

Progress in Human Rights over the 40 Years of Reform and Opening Up in China

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Foreword

2018 marks the 40th anniversary of reform and opening up in China. The Communist Party of China (CPC) has led the people in carrying out this great new revolution in the new era – one that holds the key to the destiny of contemporary China. Reform and opening up has helped to liberate and develop social productive forces. It has opened up a path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and ushered in a new chapter in the development of human rights.

Over the four decades, the Chinese people have worked hard as one under the strong and coherent leadership of the CPC. Huge changes have taken place, and living standards have significantly improved. The Chinese nation has risen and become prosperous and strong.

Over the four decades, the CPC has always prioritized the people's interests, ensuring that reform is conducted for the people and by the people, and that its benefits are shared by the people. It has worked to safeguard the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the people, respect human values and dignity, and promote the well-rounded development of the people.

Over the four decades, China has showed respect for, protected and promoted human rights in the course of reform and opening up. It has blazed a trail of development in human rights that conforms to the national conditions, and created new experiences and new progress in safeguarding human rights.

Over the four decades, China has summed up its historical experience, drawn on the achievements of human civilization, combined the universal principles of human rights with the prevailing realities of the country, and generated a series of innovative ideas on human rights. It has brought into being basic rights that center on the people and prioritize their rights to subsistence and development, and proposed that China should follow a path of comprehensive and coordinated human rights development under the rule of law.

Over the four decades, China has carried out extensive exchanges and cooperation in the field of human rights, earnestly fulfilled its international human rights obligations, fully participated in international human rights affairs, actively promoted reform of the global human rights governance system, worked hard for the building of a global community of shared future, and made a consistent contribution to the international cause of human rights.

I. Firmly Establishing a Governance Principle of Respecting and Protecting Human Rights

It is the determination and ultimate goal of the CPC and the Chinese government to respect and protect human rights. Since the launch of reform and opening up in 1978, “respecting and protecting human rights” has been written into the reports to CPC

National Congresses, the Constitution of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Constitution of the Communist Party of China, and strategies and plans for national development, becoming an important principle of governance for the CPC and the Chinese government.

That the state respects and protects human rights has been established as an important principle of the Constitution of the PRC. The Constitution is the fundamental law of a country, making it a declaration of human rights protection. As the supreme law, the Constitution of China effectively ensures that the people are masters of the country, and has promoted the cause of human rights in China. In 1954, the first Constitution of the PRC was created. The Constitution of 1982 stipulated clearly in the “General Principle” and “The Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens” that all people enjoy a wide range of rights, including personal rights, right to dignity, property rights, political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights.

Since then the state has revised the Constitution five times in accordance with the developments and requirements of reform and opening up, enhancing the status of human rights. In 2004, the Constitution established the principle that “the state respects and protects human rights”, and further clarified citizens’ rights in the economic, political, cultural and social fields. This launched a new stage where human rights develop under the guidance of constitutional principles. The amendment to the Constitution adopted in 2018 guarantees the principal position of the people, ensuring in the new era the development of socialist human rights with Chinese characteristics, and the realization of the Two Centenary Goals and the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation.

Respecting and protecting human rights is a pursuit in CPC governance. Based on the realities of reform and opening up, the CPC has proposed a series of ideas on human rights in China, constantly adding new elements to reflect the changes in our time. In 1997, the 15th CPC National Congress clearly stated: “As a ruling party, the Communist Party leads and supports the people in exercising the power of running the state, holding democratic elections, making policy decisions in a democratic manner, instituting democratic management and supervision, ensuring that the people enjoy extensive rights and freedom endowed by law, and respecting and guaranteeing human rights.” In 2002, “human rights are respected and guaranteed” was written into the report to the 16th CPC National Congress as an important goal of socialist political progress. In 2007, when summarizing “sound development of the cause of human rights” over the previous five years, the report to the 17th CPC National Congress further pointed out: “We must respect and safeguard human rights, and ensure the equal right to participation and development for all members of society in accordance with the

law.” And in the same year, this principle was written for the first time into the CPC Constitution.

In 2012, the principle that “human rights should be fully respected and protected” was defined by the 18th CPC National Congress as an important goal in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, establishing the importance of human rights from a strategic perspective. The CPC Constitution amended and adopted at this congress reaffirms the principle of respecting and protecting human rights. In 2014, the Fourth Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee adopted the “Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Major Issues Concerning Comprehensively Advancing the Rule of Law”, making a major strategic plan to comprehensively advance the rule of law as part of its effort to modernize the state governance system and enhance its administrative capacity. The resolution emphasizes the need to “provide stronger judicial protection of human rights” and to “strengthen awareness throughout the whole of society about the need to respect and safeguard human rights”. In 2017, the CPC 19th National Congress established Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era as the guiding ideology of the CPC, and clearly stated that we should “strengthen legal protection for human rights to ensure that the people enjoy extensive rights and freedoms as prescribed by law”. Xi Jinping thought raises new and higher development requirements for China’s human rights in the new era, and provides fundamental principles for us to follow the path and advance the cause of human rights with Chinese characteristics.

It has become a core goal of national development to respect and protect human rights. In its national development strategies, the Chinese government upholds the values of respecting and safeguarding human rights, and is committed to improving the people’s wellbeing, safeguarding their rights, and promoting their well-rounded development.

To meet the requirements of building socialism with Chinese characteristics since the three-step development strategy for achieving modernization was laid out in the early days of reform and opening up, the CPC and the Chinese government have always pursued the goals of improving people’s living standards and ensuring that they enjoy various basic rights. Since the 18th CPC National Congress, the Central Committee led by General Secretary Xi Jinping has made it clear that, in governing the country, it will follow the goal of meeting the people’s aspiration to live a better life and subsequently set the Two Centenary Goals. In 2017, the 19th CPC National Congress proposed that on the basis of completing the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects by 2020, a two-step approach should be taken to build China into a strong and modern socialist country by the middle of the century.

In accordance with the requirements and strategies for building a modern socialist country, the Chinese government has made a national plan every five years from 1953 to 2001 for the development of the economy, culture, society, and other sectors. In 2006, the detailed, micro plan with growth targets was transformed to a macro program for national economic and social development. China has formulated 13 such programs for national economic and social development, covering poverty elimination, education, healthcare, employment, social security, democracy and the rule of law, and the anti-corruption campaign and involving economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights. These plans set out the guiding principles, goals, basic requirements and implementation measures for the development of human rights.

In response to the UN Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the Chinese government has made and carried out the National Human Rights Action Plan (2009-2010), National Human Rights Action Plan (2012-2015), and National Human Rights Action Plan (2016-2020), setting phased goals and tasks for respecting and safeguarding human rights. It has fulfilled the targets set in the first two action plans, and is working on the third. The Chinese government has also formulated special action plans relating to the economy, culture, society, the environment and other fields, as well as special plans to protect the rights of specific groups such as ethnic minorities, women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. In so doing, the government is determined to ensure equal opportunities for all people to live a rewarding life, realize their dreams, and enjoy full access to human rights.

