, the Committee

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dedicated a long part of its final report to the issue of bilingual education policy and discrimination against Tibetan children within the Chinese education system.

In reviewing reports submitted by States Parties, the Committee accepts submissions by **NGOs** on the implementation of the **CRC** and the Optional Protocols on reporting States. **The International Campaign for Tibet (ICT)**, as well as 17 other **NGOs**, submitted a report focusing on numerous areas concerning violations of Tibetan children's rights. **ICT** testified before the Committee in February 2013 during a pre-session of China's review.

During the formal session on September 26 and 27, more than 40 representatives from **NGOs** and other civil society groups were present at the review, although they were not allowed to speak as per the rules of the review. **ICT** attended both days of the session and handed over a list of proposed questions to some of the Committee Members.

In many of the written questions posed by the Committee to the **PRC** prior to the formal session, Tibet and the rights of children belonging to ethnic minorities were raised. Some of the issues concerned the cases of self-immolations of children in Tibet, discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities, freedom of religion for Tibetan children, and bilingual education for children from ethnic minorities.

On the first day of its review, the head of the **PRC's** delegation, Mr. **Jia Guide**, held an introductory speech, outlining the main objectives of China's 10-year National Program for Child Development, adopted in 2011, as well as progress made regarding child-related legislation, the protection of children with special needs, the improvement of education and healthcare systems and new special criminal procedures regarding juvenile offenders. His statement was then followed by introductory remarks

by Representatives from the Special Administrative Regions of Hong Kong and Macao on the implementation of the **CRC** in their respective regions.

In the interactive dialogue that followed, the Committee praised the **PRC** for the legislative reform of its Criminal Code and various programs aimed at improving the situation of children. However, Committee Members also raised their concerns with regard to a wide range of issues, such as the **PRC's** reservation on article 6 of the **CRC** regarding the right to life, forced abortions, corporal punishment, the treatment of migrant children and the use of re-education through labor for children.

The rights of Tibetan children played an important role throughout the whole session, as several Committee Members asked different questions on the human rights situation of Tibetan children, touching upon many critical points, such as Tibetan children's self-immolations, freedom of thought and religion, shortage of schools in rural areas in Tibet and the use of the Tibetan language in schools.

On the second day of the review, the **PRC** was expected to respond to the questions asked by the Committee. However, China failed to answer to most of the sensitive questions regarding Tibet by giving lengthy explanations and providing formal laws and statistics, diverting from the actual questions. The Committee Members were able to effectively challenge the **PRC's** delegation and always brought the focus back to their original questions when the **PRC** did not provide adequate answers. Many of **ICT's** proposed questions were used by the Committee, covering different issues, such as freedom of religion, the right to education and language rights.

For example, when China denied that there was discrimination against the practice of religion, the Chairperson of the Committee, Ms. **Kirsten Sandberg**, retorted that they had received many

reports on infringement of freedom of religion in Tibet and Xinjiang and that the **PRC's** delegation was not talking about the reality on the ground.

Moreover, China was questioned on the whereabouts of **Gedhun Choekyi Nyima**, who was abducted by Chinese authorities in 1995 after he was recognized by the **Dalai Lama** as the 11th Panchen Lama. The Committee asked if China's argument that the **Panchen Lama** had been given higher education and is living a happy life had been confirmed by an independent authority, echoing a similar question asked by the same Committee as early as 2005. The Chinese Representative refused to respond to this question, vaguely stating that they would provide an answer at a later stage.

The next **CRC** review of China will be held in 2018.

BACKGROUND NOTE

The **Committee on the Rights of the Child** is a body, composed of 18 independent experts, that monitors implementation of the **CRC** by its States Parties. It also monitors implementation of two Optional Protocols to the **CRC**, on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

All States Parties are obliged to submit regular reports to the Committee on how the rights are being implemented. States must initially report two years after acceding to the Convention and then every five years. The Committee examines each report and addresses its concerns and recommendations to the State party in the form of "concluding observations".

