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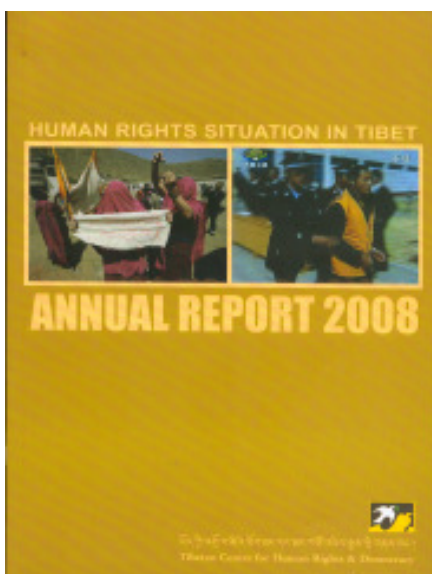
Executive Summary of Annual Report 2008: Human Rights Situation in Tibet

The year 2008 was historic for Tibet! The 49th anniversary of the Tibetan People's Uprising on 10 March 2008 sparked off an unprecedented magnitude of spontaneous mass popular protests in the so-called "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR") and the Tibetan areas outside the "TAR"; Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu and Yunan.¹ The pan-Tibet political uprising this past spring is an eruption of popular resentment against the Chinese authorities' five decades of misrule in Tibet which saw systematic gross violations of human rights in every sphere of life. To China and the world the year was a stark reminder that the Tibet issue needs to be urgently resolved. It is clearly evident that the policies designed and ordered from the faraway central government in Beijing have failed miserably in Tibet. Decades of state propaganda, especially aggressive in the years leading up to the Olympics year, about development in Tibet is torn apart. Tibetans in Tibet yearn for human dignity and fundamental human rights and they have spoken their aspirations clearly and strongly in the pan-Tibet peaceful protests this year.

It was known from the beginning that 2008 being the year of summer Olympics in Beijing was going to be a noisy one for the People's Republic of China for its notorious human rights record. But interestingly nobody foresaw such a huge uprising in Tibet. It is clear that the outside world has underestimated the sentiments of the Tibetans inside Tibet. There were some reservations in certain sections of the international community that there have been some positive changes taking place inside Tibet. However, the uprising in Tibet has shattered that myth for the better. Tibetans inside Tibet are suffering and the Tibetans have spoken their hearts and minds clearly and strongly.

The uprising in Tibet in 2008 saw at least 120 known Tibetans killed in police firing, at least 6500 Tibetans arrested, over a thousand cases of involuntarily or enforced disappearance, at least ten known cases of death due to torture, and at least 190 Tibetans sentenced to varying prison terms from nine months to life imprisonment.² The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) believes that the actual figures could be manifold in light of the magnitude of the uprising in Tibet. However, the government's severe blockade of information which is often linked to "leaking state secrets" and punishable by lengthy prison terms under the charge of "endangering state security" for what is a standard practice of reporting human rights violation has enormously stifled the flow of information. In order to avoid international condemnation, the government engaged in a systematic and intermittent ban on communication channels. Those arrested for communicating to the outside world have been dealt with severely.³

The protests in Tibet subsequently led to the world wide condemnation of Chinese authorities' use of brute armed forces on the Tibetans. Sympathetic individuals and Tibet supporters resonated the call for justice during the global relay of the Olympics torch. Tibet supporters and other rights group activists sent a strong message of condemnation of the grave human rights situation in Tibet and in particular the brute use of armed forces on peaceful protesting Tibetans.⁴ The Chinese authorities in a counter measure whipped up nationalism amongst its citizens as well as those overseas.⁵ Nationalist Chinese lashed severe attacks on western media and dozens of anti-west websites were setup to launch cyber campaigns in conjunction with those on the ground.⁶ But the authorities quickly



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realized that the ordinary Chinese were experiencing a unique opportunity of protest and freedom of association facilitated by the authorities, which could in fact boomerang hard on the government in the future.⁷ This reluctance to accept criticism and prompting conflicts in the name of “nationalism” leads to the conclusion that China fails in these qualities to become a global superpower. One of the key characters of global superpowers is free speech and confidence in its people, yet China fails to exhibit these qualities. In its path to become a global superpower the world has to engage China, and China in turn has to heed with dignity the critique by other countries.

