

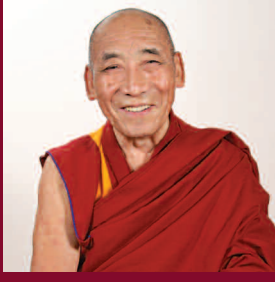
# Tibet

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## PRESS WATCH

SPRING 2009  
A publication of the  
International Campaign for Tibet

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  - Tibet in the News
  - Appreciation:  
Geshe Tsultim Gyeltsen



INTERNATIONAL  
CAMPAIGN  
FOR TIBET



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*Tibet's Exile Government in Action*

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# From the President



John Ackerly, President

## TIBET PRESS WATCH

The International Campaign for Tibet works to promote human rights and democratic freedoms for the people of Tibet.

Founded in 1988, ICT is a non-profit membership organization with offices in Washington, D.C., Amsterdam, Berlin and Brussels, and field offices in Dharamsala and Kathmandu.

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As I write my final message for this newsletter, I am filled with a mix of emotions. It's hard to leave such a great organization. For so many years, I had no other desire but to work for Tibet — but my motivations were not altogether rooted in Buddhist values.

I spent many months traveling around Tibet on 5 trips between 1987 and 2000, witnessing Tibetans shot down in the streets and dragged off to prison, interviewing torture victims, documenting prisons and facing the arrogance of Chinese officials. Friends that I made in 1987 were behind bars by the time I returned to Lhasa in 1991. I was angry.


And part of me is still angry but I feel immensely gratified that there now exists an institution like ICT and a movement that can stand up for His Holiness the Dalai Lama, hold China accountable and pressure our own governments, when necessary. I feel indebted to all of you for giving hope, recognition and support to Tibetans, and especially to the thousands of monks, nuns and laypeople who are still in prison.

As I leave ICT, several things give me hope. First, the movement inside Tibet is stronger than ever, as evidenced by the extraordinary mobilization in March of 2008 and during the winter of 2009. Secondly, new generations of young and active Tibetans (including impressive leaders such as the Karmapa) are coming of age. Lastly, as a mountaineer I have great respect for Tibet's timeless defense — its altitude and remoteness which make long-term settlement by non-Tibetans a constant and forbidding challenge.

A President of an organization is often given credit for achievements and strengths almost wholly the result of the staff, and I am no exception. We have tremendous staff in all of our offices, and I want to express my indebtedness to them too, for being exceptionally hard working and thoughtful. We have achieved so much, and of course there are things that I would have liked to achieve and either failed to or didn't get to. One of those things is to bring more Chinese or Chinese-Americans on our staff or our Boards. This is their struggle too and sometimes it seems that Chinese in China are more proactive on Tibet than Chinese in western countries.

I cannot overstress just how wonderful it has been to work at ICT. But change is good for organizations and it will be for ICT too. I look forward to the new vision and strategies of ICT's next President. I was hoping to introduce that person in this message. Our Board of Directors is looking for an exceptional candidate and they may make an announcement in the coming weeks.

I look forward to staying in touch with you as a member of ICT's Board of Directors and to see you at future ICT events. It has been an honor to represent you and all of our members and supporters and to serve this organization and one of the greatest leaders of all time, His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Thank you,  
  
John Ackerly

## **Amdo Monks Taken for 'Study' after Peaceful Protest**

March 16, 2009

ICT—More than a hundred monks who held a peaceful candlelit vigil on the first day of Tibetan New Year (February 25) have been taken from the Lutsang monastery for 'study' at an unknown location. The phrase 'taken for study' means that the monks will be taken to a location where they will undergo political education classes.

Tension is high in the area. One Tibetan source reports that Tibetan students have had their cell-phones confiscated by police in an apparent attempt to stop information about the crackdown reaching the outside world. Students were told their phones would be returned "at the end of the month".

## **50th Anniversary of Tibetan Uprising: European Parliament Urges China to Negotiate**

March 12, 2009

ICT—In a resolution adopted by the European Parliament on Thursday, 12 March 2009, to mark the 50th anniversary of the Tibetan uprising against Chinese rule, the Chinese Government is urged to resume talks with the Dalai Lama's representatives with a view to "positive, meaningful change in Tibet", not ruling out autonomy, which is a solution that the parliamentarians believe would not compromise China's territorial integrity."

## **U.S. Message to China: Negotiate with the Dalai Lama on Tibet**

March 16, 2009

ICT—With Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi in Washington last week, both President Obama and the U.S. House of Representatives stated that the U.S. government expects Beijing to negotiate with the Dalai Lama's representatives on a durable solution for Tibet, despite repeated demands by Chinese officials to drop the Tibet issue.

