

URGENT ACTION

TIBETAN IMPRISONED FOR “INCITING SEPARATISM”

A young Tibetan writer and blogger, Druklo (pen-name Shokjang), was sentenced to three years imprisonment for “inciting separatism”, without access to family and lawyer. He has filed an appeal. According to his appeal letter, his conviction was based on his online posts on religious freedom; the Dalai Lama and other Tibetan issues.



On 19 March 2015, **Druklo** (pen-name Shokjang) was taken away by police officers in Tongren County (Rebkong) in the Huangnan (Malho) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai province, in northwest China. On 17 February 2016, Druklo was sentenced to three years in prison by the Peoples’ Intermediate Court in Tongren County (Rebkong). He did not have access to a lawyer throughout his detention or during his trial, and his family only received notification of his sentencing hearing two days in advance. Druklo is being held at the Tongren Detention Center.

In his appeal letter drafted without legal assistance, Druklo detailed the authorities’ human rights violations and gave his rebuttal. On 16 March 2015, armed personnel in police and army uniforms searched his guesthouse room. They pointed guns at him when Druklo asked them to show him a search warrant. Druklo later posted this event on the internet which became one of the items cited in his conviction. Also cited in his conviction were his comments raising concerns about the right to religious freedom along with a photo showing heavy presence of armed soldiers at a major annual religious event at Kumbum Monastery, an important Tibetan Buddhist site. His repost on social media of a news report about Chinese government talks with the Dalai Lama and his possession of a copy of the banned book “Sky Burial” were also cited in the conviction as evidence of “inciting separatism”.

Druklo is a prominent Tibetan writer and blogger known for his critical articles about the current situation in Tibetan areas. On 16 March 2015, Druklo had written an article on his blog about the 56th anniversary of the failed Tibetan uprising against Chinese rule in 1959, describing the increased police patrols on the streets of Tongren County (Rebkong).

Please write immediately in Chinese, English or your own language:

- Urging the authorities to release Druklo immediately and unconditionally;
- Pending his release, urging the authorities to ensure that he has regular, unrestricted access to his family and lawyers of his choice, without delay, and is protected from torture or other-ill-treatment.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 8 JUNE 2016 TO:

Director
Tongren Detention Centre
Tongren County
Huangnan Tibetan Autonomous
Prefecture
Qinghai Province 811300
People’s Republic of China
Salutation: Dear Director

Governor
Hao Peng
Qinghai Provincial Government Office
12 Xi Dajie
Xining, Qinghai 810000
People’s Republic of China
Fax: +86 0971 8252135
Email: qhsxxgk@163.com
Salutation: Dear Governor

And copies to:
Premier
Li Keqiang
The State Council General Office
2 Fuyoujie, Xicheng Qu
Beijing 100017
People’s Republic of China
Fax: +86 10 65961109
Email: english@mail.gov.cn
Salutation: Your Excellency

Also send copies to: Ambassador Cui Tiankai, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China
3505 International Place NW, Washington DC 20008
Fax: 1 202 495 2138 | Phone: 1 202 495 2266 | Email: chinaembpress_us@mfa.gov.cn

Please let us know if you took action so that we can track our impact! **EITHER** send a short email to uan@aiusa.org with “UA 85/15” in the subject line, and include in the body of the email the number of letters and/or emails you sent, **OR** fill out this [short online form](#) to let us know how you took action. Thank you for taking action! Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 85/15. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/1437/2015/en/>, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/3517/2016/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Druklo was born in Xiahe (Labrang) in Gansu province, in the Tibetan area of Amdo. He is popular among Tibetans for his critical writings, including his books written in Tibetan language, *For freedom I have no regret* and *The courage of Rangdrol*, as well as articles posted online such as *Conflict and Resolution: A Response to Liu Junning*, which is a reflection on China's ethnic policies, and *Tonight, I am in the Grasslands of my Hometown*, which is a critique of the Chinese government's resettlement of Tibetan nomads.

This is the second time Druklo has been targeted by the Chinese authorities. On 6 April 2010, while he was still attending the Northwest University for Nationalities in Lanzhou, Druklo was detained with a fellow student Teurang, for co-editing the banned literary magazine *the Shar Dugri* (Eastern Snow Mountain) in which articles touching on the 2008 protests in Tibetan areas was published. The authorities accused him at the time of having been in contact with the Tibetan Youth Congress, a Tibetan exile organization. He was eventually released on 8 May 2010.

Ethnic Tibetans in China face discrimination and restrictions on their rights to freedom of religious belief, expression, association and peaceful assembly. Tibetan monks, writers, protesters and activists are regularly detained as a result of their peaceful activities.

In recent years the Chinese government has enacted or drafted a series of sweeping laws and regulations under the pretext of enhancing national security. There are fears that they could be used to further silence dissent and crack down on human rights defenders through expansive charges such as “inciting subversion” and “separatism”.

Harsh criminal sentences continue to be imposed in China on writers, bloggers, journalists, academics, whistle-blowers and ordinary citizens for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression. Amnesty International has documented the misuse of the various charges of “separatism” and “terrorism” to violate the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and religion. Since 27 January 2016, Tashi Wangchuk, who advocates for Tibetan language education, has been detained with no access to family and lawyer, and is charged with “inciting separatism”. He could face up to 15 years in prison if found guilty.

Torture and other ill-treatment remain endemic in all places of detention in China, and this risk is even greater for those who are not allowed access to their family or lawyers.

Name: Druklo (pen-name Shokjang)

Gender m/f: Male

Further information on UA: 85/15 Index: ASA 17/3908/2016 Issue Date: 27 April 2016