

Joint-Appeal Letter from 159 Organizations from across five regional groups

04 May 2020

Ms. Michelle Bachelet
High Commissioner for Human Rights
OHCHR
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10

Sub: 25th year of Enforced Disappearance of Tibet's Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima by China

Your Excellency,

We the undersigned 159 organizations request your immediate attention and actions towards the release of Tibet's 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima on this 25th year of his **enforced disappearance by China.**

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 Rinpoche¹, 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 in his place, China installed its own candidate, a son of communist party members.

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. These atrocities were outlined by the 10th Panchen Lama who died under mysterious circumstances, in his *70,000 Character Petition* submitted to the Chinese authorities. China's perpetration of cultural genocide and persecution of Tibetan Buddhists in Tibet has **forced 154 Tibetans to self-immolate** in Tibet as a mark of peaceful protest since 2009.

The communist China is destroying the foundations of Tibetan Buddhism. It is **interfering in the sacred Buddhist traditions of Tibetans** with unjust laws like Order no. 5 through which "atheist" Chinese government is meddling in the recognition of reincarnated lamas. It is

¹ 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.

demolishing Buddhist academies like the *Larung Gar* and *Yachen Gar* and putting the monks and nuns in so-called *patriotic re-education camps* which are nothing but concentration camps to strip them off their beliefs. **They did it to Tibetan Buddhists with impunity and now they are doing it to the Uighur Muslims and Christians.**

When China kidnapped Panchen Lama, they denied its occurrence to the UN and a year later called it “protective custody”. This “Chinese model” of lies, deceit and oppression were again deployed in the case of detention of one million Uighur Muslims in concentration camps. And now the world is suffering because of this **“Chinese model of deceit and oppression”** which has led to the spread COVID-19 virus across the world. Their suppression of whistleblowers of COVID-19 and misinformation on the disease have pushed the world through unprecedented tragic loss of lives and crippled the global economy. **We cannot allow China to continue on this path of global destruction with the “Chinese model of deceit and oppression.”**

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.**

We therefore urge Your Excellency to:

1. Press China to **release Tibet’s 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, his entire family and Chadrel Rinpoche;**
2. Press China to **stop meddling in the religious practices of the peoples** under its regime including Tibetan Buddhists, Uighur Muslims and Christians;
3. Press China to allow an **independent fact-finding mission** to assess the human rights violations perpetrated against Tibetans in Tibet and other regions under China;
4. **Release statement/press note** raising serious concerns and calling for the immediate release of the 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima in this 25th year of his enforced disappearance.

Yours Sincerely,

CC:

- Secretary-General Mr. Antonio Guterres, United Nations, New York
- Chair of the Third Committee Ambassador Christian Braun, UN General Assembly, New York
- UN High Rights Council President Ambassador Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberger, Geneva

Country-wise list of organizations endorsing the appeal in alphabetical order.

1. Austria, Save Tibet
2. Austria, Stupa fur den Welt-Frieden
3. Austria, Tibet Center
4. Austria, Tibeter Gemeinschaft- Graz
5. Austria, Tibeter Gemeinschaft- Kantern
6. Austria, Tibeter Gemeinschaft- Linz
7. Austria, Tibeter Gemeinschaft Osterreich-TGO
8. Austria, Tibeter Gemeinschaft- Tirol
9. Austria, Tibeter Gemeinschaft-Salzburg
10. Austria, Tibeter Gemeinschaft-Voralberg
11. Brazil, RangZen:Movimento Tibete Livre-Brasil
12. Bulgaria, Friends of Tibet
13. Canada, Canada Tibetan Association of Ontario
14. Canada, Ottawa Tibetan Community Association
15. Canada, Tibetan Association of Alberta
16. Canada, Tibetan Cultural Association of Quebec, Montreal
17. Canada, Tibetan Cultural Society of British Columbia, Vancouver
18. Canada, Tibetan Cultural Society of Vancouver Island, Canada
19. Canada, Tibetans-Belleville, Canada
20. Chile, Amigos del Tibet Chile
21. Colombia, Amigos de Tibet Colombia
22. Costa Rica, Asociación Cultural Tibetano Costarricense
23. Czech Republic, Czech Supports Tibet
24. Czech Republic, Lungta
25. Czech Republic, Tibetan Association,
26. France, Association de la Jeunesse Tibetaine
27. France, Association Dhoday
28. France, Association France Tibet
29. France, Association Kun Phen Ling Terre du Coeur
30. France, Dokham Chushi Gangdrug en France
31. France, Etre avec le Tibet
32. France, Étudiants Pour un Tibet Libre
33. France, Jamtse Thundel
34. France, La Communauté Tibetan de France et Ses Amis
35. France, Lhakar France
36. France, Maison du Tibet
37. France, Non-Violent Louis Lecoin
38. France, Objectif-Tibet
39. France, Tibet Dunkerque et Flandre
40. France, Tibet Nienpo
41. France, Tibet-Normandie
42. France, Urgence Tibet Nîmes
43. France, U-Tsang Association
44. Germany, Ilham Tohti Initiative e.V (ITI)

