

# URGENT ACTION

## DETAINED TIBETAN SCHOLAR AT RISK OF TORTURE

**Tibetan scholar and writer, Tagyal, was detained on 23 April under suspicion of "inciting separatism". He is a prisoner of conscience, at high risk of torture and other ill-treatment.**

Tagyal is a well-known Tibetan scholar, aged 47, who writes under the pen name Shogdung. On 23 April, security officials took him from his workplace, the Nationalities Publishing House, in Xining, the capital of Qinghai Province in China. Later the same day, the officials went to his home and confiscated two computers. Around 2.30 am the next morning they returned to his home, informing his family that he was being held under suspicion of "inciting separatism".

Tagyal is believed to be held in No.1 Detention Centre in Xining (also known as Ershilipu Detention Centre). Despite several attempts, no one has been able to visit him. Tibetans in police custody, particularly those detained on charges of "inciting separatism", are frequently tortured and otherwise ill-treated. Tagyal suffers from poor eye-sight and digestive problems.

Tagyal's detention was first publicized on a blog that has since been blocked. The blog suggested that his detention was prompted by the publication of an open letter that he wrote on 17 April, which was signed by seven other Tibetan scholars and artists. The letter expresses condolences to the victims of an earthquake that struck Qinghai on 14 April. No other signatory is known to have been detained. Tagyal's recently published book, *The Line between Sky and Earth*, which describes Tibet in the wake of the unrest in 2008 as "a place of terror", may also be a reason for his detention.

The authorities closed down his family-run bookshop on 12 April, leaving the family without a source of income.

### **PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in Mandarin, Tibetan, English or your own language:**

- Calling on the authorities to release Tagyal immediately and unconditionally as he is a prisoner of conscience, detained solely for his peaceful exercise of the right to freedom of expression;
- Urging the authorities to guarantee that Tagyal will not be tortured or otherwise ill-treated while he remains in custody;
- Urging the authorities to ensure that Tagyal is allowed access to legal assistance of his choosing, his family and any medical treatment that he may require.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 1 JULY 2010 TO:**

Director of the Qinghai Provincial  
Department of Public Security

He Zaigui Tingzhang  
Qinghaisheng Gong'anting  
1001 Fang, 10 Ceng  
Gong'antingdalou  
Xiningshi 810000  
Qinghaisheng  
People's Republic of China

**Salutation: Dear Director**

Director of the Qinghai Provincial  
Department of Justice

Wu Faxiang Tingzhang  
Qinghaisheng Sifating  
11 Nanshanlu  
Chengzhong district  
Xiningshi 810000  
Qinghaisheng  
People's Republic of China

**Salutation: Dear Director**

### **And copies to:**

**Director of the No. 1 Detention  
Centre**

Xiningshi Diyi Kanshousuo  
73 Ningzhanglu,  
Ershilipu Paichusuo  
Xiningshi Gonganju  
Chengbei Fenju  
Qinghaisheng  
People's Republic of China 810003

**Salutation: Dear Director**

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.** Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 14 April, the Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Yushu in southern Qinghai was hit by an earthquake. According to newspaper reports, more than 2,000 people died and more than 170 are missing. 12,135 people were injured, 1,434 severely. More than 100,000 were left homeless, many of which are now living in temporary shelters and facing difficult weather conditions.

Domestic and international aid has been poured into the region following the earthquake in April. Tibetan monks and civilians have played a vital role in relief efforts because, unlike emergency workers from other parts of China, they are accustomed to the high altitude of the Tibetan Plateau. Tibetan monks began arriving in Yushu shortly after the earthquake struck, but the government has recently asked them to return to their monasteries. The Dalai Lama has asked to visit Qinghai Province to mourn the victims of the region and comfort their families, but his request has been ignored. The government has however allowed a visit to the area by Gyaincain Norbu, chosen by Beijing as the 11th Panchen Lama.

Three days after the earthquake, Tagyal attempted to go to Yushu County to help, but he was denied the permit to go there. Together with a group of prominent Tibetan intellectuals, he signed, on April 17, an open letter to the victims of the disaster, expressing condolences and criticizing the Chinese government for its handling of earthquake relief efforts.

Yushu, which is part of the Tibetan Plateau, has a population that is 97 per cent ethnic Tibetan. There has been considerable ethnic unrest in the region in recent years.

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