II. Better Protecting the Rights to Subsistence and Development

Over the past 40 years, China has worked to better protect basic human rights, with its primary focus on the rights to subsistence and development. Development is China's top priority in governance and considered to be the key to addressing the country's main problems. China has focused on ensuring and improving people's wellbeing by resolving their most serious and urgent problems, realizing historic leaps from poverty to securing access to food and clothing, and thence to moderate prosperity.

Tremendous achievements in poverty reduction. Poverty elimination is the top priority in China's effort to protect human rights. Reform and opening up have been a great driving force for poverty elimination in China. Over the past four decades, the Chinese government has made continuous endeavors in poverty reduction, concentrating

on development-oriented poverty alleviation in rural areas. The government has carried out large-scale development-oriented poverty-alleviation campaigns across the country in a planned and organized way, and implemented a number of medium- and long-term programs, including the Seven-Year Program for Lifting 80 Million People Out of Poverty (1994-2000), the Outline for Development-Oriented Poverty Alleviation for China's Rural Areas (2001-2010), and the Outline for Development-Oriented Poverty Alleviation for China's Rural Areas (2011-2020).

Since the 18th CPC National Congress, the CPC Central Committee has gone all out to win the battle against poverty, taken poverty elimination as the primary task, made it a defining indicator in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, and made unprecedented efforts to implement major plans for development-oriented poverty alleviation. The CPC Central Committee and the State Council have issued the Decision on Winning the Battle Against Poverty, which lays out the goals and criteria for poverty elimination, establishes the basic strategy of targeted poverty alleviation and elimination, creates a poverty elimination system with Chinese characteristics, and defines comprehensive efforts to advance key plans for targeted poverty alleviation.

In the light of the strategic goal of poverty elimination set out by the 19th CPC National Congress, the central authorities issued a Three-Year Guideline on Winning the Battle Against Poverty. The 19th CPC National Congress defined targeted poverty elimination as one of the three crucial battles in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, and pledged to help all the rural population living below the current poverty line shake off poverty by the year 2020 and ensure that poor people and poor areas will join the moderately prosperous society together with the rest of the country.

Through decades of efforts, the number of rural poor has markedly dropped and the poverty headcount ratio has seen a continuous decrease. Solid steps have been taken to eliminate regional poverty, and the working conditions and living standards of the rural poor have notably improved, which created a stronger sense of gain for the people, indicating decisive progress has been made in the fight against poverty. According to World Bank estimates, over the past 40 years, the number of people in China living on less than US\$1.9 a day (international poverty line) has dropped by more than 850 million – this represents 70 percent of the total world figure. The number of rural poor fell from 770 million in 1978 to 30.46 million in 2017 when calculated in accordance with China's current poverty line, with the incidence of poverty dropping from 97.5 percent to 3.1 percent. More than 10 million people rose and remained above the poverty level every year from 2012 to 2017. With the highest number of people moving out of poverty, China was the first developing country to realize the UN Millennium

Development Goal for poverty reduction. Poverty reduction is the most telling evidence of China's progress in human rights.

Adequate food and clothing ensured. In the early days of reform and opening up, providing enough food and clothing for nearly one billion people was the top issue facing China. Reform of the rural land system and the implementation of the household responsibility system greatly stimulated farmers' enthusiasm and boosted agricultural production capacity. China's food grain output reached 661.61 million tons in 2017, double the figure of 1978. In recent years China has become the world's largest producer of grain, meat, peanuts and tea, the second-largest producer of rapeseed, and the third-largest producer of sugarcane. China feeds approximately 20 percent of the world's population using less than 10 percent of the arable land, guaranteeing the basic right to subsistence by eradicating hunger and improving nutrition.

Safer drinking water. National standards for major drinking water sources have been implemented. In 2016 more than 600 surface water sources each supplying drinking water for 200,000 people or more, and all ground water sources each supplying 20 million or more cubic meters of drinking water annually were incorporated into the Catalogue of China's Major Drinking Water Sources, subject to annual quality assessment. The 2017 assessment results show that 99.5 percent of the drinking water sources met the water supply reliability standard, and 90.9 percent met the water quality standard.

A program was launched in 2005 to ensure drinking water safety in rural areas. By the end of 2015 a total of 520 million rural residents and 47 million teachers and students in rural areas had gained access to safe drinking water. Since 2016 the program has been upgraded to reinforce rural drinking water safety. By the end of 2017 the upgrade had benefitted 95.09 million rural residents, among whom 11.69 million were people living below the poverty line. Centralized water supply now covers 85 percent of the rural population and 80 percent of rural people have access to tap water.

Improved housing conditions. The past 40 years have witnessed a remarkable improvement in housing conditions. In 2017 the per capita floor space of urban residents was 36.9 sq m, up from 6.7 sq m in 1978, and that of rural residents was 46.7 sq m, up from 8.1 sq m in 1978. The state has made it a priority to resolve housing problems for poor families. From 2008 to 2017 government subsidies were used to build 64 million housing units in urban areas, and redevelopment of run-down areas helped 100 million people move from sub-standard accommodation to new apartments. By the end of 2017 more than 35 million people in straitened circumstances had moved into public rental housing units, and more than 20 million poor people had received public rental subsidies. Since the 18th CPC National Congress the state has increased funding for dilapidated rural housing renovation, allocating RMB162.5 billion in

subsidies for renovating the sub-standard housing of 16.59 million rural households, and helping tens of millions of rural households move into proper accommodation from dilapidated houses built of such materials as beaten earth, and timber and bark.

More convenient and safer public transport. Over the past 40 years China's steadily-improving public transport network has provided stronger support for the country's economic and social development, and greater convenience and safety to the public. By the end of 2017 China's rail network had grown to 127,000 kilometers, up by 150 percent from 1978, and high-speed rail had reached 25,000 kilometers, accounting for more than 60 percent of the world's total. The high-speed and other railway lines form an extensive passenger transport network covering all provincial capitals in the country. By the end of 2017 China's road network had increased to 4.77 million kilometers, up by 440 percent from 1978, including 136,000 kilometers of expressways. Road density had grown more than fivefold from the beginning of reform and opening up to 49.72 km/100 sq km. Every county in China now has access to roads. Rural transport has seen continuous improvement, with roads connecting 99.99 percent of towns and townships and 99.98 percent of administrative villages. Since 2001 programs have been carried out to renovate dangerous bridges, and reinforce road safety, the protection of the public, and road disaster prevention. Through these programs, 39,000 bridges on roads at township level and above, 660,000 kilometers of high-risk roads, and 31,000 kilometers of disaster-prone roads have been renovated to better safeguard public transport safety.

A total of 8,440 new post offices have been built in towns and townships, with the result that every township-level unit has a post office and every village has access to postal services. Express delivery outlets cover 87 percent of towns and townships, establishing a two-way channel that facilitates the transport of manufactured products to rural areas and agricultural products to the cities.

Better protection of the rights to life and health. Since reform and opening up, and especially since the 18th CPC National Congress, the country has increased public access to health services throughout the life cycle, to quicken its pace toward a healthy China. Life expectancy in China rose from 67.8 in 1981 to 76.7 in 2017, higher than the world average of 72. The maternal mortality rate decreased from 94.7 per 100,000 in 1989 to 19.6 per 100,000 in 2017, and the infant mortality rate dropped from 50.2 per 1,000 in 1991 to 6.8 per 1,000 in 2017, both meeting the UN Millennium Development Goals ahead of schedule.