"The statements by the President and the House send an unequivocal message that the United States expects the Chinese government to negotiate sincerely with the Dalai Lama," said Todd Stein, Director of Government Relations at the International Campaign for Tibet. "The U.S. government has reminded China's leaders that their vision for a harmonious U.S.-China relationship will not materialize until they deal with Tibetan leaders on a durable solution for Tibet."

## **U.S. State Department Reports on "Severe Cultural and Religious Repression" in Tibet**

February 25, 2009

ICT—The U.S. State Department today issued its annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2008, in which it found that human rights in Tibet had "deteriorated severely during the year," and that "official repression of freedoms of speech, religion, association, and movement increased significantly" in the wake of the protests that swept the Tibetan plateau beginning in March 2008.

## **China Dismisses Human Rights Concerns on Tibet in Rare Public Review**

February 11, 2009

ICT—China rejected any mention of the human rights situation in Tibet at the conclusion of a major international review of its human rights record in Geneva today despite the fact that the issue was raised by more than six countries. The U.N. Universal Periodic Review represented the first major opportunity for the international community to discuss human rights in China since the Beijing Olympics and the beginning of the crackdown in Tibet last year. Mary Beth Markey, ICT Vice President for Advocacy, said: "We have witnessed a gross and willful politicization of the process by China and its collaborators on the Human Rights Council."

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For the latest news on Tibet, visit [www.savetibet.org](http://www.savetibet.org)

# Tibet Press Coverage

## *News from around the World*

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Once again the courage and resilience of the people of Tibet leaves us humbled — and inspired. In March Tibetans honored the 50th anniversary of the Dalai Lama's flight to safety and to his status as a refugee leader. Despite the oppressive Chinese security presence across the Tibetan plateau, the people of Tibet made their voices heard.

On March 11, President Barack Obama signed an omnibus appropriations bill with dozens of provisions on Tibet — most notably one funding a Tibet Section in the U.S. Embassy in Beijing until the Chinese government allows a U.S. Consulate to be established in Lhasa.

Globally, respect is growing for the Tibetans and their extraordinary forbearance. We're pleased to share just a small selection of press reports as a spotlight on how the Tibetan issue is seen in different places.

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### China 'Blocks YouTube Video Site'

March 24, 2009 BBC News, Beijing

China is reported to have blocked the YouTube video-sharing website. The site has been carrying a graphic video released by Tibetan exiles, which shows hundreds of uniformed Chinese troops swarming through a Tibetan monastery — a group of troops beat a man with batons, a group of men, including a monk, are beaten, kicked and choked, while they lie on the ground.

On Tuesday, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said that China "is not afraid of the internet". However, he was unable to confirm if YouTube had been blocked. China has a history of blocking websites which carry messages it views as politically unacceptable.

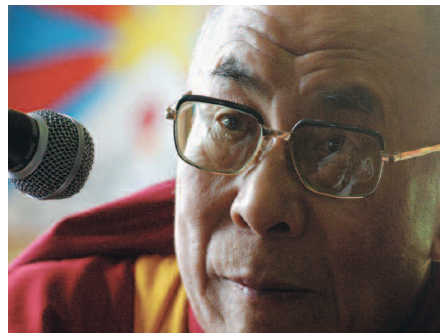
### Tibetan Leader Warns of Cultural 'Extinction'

March 11, 2009 Washington Post Foreign Service

On Tuesday, the official New China News Agency released two commentaries accusing the Dalai Lama of talking "gibber-

ish." "This 'hell on earth' is precisely 'paradise on earth' for the ordinary Tibetans," one commentary said.

China regularly defends its rule of Tibet. The International Campaign for Tibet says in a report that more than 1,200 Tibetans are still missing after last year's crackdown.



### It's Not Hard for China to Satisfy Tibet

*We are seeking autonomy, not independence*

March 10, 2009 Wall Street Journal

By Thupten Jinpa, principal translator for the Dalai Lama.

Surely the time has come to resolve the longstanding dispute, and to allow the reunion of the Tibetan people with their

cherished leader. Last year's disturbances across the Tibetan areas brought attention to the depth of the Tibetan dissatisfaction with the status quo. Similarly, the widespread protests against the Olympic torch relay in many cities across the world — Asia, Europe and North America — conveyed the wish of so many people in the outside world to see the Tibetan issue resolved.

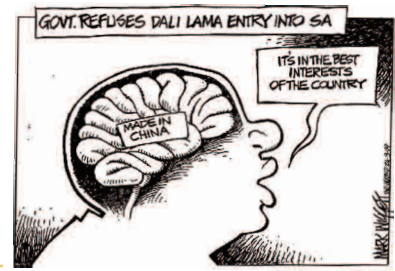
Beijing now has the opportunity to exercise magnanimity and bring this sad chapter on Tibet to a dignified close. Failure to reach a solution while the Dalai Lama is alive will only serve to make the dispute even more intractable. The legitimacy of Beijing's rule in Tibet may be questioned for many more decades to come.

