



## **Joint Statement on the Human Rights Situation in Tibet Following the Self-Immolation of Tibetan Freedom Activist Lobga Rangzen**

**3 July, 2026**

We, the Tibetan Communities Association of Australia and the Australia Tibet Council, are devastated and deeply saddened by reports that Tibetan activist Lobsang Palden, widely known as Lobga Rangzen, set himself on fire outside the United Nations Headquarters in New York City on the evening of 2 July, 2026. He died of his injuries soon after.

Hours before, he called for Tibetans in exile to work together and stronger, for the Tibetan freedom movement, regardless of our roles in our community, and life in exile. He stated that we should recommit ourselves to the movement wholeheartedly. He stated that he was in opposition to China's new Ethnic Unity Laws.

This tragic incident highlights the profound despair experienced by many Tibetans living under increasingly severe restrictions on their fundamental rights and freedoms. Since 2009, in desperation, 160 Tibetans in Tibet have also self-immolated to protest against Chinese repression. No one should feel driven to such desperate acts in order to draw international attention to the suffering of their people.

The underlying reality facing Tibetans is well documented. Across Tibet, authorities continue to impose sweeping restrictions on freedom of religion, language, culture, expression, and peaceful assembly. Tibetan community leaders, writers, monks, educators, environmental defenders, and ordinary citizens continue to face surveillance, arbitrary detention, imprisonment, and other forms of repression for peacefully exercising their rights.

Recent policies, including China's National Law on Ethnic Unity and Progress, which went into effect one day prior on 1 July, further expand state control over Tibetan identity and civic life, deepening concerns about the protection of fundamental human rights.

The international community must not allow Tibet to disappear from global attention.

We call upon governments, the United Nations, and democratic institutions worldwide to:

- Publicly raise concerns regarding the deteriorating human rights situation in Tibet.
- Urge the Government of the People's Republic of China to respect the rights of Tibetans in accordance with its obligations under international human rights law.
- Renew efforts to secure meaningful and independent access to Tibet for UN experts, journalists, and international observers.
- Continue advocating for the release of Tibetan political prisoners and greater transparency regarding their treatment and conditions.
- Support efforts to preserve Tibet's unique language, religion, culture, and heritage.

At this difficult time, we extend our thoughts to Lobga, his family, and all Tibetans who continue to endure the consequences of ongoing repression.

The world cannot afford to look away.

Australia Tibet Council & Tibetan Communities Association of Australia