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Eight Tibetans sentenced summarily for peaceful protest

1 message

Tenzin Norgay <tenzinnorgay@tchrd.org>

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To: SRindependenceJL@ohchr.org

Special Rapporteur of the Human Council on the independence of judges and lawyers
c/o Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for
Human Rights
United Nations Office at Geneva
8-14 Avenue de la Paix
1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland

30 September 2009

Dear Sir,

Greetings! The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) wishes to submit the following case in seeking your kind intervention with the government of People's Republic of China (PRC). The Centre deems the case as an issue of summary execution of judiciary in the Tibetan areas of China.

On 13 August 2009, the Machen County People's Court, Golog "Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture" ("TAP") sentenced eight Tibetans to varying prison sentences in what is clearly a case of summary and arbitrary execution of judicial power. The Tibetans, six monks and two lay people, were given prison terms for taking part in a peaceful protest on March 21 2009.

The eight indicted Tibetans were identified as:

1. Monk **Palden Gyatso**, a disciplinarian at Ragya Monastery, sentenced to seven years rigorous imprisonment.
2. Monk **Tsultrim**, a former disciplinarian of Ragya Monastery was given four years of rigorous imprisonment. He was also a former Chant master, well trained in performing ritual prayers and a scholar on vinaya teachings (monastic code of conduct).
3. Monk **Sangpo** was given three-year prison sentence. He was a former treasurer of Ragya Monastery.
4. Monk **Jamyang Khedrub** was sentenced to two-year prison term. He was the secretary of the Board of Directors of Ragya Monastery.
5. Monk **Gendun** was given one-year prison sentence.
6. Monk **Sherab Sangpo**, 27, was sentenced to two-year prison term.
7. **Hu-lo** from Gya-sa Village (lay person) was given one-year prison sentence.
8. **Yang-kyab** from Gya-sa Village (lay person) was given six-month prison sentence.

Background information

On 21 March 2009, Tashi Sangpo, a monk of Ragya Monastery, committed suicide by jumping into the Yellow River [Tibetan: Machu River]. The monk had earlier been held in a local detention centre in prolonged detention coupled with harsh beatings, torture and other inhuman treatment since 10 March 2009. Subsequently, by late afternoon of 21 March 2009, few moments after the news of Tashi Sangpo's suicide, monks of Ragya Monastery walked to the local Public Security Bureau (PSB) office to demand answer for Tashi Sangpo's death. In response the authorities arrested many monks and some other lay Tibetans. Eight of the arrestees (aforementioned Tibetans with their prison term) were sentenced by the People's Court of Machen County on 13 August 2009.

The TCHRD expresses its serious concern over Chinese authorities' manhandling of the case and awarding lengthy prison sentences to what was a mere and ordinary exercise of the freedom of expression and opinion guaranteed by the Chinese Constitutions and other International Conventions to which China is a state party. In light of this, the Centre request the intervention of your kind office in this utter case of summary and arbitrary execution of judiciary in clamping down on Tibetans peacefully demanding answers from the authorities.

Thank you,

Sincerely,

Tenzin Norgay

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Note: Following are few urls of the reports covered by various media groups on the arbitrary sentencing of the Tibetans

1) China court jails eight Tibetans: rights group (AFP, 17 August 2009)

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hDtruyH0P30eK0Phd8EqMv4e-GiA>

2) China sentences 8 Tibetans over protests - activists (Reuters, 18 August 2009)

<http://in.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idINIndia-41819020090818>

3) Report: 8 Tibetans jailed over protests in China (Seattle Times, AP, 17 August 2009)

http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/nationworld/2009680038_apaschinatibet.html