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LE BUREAU DU TIBET

Bureau de l'Ambassadeur de S.S. le Dalaï Lama

By Fax: 917 0092

9 May, 1997

Ms. Kathryn Hinkle-Babul  
Secretary  
UN Working Group on Enforced or  
Involuntary Disappearances  
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Dear Ms. Hinkle-Babul,

First of all, Tibet Bureau for UN Affairs, wishes to thank the Working Group through you, for the expression of its genuine concern over the increasing patterns of disappearances in Tibet, as contained in the Report E/CN.4/1997/34 to the 53<sup>rd</sup> UN Commission on Human Rights. We are also grateful for the decision taken by the Working Group with regard to the disappearances of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his parents for the past two years.

We earnestly hope that the Chinese authorities will in adherence to its own call for dialogue, co-operation and consultation, fully co-operate and provide the necessary supporting documents requested by the Working Group. As Gedhun Choekyi Nyima "celebrated" his eighth birthday in captivity, the Tibetan Government in Exile, the six million Tibetan people and Tibetan Buddhist worldwide remains deeply concerned about his and his parents, disappearance, well being and whereabouts.

In this connection, we would like to remind the Working Group of our submission of 23 January 1996 concerning the disappearances of **Chadrel Rinpoche, Jampa Chung and Samdup** and others after being arrested by the Chinese authorities in connection with the selection of the reincarnation of the Tenth Panchen Lama. We enclose this submission for your reference.

Tibet Bureau is highlighting these cases again to the Working Group because Chadrel Rinpoche, Jampa Chung and Samdup were recently sentenced by the Chinese authorities to 6, 4 and 2 years of prison terms respectively for "splitting the country", "leaking states secrets" and for colliding "with separatist forces abroad". Their whereabouts still remain unknown, now for around two years, after their arbitrary detentions in May 1995. The sentences were given during a secret trial held by the Shigatse Intermediate People's Court of the so-called "Tibet Autonomous Region" on 21 April 1997, according to an announcement by Xinhua, the official Chinese news agency on 7 May, 1997.

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**Chadrel Rinpoche** aka Jampa Tinley was born in 1939 in a place 340 kms west of Lhasa, the Tibetan capital, in the Namling district of Shigatse province. In 1954, at the age of 15, he joined the Tashi Lhunpo Monastery and his ability in religious study made him a close disciple of the Tenth Panchen Lama. The Panchen Lama sent Chadrel Rinpoche to study for one year at Lhasa Shol School in the 1960s, following which he was sent to Beijing where he studied for four years and then returned to Tashi Lhunpo Monastery. During the Cultural Revolution Chadrel Rinpoche was forced to work in a labour camp.

Chadrel Rinpoche was the director of the Democratic Management Committee of the Tashi Lhunpo Monastery - the traditional seat of the Panchen Lamas - and head the official Chinese search committee for the reincarnation, appointed by Beijing on 19 August 1989. He reportedly angered Chinese authorities in 1995 when he rejected China's plan to choose their own Panchen Lama and, following His Holiness the Dalai Lama's proclamation of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the Eleventh Panchen Lama on 14 May 1995, he arrested on 17 May 1995.

In October 1994, Chadrel Rinpoche received a major award from the Chinese authorities for turning his monastery into a "Resplendent Model of Safe-guarding the Unification of the Motherland by Displaying the Spirit of Patriotism."

However, thereafter, the Chinese authorities attempted to remove Chadrel Rinpoche as the head of the Search Committee and replace him with Mr. Sangchen Lobsang Gyaltzen, a long-time opponent of the Tenth Panchen Lama and a noted supporter of the Chinese authorities.

Around February 1995, Chadrel Rinpoche and Jampa Chung left Tashi Lhunpo Monastery for Lhasa and from there took a flight to Beijing where they attended a meeting of the Third General Meeting of the Eighth Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. This meeting, commencing on 4 March 1995, would normally last for around ten days but on this occasion it was extended after Chadrel Rinpoche refused to accept China's plan to install its own choice of the reincarnation of the Tenth Panchen Lama. At the meeting's end Chadrel Rinpoche was reportedly harassed and was kept under virtual house arrest in Beijing.

On the day (14 May 1995) when His Holiness the Dalai Lama announced Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the Eleventh Panchen Lama, Chadrel Rinpoche managed to somehow leave Beijing en-route to Tibet. A few days later he was arrested in Chengdu (capital of Sichuan) on 17 May and was taken back to Beijing where he remained under incommunicado detention.

For your information, after Tibet Bureau submitted his case to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention on 15 September 1995, the Working Group on 13 May 1996 informed us that the Chinese authorities claim that after leaving Beijing in mid-May 1995 to return to Tibet, Chadrel Rinpoche had "suddenly been taken ill and had to be hospitalised. Considering the fragile state of his health, the managing committee of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery thought it best to relieve him of his function as Administrator. He is at present under medical care."

