



## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

### **Nepal: As UN human rights review nears, report urges the end of abuses against Tibetans**

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*Brussels/Paris, 17 June 2020* - In a new report released today for an upcoming human rights review of Nepal, FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights) and the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) call on the Nepali government to respect and fulfill the rights of Tibetans in Nepal, who have become more vulnerable as a result of China's mounting influence in the Himalayan country. Nepal's human rights record will be assessed as part of its third Universal Periodic Review (UPR), scheduled to take place in early 2021 in Geneva, Switzerland.

“Stronger ties between Nepal and China mean that Tibetans residing in Nepal are now at an increasingly serious risk of being repatriated to the People's Republic of China, where they could face torture and persecution. We call upon UN member states to use the upcoming UPR to urge the Nepali government to refrain from returning Tibetans to a country in which they are at risk of torture or persecution,” said FIDH Secretary-General Adilur Rahman Khan.

The joint FIDH-ICT report identifies three main human rights issues concerning Tibetans in Nepal:

- Tibetans do not have legal status in Nepal and are vulnerable to arbitrary restrictions of their rights. The more than 20,000 Tibetans currently living in Nepal do not enjoy their rights to equal treatment before the law, education, land ownership, freedom of movement, and employment.
- The Nepali government's failure to apply the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the return of individuals to a jurisdiction where they are at risk of being subjected to persecution or torture.
- The shrinking public space for freedom of expression, including freedom of the press, in matters related to China and Tibet, as a result of Beijing's growing influence on the Nepali government.

“Tibetans living in Nepal continue to be denied their most basic human rights. They are barred from secondary education, cannot enjoy their right to work, and are often subjected to preemptive arbitrary detentions. Their rights to free expression and peaceful assembly, as well as freedom of religion, are increasingly restricted. The Nepali government must immediately cease these violations against Tibetans and withstand pressure from Beijing to undermine the status and the rights of Tibetans in Nepal,” said the head of ICT's UN Advocacy Team, Kai Müller.

The report documents how stronger cooperation between the governments of Nepal and China, particularly with regard to the two countries' policies toward Tibetan refugees and national security, has resulted in increased vulnerability for Tibetans in Nepal. Recently adopted agreements between Nepal and China, such as the 'Boundary Management System' and the 'Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance on Criminal Matters,' indicate the Nepali government's apparent efforts to restrict and monitor Tibetans in Nepal and to deport them to China.

The report also reveals that the space for freedom of expression, including freedom of the press, in particular regarding issues related to China and Tibet, is increasingly shrinking in Nepal, not only for Tibetan residents, but also for Nepali citizens, such as members of civil society and journalists.



International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) | 1825 Jefferson Place NW | Washington, DC 20036 | United States of America  
Phone: (202) 785-1515 | Fax: (202) 785-4343 | [info@savetibet.org](mailto:info@savetibet.org)

ICT Europe  
Funenpark 1D | 1018 AK  
Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
Phone: +31 (0)20 3308265  
Fax: +31 (0)20 3308266  
[icteurope@savetibet.nl](mailto:icteurope@savetibet.nl)

ICT Deutschland e.V.  
Schönhauser Allee 163 | 10435  
Berlin, Germany  
Phone: +49 (0)30 27879086  
Fax: +49 (0)30 27879087  
[info@savetibet.de](mailto:info@savetibet.de)

ICT Brussels  
11, rue de la linière | 1060  
Brussels, Belgium  
Phone: +32 (0)2 609 44 10  
Fax: +32 (0)2 609 44 32  
[info@save-tibet.eu](mailto:info@save-tibet.eu)