

The case of Tibetan environmental defender Anya Sengdra

Considering that Anya Sengdra (also known as A-Nya Sengdra¹, a nomad from Gade County in the Tibetan region of Golog (Qinghai Province), is an environmental defender in Tibet known for his peaceful actions against local corruption, illegal mining activities, as well as the hunting and poaching of endangered species;

Recognizing that he was arbitrarily arrested on 4 September 2018 at the age of 47, and was beaten and held without access to a lawyer during the first 48 days of his detention;

Noting that he was charged with “provoking troubles, forming a mob to disturb public order, and other malicious acts,” and was sentenced to seven years in prison on 6 December 2019 by the Gade County Court (in Chinese: Gande), in Golog (Guoluo), Qinghai Province, in the Tibetan region of Amdo;

Noting that Anya Sengdra was not released at the end of his sentence on 3 September 2025, but according to reliable sources, his sentence was reportedly extended by one year allegedly for theft without any official announcement or transparent judicial procedure from the People’s Republic of China;

Noting that this extension of his deprivation of liberty, not being based on a judicial decision in accordance with international standards, constitutes arbitrary detention, in violation of the right to a fair trial, including the right to legal counsel and to an effective remedy;

Expressing deep concern about the deterioration of Anya Sengdra’s health, observed during the first family visit since his arrest, in August 2025, as well as the lack of access to appropriate medical care;

Noting that on 10 August 2023, three United Nations Special Rapporteurs raised the cases of detained Tibetan environmental defenders, including that of Anya Sengdra, and urged the Chinese government to provide details regarding the reasons and location of their detention, their health conditions, to provide them with adequate medical care, and to allow family visits;

Stressing that over the past two decades, as the Chinese government has intensified mining projects, dam construction, urbanization, and other infrastructure developments across Tibet, environmental defenders have faced increasing persecution as a result of their efforts;

The International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and its member organizations:

- Demand the immediate and unconditional release of Anya Sengdra, in accordance with international human rights standards and international humanitarian law;
- Call on the Chinese authorities to ensure respect for the right to a fair trial, in particular through transparent judicial procedures, effective access to legal counsel, and the right to an effective remedy against any detention decision or extension of sentence;
- Urge the international community, particularly the United Nations, to increase diplomatic pressure on China to put an end to the arbitrary detention of Tibetan environmental defenders in Tibet;
- Reaffirm their solidarity with environmental defenders in Tibet, and support their efforts to protect the rights of the Tibetan people and to safeguard their natural environment in the face of mining, dam-building, urbanization, and other infrastructure projects;

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