During its 64th session (September 16 – October 4) the Committee reviewed the reports of seven States, including the **People's Republic of China (PRC)**. The other States to be reviewed, were Kuwait, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Sao Tome and Principe, and Tuvalu. ■

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On November 18, judges in the Spanish National Court ordered warrants of arrest to be issued against five Chinese leaders, including former President and Party Secretary **Jiang Zemin**, for their policies in Tibet. This groundbreaking development follows the news on October 9 of **Hu Jintao's** indictment for genocide in Tibet. In a separate legal ruling also issued on November 18 in Madrid, the Spanish National Court also ordered that former leader **Hu Jintao** is informed of his indictment and sent questions about his policies in Tibet via the Chinese embassy.

The rulings have positively surprised Spanish legal experts working on the orders for arrest warrants are made against five senior Chinese leaders for

The rulings, which go further than Spanish experts expected and send a strong signal to the Chinese leadership, mean that none of the leaders named, and others too, are likely to take the risk of travelling outside the **PRC** as they could be arrested for questioning on the crimes they are accused of. All the leaders face the possibility of bank accounts overseas being preventively frozen. In the earlier writ issued on October 9, the judges recognized that this indictment of **Hu Jintao** comes at the judicial moment "when his diplomatic immunity expires".



© China Daily Mail

Jiang Zemin

Tibetan law suits upholding the principle of "universal jurisdiction" a part of international law that allows courts to reach beyond national borders in cases of torture, terror and other serious international crimes perpetrated by individuals, governments or military authorities. This new development was described to the **International Campaign for Tibet** (ICT) by legal experts in Spain as being potentially as significant as the arrest of **Pinochet** in London in 1998 after a group of Spanish lawyers put together a lawsuit against the Chilean dictator, who presided over a 17-year reign of terror and ordered foreign assassinations.

their involvement in policies in Tibet as follows: **Jiang Zemin**, former President and Party Secretary; **Li Peng**, Prime Minister during the repression in Tibet in the late 1980s and early 1990s (and the crackdown in Tiananmen); **Qiao Shi**, former head of Chinese security and responsible for the People's Armed Police during the martial law period in Tibet in the late 1980s; **Chen Kuiyuan**, Party secretary in the **Tibet Autonomous Region** from 1992 to 2001 (who was known for his hardline position against Tibetan religion and culture), and **Deng Delyun** (also known as Peng Pelyun), minister of family planning in the 1990s.

This ruling was made by the appeals court (Section 4 of the Criminal Court of Spain's National Court, the Audiencia Nacional), which is the investigative national court for major crimes such as terrorism, drug trafficking, piracy, or money laundering. It specifically refers to the "political and criminal responsibility" of the named Chinese leaders for their policies on Tibet and addresses the evidence presented to the court over the past eight years. This includes testimony from former political prisoners, international experts, documentation of killings and torture, and reports by **ICT** and other organisations. A report by **ICT**, ratified to the judge in Madrid in December 2012, outlined details of the chain of command for specific policies in Tibet from the imposition of martial law leading to torture and a climate of terror, to systematic patriotic education, compelling Tibetans to denounce their

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Escalation of Militarization in Nagchu and New Shooting of Unarmed Tibetans

Troop presence has been stepped up in Nagchu and local schools closed following a failed attempt by the authorities to compel families and monasteries in the area to raise the Chinese national flag to mark the founding anniversary of the People's Republic of China on October 1, China's National Day.



People's Armed Police and unarmed local Tibetans in Garchung Village in Dathang Township, Driyu county, Nagchu

According to Radio Free Asia, around 40 Tibetans were detained after refusing to do so on or around September 29-30. Hundreds of Tibetans protested at the county office, demanding their release, according to the same report, which cited a Tibetan source as saying, "Groups of seven paramilitary policemen have been stationed at each house and are watching the Tibetans. Villagers are not being allowed to tend to their animals, and any Tibetan found loitering in the town is being taken away." (RFA, Tibetans Clash With Police Over Chinese Flag Campaign – October 2, 2013).

