



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Enforced Disappearance of the Panchen Lama of Tibet: Parliamentarians Urge Access to UN Human Rights Experts

Amsterdam - International Network of Parliamentarians on Tibet (INPaT) today called upon President Hu Jintao of the People's Republic of China to provide access for independent human rights experts and parliamentarians to meet with Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the Eleventh Panchen Lama who remains under enforced disappearance for the past 15 years.

In a letter addressed to President Hu Jintao, the Co-Chairs of INPaT said: "Today, 30 August, on this occasion of the International Day of the Disappeared, on behalf the network of parliamentarians from more than 30 countries, the International Network of Parliamentarians on Tibet (INPaT), approaches your government to reconsider your policy by publicly declaring the whereabouts of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the Eleventh Panchen Lama of Tibet, and his family-members to the world."

"We took this initiative not only to remind the international community about this unresolved case but also to seek a new policy on the part of the Chinese authorities since we don't believe this propaganda of the Panchen Lama wanting 'not to be disturbed' by outsiders really satisfying or convincing anyone," said Hon. Matteo Mecacci from Italy, who is one of the Co-Chairs of INPaT.

Recalling various interventions and recommendations by United Nations human rights mechanisms, the letter asked the Chinese authorities to: "Receive a joint fact-finding mission by the Chairperson of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances and the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief (two experts of the UN Human Rights Council), to ascertain the whereabouts and well-being of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the Eleventh Panchen Lama of Tibet."

INPaT letter criticized that the Chinese authorities "despite repeated appeals by the international community, has refused to divulge any positive information about Gedhun Choekyi Nyima or his family. Since his initial abduction in 1995, public outcry from millions of Tibet supporters has continued to decry your state's actions as illegal violations of numerous international norms."

Urging the Chinese authorities to sign and ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the INPaT appeal letter calls upon President Hu Jintao to also "allow a delegation of international parliamentarians to meet with Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and his family in order to ascertain their well-being."

The letter also said that parliamentarian's remain "deeply concerned by overwhelming cases of enforced disappearances on the Tibetan Plateau following the arbitrary detention of Tibetans since 2008 Tibetan Uprising."

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