The role of information and communication tools played a vital role during the uprising in Tibet in 2008. Unlike the past large scale protests in the late 1980s and early 1990s which were largely clustered in Lhasa, the protest which began on the 49th anniversary of the Tibetan People’s Uprising on 10 March 2008 rapidly spread like a wild fire. Within a couple of days the protests had already engulfed the whole Tibetan plateau. Modern electronic gadgets and digital technology played a crucial role in the flow of information both within Tibet and to the outside world.⁸ Making it hard for the authorities to deny, evidence of state law enforcement agencies’ use of excessive armed force surfaced in the outside world in the form of mobile phone clips and graphic pictures.⁹ The Chinese authorities were quick to curb the flow of information by cutting channels of communication.¹⁰ When free and independent media persons were being denied access to Tibet to cover the protests, brave individuals took maximum use of modern technology to report the situation on the ground despite the risk of lengthy prison terms and torture when caught. In the absence of independent media; the risk was worth taking felt these brave individuals. Labrang monk Jigme Guri’s video testimony of torture¹¹ and Dhondup Wangchen’s “Leaving Fear Behind” video documentary¹² are some of the leading evidence tapes that have marked a milestone in the use of modern tools in proving human rights violations in Tibet.

Following the March protests in Tibet, the Chinese authorities dismissed several interventions made by high profile entities

entrusted with protecting human rights. In early April, a request made by the then United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Louise Arbour, to visit Tibet to independently assess first-hand the situation on the ground was declined by the Chinese government reasoning that ‘the timing was not convenient.’¹³ Additionally seven United Nations Special Procedures mandate holders issued a joint statement expressing their deep concern over reports of security forces firing on peaceful protesters.¹⁴ The statement called for “restraint and non-violence by all parties, greater and unfettered access to the regions concerned for journalists and independent observers, guarantees for the free flow of information, and full implementation of international standards in regard to the treatment of protestors and those detained, both in the People’s Republic of China and in other countries in which protests are taking place.”¹⁵ The joint statement by experts was never heeded. The International Committee of the Red Cross which has the mandate to monitor the well-being of prisoners worldwide has never been given access to Tibet. PRC’s denial of access to the UN mandates on human rights discredits these offices in general and in a way proves the allegations of gross human rights violations made by the rights group. Clearly China has plenty to cover up in denying access to those entrusted with investigating human rights issues. The government’s non cooperation with the UN Committee against Torture during the examination of the fourth periodic review of China’s compliance to the United Nation’s Convention against Torture (CAT) and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment exposed PRC’s total disregard of the UN human rights mechanism to protect people against torture although it is a state party to the convention.¹⁶

One of the key components of the authorities’ crackdown upon the Tibetan protesters has been minimal tolerance and to strike deadly in order to quell the mass protests. On several occasions the authorities have indiscriminately opened fire into peacefully protesting Tibetans which have resulted in the deaths of many innocent Tibetans. The events in Lhasa, Kardze County and Ngaba County were especially drastic in nature of the retaliation by the armed forces and the actual figures of casualty during an event. On 14 March 2008, Lhasa went up in smoke as the city was gripped by protest. The Chinese armed forces fired live ammunitions on the

protesting Tibetans and around 80 Tibetans were shot dead.¹⁷ There were unconfirmed reports of government agents firing indiscriminately in the cover of darkness. On 3 April 2008, at least 14 Tibetans were shot dead when armed security forces fired live ammunition indiscriminately into a protesting crowd near Tongkhör Monastery in Kardze County¹⁸. The protest broke out when monks of Tongkor Monastery (Ch: Donggu) in Zithang Township, Kardze County, Kardze “Tibet Autonomous Prefecture” (“TAP”), Sichuan Province, called for the release of two monks arrested for objecting to the Chinese ‘Patriotic Education’ campaign in the monastery. The bodies of the dead were not returned to the families. On 16 March 2008, the Chinese security forces made a bloody armed retaliation over a protest in Ngaba County participated by thousands of Tibetans which resulted in the death of at least eight known Tibetan who died after sustaining bullet injuries.¹⁹ The actual number of deaths can be much higher as people have seen at least “30 Tibetans felled” by the armed troops. The youngest among the dead was a 16-year-old girl; Lhundup Tso.²⁰ The UN Committee against Torture in its concluding observation to the examination of the fourth periodic report of China’s compliance to the Convention against Torture has in its recommendation specifically asked for the PRC to give a detail account of the events in Lhasa, Kardze and Ngaba County. PRC as a state party to the convention is bound to provide the details as required by international law and the reply is watchfully awaited by all the concerned parties including the TCHRD.

