

RICHARD REOCH
Curriculum Vitae
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Born: 23 August 1948; Toronto, Canada

Nationality: Canadian

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SUMMARY

Richard Reoch has devoted his life to defending human rights, working for peace and protecting the environment. He has an extensive background in high-level international leadership. He was a senior director of several international organisations and initiatives, including the global human rights organization Amnesty International.

Outline:

- International Relations
- Health Systems
- Buddhist & Mindfulness Study and Practice
- Languages
- Education and Professional Training
- Selected Writings, Talks and Films

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Sustained involvement in the leadership of international public affairs organizations and initiatives:

Chair of the International Working Group on Sri Lanka, an independent network of diplomats, experts and international agencies dedicated to peace, human rights and development in Sri Lanka (1998 – present); former independent chairperson of the NGO Forum on Sri Lanka, a consortium of international Non-Governmental Organizations working in Sri Lanka.

Member of the high-level International Interfaith Delegation to the Rohingya refugee camp complex on the Myanmar-Bangladesh border (2018). Consultant to the Buddhist Humanitarian Project initiated at that

time (2018). Return mission to the Rohingya camp complex as part of a “Justice for All” delegation examining the issue of education for the estimated 500,000 children and young people in the camps (November 2025).

Invited to serve as Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Mindfulness Initiative, which trains and assists the All-Party Parliamentary Mindfulness Group of the UK Parliament. The Mindfulness Initiative was the organizer of the international “Mindful Politics” conference attended by legislators from 15 countries (2017).

Chair, Executive Committee, The Rainforest Foundation International (1996 – 1998); Secretary of the International Board of Directors, The Rainforest Foundation International (1992 – 1995); Trustee, The Rainforest Foundation, UK (1994 – 2015).

Senior leadership positions in Amnesty International during a period of service in its International Secretariat, both in London and in Asia (1972 – 1993).

Working travel in some 60 countries. Multicultural conference and workshop organizing, with public presentations and addresses to community organizations and professional bodies including the Marrakesh Declaration Conference on the Protection of Minorities in Majority Muslim Countries, the Foreign Press Association (London), the Press Club of India, the Foreign Correspondents' Clubs of Hong Kong and Japan, the Bar Associations of Karachi, Hyderabad and Kathmandu, the United Nations Association of Great Britain, the United Kingdom Assistant Prison Governors' Association, the Senior Command Course for Senior Police Officers in the United Kingdom and the Inaugural Conference of the Human Rights Information and Documentation System (HURIDOCS), Strasbourg (1974 – present).

Senior management responsibility for the international public information program of Amnesty International: representing the organization to the news media; directing a specialized department functioning in four official languages, with offices in London, Colombo, Hong Kong, Madrid, Paris, San José and translation units and press officers in some 50 countries; issuing books, leaflets, electronic news service, film and video material. Initiated the Asian development program of Amnesty International, working and travelling widely for five years in the region; conference organizer for the South Asia Regional Conference of Amnesty International in New Delhi, 1975, and the First Pacific Regional Conference, 1976; established the South Asia Publications Service in Colombo, Sri Lanka and was its senior manager from the International Secretariat of Amnesty International from 1975 to 1989; supervised the subsequent creation of the Asia Distribution Service in Hong Kong (1975 – 1993).

Representative of the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture on the Indo-British Project for the Prevention of Torture of the Indian National Human Rights Commission and the British Council (2002-2003).

Facilitator, Strategic Planning Review, The Irish Council for Civil Liberties,

Dublin, Republic of Ireland (2001).

Facilitator, Strategic Planning Meetings, the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, established under the Belfast Agreement to develop a Bill of Rights (2000).

Facilitator, Planning Consultations, the Committee on the Administration of Justice, the principal human rights NGO in Northern Ireland (1999 – 2009).

Invited to carry out review of the publications program of Unicef (UK) (1999 – 2000).

