

Stay Informed, Stay Connected

Via our websites and social media, you can keep informed about the Tibet movement and the work of ICT. “Like” us, “share” us, and help us spread the word.



Join us for the online conversation at our blog at weblog.savetibet.org

Visit our website in Chinese at liaowangxizang.net



“Like” us on Facebook.
International Campaign for Tibet



For up-to-the-minute news, follow

[@SaveTibetOrg](https://twitter.com/SaveTibetOrg) (ENGLISH)

[@SaveTibet_Tibet](https://twitter.com/SaveTibet_Tibet) (TIBETAN) རོད་ཡིག

[@LiaoWangXiZang](https://twitter.com/LiaoWangXiZang) (CHINESE) 中文

Share us with your contacts and join in the Tibet conversation. The more people who care about Tibet, the bigger the impact we can have!

Small Gifts, Big Difference

The *Friends of Tibet* are a small inner circle of supporters of the International Campaign Tibet who pledge to make a monthly automated gift. The steady, reliable support of our *Friends of Tibet* gives us the ability to act (and not just react) in defense of the people and culture of Tibet. Take the next step in your support by joining the *Friends of Tibet* today. Enroll online at www.savetibet.org/friends-of-tibet, or by contacting Brian Ahern at brian.ahern@savetibet.org or (202) 580-6770.



His Holiness the Dalai Lama with members of the Tibetan election observation delegation gathered in March in Dharamsala, India. Shown left to right are: **Bhuchung K. Tsering**, Vice President of ICT, **Andre' Gattolin**, Senator, Australia, **Zsuzsanna Lisa Singh**, Senator, Australia, **Matteo Mecacci**, President of ICT, former MP, Italy, **His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama**, **Thomas Mann**, MEP European Parliament, Co-Chair, INPAT, **Norman Baker**, Former MP, Minister, President, UK Tibet Society, **Anna Ferencz**, MEP assistant, Hungary.



Stay Informed, Stay Connected

Via our websites and social media, you can keep informed about the Tibet movement and the work of ICT. "Like" us, "share" us, and help us spread the word.



Join us for the online conversation at our blog at weblog.savetibet.org

Visit our website in Chinese at liaowangxizang.net



"Like" us on Facebook.
International Campaign for Tibet



For up-to-the-minute news, follow

[@SaveTibetOrg](https://twitter.com/SaveTibetOrg) (ENGLISH)

[@SaveTibet_Tibet](https://twitter.com/SaveTibet_Tibet) (TIBETAN) རྟོག་ཡིག

[@LiaoWangXiZang](https://twitter.com/LiaoWangXiZang) (CHINESE) 中文

Share us with your contacts and join in the Tibet conversation. The more people who care about Tibet, the bigger the impact we can have!

Small Gifts, Big Difference

The *Friends of Tibet* are a small inner circle of supporters of the International Campaign Tibet who pledge to make a monthly automated gift. The steady, reliable support of our *Friends of Tibet* gives us the ability to act (and not just react) in defense of the people and culture of Tibet. Take the next step in your support by joining the *Friends of Tibet* today. Enroll online at www.savetibet.org/friends-of-tibet, or by contacting Brian Ahern at brian.ahern@savetibet.org or (202) 580-6770.



His Holiness the Dalai Lama with members of the Tibetan election observation delegation gathered in March in Dharamsala, India. Shown left to right are: **Bhuchung K. Tsering**, Vice President of ICT, **Andre' Gattolin**, Senator, Australia, **Zsuzsa, Lisa Singh**, Senator, Australia, **Matteo Mecacci**, President of ICT, former MP, Italy, **His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama**, **Thomas Mann**, MEP European Parliament, Co-Chair, INPAT, **Norman Baker**, Former MP, Minister, President, UK Tibet Society, **Anna Ferencz**, MEP assistant, Hungary.

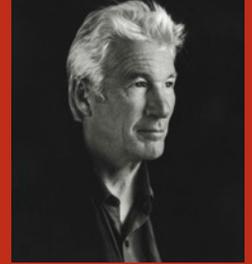
Tibet

བོད་

PRESS WATCH

INSIDE:

- The Environmental Threat to Tibet
- Congressional Delegation Makes Historic Tibet Visit
- Beijing's Attempts to Control Reincarnation
- Emerging Pattern of Solo Protests



SPRING 2016

*A publication of the
International Campaign for Tibet*



LOBBYING FOR TIBET ON CAPITOL HILL:

EIGHTH ANNUAL LOBBY DAY REACHES 120 CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES

Join supporters around the world in building a better future for Tibet.