A community-level health service system covering urban and rural areas is in place. The number of health service institutions increased to 987,000 in 2017, up by 480 percent from 1978, with health professionals growing by 260 percent to 8.98 million in 2017. Basic public health services have improved, with national vaccination coverage

among children topping 90 percent, and the prevalence of HBsAg in children under five decreasing to 1 percent. China has set up the world's largest online direct reporting system of notifiable epidemics and public health emergencies, and the average reporting time has been shortened to four hours. The national fitness program has thrived, with more than 1.7 million sports venues across the country.

Expanded social assistance. Through years of effort, China has formed a social assistance system with subsistence allowances, assistance and support for people in extreme difficulty, disaster relief, medical assistance, housing assistance, education assistance, employment assistance, and temporary assistance as the main forms, supplemented by public participation. A subsistence security system has been set up nationwide. Regulations on Subsistence Security for Urban Residents and Interim Measures for Social Assistance have been enacted. Decisions on Improving the Assistance and Support System for People in Extreme Difficulty provide assistance to two groups of people – urban residents without income, the ability to work, or support by family, and rural people eligible for the “Five Guarantees”: those who are unable to work and have no source of income, including the elderly, the disabled and minors who have no legal guardians to support them.

By the end of 2017, 37,494 towns, townships and neighborhoods had set up social assistance agencies, staffed by 104,673 full-time and part-time personnel – an average of 2.6 per unit. As of September 2018 there were 46,199,000 people living on subsistence allowances, consisting of 10,688,000 urban residents receiving an average of RMB575 per month, and 35,511,000 rural residents receiving an average of RMB4,754 per annum. All rural subsistence allowance standards at the county level meet or exceed the national poverty line.

In 2017 medical assistance was granted to 91,381,000 applications, in the form of direct payment for medical service for 35,171,000 people, and as subsidies for 56,210,000 poor people when joining the basic medical insurance. Between January and September 2018 temporary assistance was given to 5,658,000 applications, averaging RMB1,069.4 per application.

Stronger protection of environmental rights. Over the past four decades China has incorporated ecological progress into the national development strategy and intensified its efforts in environmental governance, creating a better environment and effectively safeguarding people's environmental rights. China's first Environmental Protection Law was adopted in 1979. Environmental protection was first included as a salient part of the plan for national economic and social development in 1982, and was designated as a basic state policy in 1983. China's Agenda 21 passed in 1994 made China the first country in the world to formulate and implement a strategy of sustainable development.

Committed to green development, China puts an enormous effort into pollution control and takes concrete steps to promote ecological progress toward a beautiful China. The 19th CPC National Congress sounded a clarion call to win the battle against pollution. The National Conference on Environmental Protection established Xi Jinping thought on ecological progress. The CPC Central Committee and the State Council issued the Decisions on Comprehensively Strengthening Environmental Protection and Resolutely Winning the Battle Against Pollution, setting out the timetable, road map and agenda for pollution prevention and control. In 2017 coal accounted for 60.4 percent of China's total energy consumption, down by 10.3 percentage points from 1978. The proportion of clean energy sources, including natural gas, water, nuclear, wind and electricity, has increased from 6.6 percent in 1978 to 20.8 percent in 2017. Between 2013 and 2017, the average PM₁₀ intensity in 338 cities at and above the prefecture level nationwide fell by 22.7 percent, and the average PM_{2.5} intensity in 74 major cities fell by 34.7 percent. In 2017, trees were planted on 7.36 million hectares across the country and forest coverage was 21.66 percent; the number of nature reserves totaled 2,750, covering 1.47 million sq km or 14.86 percent of China's land territory.

China has played an active role in global environmental governance, and ratified more than 30 multilateral conventions and protocols related to environmental protection. China was the first country to release a national plan on implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to deposit its instrument of ratification for the Paris Agreement, becoming an important participant, contributor and leader in promoting global ecological progress.

III. Fully Developing Human Rights in All Respects

Over the past four decades since the launch of reform and opening up, China has taken all-round development of the human being as the intent and goal of human rights. It has made comprehensive progress in all human rights, ensured economic, social and cultural rights, and enhanced the mechanisms guaranteeing civil and political rights.

Significant improvement in people's lives. Between 1978 and 2017, China's GDP increased from RMB367.9 billion to RMB82.7 trillion and per capita GDP from RMB385 to RMB59,660, a 22.8-fold increase, or a real growth of 8.5 percent per year adjusted for inflation. Per capita gross national income rose from US\$200 in 1978 to US\$8,690 in 2017, above the average level of upper middle-income countries. The per

capita disposable income of urban and rural residents grew from RMB343 and RMB134 in 1978 to RMB36,396 and RMB13,432 respectively in 2017. In 2017, national per capita consumer spending was RMB18,322, an 18-fold increase over 1978 or a real growth of 7.8 percent per year adjusted for inflation. The country is moving from a society based on subsistence to one based on plenty. The Engel coefficient of urban and rural households in 1978 was 57.5 percent and 67.7 percent, which fell to 28.6 percent and 31.2 percent respectively in 2017. China's human development index (HDI) value has risen significantly from 0.423 in 1980 to 0.752 in 2017, gradually moving into ranks of countries with higher HDI. Among the 47 bottom-ranked countries measured in 1990, China is the only one to have risen into the ranks of the "high human development" countries.

Increased protection of personal rights and right to dignity. The Constitution confirms citizens' right to dignity. The 19th CPC National Congress again emphasized the protection of personal rights, property rights and right to dignity, demonstrating the humane view of protecting dignity and promoting the all-round development of the human being. General Principles of the Civil Law and Tort Liability Law further establish the system of protection for right to dignity. "Civil rights" as one chapter is included in General Provisions of the Civil Law to elaborate right to dignity. In August 2018, right to dignity as an individual book was contained in the draft Civil Code.

China has abolished the detention and repatriation system and the reeducation through labor system. It is now accelerating the reform of the household registration system. In 2014, Decisions on Furthering the Household Registration Reform released by the State Council relaxed the restriction on the transfer of household registration (*hukou*), enabling eligible regular residents with stable employment in urban areas to localize their residency. In 2017, the urbanization rate of registered population stood at 42.35 percent, up 7 percentage points over 2012. Since the 18th CPC National Congress, more than 14 million people without *hukou* have completed household registration, basically bringing the entire population into the *hukou* system.

Inviolability of residence, freedom of correspondence and information security are fully protected by law. In 2017, the public security agencies launched special programs to handle cases involving invasion of personal information to effectively curb personal information leakage.

Legal protection of property. The Constitution stipulates that the private property of citizens is inviolable. The state protects citizens' property rights and right of inheritance by law, as well as the legitimate rights and interests of non-public commercial sectors such as the individual economy and private enterprise. The Property Law specifies that the property rights of the state, collectives, individuals and other legal persons are under the protection of law and shall not be infringed by any unit or individual.

