



## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

### Remembering former ICT Board Member David Urubshurow

<http://www.savetibet.org/remembering-former-ict-board-member-david-urubshurow>

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David Urubshurow, a Kalmyk Mongolian American attorney and a former member of the Board of the International Campaign for Tibet, passed away Oct. 1, 2023. He was 75.

David was four years old when his parents took him and his two brothers and immigrated to the US in 1952, escaping from Stalinist persecution in the former Soviet Union. They settled in Howell, New Jersey, where a small Kalmyk community was established. He grew up coming to appreciate his Mongolian culture and religion. He was proud of his Mongolian heritage and traced his community's history [in one of his writings](#), saying, "My forebears migrated from the Altai Mountains of Western Mongolia in the early 1600s to settle the Volga River basin north of the Caspian Sea." They came to be known as Kalmyks in Russia.

He served as the Trustee of the Tibetan Buddhist Learning Center in Washington, NJ, which was the spiritual center set up by [Geshe Wangyal, a Kalmyk Buddhist master](#), in 1958 to serve the Kalmyk Buddhists. David in fact [became a monk for a while under Geshe Wangyal](#). He wrote extensively about the Kalmyk people and about Mongolia and gave talks at various venues. He was [involved in organizing the first visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the Republic of Kalmykia in 1991](#). Further, he was involved in initiatives in Mongolia. He [served as a Special Advisor to the Mongolian government](#) in the 1990s.

Geshe Wangyal had studied in Tibet and had a strong devotion to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. He not only supported the Tibetan cause but also greatly influenced his community, including his students, many of who went on to become scholars on Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism. The Kalmyk people appreciated Tibet as the source of this spiritual heritage and also had firsthand experience of Communist oppression under the Soviet Union. Therefore, in the wake of the Chinese invasion of Tibet and the flight of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to India in 1959, they did much to support the Tibetan people.

David was practicing law in the Washington, DC region and was involved with then-International Campaign for Tibet President Mr. Tenzin N. Tethong when ICT was established in 1988. He continued his relationship with ICT during the leadership of Kasur Lodi Gyari as well as John Ackerly, serving as a member of the Board of ICT and serving as ICT's treasurer for a number of years.

John Ackerly recalls, *"David was an unofficial ambassador between exile Kalmyk, Tibetan and Mongolian communities and lived a life showing the natural bonds between those peoples. His humor, smile and embrace brought warmth to any room he entered and he brought that to the ICT boardroom for many years."*

David was a graduate of Monmouth College (now University) in West Long Branch, NJ and Antioch School of Law, Washington, DC, in 1980.

He is survived by his wife Victoria Kennick in Maryland, daughter Delghir Urubshurow and his two brothers, Jalsa and Nimja. His son, Donzen Urubshurow, predeceased him in 2013.



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