

Free Tibet Campaign's *Stop the Torture in Tibet* initiative will highlight persistent torture and maltreatment in Tibet's prisons, detention centres and labour camps. Since 2002 China has released at least 14 political prisoners early as a result of pressure from governments and individuals worldwide, thereby demonstrating sensitivity to international criticism of its human rights record. By highlighting individual political prisoners who have experienced torture, we aim to both contribute to their early release from prison and to bring to an end the practice of torture in Tibet.

Ngawang Phulchung



STEVE LEHMAN

Ngawang Phulchung, a 45 year old monk from Toelung Dechen County, is currently serving a 19 year sentence in Drapchi Prison for his leadership of the 'Drepung Ten' group of monks, who disseminated literature advocating Tibetan freedom and highlighting China's human rights abuses.

Ngawang Phulchung was first detained on 27 September 1987, during a peaceful demonstration in Lhasa against China's occupation of Tibet. 21 Drepung monks marched in support of the Dalai Lama's Five-Point Peace Plan, which had been outlined a few days earlier in Washington DC. The monks were joined by hundreds of lay people as they circumambulated the Jokhang Temple. Ngawang was arrested with 29 others, was beaten and detained for four months without charge. He was released in January 1988 after international protests to the Chinese authorities.

On his release Ngawang helped found the Drepung Monastery 'Group of Ten' to work for Tibetan independence and human rights. Ngawang and nine other monks carried out non-violent activities including clandestinely printing copies of "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights" in Tibetan as well as "The Meaning of the Precious Democratic Constitution of Tibet", a manifesto outlining a democratic parliamentary system for an independent Tibet. They also distributed copies of the Dalai Lama's speeches, reported on human rights abuses, publicised political unrest in Tibet and organised further peaceful demonstrations.

Following the imposition of martial law in Lhasa in March 1989 police surveillance increased significantly. Between March and July Public Security Bureau officers detained ten monks on charges of founding a "counter-revolutionary clique". Ngawang was arrested on 19 April 1989 and detained for over seven months, enduring extreme brutality and torture during interrogation. After a closed trial he was sentenced on 30 November 1989 in front of an audience of 1,500 people, forcibly gathered by the Chinese authorities.

As a leading figure in the 'Drepung Ten', Ngawang received a sentence of 19 years' imprisonment with an additional five years' deprivation of political rights.

State radio reported, "Let the sentence on Ngawang Phulchung serve as a stern warning for separatists both at home and abroad that those who split the motherland will come to no good." Four other leading monks in the group received sentences of between 17 and 19 years, whilst the remaining five monks received sentences ranging from five to nine years.

Testimonies by former prisoners reveal that Ngawang has continued to be politically active. In April 1991 he and 17 other monks were beaten and placed in solitary confinement for six weeks after protesting against the treatment of five monks who had attempted to hand a petition to a group of visiting US diplomats. In May 1996 Ngawang was again beaten and placed in solitary confinement for accusing guards of causing the death by torture of another inmate. Protests in Drapchi in May 1998 resulted in Ngawang being so severely brutalised that he has never recovered full health. Discussing his motivation before his final incarceration Ngawang said, "No, we were not frightened; we were already prepared to give up our lives for the six million Tibetans."

Ngawang Phulchung and **Jamphel Changchub** are the last remaining

Name:	Ngawang Phulchung
Age:	45 yrs (born 1960)
From:	Toelung Dechen County, later Drepung Monastery
Arrested:	19 April 1989
Reason:	"seriously undermining national security" and "organising and joining a counter-revolutionary clique"
Sentence:	19 years
Expected Release:	19 April 2008
Prison:	Drapchi Prison

members of the 'Drepung Ten' still in prison. Jamphel Changchub is due for release on 7 April 2005 having received a three year reduction of his 19 year sentence. Seven of the ten monks have now been released, but the eighth, Kelsang Thutop, who was serving a 19 year sentence, died in prison in July 1996 as a result of ill-treatment and malnutrition.

(Sources: TIN, Gu Chu Sum, Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy.)



ActionActionActionActionAction

Write to the authorities below requesting:

- The immediate release of Ngawang Phulchung.
- Confirmation that Jamphel Changchub will be released on 7 April 2005 and the restoration of his political rights.
- A commitment that the torture and maltreatment of all prisoners arrested for "counter-revolutionary" offences or "endangering state security" in Tibet will cease. (China does not recognise the expression "political prisoners.")
- An independent investigation into prison conditions in Drapchi and into reports that prisoners have been tortured in detention, with the investigation's findings to be made public.

Addresses

1. *Governor of Drapchi Prison*
Name: Jianyuzhuang
Address: Xizang Zizhiqu Di Yi Jianyu Lasashi 850003
 People's Republic of China
Salutation: Dear Governor

2. *Minister of Justice*
Name: Zhang Fusen Buzhang
Address: Sifabu (Ministry of Justice) 10 Chaoyangqqu Nandijie Beijingshi 100020
 People's Republic of China
Email: minister@legalinfo.gov.cn
Fax: + 86 10 6520 5236
 or +86 10 6529 2345 (c/o Ministry of Communications)
Salutation: Dear Minister