These are a few ways to invest in ICT's work.

FRIENDS OF TIBET

Become a regular supporter of ICT's advocacy for Tibet by making a recurring monthly contribution, and join a network of committed, reliable supporters across the country and around the world. Visit savetibet.org/friends-of-tibet/

PARTNERS FOR TIBET

Become a leading supporter and join a select group of ICT members who contribute \$1,000 or more. Your generosity will be recognized with exclusive benefits and opportunities to engage more deeply in our work. Visit savetibet.org/partner-for-tibet/

MANDALA SOCIETY

Join an intimate group of supporters who have chosen to create a living legacy to Tibet. Place ICT in your will or trust, make a gift of stocks, retirement funds or real estate, or participate in a gift annuity.

HONOR AND MEMORIAL GIFTS

Celebrate the special occasion of a friend or family member, or honor someone's memory, with a donation to support Tibet through the work of ICT. Each donation is recognized with a print or electronic card to the person you designate.

The International Campaign for Tibet depends on contributions from members to sustain its work in support of Tibet. Your generosity makes a difference.



Learn more about these opportunities and other ways to stand with Tibetans by supporting ICT's work at savetibet.org/other-ways-to-give/ or contact Brian Ahern at brian.ahern@savetibet.org or (202) 580-6770.

Stay Informed, Stay Connected

Via our websites and social media, you can keep informed about the Tibet movement and the work of ICT. "Like" us, "share" us, and help us spread the word.

Photo © Jurjen Donkers

Find us on social media



8 feeds, 5 languages

[@SaveTibetOrg](#)

(ENGLISH)

[@SaveTibet_Tibet](#)

(TIBETAN) རོད་ཡིག

Plus:

[@MATTEOMEACACCI](#)

[@BHUCHUNGTSERING](#)

(TIBETAN) རོད་ཡིག

[@KATESICTIBET](#)

[@SaveTibet](#)

(GERMAN)

[@LiaoWangXiZang](#)

(CHINESE) 中文

[@SaveTibetNL](#)

(DUTCH)



8 websites, 6 languages

savetibet.org

(ENGLISH)

savetibet.us

(TIBETAN) རོད་ཡིག

tibetpolicy.eu

(ENGLISH)

savetibet.de

(GERMAN)

liaowangxizang.net

(CHINESE) 中文

atc.org.au partner

(ENGLISH)

savetibet.nl

(DUTCH)

savetibet.fr

(FRENCH)



English, German,
French, & Dutch



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET
Deutschland

INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET
Nederland

INTERNATIONAL
CAMPAIGN
FOR TIBET

From the President



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF ADVISORS

Harrison Ford
Hideaki Kase
Kerry Kennedy
Bernard Kouchner
Vytautas Landsbergis
Mairead Maguire
Adolfo Perez Esquivel
Jose Ramos-Horta
Rabi Ray
Professor Samdhong Rinpoche
Sulak Sivaraksa
Tenzin N. Tethong
Desmond Tutu
Elie Wiesel

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Richard Gere, Chair
Gare Smith, Vice-Chair
Jim Kane, Treasurer
John Ackerly
Pam Cesak
Marco Antonio Karam
Keith Pitts
Steve Schroeder
Grace Spring
Tempa Tsering

Matteo Mecacci,
President
Bhuchung K. Tsering,
Vice President

WASHINGTON OFFICE

1825 Jefferson Place, NW
Washington, DC 20036
202.785.1515
202.785.4343 Fax
info@savetibet.org
www.savetibet.org

INTERNATIONAL OFFICES

Amsterdam
Berlin
Brussels

FIELD OFFICE

Dharamsala

EDITORIAL SUPPORT

Andrea Calabretta and
Schultz & Williams

Dear Friends,

As 2016 gets underway and signs of spring begin to appear in Washington, I'm excited to share with you our latest activities and advocacy work in support of the people of Tibet.

