



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

First Tibetan American Commissioner completes terms at religious freedom commission

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May 14, 2020

Dr. Tenzin Dorjee, the first ever Tibetan American to be appointed a Commissioner of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom, completes his term today, May 14, 2020. He was appointed to the Commission on December 8, 2016, by then House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA). He was reappointed by her for a second term on May 10, 2018.

Dr. Dorjee served his two terms in office meaningfully, endearing himself to his colleagues who admired his knowledge on religious matters and his personal warm-heartedness. On June 12, 2018, he was unanimously elected Chair of the Commission for a one-year term, which he served with distinction.

The International Campaign for Tibet had a very cordial working relationship with Dr. Dorjee. He has paved the way and set an example for other Tibetan Americans to assume leadership roles in the American society, both at the federal and the state level.

Given below is the bio of Dr. Tenzin Dorjee.

Tenzin Dorjee (Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara, UCSB) is Associate Professor at the Department of Human Communication Studies, California State University, Fullerton (CSUF). His primary teaching and research interests are intergroup, intercultural, and intergenerational communication, identity issues, peacebuilding, and conflict resolution. At CSUF campus, he has received faculty recognition awards for outstanding achievements in teaching (2011), research (2013), and community service (2015).

He has authored and co-authored peer-reviewed articles and invited chapters on Tibetan culture, identity, nonviolence, and middle way approach to conflict resolution including Sino-Tibetan conflict, intercultural and intergroup communication competence, intergenerational communication context, and others. Based on his dissertation, he co-authored with Giles, H., and Baker, V. (2011): "Diasporic communication: Cultural deviance and accommodation among Tibetans in exiles in India," *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 32(4), 343-359. Most recently, he co-authored *Communicating Across Cultures* (second edition) with Stella Ting-Toomey (2019) and published by The Guilford Press, New York. He also guided students to present papers at annual regional, national, and international communication conferences and co-authored peer-reviewed journal articles with them.

Dr. Dorjee received the 2017 Distinguished Faculty Marshall of the College of Communications and Distinguished Faculty Member of the Department of Human Communication Studies awards. Tibetan Association of Southern California (TASC) honored him in 2018 with Appreciation Award for his USCIRF service on behalf of all Tibetans. Dr. Dorjee is a prominent translator who studied at Sera Jey Monastic University, South India, and the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics, and worked in the Translation and Research Bureau of the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives (LTWA), Dharamsala, India, for over 13 years. For over 20 years, he has been a volunteer translator for Gaden Shartse Thubten Dhargye Ling Tibetan Buddhist Center in Long Beach, CA, founded by late His Eminence Geshe Tsultim Gyeltsen. He is also a published author of

articles and translated works of Tibetan Buddhism and culture into English. He had the honor to translate for many preeminent Tibetan Buddhist Professors including His Holiness the Dalai Lama in India and North America. He served as a former Member-At-Large in the Executive Council of the Western States of Communication Association (WSCA), Chair of WSCA's Distinguished Teaching Award Committee, Basic Course Director of the Department of Human Communication Studies, CSUF, and Vice President and President of the Tibetan Association of Southern California.

His service record is extraordinary. To further freedom of religion, he travelled to Burma and Iraq to monitor religious freedom conditions there. He testified before U.S. Congress about the religious freedom conditions in China, including Tibet, and Long Arm of China in the U.S. academic institutions. He spoke at various venues, such as USCIRF events and Parliament of the World's Religions, about Tibet, Buddhism, Tibetan culture and Sino-Tibetan relations. He has served on many community-based committees. At the invitations of the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and Tibetan institutes in India, including the College of Higher Tibetan Studies, the Dalai Lama Institute for Higher Education, the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, and the Tibet Policy Institute, he taught intercultural communication, social science research and methodology, teaching pedagogy, and translations techniques.

Dr. Tenzin Dorjee was appointed to the Commission on December 8, 2016, by House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA). He was reappointed to the Commission by Leader Pelosi on May 10, 2018. On June 12, 2018, Dr. Dorjee was unanimously elected Chair of the Commission.



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