



## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

### ICT calls for release of Tibetan monk sentenced to 10 years

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December 13, 2021

The International Campaign for Tibet is alarmed by reports of the sentencing of the prominent Tibetan Buddhist monk and scholar Go Sherab Gyatso to 10 years' imprisonment and calls on the Chinese government to respect his fundamental rights.

There is no evidence that Go Sherab Gyatso, who is in his 40s, received a fair trial. The Chinese government must release him immediately, since he was imprisoned and sentenced solely for peacefully expressing his views.

“The case of Go Sherab Gyatso reflects China’s pattern of relentlessly persecuting dissent and independent thought in Tibet,” ICT said. “It is urgent that international institutions, governments and parliaments publicly demand Gyatso’s immediate release and put in place serious consequences for China’s continued violations of Tibetans’ basic freedoms.”

ICT added: “Gyatso’s groundless incarceration is just one more reason why the international community should demonstrate its collective disapproval by declaring a diplomatic boycott of the Beijing Winter Olympics. This is the least that countries should do to put themselves on the right side of history and send a vital message of support to victims of the Chinese government’s oppression.”

### International attention

Gyatso’s case received international attention, with UN Human Rights experts raising concerns about his arbitrary detention. In response, China told the UN that Gyatso was detained “in accordance with the law on suspicion of inciting secession.”

Chinese authorities habitually use charges of “secession” or “separatism” as a pretext to persecute Tibetans for expressing support for Tibetan culture or the Dalai Lama, or for voicing independent thought and dissent. International law protects such peaceful expression, even if it were done to call for the separation of Tibet from China.

Gyatso was detained in Chengdu, Sichuan province by officials from the Tibet Autonomous Region on Oct. 26, 2020. Radio Free Asia on Dec. 10, 2021, reported that Gyatso had been sentenced in a secret trial. According to a source speaking to RFA, Gyatso will be moved soon to a prison near Tibet’s capital, Lhasa.

No details were available regarding the charges on which Gyatso was convicted. The Chinese government, in its response to the UN Human Rights experts in August 2021, stated that he would be tried by the Lhasa City Intermediate People’s Court.

### Go Sherab Gyatso

Gyatso is a monk of Kirti monastery and a prolific writer, having published several books on Tibetan Buddhist philosophy, tradition and culture. These include commentaries on the autobiography of the Tibetan Buddhist master Tsongkhapa, a book of advice by Sakya Pandita and Gedun Choephel’s “The Golden Surface,” the

story of a cosmopolitan's pilgrimage. He has also published critiques about the Tibetan monastic education system, calling for a broadening of the monastic community's exposure.

Gyatso has already faced multiple detentions for his advocacy on behalf of the Tibetan people. He underwent "reform through labor" from March 20, 1998 to Nov. 30, 2001. In 2008, he was detained in Lhasa and imprisoned for a year around the time Tibetans staged mass protests against Chinese rule. In 2011, he was again arrested.

To date, several Tibetans, including scholars and writers, have been arrested, sentenced or disappeared merely on account of their exercising their universal freedom of expression.



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