



Tibetan Community in Switzerland & Liechtenstein

Tibeter Gemeinschaft in der Schweiz & Liechtenstein

1/2

Office of the United Nations
High Commissioner for Human Rights
Mrs. Navanethem Pillay
Palais Wilson
52 rue des Pâquis
CH-1201 Geneva

Birmenstorf, 10th August 2012

**Defender of Human Rights – 2nd Action of TCSL 2-year Campaign
Appeal to UN to send an independent fact-finding mission to Tibet now!
Appeal to UN: “Stop Torture and Maltreatment in Tibet Immediately”**

Your Excellency

Commencing May 30, 2011, Tibetans and their supporters have started a 2-year campaign to appeal to the UN to send an independent fact-finding mission to Tibet.

We kindly invite you to come and visit us at the site of our 2nd action at the Palais Wilson on August 17, from 11:30 am to 4 pm. Tibetans are demanding an immediate end to torture in Tibet. Torture and maltreatment remain the norm for Tibetans who by any means are expressing their protest against the current situation in Tibet.

A disturbing variety of torture techniques employed in Tibetan prisons and detention centers has been documented since 1996. Some of the most common are electric shocks delivered by cattle prods to the genitals, mouth, eyes, and other sensitive areas; beatings with metal rods, sticks, pistols or rifle butts, plastic hoses filled with sand, pieces of furniture, exposure to extreme heat or cold; and aerial suspension or restraint by rope in painful positions. Other documented torture techniques include starvation, forcing victims to stare at the sun for prolonged periods, attacks by ferocious trained dogs, and sexual assaults, as well as psychological tortures, such as mock executions, forcing victims to witness others being tortured, urinating in victims' mouths, prolonged solitary confinement, and death threats. Tibetans typically suffer acts of torture at two stages in the process of detention, arrest, adjudication, and sentencing: first, during the pre-trial period of detention, which can range from two to six months; and second, while serving time in Tibet's prisons and “re-education through labour” camps. Many of the most egregious acts of torture occur during the pre-trial period, in which, despite article 247 of China's revised criminal law, interrogations in an effort to elicit confessions routinely involve torture.

Despite the amendments that China cites in its Third Periodic Report, the observation of Committee Member, Mr Burns, Country Rapporteur on China, during this Committee's 1996 appraisal of China's Second Periodic Report, continues to capture the practical reality in Tibet: “Regardless of the rules formally in force,” he noted, “de facto impunity did seem to exist for perpetrators of acts of torture...”



Another disturbing act of maltreatment has often been observed during the series of self-immolations over the past months. After Tibetans set themselves ablaze, security forces rushing to the scene and, while trying to extinguish the flames were seen kicking and beating the Tibetans. Instead of dealing with the root causes of the protest, this is the most ruthless public display of contempt for any expression of political dissent.

Your Excellency, these are just another few examples of the ongoing widespread human rights abuses in Tibet, compelling us to turn to you and your Office who is addressing such violations and who is responsible for promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms around the globe.

We call on the United Nations:

- To send an independent fact-finding mission with unhindered access to Tibet. 44 Tibetans have been confirmed to have self-immolated inside Tibet since February 27, 2009; 37 men, seven women; 34 of the 44 are known to have died following their protest. How long will you wait to act?
- To urge the PRC to stop the widespread use of torture and maltreatment in Tibet immediately
- To call on China to resume the dialogue with the Tibetan Representatives in order to find a mutually agreeable solution to longstanding political problems

We would appreciate very much receiving a short answer to our non-violent appeals.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Sonam Dhargyal TSAWA:
Solothurn Section of the TCSL

Mr. Tenzin NYINGBU:
Aargau Section of the TCSL

Copy: Mr. Ban Ki Moon, General Secretary of the United Nations