Independent Evaluator, "Accord Programme", Conciliation Resources, the international conflict resolution facilitation body (1999).

Amnesty International mission delegate to Northern Ireland (1999).

Author, "Preventing Torture", the Official Handbook for Field Staff of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) (1999).

Editor, Hearing Thunder, annual review of the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture, London (1999).

Independent human rights expert attached to the UK government's Department for International Development evaluation of the International Committee of the Red Cross and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees activity in the conflict zones in Sri Lanka (1998).

Media expert on the Election Observation Mission for the Extraordinary Presidential Election in Armenia, March 1998 – Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) (1998).

Evaluator for The Westminster Foundation of Article 19 research and report on Freedom of Expression and the Media in Belarus, which investigated the role of the media in national elections and the constitutional referendum (1997).

Facilitator, "Regional Workshop: Women's Rights are Human Rights", the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development, Thailand (1996).

Leader, workshops on public information, convened by Directory for Social Change, UK (1995).

Facilitator, Consultation on Human Rights Strategies for Sri Lanka convened by NOVIB, The Netherlands, in conjunction with the Civil Rights Movement of Sri Lanka, Inform, Law and Society Trust, Movement for Development and Democratic Rights and Movement for Interracial Justice and Equality (1995).

Contributor, "Universal Rights, International Law" for *A Vision of Hope*, the commemorative volume of the United Nations for its 50th Anniversary.

(1995).

Editor, *Human Rights: The New Consensus*, Regency Press in collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (1994).

Facilitator, "Conference on Human Rights, the Northern Ireland conflict and the Peace Process" convened by the Committee on the Administration of Justice, Belfast (1994).

Team Leader, NOVIB Human Rights Evaluation Project, Sri Lanka (1993).

Human Rights Coordinator, Inter Press Service Third World News Agency, Rome. Responsible for advising on and coordinating editorial planning for IPS participation in the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights (1993).

Head of Press and Publications, Amnesty International. Senior management responsibility for the organization's worldwide public information program (1980 – 1992).

Head of Press and Communications, Amnesty International. Directing the international Press Office (1978 – 1980).

Regional Liaison Officer for Asia, Amnesty International. Responsible for organizational development in Asia (1974 – 1978).

Research and Office Assistant at the International Secretariat of Amnesty International (1972 – 1974).

Program Director, Open Windows Community Program, Trinity College, University of Toronto (1970 – 1971).

HEALTH SYSTEMS

Instructor of Zhan Zhuang Chi Kung for the Lam Association founded by Master Lam Kam Chuen, under the authority of Professor Yu Yong Nian (Beijing). Member of the first group of western students ever to hold this authorization; began studies 1985. Holds title "Sifu" (authorization 2002 – present).

Author of *Dying Well - A holistic guide for the dying and their carers*, 1997, published in order of date in the UK, Australia, USA, the Netherlands, France, Canada, Sweden (1997). Other editions in other languages followed.

Leader, training programmes in personal development, advocacy skills and stress management for Community Health Council staff, the National Health Service, NW Region, UK (1996).

Tai Chi Chuan Instructor, Sharp End and Hoxton Health Group, City and East London Family and Community Health Services (1996 – 2001).

Shiatsu Practitioner, Hoxton Health Group, City and East London Family and Community Health Services (1994 – 1996).

London Shiatsu Graduate Support Group, Joint Convenor (1993 – 1994).

Tai Chi Chuan instructor, European School of Osteopathy, Maidstone, Kent (1992 – 1995).

Tai Chi Chuan instructor, Royal College of Nursing (1991 – 1993).

Tai Chi Chuan tutor, Islington Adult Education Authority, London / Islington Federal College (1990 – 1999).

BUDDHIST & MINDFULNESS STUDY AND PRACTICE

Invited to serve as Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Mindfulness Initiative. Responsibility included supporting the registration of the organization as a Charity in the UK. The Mindfulness Initiative provides the secretariat to the All-Party Mindfulness Group of the UK Parliament (2017 – 2018).