I am especially pleased about the recent success of our eighth annual Tibet Lobby Day, which we hosted in cooperation with several US-based Tibet support groups. Approximately one hundred advocates for Tibet gathered in Washington, DC to lobby Members of Congress on the Tibet issue, with additional supporters participating online. Through live and virtual participation, we were able to reach every single Congressional office with the exception of one. As we spoke with Representatives, we found support for Tibet to continue to be extremely strong. And at the same time in London, ICT chairman Richard Gere had important meetings with supporters and the Speaker of Parliament, who the next day during Parliament's question time asked Prime Minister Cameron about China's "counterterrorism" policies in Tibet. You can read more about Lobby Day on page 7.

ICT helped reveal the covert alliance between the Western Buddhist sect known as the International Shugden Community and the Chinese government in a major journalistic investigation conducted by *Reuters*. On page 5, you can read more about how ICT was able to obtain and translate a Communist Party document proving that the Party is using Shugden protestors to try to discredit His Holiness the Dalai Lama with loud protests at public events. Now that the covert alliance has been exposed, ICT will continue to watch this situation closely.

Speaking of victories, earlier this year, we were proud to co-sponsor a ceremony honoring House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi and founder of Human Rights Watch Robert Bernstein. The two were awarded the Human Rights and Freedom Defender prize from the Wei Jingsheng Foundation, which promotes human rights and democracy in China. This award came on the heels of Leader Pelosi's November trip to Tibet, the first time a Congressional delegation has visited the Land of Snows since 2008 (see our coverage on page 6).

We have also been working to counter Chinese propaganda and to bring international attention to matters of vital concern. On that note, we have issued a petition to Secretary of State John Kerry, calling for him to hold China accountable regarding a pattern of unjust arrests and disappearances of peaceful lone protestors inside Tibet. I hope you'll take the time to read more about this issue on page 10, and sign and return the petition on page 11.

ICT is shining a spotlight on matters of injustice not only with regard to human rights violations but also grave environmental concerns. In December, *Al Jazeera America* published an op-ed by Mr. Gere entitled "Tibet is the Canary in the Coal Mine: The Dalai Lama's Home Country is Warming at Nearly Three Times the Rate of the Rest of the World" (see page 4). This article draws on a new environmental report we issued in December that details the fragile ecology of the Tibetan plateau, and the devastating consequences of Chinese policies that are re-shaping the landscape.

We have also recently documented that Chinese authorities—in their fervor to try to control the next incarnation of the Dalai Lama and in blatant violation of religious freedom—are keeping a preposterous "Living Buddha database" that functions as a register of those who are allowed to reincarnate after death (page 9).

And even as China has increased its oppression of minorities with a new "counter-terrorism" law that effectively allows for persecution of any dissent, the UN Committee Against Torture has issued a strong statement condemning China's record on human rights abuses (page 5).

Our work on behalf of Tibet is possible because of your ongoing support. Please read through the issue to see even more of your efforts in action. I send you my personal thanks and best wishes as we continue together along this path of freedom and justice for our Tibetan brothers and sisters.

In solidarity,

Matteo Mecacci

Cover Image: Tibetan Americans and Tibet supporters from across the country convened in Washington, DC, to take part in Tibet Lobby Day 2016.

New in 2016

Rowell Fund for Tibet Announces 2016 Grantees

The Board of Advisors of the Rowell Fund for Tibet has selected five Tibetan grantees for financial support totaling \$28,539.68 for 2016. The Rowell Fund supports the work of Tibetans communicating issues of importance to broader Tibetan or international audiences through photography, film-making, writing, journalism, and other projects.

THE GRANTEEES FOR 2016 ARE:

- Library of Tibetan Works and Archives: For the publication of the Tibetan and English language book *My Earth My Responsibility: Tibetan Buddhist and Western Scientific Perspectives on Climate Change*.
- Tibetan Women's Center Rajpur: To teach women artisans basic Tibetan and English reading and writing skills.
- Tibetan Children's Literature Project: To promote and develop children's literature in Tibetan language.
- Clean Upper Dharamsala: To expand a composting project.
- The Photography Club of the Tibet Children's Village School: For the purchase of camera equipment.

In 2016, the Rowell Fund will lead a fundraising trip to Tuolumne Meadows in Yosemite National Park to continue to support these programs. For more information, please contact lizzy.ludwig@savetibet.org

US Congress Grants \$25 Million in Aid for Tibet Programs in 2016

The U.S. Congress continued its steady support for Tibet through the provision of an estimated \$25 million for Tibet programs through the Consolidated Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2016.