The household contract responsibility system that entitles farmers to manage contracted public-owned land, implemented following reform and opening up, is the cornerstone of China's current rural land system. Since 2014, China has made solid efforts to confirm and register the management rights of contracted land, and to issue titles to land in rural areas. By June 2018, 31 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government) had finished this work, with the total area of contracted land reaching 1.39 billion *mu*. A total of 189 million land contracts had been signed and improved, and 135 million titles had been issued. The 19th CPC National Congress stated that the land contract relationship should sustain for the foreseeable future, and should be extended for a further 30 years after the second round of contracts expires.

Effective protection of the right to work. China highlights employment in its economic and social development, advocating a jobs-first strategy and a more proactive employment policy to promote higher-quality jobs and maximum employment. As the economic structure is upgraded, reform of the employment system deepens, gradually putting in place an employment mechanism adapted to the socialist market economy. From 1978 to 2017, China's employed population increased from 401.52 million to 776.4 million. The average annual growth of 9.61 million is faster than total population growth. Since 2003, when a complete statistical system was put in place, the annual increase of new jobs in urban areas has been 11.78 million, and the registered urban unemployment rate has been low over many years, with the surveyed unemployment rate lower than the world average.

The average yearly income of urban employees rose from RMB615 in 1978 to RMB76,121 in 2017, an annual increase of 7.7 percent in real terms. The right of remuneration for labor, right to rest and leisure, right to occupational safety and health, special right of women workers and the right to participate in the democratic management of businesses are protected by law. The labor contract mechanism, the collective contract mechanism, and collective consultation are all being implemented. A government-trade union-enterprise tripartite coordination mechanism, a labor security supervision mechanism, and a labor dispute settlement mechanism have all been set up to protect the legitimate rights and interests of workers. In 2017, 90 percent of enterprise employees had signed labor contracts. A workplace safety and accident prevention and control system to protect laborers is being implemented and constantly improved.

Extended protection of the right to social security. China has built the largest-scale social security system covering the largest population of the world, raising the world social security coverage rate by 11 percentage points. By June 2018, 925 million people had been covered by basic endowment insurance, 191 million by

unemployment insurance, and 230 million by work-related injury insurance. The basic medical insurance system providing basic medical insurance for urban workers, basic medical insurance for urban residents, and new-type rural cooperative medical insurance for rural population covers more than 1.3 billion people. A total of 1.15 billion people hold social security cards, representing 82.81 percent of the population.

China is comprehensively improving its social security system based on its economic and social development. It has raised the basic pension of company retirees every year since 2005. Per capita government subsidies for basic medical insurance for urban and rural residents rose from RMB240 in 2012 to RMB490 in 2018. China is improving its capability in offering social security services via information technology such as internet and big data. In 2016, a system was officially launched to provide for real-time settlement of medical expenses for treatment incurred outside the province where the patient resides through the social security card.

Marked improvement in the protection of the right to education. China has made great efforts in implementing the education-first strategy to modernize education and guarantee equal access to education for all. Government spending on education is targeted to be no lower than 4 percent of GDP. From 2012 to 2017, national expenditure on education totaled close to RMB21 trillion. The level of national education has significantly improved: The average years of schooling for those aged 15 and over rose from 5.3 in 1982 to 9.6 in 2017; the figure for the working-age population reached 10.5.

Rapid progress has been made in preschool education. In 2017, the total number of kindergartens stood at 255,000, an increase of 55.5 percent over 1978, with the gross enrollment rate reaching 79.6 percent. A Compulsory Education Law was formulated and then revised to extend the enforcement of nine-year compulsory education. In 2017, there were 219,000 public schools for compulsory education, accommodating 145 million students. The net enrollment rate of primary school-age children was 99.91 percent, the gross enrollment rate of middle school-age population was 103.5 percent, and the completion rate of compulsory education was 93.8 percent. The availability of compulsory education has reached the average level of high-income countries. Availability of senior secondary education in China is now basically universal. In 2017, there were 24,600 senior high schools nationwide, with a total of 39.71 million students on campus, an increase of 21.67 million over 1978. The rate of students entering high school was 94.9 percent, up 54 percentage points from 1978, and the gross enrollment rate of senior high school-age population was 88.3 percent, higher than the average level of mid- and high-income countries (86.7 percent). Higher education is developing vigorously. In 2017, there were 2,913 universities across the country, with 37.79 million students on campus, representing a gross enrollment rate of 45.7 percent of college-age population. A mass vocational education system has been built,

contributing significantly to the popularity of high school education and higher education.

Full and effective protection of cultural rights. Government funding for cultural undertakings is increasing rapidly, from RMB444 million in 1978 to RMB85.58 billion in 2017, a yearly increase of 14.4 percent. The national public cultural service standards have been established, and the National Guiding Standards for Public Cultural Services (2015-2020) are being introduced. Many public cultural facilities have been opened to the public for free. In 2017, there were 3,166 public libraries nationwide, with 109 sq m of public library space per 10,000 people, an 11.1-fold increase over 1978. These public libraries contained 970 million volumes, and received 745 million visits. The total number of China's museums stood at 4,721 in 2017, a 12.5-fold increase over 1978. In 2017, they contained 36.62 million items, and received 970 million visitors.

Equal access to public cultural services is an important goal. By 2017, a total of 44,521 cultural centers and 340,560 comprehensive cultural service centers in villages and communities had been set up. Digital cultural services are a new innovation in providing public cultural services. In 2017, public libraries had more than 1 billion ebooks, 221,000 computers, and 144,300 electronic readers. By 2017, the total broadcasting network had covered 99.81 percent of the population, and 99.07 percent had had access to television; the database of the cultural information resources sharing project and the digital library promotion project had amounted to 700 terabytes. The Outline of the National Scheme for Scientific Literacy (2006-2010-2020) and the Benchmark for the Scientific Literacy of Chinese Citizens have been formulated to popularize science and improve the public's understanding and appreciation of science and culture.

Legal protection of the right to vote. The right to vote and to stand in elections is a basic right enshrined in the Constitution. China is committed to the development of socialist democracy and ensures that everyone is entitled to an equal right to vote. It has enacted electoral laws for the National People's Congress and local people's congresses, and organization laws for local people's congresses and governments. The principles of universality, equality, direct election, indirect election and competitive election are applied. The Constitution stipulates, "All citizens of the People's Republic of China who have reached the age of 18 shall have the right to vote and stand for election, regardless of ethnic status, race, sex, occupation, family background, religious belief, education, property status and length of residence. Persons who have been deprived of political rights in accordance with the law shall not have the right to vote and stand for election." China has amended electoral laws and improved the election system to gradually ensure that both rural and urban areas adopt the same ratio of deputies from the represented population in elections of people's congress deputies, and all regions,

ethnic groups and fields have a certain proportion of deputies. In the new elections to the people's congresses at county and township levels beginning in 2016, a total of 900 million constituents cast votes for more than 2.5 million deputies. The makeup of deputies to the National People's Congress is becoming more representative. Among the 2,980 deputies to the 13th National People's Congress in 2018 are 468 front-line workers and farmers, 613 professional and technical personnel, 742 women, and 438 representatives of ethnic minorities.

