

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 17/17/99

2 August 1999

Further information on UA 210/98 (ASA 17/25/98, 24 July 1998) and follow-ups (ASA 17/34/98, 16 October 1998, ASA 17/39/98, 1 December 1998) - Torture and ill-treatment / Fear for safety

**PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA Ngawang Sangdrol, age 22 (f)
11 other named Tibetans**

Ngawang Sangdrol has reportedly had her sentence increased for a third time, by four years, for her participation in May 1998 prisoner protests at Drapchi Prison. She has allegedly been identified by the authorities as one of the "ring leaders" of these protests. She is now serving a 21 year sentence, the longest imposed on any female political prisoner in Tibet.

Ngawang Sangdrol, a nun from Garu nunnery, was originally sentenced to three years' imprisonment in 1992, for taking part in a peaceful pro-independence demonstration in Lhasa. In October 1993 she was sentenced to a further six years for composing and recording pro-independence songs in prison, and in July 1996 her sentence was increased again, reportedly by eight years (not nine as previously reported), this time for minor acts of disobedience while in prison. News of her most recent sentence increase, imposed by the Intermediate People's Court, Lhasa, in October 1998, comes from unofficial information just received by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), a non-governmental organisation based in Dharamsala, India.

Another unofficial source said that Ngawang Sangdrol's health was reported to be reasonable at the end of June 1999, but Amnesty International remains concerned that she may be ill-treated in detention. She was extremely harshly treated after the May 1998 protests, and kept in solitary confinement. TCHRD report that she has a long-term kidney problem, for which she has been treated in the prison clinic. General prison conditions in Tibet remain very poor. Few prisoners escape torture and ill-treatment, and many are forced to work for long hours in unacceptable conditions: Ngawang Sangdrol is reported to work at weaving wool.

TCHRD confirm that Ngawang Sangdrol was born in 1977, making her 22 years old.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English, Chinese, Tibetan or your own language:

- demanding the immediate and unconditional release of Ngawang Sangdrol and all other prisoners of conscience in Tibet;
- expressing outrage that, after three increases of sentence, Ngawang Sangdrol is now serving a 21 year prison term imposed solely for peacefully exercising her right to freedom of expression;
- urging that she is not subjected to further torture or ill-treatment and receives all necessary medical treatment for reported kidney problems;
- continuing to urge the Chinese authorities to conduct a full and impartial investigation into the events of 1 and 4 May 1998 in Drapchi prison and the subsequent ill-treatment of prisoners.

APPEALS TO:

President of the People's Republic of China
JIANG Zemin Guojia Zhuxi
Beijingshi

People's Republic of China

Telegram: President Jiang Zemin, Beijing, China

Salutation: Your Excellency

Chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Regional People's Government

Legchog Zhuren

Xizang Zizhiqu Renmin Zhengfu

1 Kang'angdonglu

Lasashi 850000, Xizang Zizhiqu

People's Republic of China

Telexes: 68014 FAOLT CN or 68007 PGVMT CN

Salutation: Dear Chairman

Telegram: Chairman, Regional People's Government, Lasa, Xizang Zizhiqu, China

Salutation: Dear Chairman

COPIES TO:

Prison Governor, Drapchi Prison/Tibet Autonomous Regional Prison No.1

Jianyuzhang

Xizang Di Yi Jianyu

Lasashi 850003

Xizang Zizhiqu

People's Republic of China

and to diplomatic representatives of the People's Republic of China accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 13 September 1999.