The Act provides funding for a number of programs, including NGOs to support sustainable development on the Tibetan plateau; humanitarian assistance for refugees; economic development in exile communities; the State Department office of the Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues; independent radio broadcasting into Tibet; and others.

Andrea Worden, Advocacy Director at ICT, said, "The United States Congress has once again given strong support to the cause of Tibet...This indispensable investment yields substantial dividends for Tibetans and their efforts to preserve their culture and identity, and secure their future."

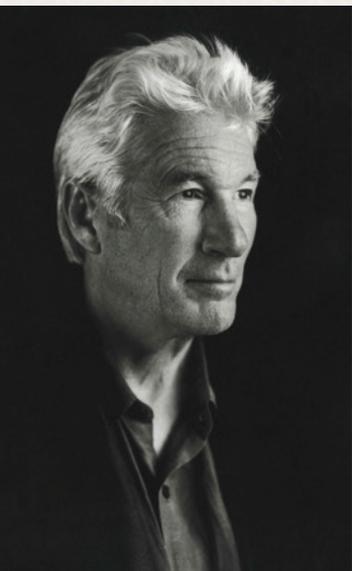


Photo by Myrna Suarez

Reuters Op-Ed by Richard Gere Underscores Urgency of Environmental Threat to Tibet

On December 10, Reuters published an op-ed by ICT Board Chair Richard Gere entitled "Tibet is the Canary in the Coal Mine: The Dalai Lama's Home Country is Warming at Nearly Three Times the Rate of the Rest of the World."

The article draws from a new report published by ICT during the COP21 climate change talks in Paris in December, 2015. *Blue Gold from the Highest Plateau: Tibet's Water and Global Climate Change* reveals how China's policies are re-shaping the landscape of the earth's highest and largest plateau, threatening Tibet's fragile environment.

In his article, Gere references the Dalai Lama's belief in the "fundamental unity of all things." This vision of interdependence among the countries and

peoples of the world is crucial to combat climate change in the present moment.

Gere writes, "Relatively unnoticed by the rest of the world, the Chinese government has built and is building dams on all the major rivers running off the Tibetan plateau—one of the most seismically active and unstable areas of the world—with potentially devastating consequences."

Meanwhile, access to water is becoming a serious security issue throughout the region, as Tibet's source glaciers are quickly retreating and its waters are diverted to Chinese cities. Gere urges that global attention be turned on China's activities in Tibet—and that a regional framework be developed for the governance and management of water resources.

Passage of China's First Counter-Terror Law Represents an Escalation of Militarization in Tibet

On December 27, 2015, China passed its first counter-terror law, rejecting concerns from governments worldwide that draconian measures in the name of national security are being used to crack down on Tibetans, Uyghurs, and Chinese civil society and to undermine religious freedom.

The new law follows oppressive and counter-productive policies in Tibet and Xinjiang involving extra-judicial killings, torture and imprisonment, and crackdowns on even mild expressions of religious identity and culture.

ICT President Matteo Mecacci said: "This law provides a rubber stamp to legitimize persecution of peaceful dissent... Peace and stability cannot be achieved through hyper-securitization and suppression of human rights.



ILLUSTRATION BY FIFI

China Co-opts Buddhist Sect to Discredit Dalai Lama

New reports based on a major investigation by Reuters news media revealed that the Chinese government gives clandestine support to the International Shugden Community, a Buddhist sect whose members appear at events in the U.S. and Europe honoring His Holiness the Dalai Lama in order to protest His Holiness' presence and declare him a "false" Dalai Lama.

The Western-led sect follows Dorje Shugden, a deity whom the Dalai Lama discourages worshipping. ICT has obtained and shared with international media a Communist Party document

for Tibet that indicates the Party is using this disagreement to its advantage and making the members of this sect a part of its assault on the Dalai Lama and his supporters.

Matteo Mecacci, President of ICT, said: "This document provides confirmation that the Shugden supporters in the West are aligned with the Chinese Communist government's agenda on Tibet, which threatens the very survival of Tibetan religion and cultural identity."

U.N. Committee Against Torture Calls China to Account

In December 2015, the U.N. Committee Against Torture condemned China's record of maltreatment in an unusually long and detailed report that raises serious questions about the way the Chinese Party state operates.

