



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Statement from the ICT Board of Directors on Tenzin Kalsang Gonta and Uzra Zeya

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The Board of Directors of the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) is pleased to welcome to ICT's Board two dynamic leaders and defenders of Tibetans' human rights and self-determination – Tenzin Kalsang Gonta and Uzra Zeya. The Board elected Gonta and Zeya during its meeting on December 9, 2025.

Upon her appointment, Gonta said, "I'm honored to be able to work toward His Holiness the Dalai Lama's vision and advocate for the people in Tibet at a time when democratic freedoms, human rights and nonviolent action couldn't be more relevant on the Tibetan plateau, in the United States and around the world."

Uzra Zeya, President and CEO of Human Rights First and former US Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues said of her appointment, "I am thrilled and honored by this opportunity to work with and support ICT in a new chapter. Through my service as an ICT Board member, I want to contribute what I can to help the Tibetan people in their struggle for human rights and freedom. As leader of Human Rights First, I am proud of our organization's legacy helping scores of Tibetan refugees fleeing oppression find protection in the United States."

"We are very excited to welcome two proven leaders to the ICT family," said ICT President Tencho Gyatso. "Tenzin Kalsang Gonta is a living testament to the resilience and determination of the Tibetan diaspora and to the power of investing in their development. I know she will bring a wealth of experience to the vital work of ICT. By the same token, we are honored to have the deep experience and strategic acumen of Uzra Zeya, a career diplomat and trusted advisor to several secretaries of state who has tackled some of the most difficult international human rights challenges." Gyatso added, "I join with ICT Chairman Richard Gere and present and past members of the Board of Directors in welcoming Kalsang and Uzra to the cause of Tibet's freedom and the preservation of its unique cultural, linguistic and religious traditions."

Biography of Tenzin Kalsang Gonta (she/they)

Tenzin Kalsang Gonta was an inaugural member of the International Campaign for Tibet's Tibetan Youth Leadership Program and is honored to come full circle by serving as a Board member for the organization. The child of Tibetan refugees, Gonta is among the first generation of Tibetans born in the United States. Raised by a wise and loving community of elders, Gonta is an active member of the Tibetan diaspora. They served in the Tibetan government-in-exile and held leadership positions with a wide range of Tibet support groups, each essential to advancing His Holiness the Dalai Lama's vision for the Tibetan people.

Professionally, Gonta has dedicated their career as an accountability professional in the public and nonprofit sectors. They have led teams of performance auditors at the state and local levels of government to improve services for the most vulnerable. As a certified internal auditor, Gonta has contributed to the profession as a peer reviewer with the Association of Local Government Auditors, board member for the Portland chapter of the Institute of Internal Auditors, and audit expert on the bond accountability committee for Portland Public Schools. Prior to their career in government, Gonta held positions in the nonprofit sector at organizations of local and national scope.

They remain connected to community-based organizations as a volunteer, most recently as Board Treasurer for the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization. In graduate school, Gonta researched public-nonprofit partnerships as well as projects that developed nonprofit leaders of color. Born and raised in the Pacific Northwest, Gonta is grateful for the quality experiences they can share with their child at Tibetan School each Sunday and in the wilderness each summer.

Biography of Uzra Zeya

Uzra Zeya joined Human Rights First (HRF) as President and CEO in April 2025. In this role, she leads HRF efforts to advance human rights for all, defend democracy at home and abroad, uphold the rule of law and protect vulnerable populations fleeing oppression.

As US Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights from July 2021 to January 2025, Zeya led global US diplomacy to advance human rights, strengthen rule of law, support refugees, elevate the fight against corruption, and combat transnational crime and human trafficking. Concurrently, she was US Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues, rallying international partners to support Tibetans' human rights and preserve their unique identity.

Zeya also served as president and CEO of the Alliance for Peacebuilding, where she led a non-partisan network of 150+ organizations working on peaceful conflict resolution in 180+ countries. Her distinguished diplomatic career included senior roles at US embassies in France and India, the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, and advising Secretaries of State Rice and Clinton. She also served in Syria, Egypt, Oman, and Jamaica, and speaks French, Arabic, and Spanish.

Zeya is on the University of Notre Dame Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies Board of Advisors. She was awarded the French Legion d'Honneur and the Cross of Commander of the Order of the Lithuanian Grand Duke Gediminas in recognition of her contributions to a more just and peaceful world.



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