



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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Agenda item 4

Human rights situations that require the Council's attention

### **Written statement\* submitted by the Mouvement contre le racisme et pour l'amitié entre les peuples (MRAP), a non-governmental organization on the roster**

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

[19 August 2011]

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

## Human rights situation in Karze Tibet Autonomous Prefecture since 6 June 2011

Since 6 June 2011, there has been a continuous peaceful protest in Kardze. People shouted “Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama”, “Freedom of Religion in Tibet”, and “The Return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama”. The current human rights situation in Karze Tibet Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province continues to be grim and tense.

In run up to preparation of 90th founding anniversary of Chinese Communist Party and 60th years of so called “Peaceful Liberation of Tibet”, a large number of security personnel were deployed by the Chinese authorities. China intensified its restriction over all Tibetan areas as pre-emptive measures to thwart protests.

Different sources, including the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), a Dharamsala (India) based NGO reported deployment of thousands of troops to suppress peaceful protesters and people are reportedly living in a climate of fear.

### Military built up to suppress peaceful protestor

Since 6 June 2011 “thousands of police and army, in riot gear, in trucks patrolling the streets, and on foot in formation patrolling the streets...”<sup>1</sup>. This was the observation by a foreign tourist who visited Karze in June. The same source also reported that the number of security personnel has doubled during his second visit to Karze region. Photos are available on the web<sup>2</sup>.

An exiled Tibetan in contact with Tibetans living in Karze said “the current security situation in Karze is extremely tense, with Karze County town completely locked down by paramilitary forces who have set up so many checkpoints - there's one at every road junction...”<sup>3</sup>.

### Restriction over Freedom of Movement

Different testimonies report that the Chinese authorities in Karze imposed strict restriction over the movement of Tibetans, especially nuns and monks who have been ordered not to leave the town without prior permission.

It was also reported that Tibetans who needed to visit the hospital for medical check-up must seek written permission from the local authorities and must be accompanied by a government official. Failure to conform to the diktat would result in arrest.

### Arbitrary Arrest, detention and sentence

The People’s Republic of China Constitution (article 37) guarantees rights against arbitrary arrest; no citizen can be arrested without a formal arrest warrant under this right.

Since 6th June 2011 there were 54 known Tibetans arbitrarily arrested, detained and sentenced as of 27 July 2011 by the Chinese authorities on charges of exercising their fundamental freedom of speech and expression. The fate of these 54 Tibetans remains unknown and the family members are yet to be allowed to visit them.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.tchrd.org/press/2011/pr20110629.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.tibet.net/en/index.php?id=2440&articletype=flash&rmenuid=morenews&tab=1>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/dozens-tibetans-imprisoned-new-wave-kardze-demonstrations-protest-lhasa-kardze-monk>

#### Arrest on refusal to celebrate the 90th Founding Anniversary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)

On 12 July 2011, eight monks<sup>4</sup> were arrested in Surmang Monastery, Nangchen County in Qinghai Province for refusing to participate in the celebration of the 90th Founding Anniversary of the CCP. They were taken to Nangchen County Detention Centre.

#### Arrest and detention for celebrating 76th birthday of the Dalai Lama

On 6 July 2011, a monk called Dorgay, aged 22, of Shabten Monastery in Dickyi Township of Nagchu County drove his car with 1500-2000 Tibetan white scarves (khatak). Praying for the long life of the Dalai Lama, he tied the white scarves on trees, electric poles and everywhere in Nagchu region as a celebration of the 76th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Soon after returning to his monastery, he was questioned by police officers and arrested. His whereabouts remain unknown until today (19 August).

#### Three nuns sentenced

On 15 June 2011, the nuns Jampa Choedon, Sheh Lhamo and Yangchen a.k.a Tashi Choetso were arrested by Chinese police while protesting in the Kardze County market raising slogans like "Return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet" and "Long live the Dalai Lama".

On 2 July 2011, the Kardze County Court sentenced three nuns of Kardze Gyemadrak Nunnery to a three years imprisonment each.

Since 6 June 2011 following protests in Kardze, five Tibetans were sentenced to 3 years imprisonment by the Kardze County Court.

#### Restriction on celebrating 76th birthday of H.H. the Dalai Lama

In 2010, the Tibetan people in Tawu County celebrated His Holiness the Dalai Lama's birthday with great fanfare. However, this year the Chinese government blocked this celebration in the monastery and even cut off electricity and water for the Nyitso monastery and Gaden Jangchup Choeling Nunnery.