Kai Mueller, Executive Director of ICT Germany, said: "The 16-page document signals the Committee's profound concern about abuses in the PRC, and its commitment to hold the Chinese authorities to account."

The U.N. Committee not only criticized the practice of torture and ill-treatment in China, but also tackled the entire People's Republic of China's system, referring especially to the lack of independence of the Chinese judiciary. The Committee expressed particular concern about deaths in custody, such as the case of the prominent and highly respected Tibetan lama, Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, who died at a high-security remote prison in July.

Impact Report

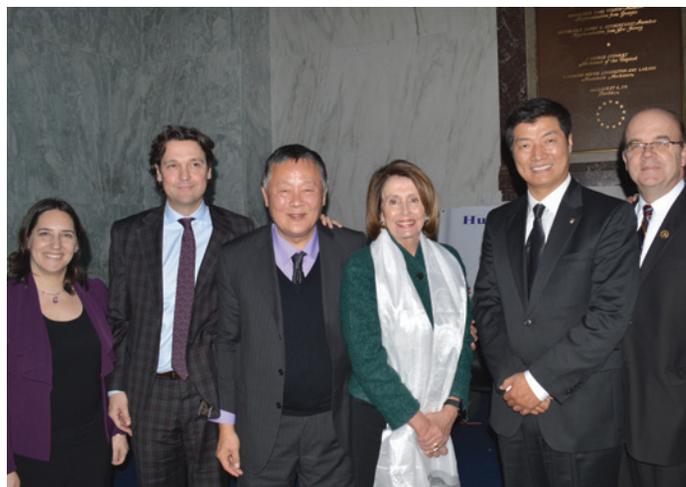
Pelosi and Delegation Report on Historic Tibet Visit

Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi and members of the Congressional Delegation who traveled to Tibet and China in November held a press conference on November 17, 2015 following their historic visit—the first US Congressional visit to Tibet since 2008.

The delegation included Representatives Timothy Walz (D-MN), Betty McCollum (D-MN), Jim McGovern (D-MA), Alan Lowenthal (D-CA), Joyce Beatty (D-OH) and Ted Lieu (D-CA). At the press conference, each member reflected on his or her experiences in Tibet.

Representative McGovern said, “I saw this trip...as an important gesture by the Chinese government...At every meeting, we talked about the Dalai Lama...But more needs to be done.” He called for a U.S. consulate in Lhasa; access to Tibet for leaders of international governments, journalists, and members of the Tibetan diaspora; and renewed dialogue with the Dalai Lama.

Leader Pelosi, while commending the Chinese government for its actions on climate change and investment in infrastructure, expressed concerns about what she could see was a very controlled visit with houses that “did not look like homes.” She concurred with McGovern in calling for free access to Tibet for journalists, saying a free press is the “gateway to freedom.”



In February 2016, Chinese human rights activist Wei Jingsheng presented House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi and Human Rights Watch founder Robert Bernstein with the Wei Jingsheng Foundation’s Human Rights and Freedom Defender Prize for their advocacy work for human rights all over the world, including in China. ICT President Matteo Mecacci spoke at the awards ceremony, which was co-hosted by ICT. Shown left to right are Sarah Cook, Matteo Mecacci, Wei Jingsheng, Leader Nancy Pelosi, Sikyong Lobsang Songay and Congressman Jim McGovern.

U.S. Urges Nepal to Protect Refugees and Minorities

The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) was established by the UN General Assembly in 2006 to allow for review of the human rights records of UN member states every four and a half years. During the UPR of Nepal in November, 2015, the U.S. issued a statement urging Nepal to take steps to ensure the welfare of Tibetan refugees and other minorities who reside in the country. In particular, the statement called for:

- Fair access to earthquake relief for vulnerable communities;
- Amending the country’s Constitution to ensure religious freedoms and allowing women to convey citizenship to their children and spouses on the same basis as men;
- Registering refugees so that they may gain documentation to work, attain schooling, and travel.

A photograph of a white dome structure with a face on top, surrounded by police officers in riot gear. The scene is outdoors, and the dome is decorated with colorful prayer flags. The text overlay on the image reads: "INFORMATION MEETING UPR 23 - REVIEW OF NEPAL: THE SITUATION OF TIBETAN REFUGEES IN NEPAL WEDNESDAY 4 NOVEMBER 2015 PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA 12H45 - 13H45 / ROOM XXIII".