A crucial tactic employed by the Chinese authorities in order to suppress Tibetan protests is the systematic use of torture in police stations, detention centres and prisons. Torture is used as a tool to break the nationalistic sentiments of the Tibetans and in order to spread a message of intimidation to those who dare to question the state and its officials.²¹ Many Tibetans have been tortured severely as an exemplary case to the others from active participation in protests. In some areas Tibetans have died as a direct result of torture whilst in the custody of state law enforcement agencies. As a direct result of relentless oppression by the Chinese security forces to combat peaceful protests, many anguished Tibetans have taken the ultimate drastic decision of

committing suicide to free themselves from the authorities' constant physical and mental torture.²² In Tibetan Buddhism, ending one's life is considered as one of the gravest forms of sins violating the fundamental principles of the religion. Buddhist monks of Tibet are known for their compassion, patience and resilience in the face of adversity. The cases of suicides by Buddhist monks in Tibet strongly corroborate the fact of use of relentless torture by the authorities.

Besides torture, cases of enforced and involuntary disappearances are enormous.²³ To a certain extent the phenomenon is state sponsored as it is a deliberate attempt by the government to purge dissent by making individuals disappear. Denial of information regarding arrestees is a standard practice by the Chinese prison authorities. Family members are left to run from one police post to another in search of their loved ones although the state agencies are required to inform them mandatorily. In an apparent case of disappearance, Thabkhey and Tsundue, both monks at the Labrang Monastery disappeared after they defiantly briefed the media about the truth on the ground during the government organized media tour to the area on 9 April 2008.²⁴ Midnight mass disappearance too was rampant especially from the monasteries. And perhaps the most prominent case of disappearance is that of the Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, who was abducted in 1995 by the Chinese government and has not been seen till date.²⁵

When massive protests broke out in Tibet, the authorities in a counter measure unleashed the vicious "patriotic education" campaign in order to suppress the Tibetans after the immediate measure of direct brutal crackdown.

²⁶ The authorities' implementation of "patriotic education" acted as rubbing salt on the fresh wounds already sustained by the Tibetans many of whom had either lost their near and dear ones in the protest or someone from the family got arrested or disappeared. The "patriotic education" campaign brought further psychological trauma amongst the Tibetan community especially in the monastic institutions. The campaign acts as a political tool to humiliate the Tibetans and break down their nationalistic sentiments. By early April, "patriotic education" campaign was being extended beyond the monasteries into the

community of lay Tibetan society in rural areas of Ngaba County. "Patriotic education" "work teams" arrived in homes and ordered Tibetans to condemn the recent protests, denounce the Dalai Lama and pledge allegiance to the Communist Party. Eight points were forced to be reiterated in front of a camcorder and those who refused to cooperate were threatened with imprisonment. One of the key components of the patriotic education campaign is the vilification of the Dalai Lama. The opposition and launching of criticism on the Dalai Lama had been the broad policy formulation adopted by the leadership in Beijing. The strategy was to discredit the Dalai Lama of his moral authority and as the legitimate leader of the Tibetan people. Since China maintained a rigid system of information blockage and embargo on Tibetan people inside Tibet, the Chinese leadership presumed that tarnishing the image of the Dalai Lama could win over the hearts and minds of the Tibetan people. However, it was not to be.

Despite almost 50 years of rule by China, the Dalai Lama rules the hearts and minds of the Tibetan people. In the pan-Tibet spring 2008 protests, registered around 300 separate events covering over 90 counties in the so-called "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR")²⁷ and the Tibetan areas outside the "TAR", the call for the return of the Dalai Lama was unanimous. At a point when the protests in Tibet started to turn violent, the Dalai Lama expressly called for an immediate end of violence attached with a warning of resignation if the Tibetans start to abandon the path of non-violent struggle.²⁸ The violent agitation dramatically subsided for the Tibetans can not go against the words of the Dalai Lama against all odds. The Dalai Lama has showed them the path of non violence and at this critical juncture too the exiled leader continues to lead the Tibetan struggle through non violence.