#### Monk set himself alight

In a second incident of self immolation this year, Tsewang Norbu (29 years), a monk set himself on fire after protesting against Chinese rule in Tibet and ill treatment of the Tibetans by the Chinese authorities.

On August 15, the monk from Nyatso monastery protested near a bridge in front of the county headquarters. He shouted slogans calling for freedom for Tibet and for the return to Tibet of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and distributed leaflets calling for human rights in Tibet. The monk then doused himself with kerosene and set himself alight, continuing to shout slogans for about 15 minutes until he died.

#### Monastery surrounded by Chinese armed Police

According to different sources, following the self immolation of Ven. Tsewang Norbu, thousands of Chinese troops were deployed in and around the monastery, armed guards could be seen everywhere on the street, on the road and in Tibetan neighborhood of Tawo.

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<sup>4</sup> Karma Samten, Jigtak, Sherab, Gaya Tashi, Urgen Samten, Karma Soepa, Karma Monlam and Dosam

Also, telephone lines were cutted and internet cafes closed in an effort to control news spreading across Tibet and to prevent news being shared with the outside world.

Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, XIth Panchen Lama still missing

On 14 May 1995, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, after carrying out necessary religious procedures, announced the six-year-old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the true reincarnation of the Xth Panchen Lama. Three days after the announcement, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his family disappeared from their home.

In late November 1995, China's Foreign Ministry spokesman Shen Guofang, said "we have no idea about the whereabouts of the so-called soul boy determined by the Dalai Lama." He denied that Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his family had spent the last few months in detention in Beijing and added that "he is not missing, nor is he incarcerated," but that "he should be wherever he was born. However on 28 May 1996, China finally admitted to holding the XIth Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, and his family at a secret location."<sup>[5]</sup>

In September 1998, Mrs. Mary Robinson (UN High Commissioner of Human Rights) was denied access to Gedhun Choekyi Nyima during her fact-finding mission to the Tibetan Area.

In October 2001, Chinese officials reported that the boy is safe, that he was leading "a normal life," and that his parents did not want anyone to disrupt his studies. The Chinese officials also said the boy's "parents want their privacy respected, that they don't particularly want people to have access to the child and they want him to live a normal life and they don't want to be bothered by people."

On 29 October 2010, the UN Committee Against Torture (CAT) wrote to the Chinese authorities reiterating "its request for information on measures taken to prohibit and prevent enforced disappearances, and shed light on the fate of missing persons such as Gedhun Choekyi Nyima". CAT has also asked the Chinese authorities whether any independent observers have been permitted to visit him, as well as detailed information on the current whereabouts of Choekyi Nyima.

On 8 April 2011, the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance (WGEID) of the UN Human Rights Council issued a statement <sup>[6]</sup> which stated: "A case going back 16 years is that concerning Gedhun Choekyi Nyima known as the 11th Panchen Lama. He disappeared in 1995 when he was six years old. While the Chinese authorities have admitted taking him, they have continually refused to divulge any information about him or his whereabouts, making his case an enforced disappearance. A number of human rights mechanisms including the UN Committee Against Torture, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, as well as Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, have all called for his whereabouts to be revealed, to no avail." Gedhun Choekyi Nyima is now 22 years old.

In conclusion, MRAP urges the People's Republic of China:

- to respect Tibetan people's freedom of expression and opinion guaranteed in its constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.tchrd.org/publications/topical\\_reports/GEDHUN%20CHOEKYI%20NYIMA%20THE%20XIth%20PANCHEN%20LAMA%20OF%20TIBET/GEDHUN%20CHOEKYI%20NYIMA%20THE%20XIth%20PANCHEN%20LAMA%20OF%20TIBET.pdf](http://www.tchrd.org/publications/topical_reports/GEDHUN%20CHOEKYI%20NYIMA%20THE%20XIth%20PANCHEN%20LAMA%20OF%20TIBET/GEDHUN%20CHOEKYI%20NYIMA%20THE%20XIth%20PANCHEN%20LAMA%20OF%20TIBET.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=10928&LangID=E>

- to release unconditionally those who were arrested for religious or political reasons and also disclose information on those whose whereabouts remain unknown;
  - to provide detailed information on those who were sentenced for religious or political reasons, including Court trial proceedings and charges;
  - to immediately resume dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama in order to find the proper solutions to the problems faced by the Tibetan people;
  - to respect freedom of religion and expression of Tibetan, Christian and Uyghur;
  - to immediately allow UN independent expert to visit Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his parents.
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