

Tibet's Stolen Child

Remembering the Story of the 11th Panchen Lama

Gedhun Choekyi Nyima



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The Department of Information and International Relations
Central Tibetan Administration

Published by:
UN, EU & Human Rights Desk
The Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR)
Central Tibetan Administration
Gangchen Kyishong, Dharamshala - 176215
Himachal Pradesh, India

Email: euhrdesk@tibet.net
www.tibet.net

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Cover Illustration:
Sudip Roy

Design & Printed at:
Archana Advertising Pvt. Ltd
New Delhi

Email: studio@archanapress.com
www.archanapress.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword.....	4
Introduction	7
Origin, Title, and Importance of the Panchen Lama.....	9
The 10 th Panchen Lama.....	12
The 70,000 Character Petition	20
The Search for the 11 th Panchen Lama.....	25
Timeline of UN Efforts Calling for the Release of the Panchen Lama	29
Statements from the International Community.....	32
Five Human Rights Experts and Human Rights Bodies	33
Andrius Navickas, Member of the Seimas, Lithuania.....	37
Brand, Schwabe, Jensen, Bause, Spokespersons for Human Rights Policy of CDU/CSU, SDP, FDP, Alliance90/The Greens, Germany	38
Czech Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet, Czech Republic	39
House of Commons, Canada.....	40
James P. McGovern, Member of the House of Representatives, USA	42
Michael Pompeo, Secretary of State, USA	43
National Council of the Slovak Republic, Slovakia	44
Ripun Bora, Member of Parliament, India	45
Roberto Rampi, Member of Parliament, Italy	46
Samuel Cogolati, Member of the Chamber of Representatives, Belgium.....	47
Samuel Brownback, Ambassador at large for International Religious Freedom, USA	48
Shimomura Hakubun, Member of Parliament, Japan.....	49
Swiss Parliamentary Group for Tibet, Switzerland.....	50
Taiwan Parliamentary Group for Tibet, Taiwan	51
Tibet Interest Group, European Parliament, Europe.....	52
Tim Loughton, Member of Parliament, UK.	54
Velenkosini F. Hlabisa, President of the Inkatha Freedom Party, South Africa.....	55
Warren Entsch, Member of Parliament, Australia.....	57
Notes	58
Bibliography	60



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ཐེན་ལྷོ་མོ་བཟང་སེངྒེ།
DR. LOBSANG SANGAY
President

KASHAG

Foreword

The story of the 11th Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, is one that exemplifies the realities of the People's Republic of China's rule in Tibet and its assault on the Tibetan identity. On the 17th of May 1995, the six-year-old Panchen Lama, his parents, and Chadrel Rinpoche - head of the search committee in charge of finding the Panchen Lama - were all abducted by the Chinese government. Since that fateful day, Buddhists around the world have been living in hope that one day we will be able to receive blessings from H.E. the Panchen Lama.

After orchestrating the disappearance of the 11th Panchen Lama, the Chinese Communist Party, a self-declared atheist government and infamous for its persecution of religious groups placed a young Tibetan boy as their own 11th Panchen Lama. This politically motivated action failed to displace the position of the true Panchen Lama from the hearts and minds of the Tibetan people. For Tibetans as well as Tibetan Buddhists all around the world, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the six-year-old boy endorsed by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama will always be the Panchen Lama.

For the 26th anniversary of the forced disappearance of the Panchen Lama, the Central Tibetan Administration hopes to illuminate the historical, contemporary, and future importance of the seat of Panchen Lama. With the support we have received from the international community, the Department of Information and International Relations has published this book in hopes of carrying the momentum forward in the ongoing campaign for the Panchen Lama. The Central Tibetan Administration gives thanks to the National Endowment for Democracy for making this project possible and generously providing a grant for this publication as well as an international advocacy tour.

This project serves four main purposes. First, to urge the international community to press the People's Republic of China to allow an independent fact-finding mission to assess the condition of the Panchen Lama and to publicize information on him, his family, and Chadrel Rinpoche's whereabouts.

Second, to remember and honor a true Tibetan patriot, the 10th Panchen Lama. Resolute, strong-willed, and determined in what he believed in, his devotion towards the Tibetan people,



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DR. LOBSANG SANGAY
President

KASHAG

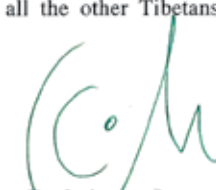
culture, and religion remained intact despite suffering many years of torture and imprisonment under Chinese rule. We honor the sacrifices that he made for Tibet and the Tibetan people.

Third, to condemn the Chinese Communist Party's interference in the Tibetan system of reincarnation. In 2007, the Chinese government passed the infamous 'Order No. 5' which states that a reincarnation application must be filled by all Buddhist monasteries before they are allowed to recognize individuals as reincarnated beings. This malevolent move completely desecrates the centuries old Tibetan Buddhist tradition of reincarnation. If left unopposed, the Chinese government will surely implement even more outrageous policies not just for Tibetan Buddhists, but for all religious beliefs.

Fourth, and the most important, we believe that understanding the story of the enforced disappearance of the 11th Panchen Lama is essential because it serves as a precedent for what to expect from the Chinese government when it comes to H.H. the Dalai Lama's reincarnation. For more than sixty years, H.H. the Dalai Lama has championed the Tibetan cause. The Chinese government - without any credibility and legitimacy - has already stated that they have the right to select the next Dalai Lama. In this regard, examining the Chinese government's tactics in the search for the 11th Panchen Lama is vital in foreseeing and countering their sinister schemes for the reincarnation of H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama.

For over sixty-two years now, the Chinese Communist Party has denied the most fundamental Human Rights to the Tibetan people in Tibet. The reality is that Tibet is a huge prison under China's unfettered rule. I urge the international community to take a strong position against attempts by the Chinese Communist Party to destroy the core of the Tibetan identity and undermine the core values of humanity. We must present a strong, unified response to demand the immediate release of the Panchen Lama and all the other Tibetans illegally imprisoned by the Chinese Communist Party.

May 2021


Dr. Lobsang Sangay
President/ Sikyong

Introduction

On 17 May 1995, six-year-old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima was kidnapped by the Chinese government, three days after being recognized as the 11th Panchen Lama. Along with him, his parents, brother, and Chadrel Rinpoche* were abducted as well. For twenty-five years now, the Chinese government has refused to divulge any information on their whereabouts and well-being with the exception of a few vague and unverifiable statements. In 2015, a Chinese government spokesperson stated that the Panchen Lama is “being educated, living a normal life, growing up healthily, and does not wish to be disturbed.”¹ More recently, he is “a college graduate with a job, and that neither he nor his family wished to be disturbed in their current normal lives.”²

After His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Panchen Lama is one of the most important figures in Tibetan Buddhism. H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama and the 10th Panchen Lama

were contemporaries during the build-up to the Chinese invasion. After H.H. the Dalai Lama was forced to escape into exile in 1959, the 10th Panchen Lama became the face of Tibetan leadership inside Tibet. Almost immediately, he was appointed as the acting Chairman of the “Preparatory Committee for the Tibetan Autonomous Region.” The Chinese viewed the Panchen Lama as an invaluable political tool: a means to gain legitimacy for its policies from the deeply religious people of Tibet. However, the Panchen Lama proved to be too virtuous to simply be a mouthpiece for the Chinese government. In 1962, he submitted the 70,000 Character Petition, a well-reasoned criticism of Mao’s policies in Tibet, which resulted in him being sentenced to fourteen years in detention. Robbie Barnett, a prominent Tibetologist, describes the petition as such: “no other document exists in China, as far

** Chadrel Rinpoche was the abbot of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery in Tibet, which is the traditional seat of the Panchen Lama. He was the head of China’s search committee responsible for finding the 11th Panchen Lama.*

The 10th Panchen Lama, Chairman Mao Zedong, H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama, 1954

as we know, in which a senior official attacks so explicitly and in such detail the policies and practices of Chairman Mao.”³

Even after his release from prison in 1977, the Panchen Lama continued to work for the well-being of the Tibetan people. He devoted his time towards rebuilding Tibetan culture including monasteries and schools. There is no doubt that the 10th Panchen Lama was a champion for the people of Tibet: “he spoke and acted on behalf of all Tibetans in Tibet even at the risk of his own personal safety,”⁴ and “should be considered the first Tibetan human rights activist in modern Tibetan history.”⁵

On 28 January 1989, the 10th Panchen Lama passed away suddenly under mysterious circumstances, giving rise to an extremely delicate situation. This was the first time since Chinese occupation that a search for a reincarnation would take place that could shift the political landscape of Tibet. In the eyes of the Chinese government, this was the perfect opportunity to cement their rule; to install a Panchen Lama who they could directly control and manipulate. For the Tibetans, only a Panchen Lama

recognized by H.H. the Dalai Lama would gain their trust and respect. It was inconceivable that the Chinese Communists – whose founder Mao Zedong infamously said that religion is poison⁶ – would claim the right to select the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama. Nonetheless, like all aspects of life in Tibet, the Chinese government had complete control and did not shy away from using force to demonstrate just that.

On 14 May 1995, His Holiness the Dalai Lama named Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, a child from Nagchu, Central Tibet as the 11th Panchen Lama. Three days later, the newly recognized Panchen Lama, his father, mother, and elder brother were seen boarding a plane under custody near their hometown.⁷ Since then, no one has seen them or heard from them. Instead, the Chinese government installed Gyaltzen Norbu, whose parents were members of the Chinese Communist Party⁸, as their puppet Panchen Lama. To this day, though completely rejected by all Tibetans, Gyaltzen Norbu continues to be paraded as the Panchen Lama while the true reincarnation remains locked up in Chinese custody.

Origin, Title, and Importance of the Panchen Lama

The Dalai Lamas and the Panchen Lamas share a special spiritual relationship and are referred to as *Yab Sey Gonpo* in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, meaning “Father/Son Protectors”. It is believed that the Panchen Lama is the manifestation of Amitabha

(Tib: *Wopame*), the Buddha of Boundless Light, and H.H. the Dalai Lama is the manifestation of Avalokiteshvara (Tib: *Chenrezig*), the Buddha of Compassion.