### Tibet's Unlikely Defender: A Chinese Journalist's Change of Mind

March 3, 2009 Huffington Post

Zhu Rui sees Beijing's announcement of March 28th 2008 as Serf Liberation Day, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the dissolution of the Tibetan parliament, as a provocative move. "I think that it's a well-planned scheme aimed at

# Tibet Press Coverage *continued*



escalating the resentment and anger. When this resentment reaches a boiling point, then they have an excuse for responding with force.”

Zhu Rui believes that China’s government is less robust than it appears. “People are becoming desperate under this kind of rule. They are protesting all over China, not just inside Tibet.” When asked what she thinks is the biggest threat to the present leadership, Zhu Rui doesn’t hesitate. “The will of the people,” she says.

## Pelosi Remarks at Reception Commemorating 50th Anniversary of the Dalai Lama’s Exile

March 9, 2009 [www.house.gov/pelosi](http://www.house.gov/pelosi)

Washington, D.C — Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Richard Gere, and Lobsang Nyan-dak, representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, spoke at a reception on Capitol Hill today commemorating the

50th anniversary of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s flight from Tibet and arrival into freedom in exile.

[Speaker Pelosi said] “On the 50th Anniversary of the Dalai Lama being forced into exile, we must heed his guidance and his transcendent message of peace. And we must never forget the people of Tibet in their ongoing struggle.”

## Even as It Tightens Control over the Fraught Tibetan Region, China is Losing Its Grip

March, 2009 [ForeignPolicy.com](http://ForeignPolicy.com)

As it tightens its grip over Tibet, Beijing is fast losing its hearts and minds. From some perspectives, China’s west is looking increasingly like its West Bank.

Some observers are now asking whether the Dalai Lama’s proposed nonviolent middle way is still even viable. “If the Dalai Lama can reach a solution, the majority of the Tibetan people would sup-

port it,” said Bhuchung Tsering, vice president of the International Campaign for Tibet, in Washington. “But some voices are pointing to the Palestinian case, saying ‘Without violence, the world won’t pay attention.’”

## Why Tibetans Won’t Come to the Party

February 18, 2009 [Huffington Post](http://Huffington Post)

The Chinese government is hailing March 2009 as the 50th anniversary of “democratic reform” in Tibet, and has tagged March 28th as the anniversary of “Serf Liberation Day” — a day of opportunity for Tibetans to “remind themselves to cherish the good days they have enjoyed since the democratic reform.” But for most Tibetans, March 2009 is being commemorated as the 50th anniversary of a popular uprising against China’s oppression, the failure of which confirmed Tibet’s status as an occupied nation.

The Tibetan blogosphere is calling on Tibetans to boycott celebrations of Losar in lieu of a national mourning for the victims of last year’s crackdown of the protests. ICT’s Mary Beth Markey describes it as “an unprecedented and highly significant statement, akin to people in the United States deciding to forego Thanksgiving.”

In a desperate move, China’s state-run Tibetan television service, XZTV, declared on February 15th that the government is even offering discount vouchers to Tibetans for their New Year shopping needs. The Party can pay for the hats, set the table, crank up the CD player and put up the streamers, but cadres have discovered a limit to their power — they can’t force Tibetans to have fun.



photo © Michael Ramos-Lynch

Tibetans refrained from celebrating Losar, the Tibetan New Year, to mourn the victims of last year’s crackdown by Chinese authorities.

# The Artist's Eye

## Photographer Niki Taxidis

For Australian photographer Niki Taxidis, the people of Tibet are a profound source of inspiration. "After being closed for so many years, Tibet drew me — its mysteries, its ancient knowledge, its timelessness. But it was the people who captured the spirit of the land for me. I met men and women who were so strong — tempered by harsh weather and travail, and profoundly compassionate, etched into this magic land as pieces of gold into rock."

In Tibet, Niki's goal was to capture the Tibetan soul through her photography to raise awareness of the social justice issues in Tibet. She hopes her images inspire all who see them to help make a difference for Tibetans.

Niki's photography will be part of an Australian Tibet Councils exhibition this year that captures the resilience of the Tibetan people, both in Tibet and in exile. In 2010 she will be revisiting Tibet with Lena Stein, another humanitarian photographer. Together they will create a book to celebrate compassion and promote autonomy in Tibet.