The resistance in Nagchu (Chinese: Naqu) occurred just days after Tibet Autonomous Region Party Secretary **Chen Quanguo** visited Chamdo in the TAR (Chinese: Changdu or Qamdo) from

September 25 to 27. Chamdo has been described by the official media as the 'frontline' of the 'patriotic education' campaigns favored by the Chinese Communist Party as a means of preempting further nationalist protest in Tibet, and more repressive measures have been introduced since 2008 to counter dissent and demonstrations. Despite the authorities' emphasis on 'social stability', the harsh repressive measures in place, and visits by senior officials from Lhasa to Chamdo, protests and dissent have continued in the region.

Tibetan writer and blogger **Tsering Woesser**, who is based in Beijing, wrote in June that in Chamdo today,

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exiled leader the **Dalai Lama**. ICT described how the functions of the Communist Party override those of the Chinese state at all levels.

In making the ruling, the judges were acknowledging that there was ample and specific evidence to issue the order for arrest warrants. Orders of international arrest are carried out by police through Interpol or European Arrest Warrants in the EU and not by governments. The Chinese authorities responded to earlier writs with complaints to the Spanish Courts and government; Beijing has sought to quash the cases through direct intervention with the Spanish government and judiciary.

The Spanish lawyers acting for Spanish **NGO Comité de Apoyo al Tibet (CAT)** were requested by Court Room No 2 where the genocide lawsuit was lodged to provide a set of questions to former Party leader **Hu Jintao** about his policies in Tibet. The writ issued last month followed an appeal on July 29 following the judge's earlier rejection of a request to extend the lawsuit to include former Party Secretary and President **Hu Jintao**. The appeals court now accepts the argument put forward by the Spanish **NGO Comité de Apoyo al Tibet (CAT)** for **Hu Jintao's** indictment. This includes the period he was Party Secretary of the **Tibet Autonomous Region** in which he presided over the imposition of martial law in 1989, and also his responsibility for policy on Tibet as President and Party Secretary of China after 2003 "due to being the highest ranking person in both the Party and the Government".

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one “does not see any prayer flags but only a field of scarlet five-starred red flags.” In the same article, translated into English by High Peaks Pure Earth, Woesser wrote: “The reason why the work groups have been installed in villages and monasteries in the Chamdo region is to implement the TAR policies of the ‘Nine Haves’ (namely ‘to have portraits of the four leaders, to have a national flag, to have roads, to have water, to have electricity, to have a TV set, to have films, to have a library, to have newspapers’). From the end of 2011 onwards, there had to be a five-starred red flag on the rooftop of every monastery, monastery hall and monk residence, as well as on every single farmer’s and herdsman’s house. All of the above also had to hang up portraits of the CCP’s leaders and they had to present these portraits with a Tibetan khata [white blessing scarf] to avoid political problems. Farmers and herdsmen had to buy the five-starred red flags themselves. Depending on the quality, a flag can cost between three and six Yuan. The replacement of an old flag with a new one is also subject to money. This year for the first time, the work groups started giving flags out for free. These work groups would often go to monasteries and families’ homes to carry out inspections.” (High Peaks, Pure Earth, “Chamdo: Villages and Monasteries are Covered in Five-Starred Red Flags” By **Woesser**)

The Chinese government regards Chamdo as “a strategic bridge between the TAR and the neighboring provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan and Qinghai.” (Tibet Daily, April 17). The region has been of particular strategic importance to Beijing since the Communist authorities gained control of central

Tibet when Chamdo, Eastern Tibet’s provincial capital, fell to the People’s Liberation Army on October 7, 1950.

The current drive to compel the display of the Chinese flag aims at enforcing loyalty to the CCP, as part of the Party’s strategy to intensify control across the **TAR**, which is seen as the answer to any political ‘instability’. This has led to a drastic increase in the number of work teams and Party cadres present in rural areas of the **TAR**, as well as to well-resourced initiatives in the culture and social sphere in Lhasa and other urban areas, sometimes described as ‘cultural replacement activities’. In 2012, the official media announced that more than 20,000 cadres and 5,000 work teams had been selected by the Chinese government to stay permanently in different neighborhoods in the **TAR**, with other cadres being sent into remote rural areas (Tibet Daily, March 11, 2012).

A mass re-education campaign was launched in the **TAR** in April 2008 under the slogan “Unity and stability is happiness. Separation [of nationalities] and unrest is disaster.” The campaign involves requiring ordinary Tibetans to sing revolutionary songs, to give the right answers to questions about Tibet’s past, and to learn rules and regulations of the PRC, including criminal law. Tibetans are also required to oppose the “*Dalai clique*.”