The bond between the Dalai Lamas and the Panchen Lamas extends back to the early seventeenth century. When the 4th Dalai Lama passed away in 1617, his late teacher, Lobsang Choekyi Gyaltsen, undertook the responsibility of searching for his reincarnation. Lobsang Choekyi Gyaltsen and the 4th Dalai Lama had been exceptionally close; it was he who administered the 4th Dalai Lama’s first vows as a monk.⁹ After the 5th Dalai Lama was found – a young boy from Chonggya in Central Tibet – he was brought to Drepung, one of the largest monasteries in Tibet. In 1625, Lobsang Choekyi Gyaltsen, now the tutor to the 5th Dalai Lama as well, initiated



The 4th Panchen Lama and the first to receive the title “Panchen Lama”

Tashi Lhunpo Monastery, Shigatse, the traditional abode of the Panchen Lamas



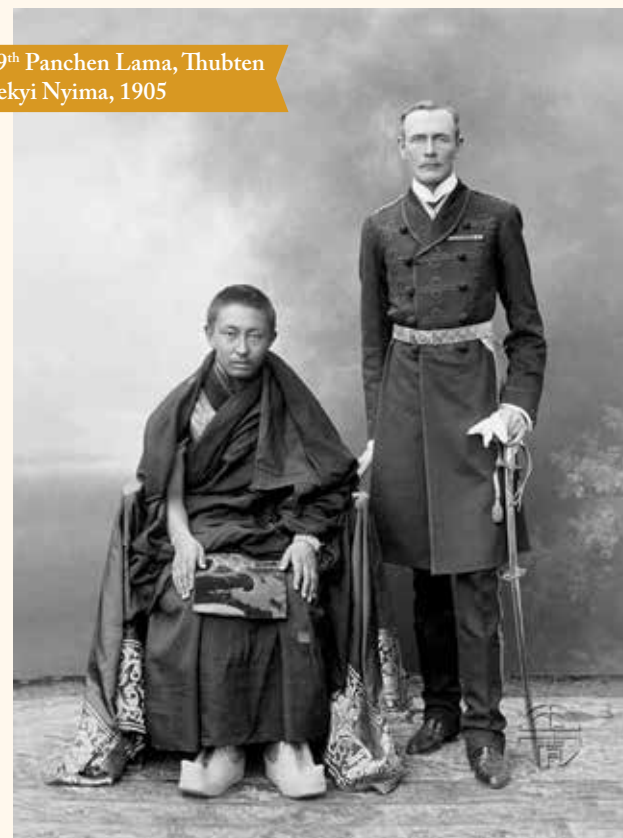
the young Dalai Lama into the monastic order.¹⁰

The 5th Dalai Lama often referred to as the “Great Fifth” grew up to become the first Dalai Lama to exercise both political and spiritual authority over all of Tibet. In gratitude to his teacher, he bestowed the title of Panchen Lama – the “Wise Teacher” – upon Lobsang Choekyi Gyaltsen. Lobsang Choekyi Gyaltsen was the first to be known as the Panchen Lama, but the title

was retrospectively applied to his three previous incarnations, thereby, becoming the 4th Panchen Lama.¹¹ Following in the footsteps of his predecessors, Lobsang Choekyi Gyaltsen served as the abbot of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery.

For more than three centuries, the Dalai Lamas and the Panchen Lamas’ connection shaped the political landscape in Tibet. As the highest-ranking figures in the Gelugpa tradition, successive reincarnations of the

The 9th Panchen Lama, Thubten Choekyi Nyima, 1905



Panchen Lama and the Dalai Lama have served as teacher/disciple to one another, with whomever the elder of the two in a particular lifetime, taking the responsibility of giving monastic ordination and tantric lineage transmissions to the other. Moreover, after the passing away of one, the other has traditionally played a key role in identifying the reincarnation.* In recent times, the 9th Panchen Lama helped identify the current 14th Dalai Lama, who in turn, recognized the 10th Panchen Lama and the present 11th Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima.

** It is important to note that mutual recognition is not necessary for the recognition of the two Lamas. It is not the case that only the Panchen Lama can recognize the Dalai Lama and vice versa.*

The 10th Panchen Lama and H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama, 1954



The 10th Panchen Lama

The 10th Panchen Lama, Lobsang Trinley Lhundrup Choekyi Gyaltsen, was born in 1938 in the village of Bidho in Amdo, northeastern Tibet.

In 1951, H.H. the Dalai Lama officially recognized Choekyi Gyaltsen as the 10th Panchen Lama with the title of Tenzin Trinley Jigme Choekyi Wangchuk. Following his recognition, the Panchen Lama arrived in Lhasa on 28 April 1952. During his brief stay



The 10th Panchen Lama's enthronement at Kumbum Monastery, 1954

in Lhasa, the Panchen Lama had two rounds of audiences with the Dalai Lama. H.H. the Dalai Lama's impression of the Panchen Lama during those meetings is recorded in his memoir, *My Land and My People*. The Dalai Lama states that the Panchen Lama "showed a genuine respect for my position, as the customs of Buddhism requires towards a senior monk. He was correct and pleasant in his manners—a true Tibetan, and I had a firm impression of unforced goodwill."¹²

In 1954, the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama were "elected" as delegates to the first National People's Congress. In this capacity, the two travelled to Beijing and were nominated to a series of positions with fancy names but in reality, held little power: the Dalai Lama as the "Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the first National

People's Congress" and the Panchen Lama "Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Congress."¹³

After H.H. the Dalai Lama was forced into exile in 1959, the Panchen Lama was appointed Acting Chairman of the "TAR Preparatory Committee." Despite this, the Panchen Lama remained a steadfast Tibetan nationalist. He was deeply disturbed to find that the Chinese had jailed hundreds



H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama meet in Lhasa, 1952

of thousands of Tibetan government officials, high lamas, scholars, community leaders, and people from all walks of life. He complained that the Chinese authorities were terrorizing the whole populace of Tibet.

The Chinese brushed aside his protest by saying that such mistakes were inevitable in all reform movements. In 1962, in his capacity as Vice-chairman of the National People's Congress, the Panchen Lama made inspection tours throughout Tibetan areas as well as East Turkestan and Southern China. He wrote his impression of the visit in what came to be known as the 70,000 Character Petition (detailed in the next chapter).

One evening, in May 1962, the Panchen Lama invited his tutor to his residence to tell him that he was going to submit the petition to the Chinese leadership. The alarmed tutor prostrated to the Panchen Lama and beseeched him not to submit the petition. He argued that the government was completely aware about the situation and if they wished to correct it, they would have done so already.¹⁴ The Panchen Lama, however, explained that he had an unavoidable responsibility to work for the people of Tibet.

On 18 May 1962, the Panchen Lama met Premier Zhou Enlai and gave him the petition—the original in Tibetan with a Chinese translation. The

Panchen Lama urged the Chinese authorities to accept the petition in the spirit it was written in, a call for an improvement in Tibet's social, economic, and cultural plight. Amongst other things, the petition pointed out, "We have no way of knowing in detail the number of Tibetans who were arrested after the rebellion, but from the appearance of things it may be inferred that the number of people who were locked up reached about ten thousand or more in every area. Therefore, if we say that all these people were the enemy, then we can affirm that hardly anyone is left over

among us Tibetans, apart from women, old people, children and a very small number of young men."¹⁵

In response to the Panchen Lama's petition, Zhou Enlai instructed the leaders of the United Front Department and senior Chinese cadres to review their work in Tibet. They came up with four documents to reform their policies.¹⁶ In August 1962, the Panchen Lama returned to Tibet under the impression that the Chinese leadership was taking keen interest in his petition and that his efforts to help the

Tibetan people were bearing fruit. Initially, the petition did have some positive effects: the Chinese agreed to increase the limit on the number of monks in monasteries and even released a number of Tibetan officials imprisoned since 1959.¹⁷

However, the situation took a turn for the worse when in a Central Committee meeting, Chairman Mao Zedong criticized leaders of the United Front Work Department for their "overfondness" of the Panchen Lama, who according to Mao, had "become too proud."¹⁸ The Panchen Lama was accused of being a "reactionary force"

and ordered to make a self-criticism. When the news of the meeting reached Tibet, the Chinese leaders of the Tibet Work Committee were jubilant. In their eyes, the time had come to make the Panchen Lama pay for his criticisms laid out in the 70,000 character petition. In October 1962, the Tibet Work Committee accused the Panchen Lama of "reactionary arrogance" and ordered him to make a self-criticism which he refused to do.¹⁹

At a large public gathering in Lhasa in 1964, the Panchen Lama further enraged the Chinese leadership when he declared before a crowd of more

Tibetan Delegation to National People's Congress, 1954



Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama, The 10th Panchen Lama, 1956



The Panchen Lama meeting with Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai, 1961

than 10,000 people: “Today, while we are gathered here, I must pronounce my firm belief that His Holiness the Dalai Lama will return to the Golden Throne. Long Live His Holiness.”²⁰ Stung by this act of courage and defiance, the Chinese government placed the Panchen Lama under house arrest and put him on trial for his criticisms of their policies. He was dismissed from all his posts and subjected to *thamzing*, a struggle session used as a form of public humiliation and torture by the Chinese government. In December 1964, the Panchen Lama was brought to Beijing and kept under house arrest.

The start of the Cultural Revolution saw his plight worsen. One evening in August 1966, a group of Chinese Red

Guards - militant university and high school students during the Cultural Revolution - broke into the Panchen Lama’s residence and seized him. His tormenters interrogated him, “tying his arms tightly behind his back with a nylon cord that cut deep into his ample flesh. They spat on him and abused him, then paraded him through the streets as they denounced him through loudspeaker as the biggest reactionary serf owner and the biggest parasite and bloodsucker in Tibet.”²¹

Till October 1977, the Panchen Lama stayed in detention in Beijing. The outside world first came to know about the Panchen Lama’s re-emergence on 26 February 1978, when the New China News Agency published a report on his appearance at the fifth National Committee of the Chinese Political Consultative Conference meeting in plenary session in Beijing. Till then, even the Tibetans in Tibet did not know whether he was alive or dead.

