



Stop Torture in Tibet

Free Tibet Campaign's *Stop the Torture in Tibet* initiative will highlight persistent torture and maltreatment in Tibet's prisons, detention centres and labour camps. Since 2002 China has released at least 14 political prisoners early as a result of pressure from governments and individuals worldwide, thereby demonstrating sensitivity to international criticism of its human rights record. By highlighting individual political prisoners who have experienced torture, we aim to both contribute to their early release from prison and to bring to an end the practice of torture in Tibet.

Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche

Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche, a prominent Tibetan religious leader from Kham (Sichuan Province), received a life sentence in January 2005, commuted from a death sentence that had been suspended for two years. He and his co-accused, Lobsang Dhondup, were arrested in 2002 for alleged involvement in a number of explosions in Sichuan Province and for "engaging in splittist activities".

Rinpoche and Lobsang did not receive a fair trial by international standards; both were denied access to independent lawyers, no evidence was made public and the trial was held in closed session. Rinpoche's sentencing appears to be based on a 'confession' by Lobsang Dhondup, a distant relative and supporter of Rinpoche. Lobsang Dhondup later retracted his confession, alleging that it had been extracted by torture, whilst Rinpoche has repeatedly protested his innocence. Both men received death sentences on 2 December 2002, with Rinpoche's sentence suspended for two years. Their appeals were heard in secret on 26 January 2003 in a provincial court. Despite perceived assurances given to Western governments that the Supreme People's Court in Beijing would have to ratify the sentences before they were carried out, Lobsang Dhondup was executed that day. The execution prompted expressions of 'regret' from a number of sources including the UK and the EU. The EU now supports Free Tibet Campaign's call for Rinpoche's case to be re-opened.

Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche had risen to local prominence due to his work in establishing new monasteries, schools, medical clinics, a medical

school, an orphanage and old people's homes in the Kardze region. Underlying these secular activities was his stalwart loyalty to the Dalai Lama. Persistent harassment by the authorities forced him into hiding on two occasions prior to his arrest in April 2002.

In the year after Rinpoche's arrest at least 60 of his most prominent supporters were held and questioned, partly as a means to curtail public campaigning on Rinpoche's behalf. As of March 2005, one supporter of Rinpoche's, Lobsang Tenphen (aka Tabo or Taphel), remains in prison serving a five year sentence, having been accused of passing information to foreign journalists. Four monks are missing. Six Tibetans connected to Rinpoche's case have been released early from prison as a result of international pressure. The most recent release was that of monk Tashi Phuntsok, freed on 6 January 2005, but described as a "broken man" after serving two years of a seven year sentence.

Free Tibet Campaign is deeply concerned that Rinpoche's life sentence may still amount to a death sentence, given Lobsang Dhondup's uninvestigated allegations of torture and the poor health of Rinpoche's other supporters who have been released in the past two years.

Name:	Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche (Chinese transliteration: Angag Tashi)
Age:	55 yrs (born 1950)
From:	Orthok region, Lithang County, Kham
Arrested:	6 April 2002
Reason:	"causing explosions" and "engaging in splittist activities"
Sentence:	Life, commuted in 2005 from a death sentence suspended for two years
Expected Release:	Not known
Prison:	Chuangdong Prison, Dazu District, eastern Sichuan Province

(Sources: *Human Rights Watch, Tibet Information Network, Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, Free Tibet Campaign.*)



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Write to the authorities below requesting:

- The immediate release of Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche.
- A fair and open retrial under international judicial standards with impartial international observers, with all evidence made public.
- A commitment that the torture and maltreatment of all prisoners arrested for "counter-revolutionary" offences or "endangering state security" in Tibet will cease. (China does not recognise the expression "political prisoners".)
- An independent investigation into prison conditions in Drapchi and into reports that prisoners have been tortured in detention, with the investigation's findings to be made public.

Addresses

1. *Minister of Justice*
Name: Zhang Fusen Buzhang
Address: Sifabu (Ministry of Justice) 10 Chaoyangpqu Nandijie Chaoyang Qu Beijingshi 100020 People's Republic of China
Email: minister@legalinfo.gov.cn
Fax: +86 10 6520 5236 or +86 10 6529 2345 (c/o Ministry of Communications)
Salutation: Dear Minister

2. *Director of the Sichaun Provincial Department of Justice*
Name: Zeng Xianzhang Tingzhang
Address: Sifating 24 Shangxianglu Chengdushi 610015 Sichauansheng People's Republic of China
Fax: + 86 28 8435 6784 or + 86 28 8435 6789
Salutation: Dear Director