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TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

(Registered under Societies Registration Act 21 of 1860)

5 February, 1998

Mr Ngawang Choephel
Tibet Bureau
Rue de la, Navigation 10
1201 Geneva
Switzerland

Dear Ngachoe La,

Please find appended a complaint letter to Mr Nigel Rodley, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture regarding two cases of death and one case of torture of Tibetan political prisoners.

These cases were received from recent arrivals from Tibet. Therefore we are confident that these are authentic cases that is extremely appropriate for submission. We have also sent some cases of Disappearance to the UN working Groups on Involuntary Disappearance in the end of last year, but there has been no reply as yet.

I am sending these cases for your information. Since I'm new in this field I would like to get some feedback on the cases that has been sent to different UN bodies.

Thank you

Tashi Delek

Yours sincerely

Lobsang Tsering
Researcher



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TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

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5 February, 1998

Mr Nigel Rodley
UN Special Rapporteur on Torture
Centre for Human Rights - D 102
Palais des Nations
1211 Geneva 10

Dear Sir,

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy would like to bring up following cases of torture inflicted upon Tibetan political prisoners.

Case no. 1.:	Death due to torture
Name :	Pasang
Sex:	Male
Age:	21
Date of Arrest:	8 December 1994
Place:	Taktse County in Lhasa City

Pasang, (Pasang Dawa) a 21 year old monk from Dechen Sangnak Monastery in Taktse County under Lhasa City died on 17 December 1997, after continuous torture inflicted by Drapchi prison officials. Pasang was born in Shingsang township, Taktse County.

Pasang was arrested on 8 December 1994 by police while doing a short solo demonstration in Barkhor (Lhasa main market). This peaceful demonstration condemned the Chinese regime in Tibet and called for Tibet's freedom. Pasang was immediately arrested and was later sentenced to five years imprisonment.

Soon after being taken to Drapchi Prison, Pasang required medical treatment due to beatings sustained. His condition was so serious that Pasang was permitted to leave the prison complex during the day to visit a hospital but was required to return to the prison every evening. Prevented from receiving continuous treatment, Pasang's health deteriorated and on December 17, 1997 at around 5:30 in the afternoon, Pasang died in the Public Welfare Hospital in Lhasa.

In 1994 Dechen Sangnak Monastery consisted of more than 60 monks. From October 1994 some monks of the Monastery staged a series of independence demonstrations and pasted leaflets in Taktse and Lhasa. Subsequently ten monks were arrested and tortured in prisons. Since then the Chinese authorities imposed strict measures in the monastery and the monks who participated in demonstration were not allowed to rejoin the monastery. The present population of the monastery is 40.

Case no. 2.: **Death due to torture**
Name: **Rigzin**
Sex: **Male**
Age: **61**
Date of Arrest: **August or September 1996**
Place: **Ngari Region**

Rigzin, a 61-year-old man from Mugrum Trehte township in Labrang county in Ngari Region died on 11 or 12 February 1997. He was imprisoned in August/September 1996 because he had kept a photograph of the Dalai Lama on his altar long after the Chinese authorities had announced the ban on such pictures.

"Many people managed to hide these away from the eyes of Chinese officials, but Rigzin dared to keep it openly on the altar. When confronted by three Chinese officials who saw the photo, he responded, "if we cannot see the person in real life then what is there in a photograph?" "Where the Chinese officials found pictures, the residents of the house were fined. However, since Rigzin had answered back to them, the Chinese said he was "bad news to the country" and he was detained for one month in the town prison and later transferred to Ngari prison and sentenced to three years imprisonment. He was reported to look very weak and suffering from malnutrition at that time. Prior to his arrest Rigzin had minor health problems but after his arrest he suffered from lung infection.

He was kept in the prison hospital for one month after which he was released because his condition had become serious. Upon his release, he lived only one month at home. He was sick that he could barely speak and was completely bedridden. He finally passed away on February 11 or 12 1997, in his bed.

While it is known that Pasang died on December 17, 1997, and that he had been severely beaten in detention, the extent of his injuries and the suffering of his last days before succumbing to death can only be imagined. Rigzin's death is a similar case, it is unknown exactly what caused his death or how much he suffered in the last days of his life.

Case no. 3.: **Torture**
Name: **Kunchok Tsomo**
Sex: **Female**
Age: **25**
Date of Arrest: **May 1995**
Place: **Meldro Gyama County under Lhasa City**

Kunchok Tsomo, a 25 year-old nun from Meldro Gyama County, under Lhasa City, was detained in Drapchi Prison for three years. For that entire period she was denied proper treatment for a broken arm and it is feared that she may be permanently disabled.

Kunchok Tsomo was arrested in May 1993 for taking part in a peaceful demonstration in Barkhor (Lhasa main market). During the interrogation period she was beaten with a rifle butt and the bone of her upper right arm was broken. Kunchok complained of the pain, but was not given medical attention or taken to the hospital. While in prison, Kunchok constantly had to keep her arm tied in a sling and was forced to clean and separate wool — work that all of the nuns detained in Drapchi Prison are forced to do.

Only once, as she was complaining of severe pain, was given a pain-killer but she still did not receive any treatment for her broken arm. Kunchok lived with this pain and inconvenience for the entire three years.

As soon as she was released in June 1996, Kunchok's relatives took her for treatment in a hospital. They were informed by the doctor that, due to the long period of time without any treatment, Kunchok's flesh had grown around and inside the broken bone. Her relatives fear that it is now too late to have her bone put back together. Kunchok's current condition is reported to be poor and she is still under medication.

This information was given to the TCHRD by Kunchok's elder brother who is a former political prisoner. Kunchok's younger brother, Bhagdro, 22 years old, is currently in Trisam Prison serving a two year sentence.

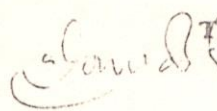
Reports are continuously received of Tibetan nuns being particularly targeted for degrading treatment and inhumane torture methods in Chinese prisons in Tibet. Many of these women, pushed beyond their limits, suffer permanent mental or physical damage or even die.

Torture and ill-treatment of Tibetan political prisoners in Chinese prisons in Tibet is commonplace. Victims who have escaped into exile recall being beaten with rifle butts, sticks and metal rods, kicked with heavy boots, shocked all over the body and in various orifices with electric batons and being savaged by trained dogs.

Since 1986 when the People's Republic of China signed the United Nations Convention Against Torture, 52 Tibetan political prisoners are now known to have died as a result of torture by police or prison officials. The actual figure could be far more as visits to Tibet's prisons, if permitted, are carefully directed, and information of prisoners is smuggled out of Tibet at great risk.

Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy would highly appreciate if your office can immediately intervene on behalf of the political prisoners of Tibet. We have also requested Chinese authorities to allow prisoners prompt and adequate access to medical care and to investigate immediately any deaths in custody or as a result of torture or ill-treatment in detention. In particular, we request Chinese authorities to investigate the deaths of Pasang and Rinzin and to ensure that the responsible officials are held accountable.

Sincerely yours


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