The Panchen Lama was reinstated as Vice-Chairman of the National People’s Congress in 1979. He asked the Chinese authorities for permission to



Struggle session during which the Panchen Lama is publicly shamed and insulted, 1964

visit Tibet, which was granted two years later. In June 1982, the Panchen Lama returned to Tibet for the first time since 1964. Seeing the destruction of religion and culture, he decided to devote the rest of his life to rebuilding the remnants of the Tibetan way of life. In 1985, the University of Tibet opened in Lhasa, largely due to his effort.²² In 1987, he succeeded in obtaining a law, making Tibetan the official language of the Tibet Autonomous Region as well as setting a timetable for the introduction of Tibetan-medium education.²³ In the same year, he founded a school for senior Tibetan Buddhist lamas in Beijing and started the Tibet Development Fund, the first non-governmental organization in Tibet, designed to attract foreign aid for development projects in Tibet.²⁴

At the TAR Standing Committee meeting of the National People’s Congress held in Beijing in March 1987, the Panchen Lama openly criticized the Chinese government’s policy in Tibet regarding education, economic development, population transfer, and discriminatory treatment of Tibetans. He said that the Chinese policies in the last twenty years “had been very detrimental” and that “the effects of these policies are being felt even today.”²⁵ He went on to attack the Chinese policy of keeping large numbers of Chinese bureaucrats in Tibet and encouraging Chinese migration. In this speech, the Panchen Lama “criticized every aspect of the Chinese policy in Tibet, from the appalling state of education to the neglect of the Tibetan language.”²⁶

On 28 January 1989, the Panchen Lama passed away suddenly aged 50 in Shigatse. Official accounts claim that the Panchen Lama suffered a heart attack. However, many including Tsultrim Tersey, a friend, believe that the Panchen Lama was poisoned.²⁷ Most likely, he had become too vocal of a critic for the Chinese government’s

liking. Just five days earlier, at a high-level meeting between government and religious leaders, he suggested that some policymakers were beginning to repeat the same mistakes made during the Cultural Revolution and said, "Since liberation, there has been development, but the price paid for this development has been greater than the gains."²⁸

There is no doubt that the 10th Panchen Lama was a Tibetan nationalist and martyr for the cause of Tibet. Constrained from expressing his thoughts



Struggle session during which the Panchen Lama is publicly shamed and insulted, 1966

and feelings, imprisoned and reviled for over a decade, he was nevertheless one of the harshest and most courageous critics of Mao's policy in Tibet.

Inauguration of the Tibetan Buddhist Institute for Higher Studies, 1987



The 10th Panchen Lama
Lobsang Choekyi Gyaltsen



The 70,000 Character Petition

The 10th Panchen Lama's 70,000 Character Petition – dubbed by Mao Zedong as “a poisoned arrow aimed at the Party by reactionary feudal overlords”²⁹ is, undoubtedly, the most impactful and scathing critique on the Chinese government's policies in Tibet. The basis for the document was formed during inspection tours throughout Tibetan areas as well as East Turkestan and Southern China between 1959 and 1962, in the midst of the disastrous Great Leap Forward. Submitted to the Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai in 1962, the petition was originally titled “A report on the sufferings of the masses in Tibet and other Tibetan regions and suggestions for future work to the Central Committee through the respected premier Zhou.” What truly distinguishes the Panchen Lama's petition is that

“His petition is based on a fearless confrontation with

the realities of contemporary China and Tibet, and on first-hand experience, on on-the-spot observation and on rigorous empirical analysis... it presents a sound argument and compelling case for a change in policy in Tibet, by means of a critical analysis of the cultural, economic and political conditions in Tibet. It defends the rights and interests of the Tibetan people on the basis of Chinese constitutional guarantees and Marxist ideological legitimacy that the Communist authorities would find difficult to reject.”³⁰

Unsurprisingly, the Chinese government buried the petition as a state secret. The substance of the petition remained a mystery until 1996 when London-based Tibet Information Network received a copy and published an English translation. Below are notable excerpts from the text organized by topic.

On Destruction of Religion:

- “Before democratic reform, there were more than 2,500 large, medium and small monasteries in Tibet. After democratic reform, only 70 or so monasteries were kept in existence by the government. This was a reduction of more than 97%...In the whole of Tibet in the past there was a total of about 110,000 monks and nuns. Of those, possibly 10,000 fled abroad, leaving about 100,000. After democratic reform was concluded, the number of monks and nuns living in the monasteries was about 7,000 people, which is a reduction of 93%.” (Page 52)
- “Those who have religious knowledge will slowly die out, and religious affairs are stagnating, knowledge is not being passed on, there is worry about there being no new people to train, and so we see the elimination of Buddhism, which was flourishing in Tibet and which transmitted teachings and enlightenment. This is something which I and more than 90% of Tibetans cannot endure.” (Page 57)
- “During the carrying out of democratic reform in the monasteries, some actions were taken in contravention of policies; after democratic reform, the situation was unspeakably bad in the monasteries, the future of religion sank into a grievous state and the monastic and secular people basically had no religious life. The right of religious belief of the citizen contained in the Party's policies and the State Constitution either became partial or existed in name only.” (Page 85-86)

On Tibetan Nationality:

- “The Tibetan language... has been taken by those foxes who called themselves lions and toyed with at will and for no reason. This should definitely not have happened... literate people are becoming illiterate in the area of understanding the meaning of words.” (Page 69)
- “Once a nationality's language, costume, customs and other important characteristics have disappeared, then the nationality itself has

disappeared too - that is to say, it has turned into another nationality... if there are no national language and other characteristics, then there can be no continued existence and development of the nationality.” (Page 69-70)

On Abuse by Chinese Cadres:

- “In some particular areas, not only was the attitude of cadres not good towards our religion and nationality, but also for a period, they openly and unscrupulously published, in Tibetan language newspapers in Qinghai and Ganzi, many crude and preposterous heretical ideas on the incorrect and bad nature of Buddhism and Sakyamuni... when the higher level cadres talked about the methods of reform, they were very clear about peaceful methods, gradual advance, strict boundaries, and protection of targets, which was satisfactory to people. But when this was passed down, level by level the methods became violent, and there were great changes such as them wanting speed and

doing things perfunctorily; the boundaries became blurred and protection was insufficient.” (Page 97)

- “Where in fact no rebellion had broken out, when [cadres] wanted to suppress people, they attacked them by falsely accusing and slandering them; this is the first point. Second: those people who gathered together to chant scriptures because of their Buddhist religion and for the happiness of mankind were also regarded as counter-revolutionaries, suppressed and attacked. Third: cadres did not carry out investigation and study into groundless rumours about ‘rebellion is going to take place’ and ‘rebellion has taken place’, but just believed them, and carried out bloody suppression and attacks. These three things were absolutely preposterous and extremely clumsy.” (Page 101)

On Famine:

- “There has been an evident and severe reduction in the present-day Tibetan population. Needless to say this was not only harmful

to the flourishing of our Tibetan nationality, but it was also a great threat to the continued existence of the Tibetan nationality, which was sinking into a state close to death.” (Page 103)

- “Because the amount of grain was not enough to feed even those with the lowest requirements, the fire of bitterness and hunger was ignited, and so dregs of fat, grain husks and so on which formerly in Tibet were fodder for horses and donkeys, bulls and oxen, because hard to get and were considered nourishing and fragrant foods. Also, in order to make the food appear more and to dispel one day’s hunger and bitterness, the responsible people in the canteens, apart from gathering together a lot of grass, which was more or less edible, even gathered together tree bark, leaves, grass roots and grass seeds, which really were not edible. After processing this, they mixed it with a bit of foodstuffs, made it into a thin gruel like pig food and gave it to people to eat, and even this was limited in amount and could not fill their

stomachs.... In some places, many people directly starved to death because the food ran out; therefore, in some places, there was a phenomenon of whole families dying out. The mortality rate was critical. These were abnormal deaths all caused by lack of food, and in fact they all should be counted as having starved to death.” (Page 112-113)

Conclusion:

- “On this occasion, I have cast aside any personal purposes, and boldly presented this sincere report, which is another good and significant thing which I have done in my history. I have taken an oath that in the future, I will certainly only do good things for the Party and the people, and will certainly not allow any trace to be left in my history which would tarnish my reputation as a descendant of the hardworking and brave Tibetan nationality... I would ask that you exercise magnanimity and a holy and pure spirit when examining the above.” (Page 123)



The Search for The 11th Panchen Lama

The 10th Panchen Lama's death in January 1989 gave rise to an unprecedented situation. This was the first time since Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1959 that the search for a reincarnation of one of the most important religious institutions, the Panchen Lama, would take place. As one of the most respected titles in Tibet, the next Panchen Lama would invariably play a major role in influencing the Tibetan people. Coupled with the fact that the unexpected death of the 10th Panchen Lama had "left China without a credible figurehead in Tibet at a time when there were repeated demonstrations in Lhasa and the Chinese were facing a serious, even unprecedented, challenge to their rule by Tibetan nationalists,"³¹ this was a truly momentous occasion.

The Chinese government quickly claimed the right to select the 11th Panchen Lama.

For them, "the main political value of the confirmation and the recognition of the Panchen Lama was to demonstrate past and present claims of China's sovereignty over Tibet."³² Premier Li Peng announced that "outsiders would not be allowed to meddle in the



Chadrel Rinpoche

selection procedure,”³³ a message clearly aimed towards H.H. the Dalai Lama. The state council organized a search committee and appointed Chadrel Rinpoche, a well-respected monk and abbot of Tashi Lhunpo monastery, as the leader of the committee. However, they also announced that the final public confirmation for the 11th Panchen Lama would be given by the Chinese government.³⁴

For the rest of the world, the idea of the Chinese Communist Party weighing in on matters of reincarnation – a Tibetan Buddhist tradition dating back to the thirteenth century – seemed like a practical joke. These were the very people who had vandalized monasteries and forbidden religious practice; members of the Chinese Communist Party were barred from believing in religion. Yet, they claimed the right to select one of the highest figures in Tibetan Buddhism. The hypocrisy was laughable if not for the serious far-reaching consequences of the matter.

Thus, began the search for the 11th Panchen Lama. The Chinese were in a comfortable position: “they controlled the monasteries,

they determined how many monks were permitted to join, they insisted on political study, they regulated the activities of the monastery and the economic regime.”³⁵ Most importantly, “when carrots failed, there were sticks: arrest, torture, beatings and dismissal from religious life.”³⁶ Nevertheless, H.H. the Dalai Lama’s voice in this matter could not be ignored. Even after thirty years of exile in India, H.H. the Dalai Lama still held profound prestige and devotion among the Tibetan people. At the end of the day, no Panchen Lama would be accepted by the Tibetan people without the approval of H.H. the Dalai Lama. This was evidenced by an incident in July 1990. Monks from Drepung monastery in Lhasa put up posters on the wall that said, “The reincarnation of the late Panchen Lama would be acceptable to us Tibetans only if it has been approved by our leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In no way can we accept a nominee of the red Chinese.”³⁷

In April 1991, a meeting attended by high lamas from all over Tibet was held in Tashi Lhunpo monastery to hear a report on Chadrel Rinpoche’s progress of the search. At this

meeting, some of the high Lamas made it known to Chinese authorities that H.H. the Dalai Lama’s approval was essential for recognition and that it could not be dismissed.³⁸ This forced the Chinese to recognize that without support from the Tibetans, enthroning a Panchen Lama would be futile. In a brief period of thaw, the Chinese authorities allowed Chadrel Rinpoche to communicate with H.H. the Dalai Lama but remained adamant that the final authority rested in Beijing. H.H. the Dalai Lama invited Chadrel Rinpoche and other members of the search party to visit India for discussion, but the Chinese government refused. In 1993, the Chinese government changed their approach and banned Chadrel Rinpoche from seeking H.H. the Dalai Lama’s guidance. Nonetheless, by this time, the two had formed a covert line of communication. In January 1995, unknown to the Chinese, Chadrel Rinpoche sent a letter to H.H. the Dalai Lama along with a package containing a complete list of boys whom the search committee had in consideration. The letter stated that the search team had found a candidate whom they favored strongly. H.H. the Dalai Lama

sent a response affirming that the search party’s choice was the correct one.