**INFORMATION MEETING
UPR 23 - REVIEW OF NEPAL:**

**THE SITUATION OF
TIBETAN REFUGEES
IN NEPAL**

**WEDNESDAY
4 NOVEMBER 2015**

PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA
12H45 - 13H45 / ROOM XXIII

Eighth Annual

Lobby Day Brings Tibet Advocates to Washington, D.C.



“As Tibetan-Americans, we are engaging the political process. Living in a democracy, we have a responsibility to speak out on behalf of the six million Tibetans who are silenced by the Chinese government’s oppressive policies.”

—Tencho Gyatso, Associate Director for Chinese Engagement & Tibetan Empowerment Programs

The eighth annual Tibet Lobby Day was held in Washington, D.C. on February 29 and March 1, 2016. Approximately 100 Tibetan-Americans and supporters of Tibet converged from across the United States to urge the U.S. Congress to support concrete actions to solve the Tibet crisis and support Tibetans in their effort to protect their culture, religion, and identity.

Tibet supporters met with more than 120 offices, asking for Congress to continue funding Tibet programs; advocate for the release of Tibetan political prisoners; promote access to Tibetan areas for US officials, journalists, and citizens; and hold Chinese leaders accountable on Tibet.

Participants reported that Tibet Lobby Day has come to be recognized as an annual event by many of the Congressional offices visited.

“Having participated in the Tibet Lobby Day for several years, I have come to learn that the Congressional offices become increasingly understanding the more we meet them,” Tenzin Chopel from Vermont told Radio Free Asia’s Tibetan service.

“This was a way to wake up our Members of Congress on the issue of Tibet and I feel it’s important that we continue the work on our return to our state,” Sonam Sangpo from Minnesota told Radio Free Asia.

In addition to in-person visits during Tibet Lobby Day, ICT members and friends of Tibet from all 50 states and Puerto Rico sent online messages to House and Senate offices.

One early success of the 8th Annual Tibet Lobby Day is the co-sponsorship of a letter to Secretary of State Kerry by Representatives Michael Capuano (D-MA) and Chris Smith (R-NJ) urging Secretary Kerry to call on the Chinese government to release several Tibetan political prisoners. Signatures of other Members of Congress for the sign-on letter are being collected now.

Tibet Lobby Day is a collaborative effort between ICT and other Tibet support groups, including Tibetan Associations in the United States, and Students for a Free Tibet.

A gallery of photos taken during this year’s Tibet Lobby Day can be found at: bit.ly/lobbydayDC2016

ICT Welcomes New Team Members

TEMPA TSERING, BOARD MEMBER



Tempa Tsering became a member of the board in April 2015. Born in 1950 in Gyantse, Tibet, he and his parents escaped into exile in India after the occupation of Tibet in 1959. He joined the Tibetan civil service in 1973 after graduating from college to serve as an interpreter and office secretary at the Tibetan Settlement in Bylakuppe, South India.

Since then, he has served in various capacities within the Central Tibetan Administration, including as Secretary to the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama; Secretary at the Department of Information and International Relations; Minister (Tibetan: Kalon) for Department of Home 2001-2002; and Minister for the Department of Information and International Relations 2005-2006.

Since 2007, he has been serving as the Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in New Delhi, India.

BRIAN AHERN, DONOR RELATIONS MANAGER



Brian Ahern began his role at ICT in November 2015. For the past four years, he has worked in the non-profit sector as a development professional at organizations focusing on national security.

Brian acquired a Bachelor's in International Affairs from The Citadel and a Master's in International Security from the University of Maryland. His introduction to Tibet began during discussions with a close family member who was studying the teachings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Brian's connection with Tibet deepened as he learned about the treatment of Tibetan artists and their inability to express themselves out of fear of persecution.

He has lived in Scotland and the United Arab Emirates and has travelled the world extensively. Having witnessed oppression firsthand, Brian is glad to be working for human rights and democratic freedoms at ICT.

ARTS & CULTURE

Festival Focus: Summer Horse Race Festival



For centuries, the annual Summer Horse Race Festival has been a tradition of the vast nomadic land of Kham, Tibet. Long-distance horse racing is the main event and highlight of the 3-7-day festival, while other important aspects include dancing, singing, weightlifting, archery, and trading of wooden bowls, butter, jewelry, saddles, and swords. Contestants participate in events like riding on horseback while picking up *khatas* (ceremonial scarves) from the ground, shooting targets under their horse's neck, and acrobatics on the horse.