Orderly development is seen in community-level democracy. A community-level self-governance system is now in place featuring self-governance by urban and rural residents, and democratic election, consultation, decision-making, management and supervision. By 2017, more than nine rounds of villagers committee elections had been held among villages across the nation. More than 98 percent of these had been conducted by direct election, with more than 95 percent of villagers taking part. The participation rate of urban residents in the election of neighborhood committees exceeds 90 percent.

Full protection of the right to know. Platforms are being improved to make government more open. In 2004, the State Council released the Outline of Comprehensively Advancing Administration in Accordance with the Law, which promotes government transparency and requires administrative organs to disclose government information unless it relates to state secrets, trade secrets under legal protection, and individual privacy. The public is entitled to access disclosed government information, and administrative organs should support this access. In February 2016, the General Offices of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council issued Decisions on Comprehensively Promoting Government Transparency, which introduced a power list, a responsibility list, and a negative list and encouraged administration to move online. As a result, 31 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government) have released the power lists of governments at provincial, prefectural and county levels. In 2015, all provinces disclosed their overall financial budgets, and in 2017, 105 central government departments disclosed their budgets.

By April 2017, 3,058 administration halls had been set up in local governments at and above the county level, covering 94.3 percent of administrations, and 38,513 service centers had been set up in townships and communities, covering 96.8 percent of administrations. Factory and village affairs are being made transparent. By September 2017, more than 5 million enterprises and public institutions with trade unions had set up congresses of workers and staff, and 1.39 million enterprises were covered by regional (trade) congresses of workers and staff. 4.87 million enterprises and public institutions with trade unions had adopted a system of disclosing information to their

employees. By 2017, 95 percent of villages nationwide had made village affairs transparent, more than 94 percent of counties were providing catalogues of disclosed village information, and 91 percent of villages were making village affairs public on information boards.

Increased right to participate. The channels for public participation in legislation and major administrative decision-making are constantly broadening. A mechanism through which public opinion is consulted in drafting laws has been set up and improved. Since 2008, the state legislatures have solicited public opinion on 139 draft laws, receiving 2.46 million comments from 590,000 people. Since 2013, the government has released announcements inviting responses from the public and expanded channels and multiplied means for soliciting opinions in drawing up plans for the legislation work of the State Council. The citizens' right to participate in administrative decision-making has been protected by law. A mechanism in which decisions are made in accordance with the law has been improved, which recognizes public participation, expert discussion, risk assessment, legality review and collective discussion as legal procedures in major administrative decision-making. In this process, the effectiveness of public participation is emphasized, and the quality of expert discussion improved to make decision-making more scientific, democratic and law-based.

Consultative democracy is applied extensively as a mechanism at multiple levels. The consultative content and procedure are regulated, and the means, frequency and effect of consultation extended and increased. Extensive consultation is conducted on matters concerning overall economic and social development and related to the vital interests of the people. Since reform and opening up, the national committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) has conducted over 2,000 investigations and consultations, received 135,111 proposals, recorded 124,868 of them, published and transmitted 11,688 samples of public opinion, and adopted and carried out most of the proposals. By September 2018, there had been 796,000 registered social organizations nationwide. They are active in urban and rural communities and help improve the level and ability of the public to express their demands, and to govern and serve themselves.

Multiple means to guarantee the right of expression. In 2017, a total of 36.8 billion copies of newspapers, 2.6 billion issues of periodicals, and 9 billion copies of books were published. By September 2018, the optical cable nationwide totaled 41.31 million kilometers; there were 110.65 million broadband users in rural areas and 1.29 billion mobile broadband users. Penetration of mobile phones was 111.3 per hundred persons. By June 2018, there were 802 million internet users across the nation, and 788 million of them accessed the internet through mobile phones. Internet usage was 57.7

percent across the country, and 36.5 percent in rural areas. Online platforms have been built to make expression convenient and efficient. Complaints reporting channels have been broadened through letters, visits, internet and telephone to multiply the means for the public to express their demands.

Continued efforts to improve the right of supervision. The National People's Congress revised the Budget Law in 2014, and released Decisions on Building a Mechanism of Soliciting Opinions of Deputies to People's Congresses and the Public Before Budget Review in 2017 to make budgets transparent and place them under democratic supervision. In 2015, the Legislation Law was amended, specifying that it is necessary to respond to the requirement for review and disclose information to increase the citizens' right to supervise.

The Standing Committee of the National People's Congress should exercise their supervisory duties over the Constitution and the law, and improve the filing and review system by setting up a national unified platform. The Standing Committee of the 12th National People's Congress received 4,778 normative documents for filing, reviewed 188 administrative regulations and judicial interpretations item by item, conducted special reviews of targeted local regulations, studied 1,527 review suggestions raised by the public and other organizations, and urged relevant departments to correct problems when they were found to be in conflict with current laws. From 2012 to 2016, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress carried out 20 examinations of law enforcement. Between 2016 and 2017, it inspected the enforcement of 12 laws concerning the immediate interests of the public such as Food Safety, Workplace Safety, Environmental Protection, and Road Traffic Safety.

The CPPCC has actively explored and improved the democratic supervision system and offered criticism and suggestions regarding problems arising in implementation. In 2017, the 12th CPPCC National Committee investigated and researched 20 supervisory issues, which accounted for 28 percent of its total investigations and researches. In 2015, the corresponding figures were 12 and 11 percent. The Plan for Deeper Reform of the People's Supervisor System has been implemented to extend the public's right of scrutiny.

Legal guarantee for freedom of religious belief. China follows policies on freedom of religious belief. Based on its national and religious conditions, China protects citizens' right to freedom of religious belief, builds active and healthy religious relationships, and maintains religious and social harmony. The Chinese government, in accordance with the Constitution and the law, supports all religions in upholding the principle of independence and self-management; religious groups, clerical personnel and believers manage their own religious affairs. The state manages religious affairs involving national and public interests, but does not interfere in the internal affairs of

religions. Since the 18th CPC National Congress, China has comprehensively promoted the rule of law and included religious work in the national governance system to improve its law-based management. The state treats all religions fairly and equally, and does not exercise administrative power to encourage or ban any religion. No religion is given preferential treatment over other religions to enjoy special legal privileges. The major religions practiced in China are Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, and Catholic and Protestant Christianity, involving a total of nearly 200 million believers and more than 380,000 clerical personnel. At present, there are about 144,000 places of worship registered for religious activities and 91 religious schools in China. Social security for religious clerical personnel has been enhanced. By the end of 2017, 96.5 percent of clerical personnel had been covered by medical insurance, and 89.6 percent by old-age insurance, and all eligible personnel had been covered by subsistence allowance welfare – almost all clerical personnel had been covered by the social security system in China.

IV. Ensuring the Rights of Special Groups

Over the 40 years since reform and opening up was introduced in 1978, China has improved various mechanisms for ensuring its citizens' rights, adopting targeted measures to create opportunities for special groups in pursuit of self-development and life goals. The legitimate rights of ethnic minority groups, women, children, the elderly, and the disabled are protected.