On 14 May 1995, H.H. the Dalai Lama announced Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the 11th incarnation of the Panchen Lama. The Chinese government was completely blindsided by this selection. In response, they arrested Chadrel Rinpoche. On 17 May, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima was also taken into Chinese custody along with his entire family, making the six-year-old the youngest political prisoner in the world. The Chinese government decided to ignore H.H. the Dalai Lama’s choice and went on to select their own candidate. On 11 November 1995, the Chinese government announced Gyaltzen Norbu, the son of two Communist Party members, as the 11th Panchen Lama. In December 1995, he was enthroned at Tashi Lhunpo Monastery amidst tight security with over five hundred military personnel deployed throughout the monastery compound.

Currently, Gyaltzen Norbu serves as the vice president of the Buddhist Association of China. In 2010, he was appointed to



Forensic artist's impression of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, Tibet's 11th Panchen Lama, April 2019

the Standing Committee of the Chinese Peoples' Consultative Conference, the top advisory board. It is not a surprise that he has been favorable to the Chinese government and its policies. During the nationwide uprising

against Chinese rule in 2008, Gyaltzen Norbu condemned the protestors stating, "We resolutely oppose all activities to split the country and undermine ethnic unity."³⁹ However, he has failed to gain acceptance among the Tibetan population. In Shigatse, the home of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery, it is very rare to see portraits of Gyaltzen Norbu in people's homes. According to rumors, even the Chinese officials refer to Gyaltzen Norbu as "Jia-Panchen", meaning fake Panchen.

In recent times, the Chinese government has made significant attempts to raise Gyaltzen Norbu's profile beyond China. Although this effort has largely been unsuccessful, any form of acceptance or recognition given to Gyaltzen Norbu plays into the Chinese government's efforts to Sinicize the centuries old Tibetan Buddhist tradition of recognizing reincarnates and in turn threatens the Tibetan people's right to practice their religion.

Timeline of UN Efforts Calling for the Release of The 11th Panchen Lama

November 1995: The Panchen Lama's case is submitted to the Working Group on Communications under the 1503 Procedure (aka Confidential Procedure) of the Sub-Commission on Human Rights. After more than five hours of deliberation, the case is not considered for further action, particularly when faced with strong objections from Mr. Fan Guoxiang, the expert from China, one of the five members of the Group.

1995: The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances releases statement stating that it "remains concerned about the whereabouts of the child... would appreciate being provided by the Government of China with documents supporting its statement that he and his parents had appealed to the Government for protection and at present are leading normal lives and enjoying perfect health."

May 1996: During China's first periodic review by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, Mr. Thomas Hammarberg from Sweden says the committee is "concerned at the fate of the child chosen by the Dalai Lama to become the new

Panchen Lama, and of all Tibetan children in general."

1997: The Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief reports that China responded to the urgent appeal of Panchen Lama's case stating that it "considered illegal the proclamation by the Dalai Lama of a child as reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, attributed the resignation of Chadrel Rinpoche from the committee looking for the successor of the Panchen Lama to health reasons."

September 1998: The High Commissioner for Human Rights makes an official visit to Lhasa and asks Chinese officials about the whereabouts of the Panchen Lama. She receives no answer.

1999: The Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief reports another Chinese response denying the allegation that Gedhun Choekyi Nyima was detained but explains that "security measures for the boy and his parents had been adopted at their request following an abduction attempt by exiled separatists." The response also informs that Chadrel Rinpoche

had been sentenced to prison for “imperiling the unity of the State and ethnic cohesiveness and damaging stability and development in Tibet.”

2002: The High Commissioner for Human Rights raises the case of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his parents during an official visit to China. Officials say that the boy is healthy, and his parents want to have privacy.

9 June 2005: An intervention is initiated by the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief “to underlie the tenth anniversary of the disappearance of the Panchen Lama.”

September 2005: During China’s second periodic review by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, senior representatives including Ven. Lobsang Dorjee and Kelkhang Rinpoche from the Tashi Lhunpo Monastery in South India join the Tibetan delegation. In its Concluding Observations, the committee states that it has “asked the Chinese authorities to allow an independent expert to visit and confirm the well-being of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima while respecting his right to privacy and that of his parents.”

May 2006: The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances issues a statement about how the case of the Panchen Lama was discussed at its meeting, stating that it “coincided with the 17th birthday of the Panchen Lama

who disappeared when he was only 6 years old.”

9 May 2007: The Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief presents its report to the seventh session of the Human Rights council stating that the “Chinese government interfered in the identification and training of significant reincarnations in order to control the political loyalties of these important figures in Tibetan society, weaken the influence of the traditional religious authorities and use of reincarnates’ influence among Tibetans.”

17 July 2007: The Chinese government in a letter to the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief informs that Gedhun Choekyi Nyima “is a perfectly ordinary Tibetan boy, in an excellent state of health, leading a normal, happy life and receiving a good education and cultural upbringing... the allegation that he disappeared together with his parents and that his whereabouts remain unknown is simply not true.”

12 December 2008: The Committee Against Torture in its Concluding Observations recommends that China “adopt all necessary measures to prohibit and prevent enforced disappearances, to shed light on the fate of the missing persons, including Gedhun Choekyi Nyima.”

8 April 2011: The Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances in a public

statement express concern about the Panchen Lama, “a case going back 16 years.”

September 2013: During China’s third periodic review by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, Mr. Zhao Chi from the Chinese delegation informs that “Gedhun Choekyi Nyima lived like any other ordinary Chinese citizen” after being questioned by Ms. Sandberg, the chairperson of the CRC. In its Concluding Observations, the committee says that it is “deeply disturbed” and recommends that China “immediately allow an independent expert to visit Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and verify his health and living conditions.”

September 2018: At the thirty-ninth session of the Human Rights Council, the UN Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances reiterates “its concern in relation to individuals who are detained in China... urges the Government of China to disclose the fate and whereabouts of all detained persons.”

September 2019: During the 119th session of the UN Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearances, China’s representatives state that the Panchen Lama “went to university”, and “has currently found a job.” However, regarding the whereabouts of the Panchen Lama and his family, the Chinese representatives remain silent. In November, the Working Group expresses that China’s response

is “not considered sufficient” and the case “will remain under consideration.”

2 June 2020: Five UN independent mandate holders demand China provide “prompt and detailed information” on the whereabouts of Tibet’s 11th Panchen Lama. The group endorse the Committee on the Rights of the Child’s recommendation to allow an independent monitor to visit him to confirm his whereabouts and the extent to which he is able to enjoy and exercise his rights. This communication is made public in August 2020.

8 July 2020: The Chinese government responds to the “Joint Allegation Letter” issued by five UN experts in June 2020 by claiming that the Panchen Lama “is an ordinary citizen and after completing his education is currently employed.” Furthermore, that “he and his family members do not wish to be disturbed.”

22 September 2020: At the 45th UN Human Rights Council, questions are asked by NGOs including Helsinki Foundation and International Service for Human Rights on enforced disappearances under the Chinese Communist Party regime including that of the Panchen Lama. The Chinese representatives respond by claiming that “Gedhun Choekyi Nyima is not an incarnation of the Panchen Lama but rather an ordinary Chinese citizen. Now he enjoys good health while leading a normal and happy life.”

Statements from the International Community

The year 2020 marked twenty-five years since the abduction of the 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, his family, and Chadrel Rinpoche. On 25 April 2020, the 31st birthday of the Panchen Lama, the Central Tibetan Administration launched a month-long global advocacy campaign initiated through its Offices of Tibet in twelve countries. The goal of this

campaign was to amplify the call for Gedhun Choekyi Nyima's release as well as to pressurize China to disclose verifiable information on his current well-being and whereabouts. This resulted a global outpouring of support from the international community. Please find a few statements and letters from this campaign below.

PALAIS DES NATIONS • 1211 GENEVA 10, SWITZERLAND

Mandates of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention; the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights; the Special Rapporteur on minority issues; and the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief

REFERENCE:
AL CHN 12/2020

2 June 2020

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacities as Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; Working Group on Arbitrary Detention; Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights; Special Rapporteur on minority issues; and Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 36/6, 42/22, 37/12, 34/6 and 40/10.

In this connection, we would like to bring to the attention of your Excellency's Government information we have received concerning **the continued enforced disappearance of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, and the regulation of reincarnation of Tibetan living Buddhas against the religious traditions and practices of the Tibetan Buddhist minority**. The 17 May 2020 marked 25 years since the disappearance of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima.

The case of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima has previously been raised with your Excellency's Government by Special Procedures mandate holders in CHN 13/2005 and CHN 12/2007. We thank your Excellency's Government for the replies received to these communications.

We would also like to recall that the case of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima has also been treated under the humanitarian mandate of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances.

Furthermore, Special Rapporteurs on freedom of religion or belief have raised concerns on the measures taken by the authorities to manage the search, identification and the reincarnation of Buddhist Lamas in 1991 (E/CN.4/1992/52, para 22), 1996 (E/CN.4/1996/95, para 40) and 2006 (E/CN.4/2006/5/Add.1, paras 94-95).

According to the information received:

On 14 May 1995, Mr. Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, then six years of age, was recognized as the 11th reincarnation of the Panchen Lama by the Dalai Lama. Shortly after this date, Mr. Nyima and his parents were taken away from their village by members of the Chinese Government. The 17 May 2020 marked 25 years since the disappearance of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima.

The Government of China has confirmed that he was taken away with his family but has refused to provide precise information on his fate and whereabouts despite

multiple requests. The Government initially indicated he was being held in “government protection,” and later that he was living a normal life. During this period, he has reportedly been deprived of the religious education in Tibetan Buddhism.

Following the disappearance of Mr. Gedhun Cheokyi Nyima, the Chinese Government attempted to nominate and appoint their preferred choice of individual as the eleventh Panchen Lama. Moreover, the authorities also attempted to regulate the appointment of Tibetan religious leaders, which went against the intrinsic beliefs and religious traditions of Tibetan Buddhists. In 2007, the Government issued the “State Religious Affairs Bureau Order No.5 (Bureau Order)” that specifically laid down measures in managing the reincarnation of Tibetan living Buddha. In article 2 of Bureau Order, it was stressed that “living Buddha reincarnations should respect and protect the principles of the unification of the state, protecting the unity of the minorities, protecting religious concord and social harmony, and protecting the normal order of Tibetan Buddhism”. In articles 3 and 4, the Bureau Order set the conditions for the application of reincarnation of living Buddha and also granted authority to local Governments to decide if a reincarnation is permissible. In the rest of the Bureau Order, it detailed various procedures for receiving the Buddhist Association of China’s opinion and the State’s permission or approval for reincarnation.