The festival reflects the immense value Tibetan culture places on the horse. Perhaps the world's longest epic, the twelfth-century Tibetan *Epic of King Gesar of Lhing* centers on a protagonist who, though raised in poverty, wins a horse race and becomes ruler of a kingdom. The horse is also an auspicious symbol of good fortune seen on typical Tibetan prayer flags. And for a Tibetan nomad, a horse is much more than just a means of transportation—it is his best friend.

Today, the Summer Horse Race Festival continues, but the Chinese government uses it as a propaganda tool. Though Chinese authorities once banned the event, since 2013, they have ordered Tibetan communities to hold the festival—and locals to participate—in order to create the appearance that Tibetans continue to happily celebrate under Chinese rule.

News of Dalai Lama's Medical Treatment Prompts Outpouring of Long Life Prayers in Tibet and then Arrests



In response to the news that the Dalai Lama was receiving medical treatment in the U.S., hundreds of Tibetans gathered on January 25 in the eastern Tibetan area of Kham and prayed for his long life, displaying large images of the exiled Tibetan leader.

Photos and footage circulated online showing more than a thousand monks, laypeople, and children participating in a prayer ceremony in a monastery in Trehor township, Kardze (Chinese: Ganzi) to pray for the Dalai Lama, who was undergoing prostate treatment at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota. This rare and bold public gathering demonstrated the strength of feeling and loyalty towards the Dalai Lama in spite of the risks of publicly showing support for His Holiness.

Abbot Pagah and Geshe Orgyen held the mass prayer ceremony and were unfortunately both detained for practicing their religion.

Following the detention of the abbot and the senior monk of Chogri Monastery, local authorities have deployed a large number of Chinese security forces to monitor and control both the monastic and lay community in Trehor. Throughout Tibet, Chinese security is knocking on doors and punishing people if they have a picture of the Dalai Lama. This is the brutally repressive rule of Beijing.

Living Buddha Database Attempts to Control Reincarnation

In December 2015, ICT published news of an important development in which a respected elder Tibetan scholar made a rare critique on social media of a Chinese official known for his hardline position on the Dalai Lama. Both Tibetan and Chinese netizens joined the online conversation, revealing deep concern over Chinese policies on Tibet and specifically, attempts by the Chinese government to control reincarnation of high lamas.

In their efforts to control the next incarnation of the Dalai Lama, the Beijing leadership has resorted to increasingly virulent personal attacks on the Tibetan spiritual leader, and has set in place legislation attempting to ensure they manage the process of reincarnation—a move considered absurd for a Communist Party state that promotes atheism.

ICT has found that the Chinese authorities even keep a register of all those who are allowed to reincarnate themselves after death; those who are not registered are not permitted to reincarnate. The news of this database of reincarnate lamas was recently picked up by the international media, including the BBC, *Time* magazine, and other outlets.

Inside Tibet

Emerging Trend:

Lone Protestors Call for Freedom for Tibet and Return of the Dalai Lama



Tashi Dhondup demonstrated in Dzoerge, Ngaba, on December 19, 2015. This photo, circulating on social media, appears to have been taken before his protest and shows him holding the image of the Dalai Lama he displayed during his solo demonstration. His whereabouts are unknown.



Kirti monk Gendun Puntsok, 18, staged a protest in Ngaba county town on March 8, 2015, marching with a portrait of the Dalai Lama wrapped in a yellow *khatag* (blessing scarf) held to his head and shouting "Let the Dalai Lama return! Freedom and equality for Tibet." He was sentenced to four years in prison.



Kirti monk Losang Kelsang, 19, protested on March 17, 2015, on the streets of Ngaba county town, holding up a portrait of the Dalai Lama in one hand and scattering *lungta* (paper slips printed with prayers) while chanting "Freedom for Tibet!" He was sentenced to three and a half years in prison.

At the end of 2015, news emerged of the detention of Tashi Dhondup, a young Tibetan man from Amdo who walked along a road in Dzoerge (Chinese: Ruo'ergai) county town on December 19 wearing traditional Tibetan dress and bearing a photograph of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, with a Buddhist flag on his back. Footage circulating on social media shows him running and walking along the street bearing the large picture of the exiled Tibetan leader. According to Tibetan sources, he was detained by armed police shortly after the footage was shown, and his current whereabouts are unknown.

