

## Rothman & Kirk Lead Bipartisan Coalition Denouncing Execution Of Tibetan By China

March 10, 2003

Rothman & Kirk Lead Bipartisan Coalition

Denouncing Execution Of Tibetan By China

Members of Congress Call for Commuting Death Sentence of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche,  
Question China's Sincerity About Bilateral Human Rights Dialogue

Washington, DC - Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ9) and Congressman Mark Steven Kirk (R-IL10) today called upon the Chinese government to commute the death sentence of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche -- a Tibetan monk, end its abusive human rights practices against Tibetans, and account for the execution earlier this year of a Tibetan man, Mr. Lobsang Dhondup. Rothman and Kirk authored a letter to the Vice President of China Hu Jintao that was signed by 64 of their House colleagues, including Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, in order to draw attention to human rights abuses against Tibetans by the Chinese government.

"The execution of Lobsang Dhondup is a drastic escalation by the Chinese in their repression of the Tibetan people, and I am very disturbed about the precedent that this sets for future cases," Rothman said. "My colleagues and I have serious concerns that the minimum guarantees of due process, including freedom from torture or mistreatment, freedom from arbitrary arrest or detention, and the right to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, were not afforded to Lobsang Dhondup or Tenzin Delek Rinpoche."

In April 2002, Tenzin Delek Rinpoche and Lobsang Dhondup were arrested and charged with involvement in a series of bombings in Kandze and Chengdu, China. Both were sentenced to death in December 2002. Although this initial trial was open, the men were denied representation of their choosing. On January 25, 2003, Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's appeal was denied in a closed, secret hearing by the Sichuan Higher People's Court. The following day, Lobsang Dhondup was reportedly executed.

"I am deeply troubled by reports that these men were subjected to mistreatment in detention, that they were held incommunicado for eight months, and that they were denied legal counsel of their choosing," Rothman stated. "All of this happened in December 2002, when the U.S. and China were involved in bilateral human rights talks, and the U.S. Department of State had expressed concern about these cases to the Chinese government. At this time, I have serious doubts about the sincerity of the Chinese government's alleged commitment to respect the human rights of the Tibetan people."

Rothman, a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations and a member of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, has been a leader in promoting human rights for the Tibetan people. Senator Jim Jeffords (I-VT) circulated a similar letter in the U.S. Senate.

###

[Go back](#)