



## Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile

### Introduction

The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile is the highest legislative body of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA). It is one of the three pillars of Tibetan democratic governance – the Judiciary, Legislature and the Kashag (Executive).

The democratization of the Tibetan polity has long been an aspiration of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. He had, in fact, initiated the reforms in Tibet itself but this was interrupted due to China's invasion in 1949/50. Prior to the Chinese invasion, Tibetans experienced little or no democratic governance since important decisions were taken by the Tsogdu (National Assembly), a composition of Kalons (Cabinet members), abbots of the three great monasteries and societal representatives. No direct elections were held. Following His Holiness the Dalai Lama's escape into India in 1959, he formally outlined an introduction of democratic polity in Bodhgaya, India in February 1960. He advised the exile Tibetans to set up an elected body comprising three exile representatives from the three traditional Tibetan provinces and one each from the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Elections were duly held and 13 representatives termed 'Deputies' were elected and designated as the 'Commission of Tibetan People's Deputies' (CTPD). They took their oath on 2 September 1960. This historic date was later celebrated as 'Tibetan Democracy Day'.

### Composition

The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile is unicameral and headed by a Speaker and a Deputy Speaker. The creation of this democratically-elected body has been one of the major changes that His Holiness the Dalai Lama has brought about in his continuous effort to introduce a democratic system based on a unique blend of traditional values and modern norms.

The members of the Tibetan Parliament are elected for a five year term. The current the 16th Parliament was elected in 2016 and has 45 members: 10 representatives from each of the three traditional provinces of Tibet i.e., U-Tsang, Dhotoe and Dhomey; two from each of the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism and the pre-Buddhist Bon religion; and two representing each of the Tibetan communities in North America and Europe; plus one from Asia and Australasia (excluding India, Nepal and Bhutan).

## CV members of Tibetan parliament who visit The Netherlands 2017

### **Ven. Atuk Tsetan:**



He was born on 12 January 1983 in Tibet. In 1991 he fled into exile and joined Drepung Gomang Monastery in India. He worked as a Vice- President of all Gelug His Holiness' Long Life Offering Committee and the President of its Standing Committee. In 2015 he was honored with the Geshe Larampa degree (Ph.D in Buddhist philosophy) He was previously elected to the fifteenth Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile and is currently serving as one of the Standing Committee members of the Sixteenth Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile.

### **Ms. Dolma Tsering Teykhang:**



She was born in 1956 at Dagne, Tibet. She did her schooling at CST Pachmarhi, Madhya Pradesh, and Mussoorie. Following her Bachelor's degree and Teachers' Training course, she worked as a teacher in various Tibetan schools for 26 years for which she was felicitated by the Department of Education, Central Tibetan Administration. During her 17 years at CST Kollegal she worked as the Cultural Secretary of Regional Tibetan Youth Congress, and during her nine years at Upper TCV, she was elected as the Secretary of TCV Staff Welfare Association. She was also elected as the President of the 9th and the 10th U-Tsang Central Executive Committee. As a recipient of a Fulbright Scholarship, she studied Special Education in 1992 in the U.S.A. She was previously elected to the Thirteenth, fourteenth of the Fifteenth Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile and is currently serving on the Standing Committee of the Sixteenth Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile.

### **Mr. Dawa Phunkyi:**



He was born in 1963 in Dharamsala, India. He attended TCV School, Dharamsala, and pursued a diploma in Health Management and a Post-Gratitude Diploma in Health Administration from Christian Medical College, Vellore, and St. John's Medical College, Bangalore respectively. He worked as a Project Officer at the Department of Health, Central Tibetan Administration and as Secretary of Tibetan Delek Hospital. He also served at various NGOs for several years, including as the President Regional Tibetan Youth Congress, the General Secretary of the National Democratic Party of Tibet, the Senior Vice-President of Indo-Tibetan Friendship Society, director of Community Service Rotary Club, Dharamsala, and Vice President of the U-Tsang Cholkha Association. Presently he is the Chief Administrator of Tibetan Delek Hospital since 2006. He was earlier elected to the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile.

### **Mr. Ngawang Tharpa:**



He was born in 1980 at Sog Dzong, Kham, Tibet. He studied Buddhist Philosophy and Science at Tsendhen Monastery in Sog Dzong. Fleeing to India in 1996, he studied at the Tibetan Transit School for three years. From 2000-2006 he worked at Norbulingka Institute as section head for the Achieve and computer sections and created around 20 bi-lingual websites during his leisure time. He was also a member of the Dharamsala Information Technology Group (DITG). In 2007, as an active member of the Wildlife Protection Society of India (WPSI), he has conducted workshops at various Tibetan Settlements in India on the protection of the environment, particularly against the use of animal skins. Since 2006 he has been working as the administrator, web-master and reporter at Khawa Karpo Tibet Culture Centre in Dharamsala. He is also the President of the 8th Local Tibetan Assembly, Dharamsala, the President of Dra-Sog-Dri-Sum Association and the Vice-General Secretary of Central Dhokham CHushi-Gangdruk.