



Tibetan Community in Switzerland & Liechtenstein

Tibeter Gemeinschaft in der Schweiz & Liechtenstein

Office of the United Nations  
High Commissioner for Human Rights  
Mrs. Navanethem Pillay  
Palais Wilson  
52 rue des Pâquis  
CH-1201 Geneva

Birmenstorf, 19<sup>th</sup> August 2011

Your Excellency

We are deeply saddened over the death of the 29-year old Tibetan monk Tsewang Norbu from Nyitso Monastery in Tawu, Tibet who set himself on fire on August 15<sup>th</sup> 2011 after distributing leaflets and shouting slogans for the freedom of Tibet and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Tibet. Such tragic incidents which happened for the second time within six months in Tibet after the 21-year old monk Lobsang Phuntsok from Kirti Monastery burned himself to death in March 16<sup>th</sup> 2011 out of deep despair are clear indications of the Tibetan people's strong resentment against the wrong Chinese government's policy in Tibet.

Kirti Monastery has been sealed off by Chinese security forces since the incident in March 2011, and the remaining monks are experiencing harsh repression and so-called "political re-education" sessions. Around 300 monks have been detained from Kirti Monastery in April. They are kept at an unknown location and likely to undergoing torture and maltreatment. Two Tibetan laypeople lost their lives when Chinese security forces forcibly entered the monastery premises. Today the monks and laypeople within and around Nyitso monastery are facing similar difficulties. Nyitso Monastery has been completely sealed off, and it is feared that the monks together with laypeople who rushed into the premises to protect the monks have been deprived of food, water and electricity.

The only response of the Chinese authorities to the remarkable solidarity among the local people with Kirti and Nyitso Monasteries was an increase in repression. Instead of showing insight into the root causes of the self-immolations, the reaction is violent suppression.

Your Excellency, we have already been alerting you to the manifold aspects of human rights violations in Tibet through our regular actions on the Place des Nations, but these recent acts demand your immediate attention and action.

Please support our case by sending a fact-finding mission with unhindered access to Tibet. Please also support the following urgent demands to the Chinese authorities:

- Withdraw all security forces from Kirti and Nyitso Monasteries
- Restore complete freedom of movement for all Tibetan monks and laypeople within and around these monasteries
- Disclose the whereabouts of the 300 monks of Kirti Monastery and release them immediately from confinement



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- immediate suspension of arbitrary arrests and "patriotic education campaigns" in all Tibetan monasteries
- Cease all actions that inhibit the freedom to exercise religious activities at Kirti, Nyitso and all other Tibetan monasteries
- Initiate a meaningful dialogue with the envoys of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for a peaceful and amicable resolution of the Tibet issue.

We thank you for your kind consideration and urgent action. Please send us a reply.

Yours sincerely

*S. Memmishofer*

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President of the Tibetan Community in Switzerland & Liechtenstein