In 2016, the Chinese Government published an online database of the State-approved Tibetan Buddhist reincarnations with over 1300 biographies of living Buddhas residing in the country as provided by the Buddhist Association of China. The regulation of reincarnation is enhanced subsequently in article 36 of the Religious Affairs Regulations 2017, which provides that: “the succession of living Buddhas in Tibetan Buddhism is to be conducted under the guidance of Buddhist groups and in accordance with the religious rites and historical conventions, and is to be reported for approval to the religious affairs department of people’s governments at the provincial level or above or to a people’s government at the provincial level or above”. Many Tibetan Buddhists have expressed their concerns about the regulation of reincarnation as it undermines the Tibetan religious traditions and practices while such regulation allow the State to interfere in the choice of their religious leaders. Furthermore, there is fear that the Chinese authority will identify and appoint the successor of the current (fourteenth) Dalai Lama against the Tibetan traditions and the wish of Tibetan Buddhist communities.

Without prejudging the accuracy of this information, we express grave concern at the continued refusal by the Government of China to disclose precisely the whereabouts of Gedhun Cheokyi Nyima. We are also particularly concerned that the regulation of reincarnation of Tibetan living Buddhas may interfere and possibly undermines, in a discriminatory way, the religious traditions and practices of the Tibetan Buddhist minority.

Should these allegations be confirmed, they would contravene international human rights law provisions, such as the prohibition against discrimination, the right to recognition as a person before the law and to its equal protection without discrimination, the right not be deprived arbitrarily of one’s liberty, the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and to freely participate in cultural life in accordance with articles 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 18 and 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and article 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The continued enforced disappearance of Mr. Gedhun Cheokyi Nyima for the past 25 years contravenes several articles of the United Nations Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances including articles 2 and 7.

The disappearance of Mr. Gedhun Cheokyi Nyima has been raised with your Excellency’s Government multiple times by Special Procedures mandate holders. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has also requested China to allow an independent expert to visit Mr. Gedhun Cheokyi Nyima to confirm his whereabouts and verify the fulfilment of his rights (CRC/C/SR.299 and CRC/C/CHN/CO/3-4). We note that your Excellency’s Government has expressed on several occasions its support for the international community’s efforts to eliminate and prevent enforced disappearances, including at the Human Rights Council. **We thus reiterate our demand for your Excellency’s Government to provide prompt and detailed information on Mr. Gedhun Cheokyi Nyima’s whereabouts and we endorse the CRC’s recommendation to allow an independent monitor to visit him to confirm his whereabouts and the extent to which he is able to enjoy and exercise his rights. We also appeal to your Excellency’s Government to ensure that Tibetan Buddhists are able to freely practice their religion, traditions and culture without interference.**

In connection with the above alleged facts and concerns, please refer to the **Annex on Reference to international human rights law** attached to this letter which cites international human rights instruments and standards relevant to these allegations.

As it is our responsibility, under the mandates provided to us by the Human Rights Council, to seek to clarify all cases brought to our attention, we would be grateful for your observations on the following matters:

1. Please provide any additional information and/or comment(s) you may have on the above-mentioned allegations.
2. Please provide prompt and detailed information on the fate and whereabouts of Mr. Gedhun Cheokyi Nyima.
3. Please explain how the regulation of reincarnation of living Buddhas is compatible with the protection of freedom of religion or belief and the protection of religious minorities without discrimination under international human rights law.

This communication and any response received from your Excellency's Government will be made public via the communications reporting website within 60 days. They will also subsequently be made available in the usual report to be presented to the Human Rights Council.

We may publicly express our concerns in the near future in this case. We have been communicating repeatedly with the Government of China to clarify the fate and whereabouts of Mr. Gedhun Choekyi Nyima for the past 25 years, thus far, without a satisfactory response. We also believe that the regulatory framework applied to religious communities, should not interfere or undermine the right of these communities to follow their beliefs and traditions. Any public expression of concern on our part will indicate that we have been in contact with your Excellency's Government's to clarify the issue/s in question.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Luciano Hazan
Chair-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances

Elina Steinerte
Vice-Chair of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention

Karima Bennouna
Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights

Fernand de Varennes
Special Rapporteur on minority issues

Ahmed Shaheed
Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief



LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS SEIMO NARYS ANDRIUS NAVICKAS.

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LR Prezidentui Gitanui Nausėdai
LR Užsienio reikalų ministrui Linui Linkevičiui

2020-05-07

DĖL JAUNIAUSIO PASAULYJE POLITINIO KALINIO LIKIMO

2020 m. gegužės 17 d. visame pasaulyje bus minimos 25-osios Gedhun Choekyi Nyimos, kuris plačiau žinomas kaip XI-asis Pančen Lama, pagrobimo metinės. Jis įvardijamas jauniausiu politiniu kaliniu, kuris pradingo dar 1995 m., tepraėjus trims dienomis, kai ištremtasis Tibeto dvasinis lyderis Dalai Lama oficialiai šešiametį berniuką iš Vidurio Tibeto paskelbė antruoju pagal rangą asmeniu Tibeto budistinėje tradicijoje.

Pančen Lama buvo pagrobtas kartu su tėvais, buvo suimtas, ir jo buvimo vieta yra viena stropiausiai slepiamų Kinijos valstybinių paslapčių.

Tradicškai Pančen Lama ir Dalai Lama yra neatsiejamai susiję. Po vieno iš jų mirties, kitas dvasinis lyderis atpažįsta ir formaliai paskelbia apie naują persikūnijimą, auklėja jį ir padeda formuoti tapatybę. Tačiau Kinijos režimas brutaliai įsikišo į Tibeto budizmo tradiciją, ėmėsi veiksmų, kurie tegali būti traktuojami kaip drastiškas žmogaus teisių pažeidimas. Beje, Kinijos ateistinis režimas griebėsi manipuliacijų - nusprendė nurodyti Tibeto budistams, kas yra jų „tikrasis“ dvasinis lyderis ir juo paskelbė berniuką, užaugusį komunistinėje šeimoje. Jis Tibete neturi autoriteto ir vadinamas „Kinų Pančenu“.

Įvairios tarptautinės organizacijos ne kartą klausė Kinijos apie Gedhun Choekyi Nyimos ir jo šeimos likimą, tačiau kiekvieną kartą į tai būdavo atkertama ciniškais melais. 2019 m. rugsėjo mėnesį Jungtinių Tautų darbo grupė, tirianti žmonių dingimus ir pagrobimus, dar kartą paklausė Kinijos LR apie šio asmens padėtį. Kinija atsakė, kad Gedhun Choekyi Nyima gavo tinkamą nemokamą išsilavinimą, lankė universitetą ir dabar susirado darbą. Tačiau iki šiol pasaulio visuomenė neturi jokių patvirtintų žinių apie XI Pančen Lamą – ar jis yra gyvas, ir kokia yra jo dabartinė tapatybė. Klausimas tampa dar aštresnis dabar, kai Jo Šventenybė XIV Dalai Lama yra solidaus amžiaus. Nors jis vis dar puikios fizinės formos, visi supranta, kad anksčiau ar vėliau iškils įpėdinio klausimas. Pagal tradiciją, Pančen Lamos vaidmuo čia yra labai svarbus, todėl tibetiečiai su nerimu ir nebe pagrindo mano, kad Kinijos LR čia yra numachiusi veiksmus, kurie toliau griautų Tibeto dvasinę tradiciją.

Šių metų gegužės 17 d., kai minime 25-ąsias Gedhun Choekyi Nyimos pagrobimo metines, jam dabar turėtų būti 31 metai. Tibetiečių vyriausybė tremtyje ir visame pasaulyje veikiančios tibetiečių organizacijos kviečia visuomenę paminėti šią liūdną sukaktį ir priminti Kinijos komunistiniam režimui apie sąžinės kalinį Gedhun Choekyi Nyimą – Tibeto XI Pančen Lamą.

Todėl raginame Lietuvos Respublikos Prezidentą Gitaną Nausėdą, Užsienio reikalų ministrą Liną Linkevičių kreiptis į dabartinę Kinijos valdžią, reikalaujant, kad Tarptautinės žmogaus teisių organizacijos gautų patikimą informaciją apie pasaulio jauniausio politinio kalinio likimą. Tik tiesa gali išlaisvinti ne tik pačią Kinijos valdžią, bet ir visų tarptautinius santykius su šia valstybe.

Dr. Andrius Navickas, LR Seimo narys, Laikinosios solidarumo su tibetiečiais grupės vadovas

14. Mai 2020 Entwurf_15. Mai 2020

Brand/Schwabe/Jensen/Bause: Sofortige Freilassung des Panchen Lama
Entführung des zweithöchsten religiösen Oberhauptes der Tibeter jährt sich am 17. Mai 2020 zum 25. Mal
Gemeinsame Erklärung der menschenrechtspolitischen Sprecher der Fraktionen von CDU/CSU, SPD, FDP und BÜNDNIS 90/DIE GRÜNEN

„Vor 25 Jahren verschleppte die kommunistische Führung Chinas den damals sechsjährigen Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, dessen umgehende Freilassung wir fordern. Mit der Entführung und dem inzwischen über zwei Jahrzehnte währenden Freiheitsentzug verstößt der chinesische Staat eklatant gegen Menschenrechte, insbesondere gegen das Menschenrecht auf Leben und Freiheit der Person wie auch gegen die Religionsfreiheit. Die chinesische Regierung ist aufgefordert, dem aus politischen Gründen an einem nicht bekannten Ort festgehaltenen Panchen Lama endlich die Kontaktaufnahme mit der Außenwelt zu ermöglichen, Beobachtern und Beobachterinnen sowie Vertretern und Vertreterinnen der Vereinten Nationen den Zugang zu ihm nicht länger zu verwehren und das Recht des tibetischen Volks, seine religiösen Oberhäupter selbst zu bestimmen, vollständig anzuerkennen.“

Das jahrtausendealte, friedfertige Volk der Tibeter mit seinen einzigartigen kulturellen Traditionen und seiner Religion wird systematisch seiner Kultur und seines Landes beraubt. Durch maximalen Druck und systematische Zerstörung oder Zweckentfremdung wichtiger religiöser und kultureller Denkmäler und Gebäude werden die uralten Wurzeln zudem ebenfalls sukzessive zerstört. Auch andere religiöse und ethnische Minderheiten leiden unter massiver Verfolgung und schweren Menschenrechtsverletzungen durch den chinesischen Staat.