Her website can be viewed at  
<http://www.nikitaxidisphotography.com.au/>



photos © Niki Taxidis

# More from ICT

## New Report from ICT — **A Great Mountain Burned by Fire: China's Crackdown in Tibet**

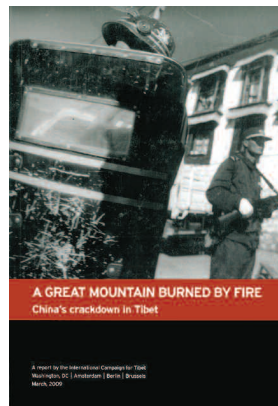
One year after the spontaneous March uprisings across the Tibet plateau, how are the people faring? ICT releases an up-to-the-minute report with details on the Chinese crackdown — including new measures to suppress Tibetan culture and religion.

*A Great Mountain Burned by Fire: China's Crackdown in Tibet* details new campaigns directed against Tibetan culture and religion in the last few months. Almost any expression of Tibetan identity not directly sanctioned by the state can be branded as 'reactionary' or 'splittist' and penalized with a long prison sentence, or worse. Pop stars, artists and writers have been detained under a new drive against "cultural products" with suspect ideological content such as songs referring to the Dalai Lama, and in music bars Tibetan performers are no longer allowed to address the audience as "Tibetan brothers and sisters" because it is considered "subversive" to the "unity of the nationalities".

'A Great Mountain Burned by Fire' includes the first translations into English from the only known book to be published in the PRC about the uprising over the past year. This collection of writing, 'The Eastern Snow Mountain' by Tibetans still in Tibet, was banned almost as soon as it appeared. One of the authors writes: **"In a year that turned out to be like a raging storm ... how could we remain ... in fear. [This work is] a sketch of history written in the blood of a generation."**

From decades, Tibetans have risked their safety to ask outsiders to spread the truth about conditions in Tibet. This report was only possible because of the selfless determination of our contacts inside Tibet, who took a significant risk to pass on this information. Their courage compels us to share the truth.

To download a free copy of this report, visit [www.savetibet.org](http://www.savetibet.org).



## What We're Reading — **Recommendations from ICT Staff and Members**

*Falling Through the Roof* by Thubten Samphel, the chief spokesperson for the Tibetan government in exile in Dharamsala, India.

*Falling Through the Roof* tells the story of a group of Delhi University students who decide to form the Tibetan Communist Party (TCP), with Tashi, the new chairman of the TCP, planning to liberate his beloved Tibet. His plans, however, do not fall in line with those of Drubchen Rinpoche who believes him to be the reincarnation of Drubtop Rinpoche. His first incarnation, according to the Lama, invented the Word, the Tibetan alphabet on a hill in Kashmir, some fourteen hundred years ago. According to the Lama, the invention of the Tibetan Word enabled the Tibetan people to take in the whole of the wisdom of ancient India.



Tsering Namgyal, journalist and author of the collection of essays 'Little Lhasa' (2006) wrote in *Himal* magazine about Samphel: "His highly enjoyable and gripping tale aside, Samphel also offers great insights into both the traditional world of Tibet and the hybrid world of exile. He is as at ease with Buddhist philosophical concepts as he is with the workings of Tibetan society. Lack of a homeland clearly frustrates the characters, but they

never seem to abandon hope; indeed, their youthful energy is only matched by their ability to laugh at their unique condition. In the end, this is an optimistic book. If there is only one underlying message here, it is that, while the Tibetan diaspora may have lost its physical home, they have gained a much larger spiritual space in return. These days, their culture thrives, albeit in various hybridized forms. It is for this reason that this magnificent novel from India — at once elegiac and exuberant — is in itself proof of the Tibetan resilience."

*Falling Through the Roof* is available online at [www.rupapublications.com](http://www.rupapublications.com)



## The International Campaign for Tibet salutes and thanks the 111th Congress for enacting the following resolution in support of the people of Tibet.

### 111th CONGRESS • 1ST SESSION H. RES. 226

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES/March 9, 2009  
Mr. HOLT (for himself, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. WOLF, Mr. CAO, Mr. ELLISON, Mr. MARKEY of Massachusetts, Mr. KUCINICH, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. BERMAN, Ms. BALDWIN, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

#### RESOLUTION

Recognizing the plight of the Tibetan people on the 50th anniversary of His Holiness the Dalai Lama being forced into exile and calling for a sustained multilateral effort to bring about a durable and peaceful solution to the Tibet issue.