Invited to deliver two Presidential Addresses at Al Akhawayn University, Morocco: “Seeds of War; Seeds of Peace” (2014) and “Is Enlightened Society Possible?” (2015) and invited, as Visiting Professor, to teach and lead programs on mindfulness for the university leadership, faculty and students (2016 – 2018).

Personal Envoy of the Sakyong of Shambhala (2015 - 2018).

President of Shambhala, installed by Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, head of the global Shambhala Mandala (2002 – 2014).

Director of the Consecration of The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya, Rocky Mountain Shambhala Center, Colorado, USA (1999 – 2001).

Tutor, Buddhist programs at Maryland College, adult education programme, Bedfordshire, UK (2000/2001).

European Secretary of Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche (1999 – 2002).

Director and Chair of Council, London Shambhala Meditation Centre.(1998 – 2000).

Vajrayana Seminary, Rocky Mountain Shambhala Center -- teachers: Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, Khenpo Tsultrim Gyampo (1997).

Vajradhatu Seminary, Rocky Mountain Shambhala Center (received transmission from Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche) commenced Ngöndro practice as Tantrika (1996).

Member of the Council of The Shambhala Centre London.

Bodhisattva Vow conferred by Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche (1995).

Given Buddhist name *Tashi Changchup*, Auspicious Enlightenment, by Sawang Ösel Rangdrul Mukpo (1994).

Commenced Shambhala Training programme at the Shambhala Centre London (1993).

Buddhist study and travel in Asia; secured intervention by His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama on behalf of imprisoned Buddhist monks in the Republic of Viet Nam (1974 – 1978).

Soto Zen meditation courses, Rochester Zen Centre, USA, and York University, Canada (1969 – 1970).

Raised in a Buddhist family associated with the Japanese-Canadian Jodo Shin-shu congregation at The Toronto Buddhist Church (spiritual director: the Ven. Takashi Tsuji); and donors to the Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, Sri Lanka (1956 – 1970).

LANGUAGES

English (parent tongue)
 French (competent conversation and reading)
 Spanish (cursory reading)

EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Member of the Register of the Shiatsu Society (MRSS). (1994)

"Death and Dying": Course KK260, The Open University. (1994)

Taoist Images of the Body; Chinese Medicine and the Classics -- Fr Claude Larre (Orientations). (1992)

Advanced Shiatsu: Shiatsu, Moxa and Magnets, Levels 1 & 2 -- Kiiko Matsumoto. (1991)

Professional Diploma in Shiatsu and Traditional Oriental Medicine, The Shiatsu College, London. (1990 – 1992)

Teamwork for Managers and Professionals, The Coverdale Organization, London. (1989)

Postgraduate study in aesthetics, Faculty of Arts and Science, University of Toronto. (1971)

Honours degree course in English Language and Literature (Bachelor of Arts), Trinity College, University of Toronto. (1966 -1971)

University of Toronto Schools, Province of Ontario scholar. (1958 – 1966)

Crescent School, Toronto. (1952 – 1957)

SELECTED WRITINGS, TALKS AND FILMS

“Mindfulness on the frontlines – Reclaiming human sanity in the midst of torture and terror” in *Responding to Mindfulness: Developing Agency in Urgent Times – A compilation of essays*, 2021. Available at www.themindfulnessinitiative.org

“Meditating on the Buddha in the midst of Buddhist Terror”:
<https://dhakacourier.com.bd/news/Society/Meditating-on-the-Buddha-in-the-midst-of-Buddhist-Terror/292>, Lion’s Roar, (9 May 2018).