1. Rights of Ethnic Minority Groups

The right of ethnic minority groups in administering state affairs is effectively guaranteed. The ethnic autonomous regions enjoy the right of autonomy in extensive areas as prescribed by law, including autonomy in the fields of politics, the economy, education, science and technology, culture, and health. All 55 minority groups have deputies and members at the National People's Congress (NPC) and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). The 13th NPC has 438 deputies from ethnic minority groups, accounting for 14.7 percent of the total number of deputies. The standing committees of people's congresses in all 155 ethnic autonomous areas have citizens from the ethnic groups exercising regional autonomy acting as director or deputy director. The chairpersons of autonomous regions, governors of autonomous prefectures, and heads of autonomous counties and banners are all citizens from the ethnic groups exercising regional autonomy of the said areas. In the 11th People's Congress of Tibet Autonomous Region, the director and half of the deputy

directors of the standing committee, and two-thirds of the deputies, are from the Tibetan or other ethnic minority groups.

The economy of ethnic minority areas has experienced rapid growth. The total GDP of the five autonomous regions of Inner Mongolia, Guangxi, Tibet, Ningxia and Xinjiang, and the three provinces of Yunnan, Guizhou and Qinghai has grown from RMB32.4 billion in 1978 to RMB8.49 trillion in 2017. The impoverished population in these regions has dropped from 50.4 million in 2010 to 10.32 million in 2017, with 40.08 million people shaking off poverty and the incidence of poverty reduced from 34.5 to 6.9 percent. From 2012 to 2017 the central government allocated RMB24.5 billion from the state poverty alleviation fund to support the development of ethnic minority groups. With the release of the Program for Developing Ethnic Minority Areas and Ethnic Groups with Small Populations During the 13th Five-Year Plan Period and the Program for Revitalizing Border Areas and Enriching the People During the 13th Five-Year Plan Period, China aims to achieve a big stride in social and economic development in these areas.

Education in ethnic minority areas has developed rapidly. China has adopted a series of measures to promote educational equality and ensure ethnic minorities' right to education. These measures include: opening schools for students from ethnic minority groups, using both Putonghua (standard Chinese) and ethnic languages in school education, giving preferential treatment to students from ethnic minority groups when they take exams to enter higher levels of education, and running residential schools in farming and pastoral areas. In Tibet Autonomous Region, students enjoy free board and lodging and are exempt from study costs from preschool to senior high school – a total of 15 years. In south Xinjiang, students also enjoy 15 years of zero-cost education, and those in rural areas are provided with free three-year preschool education both in Putonghua and ethnic languages. Middle and high school students from Tibet and Xinjiang can attend special classes at schools in more developed areas of the country. High school graduates from ethnic groups can attend preparatory courses or special classes at colleges and universities, and university graduates from ethnic groups can apply for a national high-level professional development program which trains and sends them to work in designated places. All this has ensured that students from ethnic minority groups have access to quality education.

The right to use and develop the spoken and written languages of ethnic minorities is respected and fully protected. In China, with the exception of the Hui and Manchu peoples who generally use Han Chinese, the other 53 ethnic minorities have their own spoken languages, and 22 groups use a total of 27 written systems. The Chinese government protects the legitimate use of the spoken and written languages of ethnic minorities in the areas of administration and judicature, press and publishing,

radio, film and television, and culture and education. The state has established a database for the endangered languages of China's ethnic minority groups, and initiated the Program for Protecting China's Language Resources. Public cultural services in ethnic minority areas have been further improved. By 2017 there were 195 radio and 263 television stations in China's ethnic autonomous areas broadcasting in 14 and 10 ethnic minority languages. The state provides bilingual education in ethnic minority areas, basically forming a bilingual education system from preschool to higher education. By 2017 more than 12,000 primary and secondary schools catering to ethnic minority students in China give courses in both Putonghua and minority languages, with 210,000 teachers teaching such courses to 3.2 million students.

Cultural heritage and relics in ethnic minority areas are protected. The Chinese government attaches great importance to the preservation and development of ethnic minority cultures. It has promulgated laws, established government bodies, and increased spending to develop the cultures of ethnic minority groups. Of all China's cultural items included in the UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List, 14 are from ethnic minorities. At national level, 492 (36 percent) of the first 1,372 cultural items included in China's intangible cultural heritage list are from ethnic minorities. Of the 3,068 representative trustees of China's intangible cultural heritage, 862 (28 percent) are from ethnic minority groups. China has set up 21 state-level cultural preservation experimental areas, 11 of which are located in ethnic minority areas. Twenty-five provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government have institutions that catalogue and study ancient classics and recordings of ethnic minorities. The central and local governments have funded the conservation and renovation of many historical and cultural sites, including the Gaochang Ancient City Ruins, Beiting Ancient City Site, and Kashi's Id Kah Mosque. More than 3,000 precious cultural relics have been conserved and renovated. Traditional Tibetan medicine, the Epic of King Gesar, traditional songs and dances, handicrafts, and other important items of intangible cultural heritage have been protected.

Ethnic minority groups' right to freedom of religious belief has been fully protected. Religious beliefs and normal religious activities are protected by law. At the moment Tibet Autonomous Region has 1,778 venues for practicing Tibetan Buddhism, and some 46,000 resident monks and nuns. The Living Buddha reincarnation is a succession system unique to Tibetan Buddhism, and is respected by the state and governments at different levels of the autonomous region, the state having issued the Measures on the Management of the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas of Tibetan Buddhism. Tibet now has 358 Living Buddhas, more than 60 of whom have been confirmed through historical conventions and traditional religious rituals.

The system whereby Tibetan Buddhist monks study sutras has been improved. By 2017 a total of 84 monks from Tibet had received senior academic titles in Lhasa and 168 in Beijing. China has published translations of the religious classics of Islam, Buddhism, Christianity and other religions in multiple languages to satisfy normal religious needs. More than 1.76 million copies of the Quran and *Selections from Al-Sahih Muhammad Ibn-Ismail al-Bukhari* have been distributed. The Tibetan Buddhist canons have been revised and published, and 1,490 copies of the canon *Kangyur* have been given to monasteries for monks, nuns and religious persons to study. To improve the self-management capacity of religious groups, the state offers training sessions to clerics on interpreting scriptures, and to persons who manage venues for religious activities. Since 2011 the National Religious Affairs Administration has organized over a dozen training sessions on interpreting Islamic scripture, and trained several hundred clerics from Xinjiang. The central government supports the Xinjiang Islamic Institute in expanding its campus, improving teaching conditions, and enrolling more students.

2. Rights of Women, Children and the Elderly

Women's rights to equal participation in the administration of public affairs and socioeconomic development are protected. China has taken numerous solid measures to implement the basic state policy of gender equality, and amended the Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests. The proportion of female officials at each level of officialdom has increased steadily, and the number of female officials in Party and government organs has grown from 422,000 at the beginning of reform and opening up to 1.9 million in 2017, accounting for 26.5 percent of all officials. Women participate fully in the administration and discussion of state affairs. The 13th NPC has 742 female deputies (24.9 percent), and the 13th CPPCC National Committee now has 442 female members (20.5 percent). At the 2018 sessions of the provincial people's congresses and political consultative conferences, women made up 27.33 percent and 25.69 percent of all deputies and members.