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

- (1) recognizes the Tibetan people for their perseverance in face of hardship and adversity in Tibet and for creating a vibrant and democratic community in exile that sustains the Tibetan identity;
- (2) recognizes the Government and people of India for their generosity toward the Tibetan refugee population for the last 50 years;
- (3) calls upon the Government of the People's Republic of China to respond to the Dalai Lama's initiatives to find a lasting solution to the Tibetan issue, cease its repression of the Tibetan people, and to lift immediately the harsh policies imposed on Tibetans, including patriotic education campaigns, detention and abuses of those freely expressing political views or relaying news about local conditions, and limitations on travel and communications; and
- (4) calls upon the Administration to recommit to a sustained effort consistent with the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002, that employs diplomatic, programmatic, and multilateral resources to press the People's Republic of China to respect the Tibetans' identity and the human rights of the Tibetan people.

*The full text of H. RES.226 is available at  
[holt.house.gov/pdf/res226.pdf](http://holt.house.gov/pdf/res226.pdf)*

## ICT Vice President Wins Human Rights Press Award



Mary Beth Markey, vice president of the International Campaign for Tibet, has been honored in the category of Online Journalism for her insightful analysis of the relationship between Tibet, China, and Nepal following last year's uprising in Tibet. The 13th Human Rights Press Award is organized by Amnesty International, the Hong Kong Foreign Correspondents Club, and the Hong Kong Journalism Association.

Ms. Markey won for her article, "Tibetans' Uncertain Future in Nepal," posted on the Far East Economic Review website in April, 2008. An excerpt from her award-winning article:

Soon after the office closures, King Gyanendra dismissed the democratic government in Nepal, fired the entire parliament, placing prominent political and civil society leaders under house arrest, and assumed absolute control. Beijing sided with the king, contending that he had operated within his sovereign rights. The struggle for power between King Gyanendra, the major political parties of the former government, and the Maoists, has perpetuated not only instability in Nepal but space in which China has pressed its influence and its own agenda. China followed its unqualified support for the king with a flurry of trade delegations and arms deals. Whatever the eventual political outcome, China has signaled that the Nepalese can expect a generous and understanding neighbor across the Tibet border.

The full article is available at [www.feer.com](http://www.feer.com)

# FIFTY YEARS—

## *Tibet's Exile Government in Action*

by William Hamman

**In 1949 and 1950, elements of the Chinese People's Liberation army invaded portions of Tibet. At the time, the Chinese asserted that Tibet had always been a part of China proper.**

It is possible that the timing of the invasion was an exploitation of American and United Nations preoccupations elsewhere. The United States and United Kingdom had only just completed the expensive Berlin Airlift in 1949, and as U.S. involvement in Korea grew and the largely demobilized U.S. Army was stretched farther and farther to send forces to Korea, the Chinese presumably calculated that the chances of a major Western reaction to their military occupation of a country viewed by most Westerners as a far-from-strategic backwater would be slight.

The Chinese occupation of central Tibet remained largely peaceful until 1956 when monks in eastern Tibet began to rise against the Chinese occupation in support of the Dalai Lama. The uprising enjoyed some interest but little support or encouragement from the West in public circles, though there was some covert CIA assistance. The scattered uprisings grew into a major armed separatist revolt in 1959, which triggered a massive Chinese military reaction. Thousands were killed as the People's Liberation Army crushed the uprising.

**The future remains cloudy — but a commitment to democracy and freedom continues to strengthen and inspire the Tibetan government in exile.**

India, where it quickly became apparent that some form of government in exile would be necessary. The fledgling government worked to bring order out of the chaos of the enforced migration, to organize the refugees and care for their basic human needs, and to begin to work for a resolution to the long-term problem of the Chinese occupation of Tibet.

Meanwhile, the disastrous “Great Leap Forward” all but de-

stroyed what remained of the Tibetan economy. The Great Leap Forward was an misguided attempt by the Chinese government to shift China rapidly from an agrarian to an industrial economy. This “forced-draft” industrialization was especially damaging to Tibet's nomadic people, who had little use for industrial products and no need for fixed industrial facilities like blast furnaces. In the mid-1960s the Cultural Revolution brought fresh misery to Tibet as the Chinese authorities banned the public expression of religion (Communism being an atheist political movement) and led to the destruction of thousands of monasteries. These programs did little but add to the torrent of refugees that fled Tibet into India, increasing the strain on the exile community.

The Tibetan government in exile remained centered on the person of the Dalai Lama, who by tradition is the head of state. He appointed an assembly of fifty Tibetan exiles known as the People's Deputies soon after his arrival in India, and in 1961 issued a draft constitution. The draft constitution was revised in 1963, and contained the Dalai Lama's firm commitment to democracy.

