

Tibet Activists Speak at UTS

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December 2010



Tenzin Dorjee, Executive Director, and Tenzin Dolkar, USA Grassroots Director of "Students for a Free Tibet" (SFT) were guest speakers in the Seminary's "World Religions and Global Conflict" class on December 8th. As a chapter-based network of young people and activists around the world, SFT works in solidarity with the Tibetan people in their struggle for freedom and independence. At any given time, SFT is involved in two or three major campaigns intended "to make China's occupation of Tibet too costly to maintain."



In their presentation, Dorjee and Dolkar depicted Tibet as a "human rights black hole." They highlighted the plight of monks, artists, intellectuals and students who are subject to lengthy internments for what in many cases are trivial offenses such as possession of a Tibetan flag. They made the case for Tibet's historical sovereignty and updated the class on the current situation, notably the Chinese government's decision to replace Tibetan with Chinese as the language of instruction in Tibetan schools and campaigns in support

of Liu Xiaobo, the jailed recipient of the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize. They also noted a shift in dissent within Tibet from dramatic protest-based activities to a Gandhi-style civil disobedience, non-cooperation-based empowerment movement.



The People's Republic of China (PRC) invaded Tibet in 1950 and considers it to be an inalienable part of the motherland. They characterize the exiled Dalai Lama, Tibet's spiritual leader, as a "splittist" even though, as Dorjee and Dolkar pointed out, he actually favors a "Middle Way" of "meaningful autonomy" between Chinese position that Tibet is part of China and SFT's position that Tibet is an independent nation.



For more information on SFT, see www.studentsforafreetibet.org.