

# URGENT ACTION

## HEALTH FEARS FOR DETAINED TIBETAN MONK

**There are growing concerns for the health of prominent Tibetan monk, Karma Tsewang, who has not been allowed access to his family or lawyer since he was seized by public security officers on 6 December in Chengdu, south-west China. His 16 supporters, who were detained for protesting against his detention, have since been released, but Karma Tsewang remains behind bars.**

**Karma Tsewang** has been detained at the Changdu (Chomdo) County Detention Centre, Tibet Autonomous Region, since 6 December, after he was seized in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, while travelling on business. His family have attempted to visit him several times, but have not been allowed. He suffers from hepatitis, and although his family were able to give some medication to officers at the detention centre, it is not known whether these were given to him and whether he is getting all the treatment he requires.

Karma Tsewang is the highly-regarded abbot (*Khenpo*) at the Gongya Monastery in Nangqian (Nangchen) county, Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, in Qinghai Province. On 10 December, after his detention, over 600 people including monks from Gongya Monastery staged a demonstration in Nangqian, calling for his release. Officials at Nangqian county threatened the monks who took part in the demonstration, warning them that Karma Tsewang would face even more severe punishment if they did not stop their protests. Despite stopping the demonstration, on 20 and 21 December, 16 monks were detained. They have since been released without charge.

Karma Tsewang's lawyer Tang Tianhao said he is being held on suspicion of "endangering state security", but what this relates to has not been confirmed. This provision in Chinese Law is frequently used by the authorities to imprison peaceful critics of the government and curtail freedom of expression. Karma Tsewang's detention comes at a time when Tibetan monks continue to be the target of a crackdown by the Chinese authorities, following the mass protests in 2008.

### **Please write immediately in English, Chinese or your own language:**

- Urging the authorities to ensure Karma Tsewang has regular access to his family, lawyers of his choosing, and any medical treatment he may require;
- Calling on the authorities to ensure Karma Tsewang is not tortured or ill-treated.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 5 MARCH 2014 TO:**

Director of Tibet Autonomous Region

Public Security Bureau

Li Zhao Tingzhang

Xizang Zizhiqu Gong'anting

26 Linkuodonglu

Lasashi 850000

Xizang Zizhiqu

People's Republic of China

**Salutation: Dear Director**

Director of Qinghai Province Public

Security Bureau

Liu Zhiqiang Tingzhang

Qinghaisheng Gong'anting

No. 50 Bayilu, Chengdongqu

Xiningshi 810007

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Fax: +86 971 8293290

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**Salutation: Dear Director**

**And copies to:**

Premier

Li Keqiang Guojia Zongli

The State Council General Office

2 Fuyoujie, Xichengqu

Beijingshi 100017

People's Republic of China

Fax: +86 10 65961109

Email: kf@people.cn

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 4/14. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA17/001/2014/en>

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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Karma Tsewang, 38, is a prominent Tibetan monk at the Gongya Monastery in Nangqian county, Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province. Gongya Monastery is an important monastery in Nangqian with 300 monks, 200 nuns and 100 young monks. The monastery holds the annual Grand Prayer for World Peace Puja which attracts tens of thousands of Tibetan Buddhist followers each year.

Since the Tibetan mass protests of 2008 against Chinese rule, the Chinese government has stepped up repression in Tibetan areas and imposed intrusive military and security controls on the local people. The authorities also continue to subject Tibetans to humiliating "patriotic education", which forces them to denounce the Dalai Lama and express support for the Chinese Communist Party. Tibetan monks have been a primary target of the crackdown. According to the International Campaign for Tibet, as of 19 December 2013, 125 Tibetans have self-immolated since 27 February 2009 in protest against this crackdown.

Name: Karma Tsewang

Gender m/f: Male

Further information on UA: 4/14 Index: ASA 17/002/2014 Issue Date: 22 January 2014