Beijing has repeatedly downplayed the nature of the Tibetan protests through the prism of criminal activities such as looting, smashing, arson, theft and rioting.²⁹ Beijing refuses to see the reality of the political nature of the pan-Tibet popular protests. On 17 March 2008, Zhang Qingli, the "TAR" Communist Party Secretary, urged that there be "quick arrests, quick hearings, and quick sentencing" of the people involved in the protests,³⁰ which was virtually a political directive to circumvent guarantees for a fair

and impartial legal due process. In view of such express orders, fast-track courts in a clear exercise of summary execution of judicial process passed verdicts quickly.³¹ Handing life imprisonment term and lengthy prison terms up to 20 years in a record one and half month's time is self explanatory about the nature of judiciary in Chinese administered Tibet. The nature of the court proceedings and the official interpretation of the Tibetans' activities obviously bring forward the questions of competency of the court and the official downplaying of the nature of the Tibetan activities. The fast paced court verdicts were clear mockery of law and due process.³² In fact in all cases there was absence of due process as required under international law. The purpose and nature of the court in Lhasa obviously is only to provide a legal rubber stamp on pre-concluded convictions without the concept of innocent until proven guilty.³³ Courts in China clearly are not for protection and delivery of justice and on the contrary it acts as a vehicle to legitimize state actions. For instance, 21 Chinese lawyers who had publicly offered to defend Tibetan protesters were forced to withdraw their assistance after judicial authorities in Beijing threatened to discipline them and suspend their professional licenses.³⁴ The authorities claimed that the Tibetan protesters were "not ordinary cases, but sensitive cases." The TCHRD documented at least 190 Tibetans being handed prison terms ranging from nine months to life imprisonment for individuals as young as 16 years old to 80 years old. Out of the total sentenced so far, seven received life imprisonment terms while 90 Tibetans were sentenced to 10 years or more. The Tibetans have been largely sentenced under the charges of "endangering state security"; a controversial legislation which has neither ever been defined properly nor mentioned its scope of application.³⁵ The legislation is used as a blanket cover to strike anyone daring to question the state.

In the aftermath of protest, Tibetan Communist Party members and the civil servants were racially targeted for their loyalty. According to China's Tibet Information Centre on 10 July 2008, 13 Tibetan party members under Lhasa City were expelled from the Communist Party for their involvement in the "March 14 riot" and their failure to uphold the three themes under the renewed "patriotic education" campaign. In another instance the Tibetan CCP members and civil servants were served with

the issuance of a two-month ultimatum on 14 July 2008 to recall their children studying in schools run by the Central Tibetan Administration or face expulsion from party membership and government job.³⁶ Consequently at least 24 students have been pulled out of schools in India and another equal number of students have already made plans to return.³⁷ Every year minors below the age of 18 form the largest number of refugees arriving from Tibet in pursuit of broad based modern education in schools established by the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration in India. As against the usual figure of around two thousand refugees escaping Tibet, this year only 627 Tibetans³⁸ have managed to arrive in India.

At the height of political repression in Tibet in 2008, calls of restraint were consistently issued by the various heads of states as well as world bodies such as the United Nations. In the backdrop of the summer Olympics in Beijing in August 2008, the calls for improvement in human rights in China and particularly dialogue by China with the Dalai Lama to resolve the Tibetan issue were heightened. Although certain issues like pollution in Beijing and free access to foreign journalists were relatively tackled, the Tibet issue remains stagnant. China's refusal to address the issue sends a wrong signal of irrelevance of non-violent movements to the various contemporary struggles being waged in the world. China is head strong in its resolution to pressurise world leaders against meeting with the Dalai Lama and it does so openly. China cancelled a major EU-China summit scheduled at the end of November 2008 because the Dalai Lama would then be visiting Europe around the same time and was scheduled to meet President Sarkozy, the EU President.³⁹ Such a move by China in flexing its economic muscles was unprecedented.⁴⁰