Tashi Dhondup is the 14th lone protester in Ngaba prefecture documented by Tibetan sources since July 2015. The trend of solo protests has led to an intensified security crackdown in the area. In Ngaba county town, Internet service was cut off from September 10, 2015 for all except government offices, according to Kirti monks in exile and other sources, and surveillance stepped up in an already oppressive atmosphere.

Of the 14 solo protests, nine of them have taken place in Ngaba county town, which became well known for its link with self-immolations. There have also been a number of solo protests in Kardze (Chinese: Ganzi), also in Sichuan province, where a number of self-immolations occurred.

It is notable that in this different pattern of protests, the young men and women who demonstrated have not harmed themselves. Since the wave of self-immolations—now totaling more than 140—swept across Tibet starting in 2009, the Chinese Communist Party has responded with an intensified wave of repression and has punished those allegedly "associated" with self-immolators, including friends, families and even entire communities.

The desire to protect loved ones from repercussions may be a factor in the new wave of solo protests. Prominent religious leaders in exile such as the Karmapa have urged Tibetans to protect their lives so that they can protect their culture and religion.

SELF-IMMOLATION REPORT

One self-immolation has occurred since our last report, bringing the total to 144 self-immolations since 2009. Each issue, we present with sadness those individuals who have most recently chosen this act of protest.



February 29, 2016

Eighteen year-old Tibetan monk Kalsang Wangdu died following his self-immolation near his monastery in Nyarong County in Kardze (Chinese: Ganzi), eastern Tibet, according to Radio Free Asia. "[While he burned], he called out for Tibet's complete independence," a Tibetan source told RFA.

Wellbeing: Deceased

The most up-to-date information and analysis on the self-immolations inside Tibet is available at savetibet.org

Call to Action



Secretary of State
John Kerry

Will You Speak Up for Unjustly Imprisoned Tibetans?

A new pattern of protests has recently emerged in Tibet in which courageous men and women are conducting non-violent solo demonstrations in locales once associated with self-immolation. These lone acts may be motivated by the desire to spare their families the violence and harassment Chinese authorities inflict on relatives of Tibetans who self-immolate.

ICT has documented 14 cases so far—including those of the young men shown on the facing page—in which peaceful solo protestors have been unjustly arrested and imprisoned. Their actions demonstrate the continued determination of a young generation of monks and lay people to make strong statements of loyalty to the Dalai

Lama despite their awareness that they will face life-threatening torture and imprisonment when they do so.

YOU CAN HELP SECURE FREEDOM FOR THESE MEN AND WOMEN BY SIGNING THE ENCLOSED PETITION TO SECRETARY OF STATE JOHN KERRY.

ICT is hoping to deliver tens of thousands of petitions from members nationwide calling for Tibetan political prisoners and human rights in Tibet to be at the forefront of all U.S. engagements with the Chinese government.

PLEASE CLIP HERE

PRIORITY PETITION TO U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE JOHN KERRY

Secretary Kerry,

In a world in which so many turn to devastating violence to achieve their aims, the Tibetan people remain resolutely peaceful in protecting their rights and culture. A younger generation in Tibet now faces terrible danger for their non-violent actions.

In a new trend, young Tibetan monks and laypeople are seeking to assert their loyalty to the Dalai Lama and their hopes for freedom by engaging in solo protests. Tashi Dhondup, for instance, simply walked along a street on December 19, 2015, wearing a Buddhist flag on his back and carrying a photograph of Nobel Peace Laureate the Dalai Lama. Chinese officials violently detained and “disappeared” Tashi Dhondup, the fourteenth lone protestor in the Ngaba area of eastern Tibet to have suffered such mistreatment at the hands of the Chinese government in 2015.

WE URGE YOU TO:

- Raise the case of Tashi Dhondup and the other Tibetan lone protestors with the Chinese government as a matter of urgency and call for their release;
- Call upon the Chinese government to address policies in Tibet that threaten the unique culture, religion and identity of the Tibetan people;
- Keep Tibet at the forefront of your engagement with the Chinese government, in support of a China rooted in respect for universal human rights and freedom of expression.

Thank you,

(Sign Here) _____

Name _____ State _____ Zip code _____