Now after more than a year, the Chinese authorities, without revealing Chadrel Rinpoche's whereabouts for around two years, sentenced him "to five year in prison with political rights deprived for three years for plotting to split the country, and was sentenced to two years in prison for leaking state secrets. The final sentence calls for six-year jail terms and suspension of his political rights for three years," according to Xinhua News agency report of 7 May 1997. This Xinhua report is enclosed herewith for the information of the Working Group.

Irrespective of this court sentence, to the Chinese authorities he was already guilty months after his arrest. For example, on 14 July 1995, the so-called "Local Religious Bureau Affairs" in Shigatse, issued a formal order removing Chadrel Rinpoche and other leading lamas of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery from their posts. Eight new pro-Chinese leaders were appointed as the new administrators of the monastery, including Mr. Sangchen Lobsang Gyaltzen as the new head.

Similarly on 24 November 1995, Mr. Raidi, chairman of the so-called "Tibet Autonomous Region People's Congress", accused Chadrel Rinpoche of having sent at least 30 letters between the years 1989-1996 to His Holiness the Dalai Lama regarding the reincarnate selection of Panchen Lama. The Tibetan Government in Exile, however, confirms that all the communications between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Chadrel Rinpoche was conducted through the official channels of the Chinese Buddhist Association and the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi.

In another move, on 22 May 1996 Chadrel Rinpoche was stripped of his membership of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee (CPPCC) of the so-called "Tibet Autonomous Region" and removed from his post as vice-chairman because he "went against the fundamental stand of the nation and lost his political standpoint of being a patriotic personality." Radio Lhasa announced on 24 May 1996 that "in doing this, we have purged the CPPCC of bad elements and have made it clean...".

Unconfirmed reports suggest that Chadrel Rinpoche has been held for the last one year in a special prison for high-level officials in Heishui in Sichuan province, 200 kms north-west of Chengdu, but his present whereabouts remains unknown.

**Jampa Chung** or Chung-la (Ch: Qamba Qung), a 50 year-old monk from Namring district under Shigatse province, was the secretary of the Search Committee and deputy director of the administration of Dechen Kelsang Phodrang (Ch: Deqen Gaisang Pozhang), the Panchen Lama's residence in Shigatse city. He was also the assistant to Chadrel Rinpoche.

On 11 July 1995, months after his arrest, the Chinese authorities forcibly returned Jampa Chung from Beijing to Shigatse (Tashi Lhunpo Monastery) with the intention of making him confess to having disclosed "state secrets" to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. At the Shigatse Regional Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee conference, the Chinese authorities called all regional administrators in the region and a group of monks from Tashi Lhunpo Monastery. Jampa Chung who was forced to speak, declared that the issue of Panchen Lama's reincarnation was purely a religious matter and said that he had no intention of interfering in China's state policy.

When the meeting closed, Jampa Chung was immediately handcuffed and later returned to Beijing. Since then his whereabouts remained unknown. Tibet Bureau also submitted his case to the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention to which the Chinese authorities replied that Jampa Chung was under investigation "on suspicion of revealing important state secrets."

In the 21 April 1997 secret trial by the Chinese authorities, Jampa Chung was sentenced to four years in prison and deprived him of two years of political rights for colliding "with separatist forces abroad" and for "seriously jeopardising the national unification and unity of ethnic groups."

Jampa Chung's current whereabouts remain unknown.

**Samdup** aged around 30 years, comes from Panam district of Shigatse province. In 1987 he completed the study at the Shigatse Teacher's Training College and worked in the main office of the large Gang-gyen Corporation, a major trading company affiliated to Tashi Lhunpo Monastery. He was the general manager of the Dram (Ch: Zhangmu) branch office of the corporation, and was arrested sometime in May 1995 by Shigatse Public Security Bureau (police).

Samdup was sentenced two years of prison term and deprived of one year of political rights for colliding "with separatist forces abroad" and for "seriously jeopardising the national unification and unity of ethnic groups." China's reply to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, based on our submission of his case, also said that he was under investigation "on suspicion of revealing important state secrets."

Samdup's current whereabouts also remain unknown.

Under the above circumstances, we urgently appeal to the Working Group to consider immediate interventions to ensure the whereabouts of the above three Tibetan men who did nothing but preserve, defend and propagated Tibet's ancient Buddhist traditions to determine the identification of the true Panchen Lama. We also appeal to the Working Group to consider an urgent call upon the Chinese authorities to declare their whereabouts publicly and their immediate release.

Thanking you for your attention to this letter.

Sincerely yours,

Ngawang C. Drakmargyapon  
HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER  
Tibet Bureau for UN Affairs