The state has strengthened economic empowerment for women, helping them to start businesses and seek employment. In 2016, women employed nationwide accounted for 43.1 percent of the total employed population. To engage women in employment and entrepreneurship, China has introduced the small-sum guaranteed loan with financial discount. By June 2018, a total of RMB359 billion had been issued in guaranteed loans to 6.34 million women to start businesses, and the government had allocated RMB39 billion for interest discount. By September 2017, 1.37 million collective contracts for protecting female workers' rights and interests had been signed nationwide, covering almost 80 million female workers in 3.15 million enterprises. In the 592 poorest counties which are the main targets of national poverty alleviation and

development work, the incidence of poverty of the female population decreased from 20.3 percent in 2005 to 9.8 percent in 2010.

Health services for women and children have improved. China has strengthened healthcare programs for women and children to safeguard their right to health. It has improved the distribution of health resources, and increased spending on maternal and child healthcare programs in rural, border and remote areas. From 2012 to 2016 about 48 million rural women received state subsidies for delivery of their babies in official institutions. In 2017 the state provided free checkups for 11.73 million rural couples planning for pregnancy, covering 91.7 percent of the target population. In June 2009 the government launched a program of free cervical and breast cancer checkups for rural women, providing free cervical cancer checkups for 70 million and free breast cancer checkups for 10 million by 2017. Between 1991 and 2017 the mortality rate of children under five decreased from 61 per thousand to 9.1. In 2016 the underweight rate for children under five decreased to 1.49 percent. The corresponding rates for growth retardation and incidence of anemia were 1.15 percent and 4.79 percent. The government has initiated a program to provide safe water storage for people, especially women, in the western parts of China, so that they have reliable sources of drinking water. By 2017, a total of 3.04 million people had received help from the program and had access to safe drinking water.

Protection and assistance for women and children have been enhanced. China has taken judicial action against domestic violence at the grassroots level. It has experimented with an adjudication system of personal security protection against domestic violence, and courts conducting this pilot program have expanded from 5 provinces in 2008 to 14 in 2015. In 2015 China promulgated the Anti-Domestic Violence Law, which has played an important role in ensuring the legitimate rights of family members including women, and maintaining equal and harmonious family relations. Amendment IX to the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China represents a major step forward in protecting women and children's rights and interests; it specifies harsher punishments for the crimes of raping girls under the age of 14 and abducting and trafficking women and children.

To ensure the physical and psychological health of minors and to protect their legitimate rights and interests, China has promulgated the Law on the Protection of Minors and the Law on the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency, both amended in 2012. In 2009 the Ministry of Public Security developed the world's first DNA database for finding abducted children, having helped 5,500 children reunite with their families to date. On the "Tuan Yuan" (Reunion) online platform initiated in 2016, a total of 3,419 items on missing children had been posted by September 2018, which had helped recover 3,367 children. In 2017 China had 663 child adoption and assistance

institutions with 103,000 beds, accommodating 59,000 persons. By 2017 some 780,000 rural children left at home by their migrant worker parents had been provided with effective guardianship, 180,000 previously unregistered left-at-home rural children had been registered, and 17,000 had been returned to school.

The mechanism for protecting the rights and interests of the elderly has improved. In 2017 some 240 million Chinese were aged 60 or above, accounting for 17.3 percent of the total population. Since 2012 China has amended the Law on Protecting the Rights and Interests of the Elderly, and released more than 70 policy papers, such as the Decisions on Accelerating the Development of the Old-Age Service Industry and the Program for Developing China's Old-Age Services and System Building During the 13th Five-Year Plan Period, forming a legal and policy framework for old-age care.

Before reform and opening up China's elderly were mainly cared for in nursing homes. Now more of them receive home care and community services, but can still choose nursing homes or facilities with medical care services. New models of old-age care such as "mutual support" in rural areas are also expanding. By 2017 China had 155,000 institutions with 7.45 million beds to provide old-age services, including nursing homes, community-based old-age service facilities, and "mutual support" facilities – a stark contrast with just 8,000 nursing homes in 1978. The state has strengthened social assistance and welfare for the elderly, providing subsistence allowances to 17.8 million elderly persons in need and supporting 4.1 million elderly persons in extreme poverty with government funding. By 2017 the allowances for impoverished senior citizens over the specified age had covered all provinces, which had also released preferential policies for the elderly. To enrich the cultural life of the elderly, there are now 49,000 schools for the elderly with more than 7 million students, and 350,000 activity centers.

3. Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The laws ensuring the rights and interests of persons with disabilities have been improved, and the government has placed work in relation to the disabled high on its agenda. As society promotes equality, participation and sharing of benefits for the disabled, they have fared better in terms of quality of life, development, and participation in social affairs.

The mechanism for ensuring the rights and interests of the disabled has improved. China has formulated a system of laws to ensure disabled persons' rights, including the Law on the Protection of Disabled Persons. By April 2018 the state had promulgated more than 80 laws and 50 administrative regulations directly relating to the protection of the rights and interests of the disabled. Having included the development of disabled persons in the national development strategy, China has

released seven five-year plans for the development of the disabled, including overall plans for ensuring their rights. China has also established a Disability Prevention Day. All levels of government have improved their work mechanisms in matters related to the disabled, coordinating efforts for their wellbeing. By 2017 China had 2,600 legal assistance centers and 2,500 legal assistance windows for the disabled, as well as 1,746 legal assistance stations funded by disabled persons' associations at various levels. The government has significantly increased spending on the disabled. In 2017 the central budgetary investment grew by 458 percent compared to the previous five-year period, establishing 3,822 service facilities for the disabled.

The disabled persons' right to social security is ensured. China has established a subsidy system for the living expenses of disabled persons in need and to pay the nursing costs of persons with severe disabilities, benefitting 21 million disabled persons. By 2017 a total of 26.15 million disabled persons were covered in old-age insurance schemes in both urban and rural areas, with 10.42 million receiving old-age pensions. Of the 5.47 million severely disabled people under the age of 60 who took part in such schemes, 5.29 million had received insurance subsidies from the government, which paid for 96.8 percent of their premiums. Impoverished disabled persons subscribing to basic medical insurance pay a reduced premium, and kinesitherapy and 28 other medical rehabilitation programs are now covered by basic medical insurance.

The system for ensuring disabled persons' right to rehabilitation has improved. China has introduced programs on preventing disabilities and implemented targeted rehabilitation programs, so that every disabled person has access to rehabilitation services. The state has issued the Regulations on the Prevention of Disabilities and Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons, building rehabilitation centers with standard practices and operating models, and developing professionals capable of delivering consistent quality services. By 2017 there were 833 rehabilitation facilities at the provincial, city and county levels nationwide, and 8,334 professional rehabilitation services for the disabled, with a team of 246,000 professionals. More than 2,000 counties (cities, districts) provided community rehabilitation services. A mechanism for providing rehabilitation services to disabled children has been established. Eight provinces and municipalities now provide subsidies to the disabled when they buy assistance devices, lightening the economic burden of families with disabled members. The state has improved the work-related injury rehabilitation system, and increased compensation for disabilities caused by work-related injuries. In 2017 65.6 percent of disabled persons were covered by rehabilitation services.