“[Eyewitness Rohingya](#)”, presentation to the Hillary Clinton Center for Women’s Empowerment, Al Akhawayn University, Morocco (2018)

“Do no harm”, in *Do No Harm – Mindful Engagement for a World in Crisis*, ed. Thais Mazur & Wendy Wood, Integral Publishers, Tucson, Arizona (2016)

[The Buddhists who are speaking out](#), Shambhala Times (2015)

[The Broken Hearted Activist](#), updated text based on the original presented in the *Practicing Peace in Times of War* with Ani Pema Chödrön (2015)

[The Great Ornament in Space](#), presentation on meditation-in-action filmed at Kings Cross and St Pancras’ train stations in London (2015)

[Is Enlightened Society Possible?](#) filmed presidential lecture with Questions and Answers at Al Akhawayn University, Ifrane, Morocco (2015)

“Foreword”, in *The Complex Buddhist – Doing Good in a Challenging World*, Ron Schultz, Emergent Publications, Arizona, (2015)

[Seeds of War, Seeds of Peace: Religious Conflict in Today’s World](#), filmed presidential lecture with Questions and Answers at Al Akhawayn University, Ifrane, Morocco (2014)

[Enlightened Society Meditation on Open Heart Project](#) online reflections on challenges of living in the VUCA world (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous), followed by a three-phase “Enlightened Society Meditation”, questions and answers. Hosted by Susan Piver, founder of the Open Heart Project (21 April 2014)

[Compassionate Abiding](#), guided meditation filmed at Shambhala Mountain Center (2014)

[The Broken Hearted Activist](#), filmed interview with Kaleigh Isaacs at Shambhala Mountain Center (2014)

[“Is the future back in the picture?”](#), Shambhalanews.com (2013)

[Awake in the World](#), short films from the Festival jointly hosted by the London Shambhala Centre and SOAS at the University of London, filmed and edited by Richard Reoch (2013)

[On Aging: My Big Yellow File](#), Shambhala Times (2012)

[Enlightened Society, Buddhist Geeks](#), online interview with Vince Horn of “Buddhist Geeks”, recorded in Boulder, Colorado (2012)

[“A Buddhist Brawl”](#) in *Mindful Politics*, ed. Melvin McLeod, Wisdom Publications, Boston (2006)

[Ashoka’s Choice: Mass Murder or Compassion](#), keynote address at the Sustainable Resources Conference, Boulder, Colorado (2003)

[The Great Stupa of Dharmakaya](#), published by and available from Shambhala Mountain Center (2001)

[“Complementary Therapies for the dying, the bereaved and their carers”](#), in *Complementary Therapies for Physical Therapists*, Butterworth Heinemann, London (2000)

[Dying Well – A holistic guide for the dying and their carers](#), published in order of date in the UK, Australia, USA, the Netherlands, France, Canada, Sweden (1997)

[“Universal Rights, International Law”](#) in *A Vision of Hope*, the commemorative volume of the United Nations for its 50th Anniversary, Regency Press, London (1995)

[Human Rights: The New Consensus](#), edited by Richard Reoch, Regency Press, London, in collaboration with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (1994)

Blog: *Huffington Post UK:* <http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/richard-reoch>

Other writings include numerous human rights articles, six plays, editorial collaboration on books by Master Lam Kam Chuen: *The Way of Energy* (Gaia Books, 1991) and *Step-by-Step Tai Chi* (Gaia Books, 1994), *The Feng Shui Handbook* (Gaia Books, 1996), *The Personal Feng Shui Manual* (Gaia Books, 1997), *The Way of Healing* (Gaia Books, 1999), *The Feng Shui Kitchen* (Gaia Books, 2000). Author of *Stand Still - Be Fit* to accompany the Channel Four TV series of that name (1995). *Dying Well - a holistic guide for the dying and their carers*, (Gaia Books, 1997), “Complementary Therapies for the dying, the bereaved and their carers”, *Complementary Therapies for Physical Therapists* (Butterworth Heinemann, London 2000), *Qigong Workbook for Anxiety* (New Harbinger Publications, USA, 2014)

Biographical references: *Current World Leaders, International Who’s Who in Western Europe*