The Sino-Tibet dialogue started in 2002 collapsed after eight rounds of talks till date. At the height of mass protests in Tibet, the Envoys of the Dalai Lama visited China to secure the well being of the Tibetan arrestees and diffuse the tension in Tibet.⁴¹ The Tibetans inside and outside of Tibet banked on the visit for some tangible results finally after years of parleys between the two sides. Despite enormous tension on the ground the visits turned out to be another futile diplomatic exercise.⁴² The eighth round of talks was a litmus test of sincerity of the Chinese side since it took place after the

Beijing Olympics and hence was devoid of pressure on China. As per the strategy China made unprecedented disclosures about the latest talks blasting the Dalai Lama and dismissing the Tibetan demands as "motive of independence" or "half independence" or "independence in disguise etc."⁴³ Soon after the exile Tibetans gathered for a special meeting in Dharamsala which was the first of its kind.⁴⁴ The meeting enjoyed the mandate of free voice of the Tibetan people. Around 560 delegates from 19 countries around the world during the five day meeting resolved to end the negotiations until genuine political will is shown by China.⁴⁵ Despite the Tibetan side's genuine attempts to engage in a result oriented dialogue, China seemingly tried to gain the upper hand by showing of engagement with the Tibetan envoys until the end of Olympics in August. China's strategy was to delay all criticisms at least until the end of the summer Olympics and it has been executed skilfully with an unprecedented press conference soon after the eighth round of talks.⁴⁶

The year 2008 was historic for Tibet with a chain of events throughout the year. The Tibetans inside Chinese occupied Tibet have spoken their heart out with great sacrifices. The brave individuals have championed the spirit of non-violence in the face of extreme adversity. The year 2009 marks the 50th anniversary of exile for the Tibetans. In a conflict ridden world, the Tibet question, especially in the aftermath of the spring 2008 protest, poses a serious moral challenge to the world. It's a test of the world's conscience about the relevance of a non violent struggle and peace and dialogue. Tibet needs humanity to support it in this critical juncture of its history and humanity needs Tibet to continue to show light in the path of non-violence as the only hope for the solution for long standing political issues.

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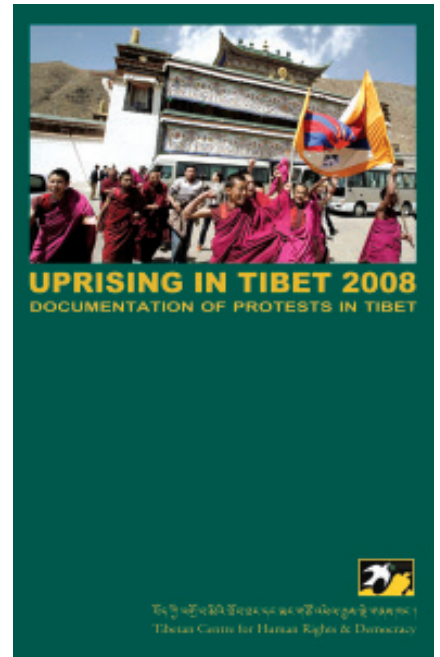
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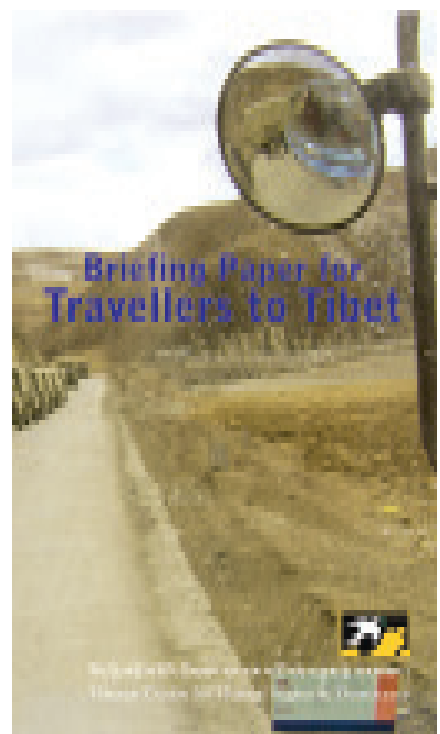
Uprising in Tibet 2008

Human Rights Situation in Tibet: Annual Report 2008

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) releases its 2008 Annual Report: Human Rights Situation in Tibet both in Tibetan and English language. The annual report focuses on three spheres of human rights violations in Tibet viz. Civil and Political Liberties, Right to Information and Religious freedom.