Wir befürworten und unterstützen den friedlichen Weg des Dalai Lama und der Tibeterinnen und Tibeter, über ein Miteinander „ohne jede Trennung von China“ in einen ernsthaften Dialog zu treten. Diesen offenen Dialog mit den legitimen Vertreterinnen und Vertretern der Tibeter wird das Regime in Peking auf Dauer nicht verweigern können, ohne selbst weiteren Schaden zu nehmen. Ein erster Schritt auf diesem Weg wäre die Freilassung des Panchen Lama.“

English Translation

Brand/Schwabe/Jensen/Bause: Immediate release of the 11th Panchen Lama

Joint declaration by the Spokespersons for Human Rights Policy of the Parliamentary Groups of CDU/CSU, SPD, FDP, Alliance90/The Greens

25 years ago, the Chinese Communist leadership abducted the then six-year-old Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima. Today, we demand his immediate release.

With the kidnapping and deprivation of liberty for over two decades, the Chinese state blatantly violates human rights, in particular the human right to life, freedom, and religion. The Panchen Lama is still being held in an unknown location without any contact with the outside world. Representatives of the United Nations and other international observers have been denied access to him and his family.

Under the Chinese state, the peaceful people of Tibet, with their unique cultural traditions and religion, are systematically stripped of their identity. Maximum pressure and systematic destruction of important religious and cultural icons gradually destroy the Tibetan culture. Other religious and ethnic minorities are also suffering severe persecution and serious human rights violations by the Chinese state.

We advocate and support the peaceful path of the Dalai Lama and the Tibetans about living together “without any separation from China” to enter into a serious dialogue. This open dialogue with the legitimate representatives of the Tibetans cannot be refused by the regime in Beijing, without taking further damage themselves. The first step on this path would be the release of the Panchen Lama.



Poslanecký klub Pirátů

Statement by Czech Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet on the 25th Year of Enforced Disappearance of Panchen Lama of Tibet, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima

On the 25th year of enforced disappearance of Tibet's 11th Panchen Lama Gendhun Choekyi Nyima, we, the undersigned members of parliament of Czech Republic, call for his immediate release along with his entire family and other Tibetan political prisoners.

Gedhun Choekyi Nyima was born on 25 April 1989 in Tibet. He was six-year-old when he was recognized as the 11th Panchen Lama of Tibet by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Within three days, on 17 May 1995 he and his entire family members were kidnapped by China and till date China has refused to disclose sufficient and satisfactory information about him. Last month, Tibetans were forced to celebrate the 31st birthday of their religious leader, the 11th Panchen Lama without even knowing whether he is alive or not.

This evinces the egregious human rights violations suffered by Tibetans under China. It therefore comes as no surprise that Tibet is consistently ranked as the second least free region in the world and the European Parliament Intergroup on Freedom of Religion or Belief has ranked China as one of the worst violators of religious freedom in the world in 2018. Not just Tibetan Buddhists, even Uighur Muslims and Christians are also facing religious persecution by China.

In light of this, we strongly condemn the enforced disappearance of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima for the last twenty-five years. It is a tragic milestone evincing the continuous crime being perpetrated by China not only against Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his family but also against all the Tibetans who are deprived of their religious leader.

We urge our Government, the European Union and the United Nations to take serious note of this gross human rights violations and press China to release Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his family members and stop China from meddling in the religious practices of the Tibetans including their system of recognition of reincarnations.

František Kopřiva

co-chair of Czech Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet

Co-signed by

Přemysl Rabas, co-chair of Czech Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet, senator

Dana Balcarová, member of parliament

Jan Horník, senator

Lenka Kozlová, member of parliament

Jakub Michálek, member of parliament

Vít Rakušan, member of parliament

Jitka Seitlová, senator

Tomáš Vymazal, member of parliament

Jan Čížinský, member of parliament

Jakub Janda, member of parliament

Tomáš Martínek, member of parliament

Jiří Oberfalzer, senator

Olga Richterová, member of parliament

Ondřej Veselý, member of parliament

Marek Výborný, member of parliament

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Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
Ottawa, ON K1A 0G2

Re: 25th anniversary of the disappearance of 11th Panchen Lama - Gedhun Choekyi Nyima

Dear Prime Minister,

We write to you in advance of the 25th anniversary of the disappearance of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the 11th Panchen Lama of Tibet, on May 17, 1995. At the time of his disappearance, Gendun Choekyi Nyima was just six years old. Neither he nor his family have been seen or heard from since. Often referred to as the moon to the Dalai Lama's sun, the Panchen Lama is the second most important religious leader within Tibetan Buddhism.

The enforced disappearance of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his family members is not just an egregious crime against him and his family, it is also a serious offence to the Tibetan people. It is an interference in sacred traditions of Tibetan Buddhism and sets a dangerous precedent for possible interference in the process of identifying the reincarnations of future Dalai Lamas.

Along with the arbitrary arrest and detention of Tibetan religious leaders, China has recently intensified its application of discriminatory policies with the intention of 'adapting religion to socialism with Chinese characteristics.' Since 2016, Chinese authorities have demolished more than 4700 homes of monks and nuns and have evicted more than 4800 from two major religious institutes – Larung Gar and Yarchen Gar. State authorities have also appointed Communist Party officials to key supervisory positions at such institutes to tighten state control over them.



Since 1995, several governments, including Canadian governments, have requested permission to visit the Panchen Lama in order to verify his safety and well-being. Similarly, efforts by human rights organizations 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 been unsuccessful. Chinese authorities have consistently denied permission and access.

Therefore we, the undersigned parliamentarians, ask that the Right Honourable Prime Minister:

1. Issue a statement calling on China to release Tibet's 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his entire family, and to stop the violation of the religious freedoms of all peoples under its jurisdiction, including Tibetan Buddhists, Uighur Muslims, Falun Gong practitioners and Christians;
2. Urge China to allow an independent fact-finding mission to assess the human rights violations perpetrated against Tibetans in Tibet and other regions in China.

Sincerely,

Garrett Genuis, M.P.
Shadow Minister for Multiculturalism & for Canada-China Relations

Ziad Aboultaif, M.P.
Shadow Minister for Digital Government

Colin Carrie, M.P.
Shadow Minister for Canada-U.S. Relations and the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario

Kerry Dionne, M.P.

Hon. Kerry-Lynne Findlay, P.C., M.P.
Shadow Minister for Environment & Climate Change

Jazraj Singh Hallan, M.P.
Deputy Shadow Minister for Multiculturalism

Marty Morantz, M.P.
Shadow Minister for National Revenue

Scott Reid, M.P.

Nelly Shin, M.P.
Deputy Shadow Minister for Canadian Heritage

Karen Vecchio, M.P.
Shadow Minister for Women and Gender Equality

Arnold Viereen, M.P.
Deputy Shadow Minister for Crown-Indigenous Relations

Cathay Wigantall, M.P.
Deputy Shadow Minister for Veterans Affairs

JAMES P. MCGOVERN
SECOND DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS

CHAIRMAN
COMMITTEE ON RULES
SENIOR DEMOCRATIC WHIP



Congress of the United States House of Representatives

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Statement of U.S. Representative James P. McGovern Chair of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China and Co-Chair of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission September 24, 2020

This year we solemnly commemorate 25 years since Gedun Choekyi Nyima, the 11th Panchen Lama, was abducted with his parents and forcibly disappeared. Since then, they have not been seen or heard from by anyone outside of China, making them among the world's longest detained prisoners of conscience.

The Panchen Lama should be freed because no government is justified in doing what the Chinese government has done to him: to kidnap and hold someone, to control his entire life and the lives of his family members, for decades, with no end in sight. He should be freed because the Tibetan Buddhist religious community must have the right to exercise their religious traditions without undue interference, and no one should be punished for adhering to these traditions. He should be freed because he has the right under international law to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including the right to practice his religion as he chooses. He should be freed because he is still a young man and it's the right thing to do.

The enforced disappearance of the Panchen Lama is an egregious example of the Chinese government's violations of the human rights and religious freedom of Tibetan Buddhists. The Chinese government has asserted control over Tibetan Buddhists' religious traditions, and claims the right to control the selection and recognition of reincarnated religious figures, but no illegitimate law or regulation can deny the right of Tibetan Buddhists to freely choose their own religious leaders without government interference.

The U.S. and the international community must continue to speak out to oppose the official restrictions on the practice of Tibetan Buddhism including control over the process of reincarnation, the demolition of buildings and expulsion of religious practitioners from Larung Gar and Yachen Gar, the implementation of Tibet's new "ethnic unity" regulations, and the use of mass labor transfers in the name of "poverty alleviation" intended in part to "dilute" Tibetan religion. These policies are part of a systematic effort by Chinese authorities to eliminate the distinct religious, linguistic, and cultural identity of the Tibetan people.

This year, let us recommit ourselves to defending human rights in China, Tibet, and around the world. Let us work to free the true Panchen Lama, his family, and all those detained for nonviolent expression of their fundamental rights, immediately and without conditions.

###

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25th Anniversary of the Panchen Lama's Disappearance

PRESS STATEMENT

MICHAEL R. POMPEO, SECRETARY OF STATE

MAY 18, 2020

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The Department of State has made the promotion and protection of religious freedom a priority, especially in China, where people of all faiths face severe repression and discrimination. As part of that mission, on May 17, we marked the 25th anniversary of the disappearance of the 11th Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, who has not appeared in public since the PRC government abducted him in 1995, at age six.

The Panchen Lama is one of the most important figures in Tibetan Buddhism with spiritual authority second only to the Dalai Lama. But China's persecution of the Panchen Lama is not unusual. The United States remains deeply concerned about the PRC's ongoing campaign to eliminate the religious, linguistic, and cultural identity of Tibetans, including through the ongoing destruction of communities of worship and learning, such as the Larung Gar and Yachen Gar Buddhist Institutes.

Tibetan Buddhists, like members of all faith communities, must be able to select, educate, and venerate their religious leaders according to their traditions and without government interference. We call on the PRC government to immediately make public the Panchen Lama's whereabouts and to uphold its own constitution and international commitments to promote religious freedom for all persons.

Vyhlásenie poslancov Národnej rady Slovenskej republiky k 25. výročiu násilného zmiznutia tibetského pančenlámu Gedhun Choekyi Nyima

Pri príležitosti 25. výročia násilného zmiznutia 11. tibetského 11. pančenlámu Gendhuna Choekyi Nyimu, podpísaní členovia Národnej rady Slovenskej republiky vyzývame aby bol okamžite prepustený spolu s celou jeho rodinou a ostatnými tibetskými politickými väzňami. Gedhun Choekyi Nyima sa narodil 25. apríla 1989 v Tibete. Mal šesť rokov, keď ho jeho Svätosť Dalajláma uznal za tibetského 11. pančenlámu. O tri dni neskôr, 17. mája 1995, bol čínskymi úradmi unesený spolu so svojimi rodinnými príslušníkmi. Odvtedy Čína odmieta prezradiť akékoľvek dostatočné a uspokojivé informácie o jeho mieste pobytu. Namiesto toho Čína vymenovala svojho vlastného kandidáta, syna členov komunistickej strany.