Though slight liberalization on religious observance in Tibet took place during the 1980's, the Chinese occupation has if anything grown more rigorous, including a declaration of full martial law in 1988 as Tibetan pro-independence groups began to operate more overtly in occupied Tibet. Also at the root of the renewed Chinese military repression is the status of the 11th Panchen Lama, a very important religious figure. Tibetans hold (and the Dalai Lama agrees) that the 11th Panchen Lama is a young Tibetan man named Gedhun Choekyi Nyima.

But the Chinese took the true Panchen Lama and initially his parents into what they described as “protective custody” when he was just a young boy. His detention is considered a religious crime by human rights groups. In his place, the Chinese appointed Gyancaïn Norbu — who is widely regarded in Tibet as a pretender. Most Tibetans are angered by what they see as a crass Chinese attempt to influence the succession of the next Dalai Lama.

For more ICT news  
and updates, please visit  
[www.savetibet.org](http://www.savetibet.org).

The nature of the government in exile continues to evolve, as well as a growing active Tibetan civil society nurtured by India's democracy, because of the Dalai Lama's devotion to democracy. He has come to believe that the power of democracy should in the end trump even the Dalai Lama's traditional role as head of state, and he has renounced any political role in Tibet should it achieve political autonomy. Changes to the constitution have removed from him the right to name members of the People's Deputies and other government officials, and in 1991 the Tibetan people carried out the first free election in their history in exile. Although those in Tibet were unable to be a part of the vote, polling places in India, North America and Europe allowed the exile community to elect Sandhong Rinpoche as their Prime Minister.

The Dalai Lama believes that Tibet should have a Parliament with three branches of government. But he also believes that the ultimate responsibility for the nature of the Tibetan gov-

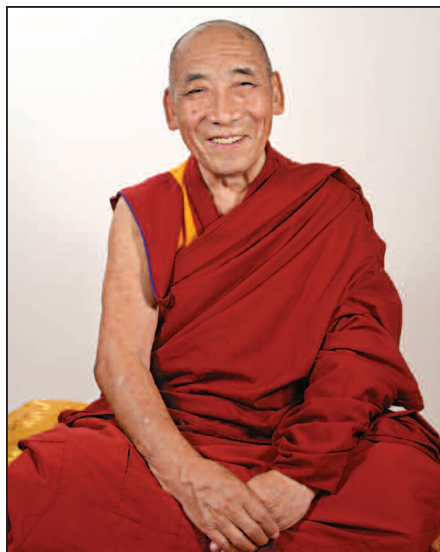
ernment lies with the Tibetan people themselves.

In November 2008, the Dalai Lama convened a Special Meeting in Dharamsala, India (de facto capital of Tibet in exile, thanks to the kindness of the Indian government), where he asked the exile community to consider the path forward — especially because, as he said, “my faith is getting thinner in the Chinese government.” Because he didn't want to influence the final decision, the Dalai Lama did not attend the conference. After six days of spirited debate, a majority of the 581 Tibetan delegates voted to continue the Dalai Lama's “Middle Way” approach.

The future remains cloudy — but a commitment to democracy and freedom continues to strengthen and inspire the Tibetan government in exile.

For more about Tibet, its history and the Dalai Lama, visit [www.savetibet.org/resource-center](http://www.savetibet.org/resource-center).

## ICT Mourns the Passing and Honors the Memory of Venerable Geshe Tsultim Gyeltsen



Geshe Tsultim Gyeltsen, 1923–2009

It is with sorrow that the International Campaign for Tibet notes the death on February 13 of Venerable Geshe Gyeltsen at the age of 85. Ven. Geshe was a member of the ICT board of directors, and the founder and spiritual director of Thubten Dhargye Ling. His assistant sent the following message:

“Ven. Geshela died peacefully, surrounded by monks from Gaen Shartse Monastery and family members. All prayers and necessary rituals were performed by the monks. His Holiness the Dalai Lama and other lamas called and spoke to Ven. Geshela earlier this week. Please pray for Geshela's swift return to continue his teachings for the benefit of

all sentient beings.”

Ven. Geshe served on the ICT Board for 20 years, working with us for a day when all Tibetan Buddhists — within the national borders as without — can practice their religion openly and freely. The ceremonies attendant at his death would have been impossible had this great teacher remained in Tibet; only in exile can Tibetans openly draw comfort, instruction, and inspiration from their faith.

We will miss his great compassion, his personal warmth, and his abiding wisdom, and note gratefully his great service to us and to the people of Tibet.

# Dialog from ICT'S Blog

weblog.savetibet.org

## Tibet Lobby Day 2009 a Success

Posted by Todd Stein,  
Director of Government Relations

I'm proud to report that Tibet Lobby Day 2009 was a smashing success. Tibetans from around the country came to Washington, marking their arrival as "Tibetan-Americans" with a growing constituent voice. By commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Dalai Lama's exile in D.C., they demonstrate their recognition of the essential role that the U.S. Congress has played in sustaining Tibetan communities and keeping Tibet on the diplomatic agenda.

