

URGENT ACTION

TIBETAN MONK AND SUPPORTERS DETAINED IN CHINA

Prominent Tibetan monk, Karma Tsewang, was detained on 6 December in Chengdu, south-west China, on suspicion of “endangering state security”. Sixteen of his supporters were also detained after they demanded his release. They have not been allowed access to lawyers and are at risk of torture.

Karma Tsewang is the highly-regarded abbot (*Khenpo*) at the Gongya Monastery in Nangqian (Nangchen) county, Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, in Qinghai Province. He was seized on 6 December in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, by public security officers from Changdu (Chamdo) prefecture, Tibet Autonomous Region, while travelling on business. His lawyer Tang Tianhao said he is being held on suspicion of “endangering state security”, but what this might relate to has not been confirmed. He is currently detained at an unknown location in Changdu.

After Karma Tsewang’s detention, 4,000 people including other Tibetan monks signed a petition demanding his release. On 10 December, over 600 people including monks from Gongya Monastery staged a two-hour demonstration in Nangqian, holding banners with photos of Karma Tsewang and chanting slogans 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.

On 23 December, Karma Tsewang’s lawyer went to Changdu, but local police refused to let him meet the monk. Officials in Nangqian county warned Karma Tsewang’s family and those of the other 16 detained monks not to hire lawyers, or they would face detention.

Karma Tsewang is well-known in the Tibetan community for his work promoting Tibetan language and culture and for his disaster relief work, in particular following the earthquake in Yushu county, Qinghai Province in 2010, in which over 2,000 people died.

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

- Urging the authorities to release the 16 other monks immediately and unconditionally, as they are being held solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression;
- Calling on the authorities to ensure Karma Tsewang and the 16 monks are not tortured or ill-treated;
- Calling on the authorities to disclose where Karma Tsewang and the 16 monks are being held, and to ensure they have regular access to lawyers of their choosing.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 FEBRUARY 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

Qinghaisheng

People's Republic of China

Fax: +86 971 8293290

Email: ghosthotcat@qhga.gov.cn

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.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



URGENT ACTION

TIBETAN MONK AND SUPPORTERS DETAINED IN CHINA

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 and 16 other monks

Gender m/f: Male

UA: 4/14 Index: ASA 17/001/2014 Issue Date: 8 January 2014