Násilné zmiznutie 11. pančenlámu Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, v tom čase najmladšieho politického väzňa na svete, je klasickým príkladom závažného porušovania ľudských práv Tibetánov v Číne v posledných šiestich desaťročiach.

Prenasledovaniu zo strany čínskej komunistickej vlády nečelia len tibetskí budhisti, ale aj ujgurskí moslimovia a čínski kresťania.

V tejto súvislosti dôrazne odsudzujeme násilné zmiznutie Gedhun Choekyi Nyima trvajúce dvadsaťpäť rokov. Je to tragický mŕtvnik svedčiaci o pretrvávajúcom zločine, ktorý Čína spáchala nielen proti Gedhunovi Choekyimu Nyimovi a jeho rodine, ale aj proti všetkým Tibetanom.

Vyzývame našu vládu, Európsku úniu a OSN, aby venovali pozornosť tomuto porušovaniu ľudských práv a vytvorili nátlak na Čínu, aby prepustila Gedhun Choekyi Nyimu a jeho rodinných príslušníkov a zabránila Číne zasahovať do náboženských praktík Tibetánov vrátane ich systému uznania reinkarnácií.

Vyhlásenie podpísané / Signatári vyhlásenia:

RIPUN BORA MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT (RAJYA SABHA)

Member : Standing Committee on Petroleum
and Natural Gas
Member : Consultative Committee on Road Transport
and National Highways
Member : Committee of Privileges



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Tibet's 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima

Gedhun Choekyi Nyima was born on 25 April 1989 to Kunchok Phuntsog (father) and Dechen Chodon (mother) in Lhari district of Nagchu province in Tibet. When he was six-year-old, at the request of *Chadrel Rinpoche*¹, His Holiness the Dalai Lama conducted elaborate religious rites and rituals for identification of the reincarnation and recognized Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the 11th Panchen Lama on 14 May 1995. But within three days, on 17 May 1995 he and his entire family were kidnapped by the Chinese authorities. Chadrel Rinpoche was also arbitrarily detained. Since then China has refused to divulge any sufficient and satisfactory information about their whereabouts. Instead, China installed its own puppet, a son of communist party members, as China's Panchen Lama.

The enforced disappearance of the 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, then world's youngest political prisoner, is a classic example of China's egregious violations of human rights of Tibetans rampant in the last six decades in Tibet. More than 1.2 million Tibetans were killed; many in concentration camps and more than 6,000 monasteries were destroyed in Tibet. When China kidnapped Panchen Lama, they denied its occurrence to the UN and a year later called it "protective custody".

The 25 years of enforced disappearance of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his family members is a continuous crime not just against him, his family and the Tibetan people but also against every individual who believes in the sanctity of human rights. This is a crime against humanity and China must be held accountable for this heinous act.

Chadrel Rinpoche was the abbot of Tashi Lhunpo monastery in Tibet which is the seat of Panchen Lama. He was also the head of China's search committee for the reincarnation of 11th Panchen Lama.

Yours sincerely,

(RIPUN BORA) MP RS
President

Assam Pradesh Congress Committee



Statement on the 25th Year of Enforced Disappearance of Panchen Lama of Tibet, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima

On this 25th year of enforced disappearance of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the 11th Panchen Lama of Tibet, I call for his immediate release along with his entire family unconditionally. He was kidnapped by the Chinese authorities when he was six-year old and has not been seen in public since 17th May 1995.

Expressing my serious concerns over China's continued disregard of its International human rights obligations, the continued abduction of Panchen Lama of Tibet is a serious human rights issue in particular the violation of Tibetan people's right to freedom of religion and belief.

On the 25th year of the enforced disappearance of Panchen Lama of Tibet, I call upon China immediately reveal the fate and whereabouts of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the 11th Panchen Lama of Tibet. For the last six decades, China has not only suppressed Tibetan religious freedom in Tibet but has been used as a means to gain control over Tibetans.

The Chinese authorities must respect Tibetans' freedom of religion and right to choose their own religious heads without governmental interference.

Roberto Rampi
Member of Italian Parliament
Italian Senate
Roberto.Rampi@Senato.it



Samuel Cogolati
Député fédéral Ecolo-Groen

Brussels, 8 April 2020

Public statement of MP Samuel Cogolati
Gedhun Choekyi Nyima

Tibet continues to be rated as the second least free country in the world, after Syria. Tibetans say that it is easier to go to heaven than to get a passport from Chinese government. Tibet has been under iron-fist control of China for over six decades. The repressive nature of the rule is best exemplified by the case of Panchen Lama. He has not been seen for quarter of a century.

He was recognised as the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama on 14 May 1995 by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Three days later, on 17 May, the Chinese government abducted him along with his parents. For 25 years he has not been seen or heard in public, although it is believed he is still alive. On the 25th of this month he will be 31 years old.

The plight of Gedun Choekyi Nyima is particularly heart wrenching one for Tibetans. This recurring human rights abuse needs to be addressed. China's claim of him leading a healthy, normal life cannot be considered credible. Not when the world has not seen him actually alive. His enforced disappearance case was registered in 1995 with the UN Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearance. It is one of the oldest continuing cases of enforced disappearance in the world. And he is one of the world's longest-serving political prisoners and the youngest one at that.

As a Member of the Federal Parliament of Belgium and Vice-chair of the Foreign affairs Committee, I thereby express my strong support for the second highest figure in Tibetan Buddhism – Gedhun Choekyi Nyima.

To mark the 25th anniversary of his disappearance, this year, I have asked the Belgian Minister of Foreign affairs to send a strong message to Beijing to free him and his parents immediately without any conditions.



United States Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Written statement by:

U.S. Ambassador at large for International Religious Freedom Samuel D. Brownback

In 2020, we mark a sad anniversary: 25 years since the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) abducted the 11th Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima. He was six years old. He and his family have not appeared in public since 1995.

The Panchen Lama is one of the most important figures in Tibetan Buddhism. But he is also a human being and, like all of us, he is entitled to fulfill his own hopes and dreams and to freely practice his Tibetan Buddhist faith. By abducting him when he was only six years old, the Chinese government not only robbed him of 25 years of his own personal, intellectual, and spiritual development, but also claimed the right to select and control all Tibetan Buddhist leaders, including a future Dalai Lama. Its attempt to install a fake Panchen Lama in 1995 likewise confirms that the CCP has no respect for Tibetan Buddhists, their faith, or their traditions.

After U.S. Secretary of State Michael R. Pompeo issued a strong statement calling on the Chinese government to immediately and publicly make the Panchen Lama's whereabouts known, the PRC stated that the now 31-year-old has graduated from college and has a job. The PRC owes the world an explanation of how the CCP can justify the abduction of a six-year-old, impede his religious training, and hide him from the world. The CCP's claim that it has the authority to select Tibetan Buddhist leaders was reaffirmed by General Secretary Xi Jinping at an August 2020 CCP meeting on Tibet, where Xi reiterated previous calls to "Sinicize" Tibetan Buddhism and to fight "splittism" in Tibet.

Let us be clear: CCP General Secretary Xi has called for the destruction of Tibetan Buddhism. "Sinicizing" Tibetan Buddhism means replacing authentic religious beliefs, traditions, and practices with the Party's socialist ideology. This would eliminate the role of individual conscience and belief, replacing the ethnic, religious, and cultural identity of Tibet with the atheist culture of the CCP. Members of all faith communities have the right to select, educate, and venerate their religious leaders in accordance with their beliefs and without government interference. Only Tibetan Buddhists can decide their legitimate religious leaders, and only they can manage the identification, succession, and education of Tibetan Buddhist lamas, including the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama.

The United States, consistent with our longstanding values, has prioritized the promotion and protection of religious freedom, an unalienable right central to the lives of all persons and free societies. Our advocacy is particularly focused on the PRC, where the CCP has waged a "life or death struggle" against Chinese people of all faiths – from Uyghur Muslims and members of other minority groups, to Tibetan Buddhists, Christians, and Falun Gong practitioners – in an attempt to maintain its authoritarian grip on power.

We call on the PRC to make public the Panchen Lama's whereabouts immediately, allow him to speak for himself, and uphold Beijing's international commitments to promote religious freedom for all persons, including members of ethnic and religious minorities. We call on other states to join together to promote religious freedom and human dignity in China and around the world.

Statement of Mr. Shimomura Hakubun, Member of Parliament and President of the All Party Japanese Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet, on the 25th anniversary of the disappearance of the 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima

We, the All Party Japanese Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet, are seriously concerned over the repression and deteriorating human rights situation in Tibet as the Chinese Communist regime is increasingly becoming more authoritarian.

With the invasion of Tibet, China has been using the relationship between the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama as a means to sow discord among the Tibetan people and destroy their religion and culture.

After selecting their puppet Panchen Lama, the Chinese government kidnapped the Panchen Lama recognized by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and imprisoned him as the world's youngest political prisoner. He is still in detention since last 25 years. It is a serious humanitarian crisis rarely seen in the world, and it would never be acceptable.

We resolutely condemn the Chinese Communist Party's religious persecution, and express deep concern over the Chinese Communist Party trying to destroy Tibetan cultural, religious and linguistic identities. China must announce the whereabouts of the Panchen Lama as soon as possible, and release him immediately by heeding the call of the international community.

Of course, the Chinese Communist Party has neither the right to select the successor of the Dalai Lama as well the Panchen Lama. No one in the world has this right except the Tibetan people. The Tibetan people, based on their Buddhist tradition, have the right to choose their religious leader and place of worship without interference from any country. The international community should firmly respect and defend such right.

We, the All Party Japanese Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet, will cooperate with countries around the world that share the same values of freedom, democracy, and the rule of law. We welcome the resolutions adopted in the Parliaments around the world against China, and that we are determined to act together.



Parlamentarische Gruppe Tibet
Groupe Parlementaire pour le Tibet
Parliamentary Group for Tibet

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Statement by Parliamentary Group for Tibet, Switzerland on the 25th Year of Enforced Disappearance of Panchen Lama of Tibet, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima

On the 25th year of the enforced disappearance of Panchen Lama of Tibet, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, we call upon the Chinese government to immediately release him and his entire family.

For 25 years, since 17th May 1995, there has been no verifiable and sufficient information about the well-being and whereabouts of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his entire family.