[NOTE: Nearly 100 Tibetan-Americans and Tibet supporters from 25 states fanned out over Capitol Hill, visiting 96 offices with a message of gratitude and an appeal for continued support. The next day, in spite of a stern warning issued by the Chinese government to "stop pushing the bill on Tibet," the U.S. House of Representatives voted 422 to 1 in support of a resolution that calls on the Chinese government to respond to His Holiness' initiatives to find a solution for Tibet and recognizes the Indian government and people for their generosity. See text of the Resolution on page 8.]



Participants in the successful Tibet Lobby Day 2009 included Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Ngawang Sangdrol, Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Rep. Nita Lowey and Richard Gere, and Tibetans from across the country who traveled to participate.



ICT friends, members and staff on last year's annual Grand Teton benefit climb for the Rowell Fund.

## Rowell Fund for Tibet Grand

For the past four years, ICT supporters have joined with world-famous mountaineers to climb the Grand Teton in Wyoming to raise funds for the ICT Rowell Fund for Tibet. The Rowell Fund provides small grants to Tibetans in Tibet, India, Nepal and elsewhere.

From July 25–28, 2009, three world-renowned climbers who have climbed extensively in Tibet will lead the group — Conrad Anker, David Breashears and Jimmy Chin. The climb will include gourmet meals, special talks by our guides and lots of adventure! The cost of the trip is \$5,500, of which \$4,500 is a tax-deductible donation to the Rowell Fund for Tibet. John Ack-

## Capitol Corner

# Update from Washington, DC

In March, both the United States government and the European Parliament made important statements of support for Tibet — despite stepped-up Chinese pressure on governments to drop the Tibet issue. These statements were particularly timely, given that Chinese authorities are launching a diplomatic offensive against countries that host the Dalai Lama or advocate for Tibetans' rights.

Beijing cancelled the EU-China summit last year in retaliation for France's decision to meet with the Dalai Lama. And Foreign Minister Yang, departing from China for his first meeting with President Obama, demanded that other countries "not allow the Dalai Lama to visit." The Chinese Embassy attempted to block a House Resolution on Tibet (see page 8 for that Resolution), and has made the rounds on Capitol Hill to defend Chinese policies in Tibet.

But the Obama administration, and the Congress, are proving to be stalwart allies for Tibet. The President and the House stated that the U.S. government expects Beijing to negotiate with the Dalai Lama's representatives to find a durable solution for Tibet. And the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the 50th anniversary of the Tibetan uprising against Chinese rule, which urged the Chinese government to resume talks with the Dalai Lama's representatives with a view to "positive, meaningful change in Tibet."

Tibet supporters should thank their leaders who have remained strong for Tibet in the face of China's diplomatic offensives, and remind our elected officials to urge China to focus on their failed policy in Tibet, rather than a PR campaign to cover it up.

## Focus on ICT Germany

# Support for Tibetan Children's Village

With help from ICT in Washington, our office in Berlin, Germany has undertaken a million-dollar project to support a Tibetan Children's Village near Dharamsala, India where more than 400 refugee children can find safe shelter. New dormitories and a health center are being built — the dining facilities are being updated — the sanitation and electricity will be renewed within the next five years. This project is the single largest grant ever extended to the Tibetan Children's Villages in India.

Parents in Tibet send their children through the dangerous Himalayan passes to Nepal and India, where they can practice and study in keeping with the traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. Children as young as six sometimes travel without their families, as part of a large group of refugees. When they arrive in India, they can at least rely on a safe haven — the Tibetan government in exile and the Tibetan Children's Villages.

But these safe havens need our constant support. Once started as small schools and homes for a few children, the Tibetan Children's Villages suffer from overcrowding and underfunding.



ICT-Europe's communications coordinator Jan Willem den Besten showing the Tibetan Children's Village project to children.

## Teton Climb — July 2009

erly, outgoing ICT President, will also participate in the climb.

The Grand Teton is one of America's most spectacular mountains. No climbing experience is required, but the trail to the 13,770 foot summit requires very good physical condition. Basic rock climbing training will be provided. For those who desire a similar experience without any rock climbing, a second group will hike the neighboring peaks. For more information or to make a reservation for this year's trip, email [rowellfund@savetibet.org](mailto:rowellfund@savetibet.org) or call 202-785-1515 ext. 238.

# ICT Member-Get-a-Member Drive

## *Help ICT Reach 2,000 New Members by August 31*

Every time you introduce a friend, colleague or family member to the Tibet issue and ICT, you strengthen the effectiveness and reach of our critical work on behalf of the Tibetan people. A vital and growing ICT means greater impact and influence when we advocate for and help protect the Tibetan people. Each time someone you know joins ICT with a membership donation of \$25 or more, you help make a difference that touches 6 million Tibetans worldwide.