45. Germany, Tibet Initiative Deutschland
46. Germany, Verein der Tibeter - Baden Württemberg
47. Germany, Verein der Tibeter - Berlin
48. Germany, Verein der Tibeter - Frankfurt
49. Germany, Verein der Tibeter - Hamburg
50. Germany, Verein der Tibeter - Munchen
51. Germany, Verein der Tibeter - NRW
52. Germany, Verein der Tibeter in Deutschland e.V.
53. Germany, World Uyghur Congress
54. India, Core-Group for Tibetan Cause
55. Italy, A'DHI Association
56. Italy, Aref International Onlus
57. Italy, Association Donne Tibetane
58. Italy, Associazione Italia-Tibet
59. Italy, Associazione Nodo Infinito
60. Italy, Casa del Tibet
61. Italy, Cenresig Center
62. Italy, Ewam Centee
63. Italy, Fondazione FPMT
64. Italy, Giamsè Jhine Pen Onlus
65. Italy, La Comunita Tibetana In Italia Onlus
66. Italy, Lama Tzong Khapa Center, Zero Branco
67. Italy, Lama Tzong Khapa Study Group, Napoli
68. Italy, Lobsang Yeshe Study Group, Parma
69. Italy, Nyingje Ling Study Group, Verno
70. Italy, Samantabhadra Institute
71. Italy, Sangha Onlus, Pomaia,
72. Italy, Società Libera
73. Italy, Spirito del Tibet
74. Italy, The Heritage of Tibet
75. Italy, Tibet House Foundation
76. Italy, Tupten Osel Ling
77. Italy, Lama Tzong Khapa Institute, Pomaia
78. Italy, Muni Gyana Center, Palermo
79. Italy, Tara Bianca Center, Genova,
80. Italy, Tara Cittamani Center, Padova,
81. Italy, Tso Pema Non-Profit
82. Italy, Yeshe Norbu Appello per il Tibet-Pomaia, PT
83. Latin America, International Tibet Network, Regional Chapter
84. Mexico, Casa Tíbet México
85. Mexico, Tibet Mx
86. South Africa, Tibet Rescue Initiative
87. South Africa, Women's Justice Foundation
88. Switzerland, Association of Dokham Chusi Gangdrung Europe
89. Switzerland, Domey Association of Europe
90. Switzerland, Independent Vietnamese Writers in Exile Centre

91. Switzerland, Tibetan Community in Switzerland & Liechtenstein
92. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Aargau
93. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Basel
94. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Bern
95. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Flawil-Uzwil
96. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Genf
97. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Glarus
98. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Horgen
99. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Landquart
100. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Lausanne
101. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Liechtenstein
102. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Luzern
103. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Müchwilen-Wil
104. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Rapperswil-Jona
105. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Rikon
106. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Rüti
107. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Schaffhausen
108. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Solothurn
109. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of St.Gallen
110. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Ticino
111. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Turbenthal
112. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Uznach-Wattwil
113. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Volketswil
114. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Wädenswil
115. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Zug
116. Switzerland, Tibetan Community of Zurich
117. Switzerland, Tibetan Women Association
118. Switzerland, U-Tsang Association of Europe
119. Switzerland, Vietnamese League for Human Rights in Switzerland
120. Taiwan, Covenant Watch
121. Taiwan, Freddy Lam, President of Taiwan Parliamentary Group for Tibet
122. Taiwan, Human Rights Network for Tibet and Taiwan
123. Taiwan, Permanent Peace Partnership
124. Taiwan, Taipei City Council, Councilor Ms.Ying-Meng Lin
125. Taiwan, Taiwan Alliance to End the Death Penalty, TAEDP
126. Uruguay, Tibet Patria Libre - Uruguay
127. USA International Sino-Tibet Friendship 國際漢藏協會
128. USA, Atlanta Tibetan Association
129. USA, Beijing Spring 北京之春
130. USA, Capital Area Tibetan Association (CATA)
131. USA, China Democratic Solidarity Union 中國民主團結聯盟.
132. USA, Florida Tibetan Association
133. USA, Mainland China Political Asylum Association 中國大陸政治避難者協會
134. USA, Montana Tibetan Cultural Association
135. USA, North West Tibetan Cultural Association, Portland
136. USA, Regional Tibetan Association of Massachussets

137. USA, Students for a Free Tibet (SFT), New York
138. USA, Tibetan Alliance of Chicago
139. USA, Tibetan American Community of Connecticut
140. USA, Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota
141. USA, Tibetan Association Colorado
142. USA, Tibetan Association Idaho
143. USA, Tibetan Association of Austin, Texas
144. USA, Tibetan Association of Boston (TAB)
145. USA, Tibetan Association of Charlottesville
146. USA, Tibetan Association of Ithaca
147. USA, Tibetan Association of Maine
148. USA, Tibetan Association of Michigan
149. USA, Tibetan Association of New York & New Jersey
150. USA, Tibetan Association of Northern California
151. USA, Tibetan Association of Philadelphia
152. USA, Tibetan Association of Santa Fe
153. USA, Tibetan Association of Southern California
154. USA, Tibetan Association of Washington, Seattle
155. USA, Tibetan Associations of Vermont
156. USA, Tibetan Center New Mexico (Aberquerque)
157. USA, Tibetans-Indiana/Kentucky/Ohio
158. USA, Tibetans-North Carolina
159. USA, Wisconsin Tibetan Association