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Nepal: Tibet Protesters Released

ARTICLE 19 welcomes the Supreme Court’s decision to release three protestors of Tibetan origin being detained for their involvement in organising daily protests against the Chinese regime, which have been increasing in the count down to the Olympics.

The Nepalese police arrested Kelsang Chung, Ngawang Sangmo and Tashi Dolma last month under the Public Security Act and charged them with carrying out acts that affected security, peace and order. Local press have repeatedly covered the Chinese Ambassador’s public calls for the protests to be halted, and widespread violent crack downs on peaceful protestors have been documented by the Nepalese police.

“ARTICLE 19 have been following the Nepalese government’s reactions to Tibetan protests outside the Chinese Embassy and UN building in Kathmandu, and in particular the reprehensible pressure that the Chinese government have placed on the Nepalese to stop ‘undemocratic’ and ‘illegal’ protests,” said Dr. Agnès Callamard, Executive Director of ARTICLE 19.

“The use of severe measures such as preventative detention against the protestors to suppress their right to free speech and peaceful protest is condemnable and a negation of the Nepalese government’s obligations to uphold international human rights standards.”

The Supreme Court ruled on the 7th of July that the police did not have enough evidence to arrest and detain the three involved in organising the protests. The judges elaborated that the authorities had also failed to establish grounds for the arrest of peaceful demonstrators under threat to security and peace.

ARTICLE 19 applauds the decision of the Supreme Court and calls on the Nepalese government not to use preventative detention as a means to suppress the fundamental right of freedom of expression.

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- ARTICLE 19 is an independent human rights organisation that works around the world to protect and promote the right to freedom of expression. It takes its name from Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees free speech.

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