Reiterating our concerns over China's continued denial of information about the Panchen Lama and refusal of an independent team to assess the ground situation in Tibet, we call upon the Chinese government to respect human rights in Tibet including cultural and religious freedom and resume dialogue with the representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for peaceful resolution of Tibet.

With deep respect for Tibetan culture and peaceful resistance of Tibetan people, we continue to stand in solidarity with the Tibetan people.

Statement signed by:

Members of the Council of States

Maya Graf
 Lisa Mazzone
 Carlo Sommaruga

Members of the National Council

Prisca Birrer-Heimo
 Laurence Fehlmann Rielle
 Claudia Friedl
 Balthasar Glättli
 Nik Gugger
 Barbara Gysi
 Beat Jans
 Irène Kälin
 Fabian Molina
 Martina Munz
 Nicolas Walder
 Cédric Wermuth

Berne, 13 May 2020

台灣國會西藏連線

Taiwan Parliament Group for Tibet

聲明書

Statement

1995 年 5 月 14 日，6 歲的根敦確吉尼瑪被達賴喇嘛依照藏傳佛教傳統，認定為十世班禪喇嘛的轉世靈童。3 天後，中國政府帶走根敦確吉尼瑪與家人，25 年來再也沒有人能得知他們的情況。

自達賴喇嘛尊者流亡印度後，中國政府從未停止破壞西藏傳統文化。中國政府用粗暴的綁架方式，剝奪班禪喇嘛轉世靈童根敦確吉尼瑪的宗教身分與宗教權利，近年更變本加厲推行西藏佛寺的「中國化」，強拆佛塔毀壞經幡，汙辱西藏的宗教自由，踐踏西藏人權。

宗教信仰自由是人民基本權利，中國政府應該尊重西藏的傳統文化。台灣與追求自由、平等、人權等普世價值的國際社會站在一起，持續關注西藏人權，譴責中國暴政。

台灣國會西藏連線代表台灣社會對於西藏人民一致的聲援，我們正告中國政府，應立即公開根敦確吉尼瑪及其家人的現況，釋放他們，並且停止一切迫害西藏人權的行動。

台灣國會西藏連線

會長：

副會長：



Brussels, 24 April 2020

Dear High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the Commission for a Stronger Europe in the World,

Dear European Commissioner for Justice,

We are writing to you on the occasion of the 31st birthday of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the 11th Panchen Lama of Tibet, which also marks the 25th anniversary of his disappearance.

Gedhun Choekyi Nyima was recognised as the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama on 14 May 1995 by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Three days later, the Chinese government abducted him along with his parents. Since then, he has not been seen or heard in public, although it is believed he is still alive.

His enforced disappearance case was registered in 1995 with the UN Working Group on Enforced and Involuntary Disappearance. It is one of the oldest continuing cases of enforced disappearance in the world. And he is one of the world's longest-serving political prisoners and the youngest one at that.

We would like to remind you that Tibet continues to be rated as the second least free country in the world, after Syria. Tibetans say that it is easier to go to heaven than to get a passport from the Chinese government. Tibet has now been under iron-fist control of China for over six decades. The repressive nature of the rule is best exemplified by the case of the Panchen Lama.

Since recurring human rights abuses from China needs to be addressed, we urge the European Commission to call upon the Chinese government to finally ensure freedom of religion and belief in Tibet, by freeing Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his parents immediately without any conditions, together with all Tibetan political prisoners.

Yours sincerely,

Mikuláš Peksa

Member of the European Parliament (Greens/EFA)
President of the Tibet Interest Group

Co-signed by

1. MEP Alviina Alametsä (Greens/EFA)
2. MEP Patrick Breyer (Greens/EFA)
3. MEP Reinhard Bütikofer (Greens/EFA)
4. MEP Isabel Carvalhais (S&D)
5. MEP Antoni Comín i Oliveres (N-A)



6. MEP Petra De Sutter (Greens/EFA)
7. MEP Lucia Ďuriš Nicholsonová (ECR)
8. MEP Tanja Fajon (S&D)
9. MEP Raphaël Glucksmann (S&D)
10. MEP Francisco Guerreiro (Greens/EFA)
11. MEP José Gusmão (GUE/NGL)
12. MEP Svenja Hahn (Renew)
13. MEP Heidi Hautala (Greens/EFA)
14. MEP Hannes Heide (S&D)
15. MEP Marcel Kolaja (Greens/EFA)
16. MEP Miriam Lexmann (EPP)
17. MEP Aušra Maldeikienė (EPP)
18. MEP Marisa Matias (GUE/NGL)
19. MEP Tilly Metz (Greens/EFA)
20. MEP Javier Nart (Renew)
21. MEP Clara Ponsatí i Obiols (N-A)
22. MEP Carles Puigdemont i Casamajó (N-A)
23. MEP Diana Riba i Giner (Greens/EFA)
24. MEP Isabel Santos (S&D)
25. MEP Ivan Štefanec (EPP)
26. MEP Riho Terras (EPP)
27. MEP Marie Toussaint (Greens/EFA)
28. MEP Alexandr Vondra (ECR)
29. MEP Salima Yenbou (Greens/EFA)
30. MEP Tomáš Zdechovský (EPP)
31. MEP Milan Zver (EPP)



23 June 2020

Statement – 11th Panchen Lama

On 17th May 2020, the Tibetan diaspora all over the free world, marked the 25th commemoration anniversary of the abduction and disappearance of the second highest spiritual leader of Tibet - Gendun Choekyi Nyima, 11th Panchen Lama. He and his family were abducted when he was just six by the Chinese security forces. This year, he turned thirty-one, making this one of the oldest continuous case of enforced disappearance. We have no record of where he is, how he is, and how his family are; except just a few words of empty assurances from the Chinese government that he is doing well. That is not good enough.

The 11th Panchen Lama needs to be released and revealed to the world. He and all other Tibetan people in Tibet needs to live in liberty. Since 1959, with the invasion of Tibet by the Chinese government, more than a million Tibetans have lost their lives. They have lost their liberty, and they see the daily suppression of their culture, beliefs, religion, and way of life. This is an injustice that we need to stand up to. As the American civil rights leader, Martin Luther King, once said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

I want to send a strong message to China, the Tibetans inside Tibet and in exile, as well as the international community that the people of the UK support the cause of the Tibetan people. We support the Tibetan struggle and we will use every opportunity to put the spotlight on China for the injustices they continue to put on the oppressed people of Tibet. Let me remind you that the cause of Tibet is not just about human rights, it is also about the environment and our planet. Tibet is responsible for forty percent of the world population's water supply. What China does in Tibet affects not just Tibet but the whole planet. China is bringing environmental damage and destruction to Tibet and ultimately, our entire planet.

It is the responsibility of everyone who appreciates and cherishes freedom, to stand up against China and to say: what you are doing is not right. The people of Tibet, the Panchen Lama, deserve their freedom. It is long overdue.

Tim Loughton MP

www.timloughton.com loughtont@parliament.uk
The East Worthing and Shoreham Constituency includes:
Coombes, Fishergate, Kingston Buci, Lancing, Shoreham, Sompting, Southwick,
and the eastern wards of Worthing: Broadwater, Gaisford, Offington and Selden.



"Democracy means freedom to choose"

INKATHA

Inkatha Freedom Party
Iqembu leNkatha YeNkululeko

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THE OFFICE OF THE IFP PRESIDENT

FROM : THE IFP PRESIDENT

ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DISAPPEARANCE OF
THE 11TH PANCHEN LAMA

South Africa's experience under apartheid of activists 'going missing', never to be heard from again, has heightened our sensitivity to this particular atrocity against human rights.

The IFP therefore supports the continuous call by human rights organisations throughout the world for the release of Tibet's Gendun Choekyi Nyima, who was named the Panchen Lama in May 1995 by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The Panchen Lama is considered to be youngest political prisoner in the world, having been taken into so-called protective custody by China when he was just 6 years old. If he is indeed in protective custody, that should have ended when he turned 18. Yet the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has consistently been denied access to the Panchen Lama.

It is now 25 years since he and his family were seen. The question of his whereabouts remains unanswered. We believe that he must be released. Every person has a right to their identity, culture, security and liberty, simply by virtue of being human.

It is well known that the IFP supports Tibet's quest for autonomy within China in accordance with the Middle Way approach. We have openly called for China to

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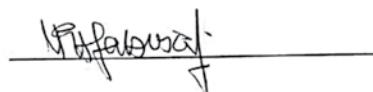
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recognise Tibet's unique cultural identity, to adhere to international standards of human rights, to be willing to engage diplomatic negotiations, and to accept autonomy for Tibet.

We have also spoken against China's exploitation of Tibet's natural resources, which is causing environmental degradation, and their attempt to assimilate Tibetans which is destroying a cultural heritage.

The IFP believes that South Africa's own freedom places upon us the responsibility to promote freedom for all people and all nations. The mere fact that human rights abuses continue, anywhere, in a world that embraces democracy and freedom, should concern us all.

Once again, therefore, the IFP joins the call for the release of the Panchen Lama.



**THE HON. MR VF HLABISA MPL
PRESIDENT OF THE INKATHA FREEDOM PARTY**

21 May 2020



**Statement from Warren Entsch MP
as Co-Chair of the Australian Parliamentary Friendship Group for Tibet**

"Today, there are a few thousand political prisoners in Tibet.

I have had the pleasure of meeting many former Tibetan political prisoners who now live in Australia. Listening to their stories, I have learned a lot about the suffering of many Tibetans.

As tragic as some of these stories are, they reveal the extraordinary courage of the Tibetan people.

I want to talk about one political prisoner in particular, the Panchen Lama of Tibet. He was six years old when he was abducted by the Chinese government some twenty-five years ago.

To this day, the Tibetan and the international community do not know where he is. The Panchen Lama story represents China's violation of religious freedom in Tibet and interference in an ancient religious tradition.

I call on the Chinese government to let the Panchen Lama of Tibet free."



22/07/2020

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“ The safety of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his proper religious training is of particular concern to me. He has not been seen in public for some months and is reported to be detained somewhere in Beijing. I, therefore, appeal to all governments, religious and human rights organizations for their intervention in ensuring the safety and freedom for the young Panchen Lama. ”

– H.H. the 14th Dalai Lama, 1995

“ When I was visiting and inspecting several places in Qinghai province, many Tibetan people came to pay religious homage to me.... No matter whether they were men or women, old or young, as soon as they saw me, they thought of the bitterness of that period, and they were unable to prevent tears flowing from their eyes. A few brave people among them said through their tears: Do not let all living creatures starve! Do not let them destroy Buddhism! Do not let them extinguish the people of our snow land! These are our wishes and our prayers! ”

– H.E. the 10th Panchen Lama, 1962



**The Department of Information and International Relations
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