Moreover, on October 6, at least 60 Tibetans were injured, some seriously, in Driru after Chinese troops opened fire on Tibetans calling for the release of a local Tibetan who had objected to orders from a ‘patriotic education’ work

team prior to China’s National Day.

Tibetans gathered in Dorje Dragtsel’s home area, Dathang township, to call for his release. The aggressive response of the police was distressing to local people, who were “violently suppressed by about 300 security forces using guns and iron batons” according to the Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy and other Tibetan sources (TCHRD, [Diru under lockdown: one Tibetan sentenced; more injured by gunshots and disappeared](#))

Tibetan exile sources have named four Tibetans who were seriously injured: **Tagyal, Tsewang, Lobsang Wangchen** and **Pador**. **Tagyal** (Tashi Gyaltzen) was reported to have been shot in the leg, breaking his thighbone. **Tsewang** had both his jawbones broken, and one source said the bullet penetrated his face. Both were taken to Lhasa for medical treatment and are believed to be in critical condition. **Lobsang Wangchen** and **Pador** were also named as having been injured. The same sources stated that many others lost consciousness after tear-gas was fired.

Tsering Gyaltzen, a Tibetan in his twenties, seems to have been singled out by the police as being a ‘ringleader’ of the peaceful expressions of dissent. During his subsequent arrest and detention, some sources have stated that he was seriously tortured and injured. After having been denied medical treatment for several days, he is now in hospital in Lhasa, in critical condition. Other Tibetans injured by beatings or torture were unable to travel for medical treatment due to restrictions on movement in the area. ■

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Delegation of Members of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile Visits Europe

On November 3, a delegation of five members of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile, headed by the Speaker Penpa Tsering, arrived in Brussels.



Tibetan Parliament's delegation at the European External Action Service

After meeting with local **Tibet Support Groups** and the **Tibetan Community** in Antwerp, the delegation had the opportunity to exchange views on the situation in Tibet with members of the **European Parliament** (during the 98th meeting of the Tibet Intergroup), representatives of the Committee of the Regions and of the Economic and Social Committee, officials of the European External Action Service (including the Director for North East Asia and the Pacific, Mr. **Gerhard Sabathil**) as well as the President of the Belgian Senate and further Senators.

Following Belgium, the delegation will pay a visit to France, the Netherlands, Germany and the UK.



Tibetan Parliament's delegation with Belgian Senators

Tibetan Youth Leadership Program 2013 in Brussels

From November 12 – 14, 2013, the **International Campaign for Tibet (ICT)** held its **Tibetan Youth Leadership Program (TYLP)** in Brussels. Ten Tibetan students living and/or studying in 5 different European countries (Denmark, Hungary, Poland, Switzerland and the United Kingdom) attended **ICT's** training program for three days.

The program held in Brussels was based on the TYLP organized by **ICT's** US office. Over recent years, several such programs, held in **Washington D.C.**, have aimed at training young Tibetan-Americans on how to carry the Tibet movement forward in the United States. This includes engaging these young Tibetans in the US political process, as well as in the foreign policy discourse under way in the American capital.

ICT's TYLP in Brussels had two main objectives: On one hand it was designed to motivate and train Tibetan students to become effective leaders within their respective Tibetan communities in Europe. On the other hand it also trained them to become advocates of the Tibetan cause at the EU level by providing them with a meaningful exposure to the EU political scene and the discourse around EU-China relations and Tibet's role in it. During

the program, participants were able to expand their understanding of the role of activists, lobbyists, **NGOs** and the media in influencing EU foreign policy in Brussels.

TYLP participants had the opportunity to engage in discussions with distinguished professionals working on several issues, such as EU-China relations, the EU's human rights policy and the Tibetan movement. The program

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TYLP speaker Mr. Andrew Fischer explaining the impact of Chinese development strategies on Tibet



TYLP participants during a campaign planning exercise

was divided between lectures by experts on China and Tibet, such as **Andrew Fischer**, **Marie Holzman** and **Katia Buffetrille**, and practical exercises on communications, advocacy and campaign planning. On the first day of the program, the students had a lively skype conversation with Mr. **Lodi Gyari**, current Executive Chairman of **ICT's** Board and former Special Envoy of the **Dalai Lama**, having previously represented the latter during the 9 rounds of the Sino-Tibetan dialogue.