In retrospect, the year 2008 witnessed unprecedented violations of Tibetan's human rights and freedoms in the so called "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR") and the Tibetan areas outside the "TAR"; Sichuan, Gansu, Qinghai and Yunnan. Chinese authorities continue to practice a systematic denial of human rights of the Tibetan people. The pan-Tibet political uprising in the spring of 2008 is an eruption of popular resentment against the Chinese authorities' five decades of misrule in Tibet which saw systematic gross violations of human rights in every sphere of life.

TCHRD received information on more than 120 known Tibetans who were killed in the recent series of protests across the "Tibet Autonomous Region" ("TAR") and the Tibetan areas outside "TAR" since 10 March unrest. Beijing has repeatedly downplayed the nature of the Tibetan protests through the prism of



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criminal activities such as looting, smashing, arson, theft and rioting and refuses to see the reality of the political nature of the pan-Tibet popular protests with different magnitudes covering 90 counties in the "TAR" and non "TAR" areas. More than 6500 Tibetans were arbitrarily detained or arrested for their participation in the pan-Tibet protest of suspected of political activities; There are at least more than a thousand Tibetans whose current whereabouts and well being remains

completely unknown to their family members and their close associates or affiliated monasteries. The XIth Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, has been missing for the past thirteen years along with his parents. There has been no information about his well-being and whereabouts to date;

The year witnessed one of the most ruthless and repressive crackdowns by the Chinese law enforcement agencies in detention centers, police stations, prisons and at the site of demonstrations. Tibet witnessed one of the highest numbers of death from torture this year. There were reports of Tibetans having been shot dead by firing live ammunition, beaten to death or released on their near death condition, for solely raising slogan in support of the Tibetan leader and calling for his swift return to Tibet or for freedom and human rights. There were a few cases of people committing suicide due to the atrocious repression and others who became mentally unstable following inhumane torture;

The Chinese authorities following the March Protest in Tibet dismissed several interventions made by high profile entities entrusted with protecting human rights. In early April 2008, a request made by the then United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Louise Arbour, to visit Tibet to independently assess first-hand the situation on the ground was declined by the Chinese government citing that 'the timing was not convenient.' Additionally six UN Special Procedures mandate holders issued a joint statement expressing their deep concern over reports of security forces firing on peaceful protesters. The statement called for "restraint and non-violence by all parties, greater and unfettered access to the regions for journalists and independent observers, guarantees for the free flow of information, and full implementation of international standards in regard to the treatment of protesters and those detained," but all of these demands were ignored. The International Committee of the Red Cross which has the mandate to visit detention facilities and check on the well being of prisoners worldwide has never been given access to Tibet. The Chinese government non-cooperation with the UN Committee against Torture during the examination of the fourth periodic review of China's compliance to the UN Convention against Torture (CAT) and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment exposed her total disregard of the UN human rights mechanism to protect

people against torture despite being a state party to the Convention.

According to the Centre's documentation, there are hundreds of Tibetans who are still held without any charges and at least 190 Tibetans were known to have been sentenced so far by various county level courts in "TAR" and Tibetan areas outside "TAR" for their participation in the series of protests in 2008. Of these 7 Tibetans were sentenced to life imprisonment for their participation in Tibet protests whereas 90 Tibetans were sentenced to 10 years and more of imprisonment. The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy believes that the actual figures could be manifold in light of the magnitude of the protest in Tibet. The government severe blockade of information, which is often linked to 'leaking state secrets' and punishable by lengthy prison terms under the charge of 'endangering state security' for what is a standard practice of reporting human rights violation, has enormously stifled the flow of information.

In the sphere of right to information, China continues to keep a firm grip on the media outlets and censors their news reports as a matter of routine and Tibet remains virtually sealed off with imposition of communication blackout following major protests in Tibet. Jamming and strict control of foreign radio, TV and news broadcasts in Tibet continued to be stringent.

There are still many Tibetans serving lengthy sentences in various prisons during the past years, there was no development on sentence reduction or early release from imprisonment. The nature of the court proceedings and the official interpretation of the Tibetans' activities obviously bring forward questions of the competency of the court and the official downplaying of the nature of the Tibetan activities. The legitimacy of the court sentencing procedure raised big question as the Tibetans were denied access to a meaningful defense and many were tried secretly. There are hundreds of Tibetans who are still held without any charges.