Our goal is to add 2,000 new members by August 31, 2009. To reach this goal, we have partnered with Firstgiving.com to launch ICT's first annual Member-Get-a-Member drive.

Firstgiving.com lets you create a personal fundraising page online — you set a goal and email your friends a link to your page so they can make a fast, secure online donation and join ICT.

An automatic “Thank You” email (with a personal message you can customize) will be sent to all of your friends who join.

You can also download a special printed ICT membership form to use with friends who do not wish to donate online. Be sure to fill in your name and address so you will get credit for each new member who joins by mail.

Help Tibet and help keep ICT strong by visiting [www.savetibet.org/memberdrive](http://www.savetibet.org/memberdrive) today to create your own personal fundraising page.

*NOTE: The three members who bring in the most new members will receive a special thank you gift from ICT and be profiled in a future issue of the Tibet Press Watch. Please spread the word!*

Get started today!

Visit [www.savetibet.org/memberdrive](http://www.savetibet.org/memberdrive).

# Political Prisoner *Take Action*

From October 2007 to until March 2008, Tibetan filmmaker Dhondup Wangchen made the documentary *Leaving Fear Behind*, assisted by Jigme Gyatso, a monk of Amdo Labrang Monastery. Putting themselves at great risk, the two men traveled across the Tibetan plateau to make their film, asking ordinary Tibetans how they felt about the Dalai Lama, China, and the Olympic Games. The filmmakers gave their subjects the option of covering their faces, but almost all of the 108 people interviewed agreed to have their faces shown on camera, despite the risks.

The film was released to the outside world on March 10, 2008 — the 49th anniversary of the Dalai Lama's departure from Tibet, and the date of the Tibetan uprising and subsequent Chinese crackdown.

Dhondup Wangchen was arrested in Tibet on March 26. He is still being detained in a secret Chinese prison, and there are fears for his safety and his life.

Jigme Gyatso was arrested on March 23, 2008, released on October 15, and re-arrested on March 17, 2009. During the time when he was free, he shared his story with the International Campaign for Tibet.



Jigme Gyatso, a senior monk of Amdo Labrang Monastery, before his arrest and detention in 2008.

# Spotlight

The guards would hang me up for several hours with my hands tied to a rope ... hanging from the ceiling with my feet off the ground. Once I was beaten continuously for two days. I suffered from pains on my abdomen and chest. The second time I was beaten unconscious, I was in the hospital for six days, unable to open my eyes or speak a word.

When I was on the verge of dying, they handed me over to my family. At my release, my captors lied to the provincial authorities by telling them that they had not beaten me. I had to stay for about twenty days at a hospital and spent 20,000 Chinese yuan [US \$2,922] to get treatment.

I told my captors: 'If you kill me, then that will be the end of it. But if am able to go outside and get the opportunity, I will talk about the torture I went through; I will tell the people of the world, as a truthful witness, about the sufferings undergone by friends and report these to the media.'

Even when I was released, I was told not to tell anyone that I was beaten; I was warned not to contact any outsiders. But I cannot just keep shut about the torture I went through, or the suffering borne by friends. This is also my reason for telling you this today.



Jigme Gyatso in the hospital after being tortured.

The re-arrest of Jigme Gyatso and continued detention of Dhondup Wangchen deserves the attention of an international spotlight. ICT asks all people to take action to help these men, and to bring the force of justice to bear on behalf of all political prisoners in Tibet.

For more information on Tibetan political prisoners, please visit ICT's new website, [missingvoices.net](http://missingvoices.net).

**Sign and return the petition below (or your own message) in the enclosed envelope. We'll deliver them, all together, to Secretary of State Clinton for maximum impact.**

Dear Secretary Clinton,

I ask that you work to help the people of Tibet as you negotiate with the Chinese government. Tibetans' human rights, religious freedoms, and political liberties are ignored and abused consistently, and they deserve a champion who can make the most of international relations to secure their basic human freedoms.

In particular, I'm concerned about political prisoners Dhondup Wangchen (a filmmaker) and monk Jigme Gyatso (his assistant), currently imprisoned for the creation of a film in which Tibetans expressed their dreams and hopes. Please use the power and resources of the State Department to seek their security and freedom.

Thank you,

(SIGN HERE) \_\_\_\_\_

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photo © Niki Taxis

This photo by Australian photographer Niki Taxis was taken as part of a project to capture the beauty, strength, and resilience of the Tibetan people. See page 7 for more of this artist's work.