The program also included visits to EU institutions, such as the **European Parliament** (EP) and the **European Economic and Social Committee** (EESC), as well as meetings with EU officials. The Tibetan students met with Members of the **European Parliament** (MEPs) **Leonidas**

Donskis (Lithuania, ALDE), **Eva Lichtenberger** (Austria, Greens) and **Thomas Mann** (Germany, EPP), as well as with former President of the **EESC** Mrs. **Anne-Marie Sigmund**. They also had the opportunity to attend the 99th meeting of the **EP's** Tibet Intergroup.

The empowerment of Tibetan youth and communities has become a fundamental objective in **ICT's** work. Therefore, **ICT** believes that it was of utmost importance to provide **TYLP** participants with a rich environment for exchanging information and ideas, and building a network of future leaders in the Tibetan community. Thanks to the students' personal engagement, the program was very successful and each session resulted into passionate brainstorming discussions. ■



TYLP participants and ICT Brussels staff in front of the European Parliament

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Political prisoners focus

Tsultrim Gyaltzen and Yugyal



Tsultrim Gyaltzen



Yugyal

According to information received by the **Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD)**, on October 11, 2013, writer **Tsultrim Gyaltzen** was detained by a group of County Public Security Bureau (PSB) officers during a night raid at his home in Tengkhar Village in Shamchu Township, Driru County.

Tsultrim Gyaltzen, who used to write under the pseudonym **Shogdril** (Eng: Morning Bell), was detained from his home on accusations that he “engaged in separatist activities and disrupted social stability by spreading rumors” during the recent unrest in Driru County.

The Driru County PSB officers searched his house and confiscated his mobile phone, computer, books and other documents before detaining him.

The next morning, on October 12, County PSB officers also detained Yugyal, 26, a friend of Tsultrim Gyaltzen, from his home in Tengkhar Village, Shamchu Township. Yugyal was also accused of engaging in separatist activities and of spreading rumors that harm social stability.

The real charges against both **Tsultrim Gyaltzen** and his friend **Yugyal** remain

unknown. There is no information on the location of their detention.

Tsultrim Gyaltzen is known for his incisive, often irreverent essays and poetry, which he composed in both Tibetan and Chinese languages. In 2007, he published two books, *Chimes of Melancholic Snow* and *The Fate of Snow Mountain*. Both books received much appreciation from his readers.

He also ran a [blog](#) in Chinese language entitled *Serving Justice*, in which he posts essays, poems, and translations. At present, his blog has been shut down. One of his more provocative essays, which sparked a controversy, was entitled, *God Must Die*.

In May 2013, just a few months away from his graduation, he was expelled from the university. It appears that he was expelled for his opinions and writings more than any other reason. Sources told **TCHRD** that Tsultrim Gyaltzen often used to hold debate sessions at the university with fellow students. Some of the subjects debated at these informal sessions were deemed “illegal” by the authorities.

In June 2013, a month after his expulsion from the university, **Tsultrim Gyaltzen** returned to his hometown in

Driru and started a guesthouse called “*The New Generation*”. Alongside his responsibilities at the guesthouse, he used to teach Tibetan and Chinese languages to local youths during his free time.

Yugyal, a former PSB officer, also attended the same primary school as his writer-friend **Tsultrim Gyaltzen** in Shamchu Township in Driru. In 2005, he was employed at the County PSB office where he worked for seven years. In 2012, frustrated by the political nature of his job, he turned in his resignation and started a small private business to earn his livelihood. He has a wife, **Lhakyi Dolma**, and two children. ■

ICT as Guest Speaker at Human Rights Film Festival in Vilnius

The 7th International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival (also called [Inconvenient Films](#)) took place from November 23 – 30, 2013 in the Lithuanian capital Vilnius.