In the religious sphere, addition to the last year's implementation of the "Tibet Autonomous Region Implementing Measures for the Regulations on Religious Affairs" on 1 January 2007 ("Implementing Measures"), and the more specific Measures on the Management of the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas in Tibetan Buddhism (the Reincarnation Measures), the Chinese authorities launched a stipulated two-month'

renewed "Patriotic education" campaign at the beginning of April 2008 following unprecedented protests across the Tibetan plateau. The campaign was reinvigorated and targeted not only the monastic institutions, which were long considered as the bastion of political dissidence, but also government employees, security forces, farmers, nomads, private entrepreneurs, and educational institutions with more rigor and intensity. The Centre recorded a large number of Tibetans arrested or detained simply for opposing the campaign which requires denouncing their spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, and pledging their allegiance to the Communist Party; Sweeping new measures were introduced by the People's Government of the Kardze "TAP" in Kardze to purge hundreds of monasteries, and to strike hard at heart of the Tibetan monastic communities and its identities, and to restrict religious practice in the wake of protests across the plateau that reveal a systematic new attack on Tibetan Buddhism;

As observed and recommended by the United Nations Committee Against Torture (CAT) to PRC to probe the deaths of Tibetans killed, missing in the spring 2008 protests in Tibet and to adopt measures to prohibit and prevent enforced disappearances, TCHRD wants to reiterate that China should ensure that all persons detained or arrested in the aftermath of the Spring 2008 events have prompt access to an independent lawyer, prompt medical care and the right to lodge complaints free from official reprisal or harassment. It should immediately end the practice of enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention, torture, information blackouts, and respect and comply with international standards of human rights practices and its own constitutional guarantees. It is not enough for China to ratify international human rights conventions or offer verbal commitments to adhere to human rights laws alone, it is high time for the people in China to see concrete improvement and a genuine level of respect and action in the promotion and protection of their human rights.

Along with the 2008 Annual Report, TCHRD also releases two special reports entitled "Uprising in Tibet 2008: Documentation of protests in Tibet" which is a compilation of the events in chronological order since 10 March 2008 till 16 July 2008 and revised version of the "Briefing Paper for Travellers to Tibet."



TCHRD ACTIVITIES

Bulletin

Centre releases its 2008 Annual Report: Human Rights Situation in Tibet

On 21 January 2009, the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) held a press conference at Lhakpa Tsering Hall, Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) for the release of its 2008 Annual Report: Human Rights Situation in Tibet. The Centre's Executive Director briefed a group of Tibetan media from various media agencies, about the current human rights situation in Tibet and answered the question posed by the media personnels.

Again on 22 January 2009, the Centre held a separate press conference for the Indian media

outlet at the Indian Coffee House, Dharamsala for the release of its 2008 Annual Report: Human Rights Situation in Tibet. Around 15 reporters and journalist from different news agencies attended the press conference and the conference was concluded with question answers session with TCHRD staff and reporters.

TCHRD attend 3rd Regional HRDs Forum and the Asia Pacific Regional Consultation on WHRDs

Mr. Tashi Phuntsok, an Information Officer of the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) attended the 3rd Regional Human Rights Defenders Forum and the Asia Pacific Regional Consultation



Mr. Tashi Phuntsok giving a country presentation on HRDs in Tibet who are in risk

on Women Human Rights Defenders from 18 – 20 January 2009 in Bangkok, Thailand. The forum was organized by Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (Forum-Asia) and was attended by 150 human rights defenders from 21 Asian countries. The prominent speakers during the forum includes Mrs. Margaret Sekaggya, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Mr. Pablo Esoiniella, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and Mr. Nuno Caldeira da Silva, European Commission (EC).

On 20 January, Mr. Tashi made a presentation on country situation of Human Rights Defenders in Tibet to the co-participants. He also briefed Mrs. Margaret Sekaggya, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders about the situation of prominent human rights defenders in Tibet who are in risk. Mr. Tashi distributed centre's DVDs and publications during the forum and also at Foreign Correspondence Club of Thailand. The forum was concluded with the Adoption of the 2008 Bangkok Commitment.



Mr. Urgen Tenzin and Mr. Jampa Monlam during the press conference