Following the visit of the **Dalai Lama** to Lithuania, the Festival decided, for this year’s edition, to have a special focus on Tibet with the screening of two documentaries: [The Sun behind the Clouds](#) and [Fire in the land of Snow: Self-immolations in Tibet](#) (also screened at Vilnius University).

ICT was invited to animate the debate after both screenings together with Lithuanian Member of the **European Parliament** Mr. **Leonidas Donskis** and with the director of *Fire in the Land of Snow*, Mr. **Losang Gyatso** from Voice of America. ■

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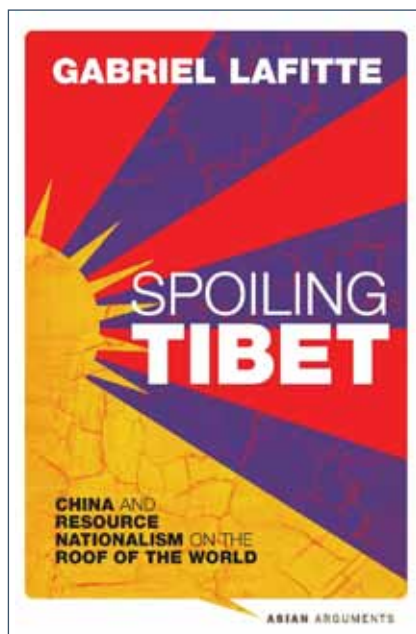
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This number's reading suggestion

Spoiling Tibet. China and Resource Nationalism on the Roof of the World"
by Gabriel Lafitte



Gabriel Lafitte's new book, launched in London in October 2013, is a revelation of China's hunger for Tibetan natural resources, and of the strong preference of Tibetan communities to protect their sacred mountains, pilgrimage circuits and resource patrimony, even, if necessary, with their lives.

The mineral-rich mountains of Tibet so far have been largely untouched by China's growing economy. Nor has Beijing been able to settle Tibet with politically reliable peasant Chinese. That is all about to change as China's 12th Five-Year Plan, from 2011 to 2015, calls for massive investment in copper,

gold, silver, chromium and lithium mining in the region, with devastating environmental and social outcomes. The copper, gold, silver and other minerals found in abundance in Tibet are suddenly being mined, for the first time, on a global scale. This means that your next smartphone, if made in China, especially if made in the new manufacturing hubs of western China, will probably be powered by a lithium-ion battery reliant on lithium extracted from Tibet. Far from being remote or only tangentially relevant to everyday life in the modern world, Tibet may soon be in your pocket.

Tibetans in exile have often expressed fears that their homeland has already been despoiled. However, there is still time for China to reconsider keeping a sustainable Tibet, since even rapid exploitation of Tibetan minerals would not be of any substantial relief to China's important demand for minerals. China's growing use of Tibetan minerals and hydropower to refine those minerals now connects Tibet with global consumption, raising the prospect that a new European Union regulatory regime to exclude conflict minerals may expand to include consumer products made out of Tibetan minerals. Tibetans are likely to continue to protest against mining, and such protests are repressed in an increasingly violent manner, which puts this issue on the agenda of anyone buying a mobile phone or tablet.

China says Tibet's rapid industrialization merely follows the universal laws of development, the slow ascent to

modernity and civilization that all countries must climb. Tibetans see this quite differently. Not only does mining cause great environmental damage, since the major deposits are so close to Asia's greatest rivers, but mining is an intensification of land use that neglects the surrounding productive countryside. Mining enclaves concentrate money, technology and a workforce in a small area, with maximum environmental impact; utterly reversing the logic of a pastoral nomadic society, which maintains the pastures through constant mobility. The switch, from extensive, mobile land use to intensive enclaves, far from being a law of history, as China claims, is unsustainable, and will only accelerate the serious degradation of the Tibetan land, already triggered by recent state policy failures.

Gabriel Lafitte's conclusion is that Tibet is not yet spoiled, but will soon be, if all the state owned mining corporations go ahead with their plans for the rapid extraction of Tibetan minerals. Until recently, the gold rushes across Tibet were done on a much smaller scale, but were still highly destructive for the environment. Now, big mines are about to initiate full-scale operations. ■

Upcoming Events

- ▶ 10 December: International Human Rights Day