Disabled persons' right to education is better protected. China ensures that the disabled enjoy equal right to education. The government has promulgated and revised the Regulations on Education for the Disabled, including their education in China's

Middle- and Long-Term Education Reform and Development Program 2010-2020 and the Program for Equitable Access to Basic Public Services During the 13th Five-Year Plan Period. China has twice implemented the Special Education Promotion Plan, striving to develop special education and inclusive education to increase the level of education for the disabled.

The state has established a funding system for disabled students from kindergarten to higher education. In autumn 2016 China began to provide 12-year free education from primary to senior high school for disabled students from poor families. By 2016 over 90 percent of children with impaired eyesight, hearing or mental disability had received compulsory education, and children with other types of disability also had increased access to education. The state encourages special education schools to run preschool courses or kindergartens, and has provided funding for disabled children receiving preschool education. In 2017 China had 112 senior high classes (departments) in special education, with 8,466 students on campus, and 132 secondary vocational schools (classes) for the disabled, with 12,968 students. 1,845 disabled persons studied at colleges of special education. China strives to develop inclusive education. In 2017 more than 300,000 disabled students – over 50 percent of all disabled students receiving compulsory education – studied at regular schools during the compulsory education phase, and 10,818 disabled persons were enrolled at regular institutions of higher learning.

Disabled persons' cultural rights are ensured. Cultural services for the disabled have been included in the nation's public cultural services system. By 2017 China's provincial- and prefecture-level television stations had run 285 programs employing sign language. Broadcasting stations had aired 223 radio programs specially for the disabled, and public libraries at the provincial, prefecture and county levels had set up 959 reading rooms with books in Braille and audio books, providing some 25,000 seats. Each year, more than 2 million disabled persons take part in cultural weeks and enjoy charity performances and exhibitions nationwide. To develop disabled arts, the state holds a national disabled arts variety show every four years, with some 100,000 disabled persons attending each time. Art troupes of the disabled have grown quickly to 281 in number, and nearly 300,000 disabled persons work in the culture and arts industry. The government provides cultural services to impoverished disabled persons, and to their families and communities. Through the "digital reading" promotion program for visually impaired persons and many other programs, China offers quality cultural products and services to its disabled population.

Disabled persons' right to employment is effectively guaranteed. The basic right of disabled persons to employment is strictly protected by law. In China, the provincial, city and county governments have established offices in service of disabled

persons seeking employment. By 2017 there were nearly 3,000 such offices with a staff of 15,000. China has initiated an occupational skills promotion program for the disabled, setting up 500 state-level and 350 provincial-level vocational training bases. Since 2013 the Chinese government has kept files on employment and training for 18 million disabled persons, and each year some 333,000 disabled persons enter the workforce. By 2017 more than 9.42 million registered disabled persons were working in urban and rural areas.

More barrier-free facilities and assistance devices have been provided. China has released the Regulations on the Building of Barrier-Free Environments, with provisions on the building of barrier-free facilities, information exchange, and community services, in an effort to ensure that disabled persons can participate equally in social life. By 2017 a total of 451 laws, regulations and normative documents on the construction and management of barrier-free facilities had been issued at the provincial, prefecture and county levels. Between 2016 and 2017 the government helped 1.83 million families with disabled members renovate their homes with barrier-free facilities. China is moving faster to provide barrier-free information services. By January 2018 more than 500 government organs had set up barrier-free public service information platforms, and more than 30,000 websites on government affairs and public services are barrier-free. A total of 9,053 fitness facilities for the disabled have been established, and 222,000 families with severely disabled members have received rehabilitation and fitness services. In 2017 2.44 million disabled persons were provided with tactile sticks, visual aids, artificial limbs and other assistance devices. The disabled persons' right to drive motor vehicles is protected. Some 160,000 disabled persons who have obtained their drivers' licenses can now travel and take part in various activities more freely.

V. Comprehensively Promoting the Rule of Law for Human Rights

Over the four decades since the launch of reform and opening up, from strengthening the legal system, to governing the country by law, and thence to comprehensively promoting the rule of law, China has worked hard to protect human rights throughout. It has endeavored to ensure that a well-conceived approach is taken to legislation, that law is strictly enforced, that justice is impartially administered, and that the law is observed by everyone. Striving to build a socialist country under the rule of law, it has made new progress in the legal protection of human rights.

1. Establishing the Legal Framework to Protect Human Rights

China has gradually established a socialist legal framework with Chinese characteristics. In this framework, the Constitution is at the core, and laws related to the Constitution, the Civil Law, the Commercial Law, and other legal departments are the main body, covering laws, administrative regulations, and local laws and regulations at multiple levels. The laws and regulations covering all levels of human rights protection are relatively complete.

The legal norms guaranteeing civil and political rights have been improved. The Legislation Law stipulates that only the National People's Congress and its Standing Committee have the power to legislate on matters concerning criminal offences and penalties, compulsory measures and penalties involving deprivation of a citizen's political rights or restriction of personal freedom, the justice system, and others.

The Criminal Law establishes three principles: 1) Any act deemed by explicit stipulations of law as a crime should be prosecuted and punished as such, and any act not deemed by explicit stipulations of law as a crime is not to be prosecuted or punished. 2) Everyone is equal before the law in committing crime. No one is permitted to have privileges to transgress the law. 3) The severity of punishments must be commensurate with the crime committed by an offender and the criminal responsibility is to be borne by the offender.

The Criminal Procedure Law contains in its General Provisions the principle to "respect and protect human rights". It also clearly stipulates the principle of presumption of innocence and the rules for the exclusion of illegal evidence. It proscribes criminal acts infringing upon citizens' rights to life, health, freedom, property, etc. by law, while attaching importance to protecting the human rights enjoyed by criminal suspects, accused persons, and criminals in accordance with the law.

The Election Law, Law on Assemblies, Processions and Demonstrations, Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy, and administrative regulations on religion, letters and visits, publishing, and association registration have clear articles on the protection of civil and political rights.

The National Security Law, Counter-Espionage Law, Counter-Terrorism Law, Cyber Security Law, National Intelligence Law, Nuclear Safety Law and other laws provide a solid legal basis for guaranteeing personal and property security, public security and national security.

The legal norms guaranteeing economic, social and cultural rights have been improved. China has enacted the General Principles of the Civil Law, General

Provisions of the Civil Law and other civil laws to protect citizens' personal rights, right to dignity, and property rights.

It has enacted the Employment Promotion Law, Labor Contract Law, Trade Union Law, Law on the Prevention and Control of Occupational Diseases, and other laws to guarantee citizens' labor rights.

It has promulgated the Social Insurance Law, and established a sound social security system for urban and rural development, ensuring citizens' right to social security.

It has formulated the Food Safety Law, Pharmaceutical Administration Law, Law on Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases, Law on Traditional Chinese Medicine, Law on Physical Culture and Sports, Regulations on National Fitness, and other laws and regulations to protect citizens' right to life and health.

It has enacted and revised the Education Law, Compulsory Education Law, Higher Education Law, Teachers Law and other laws to promote balanced development of education and protect citizens' right to education.

It has formulated the Cultural Relics Protection Law, Intangible Cultural Heritage Law, Public Cultural Service Guarantee Law, Film Industry Promotion Law, Law on Public Libraries, Regulations on Museums, and Regulations on Public Cultural and Sports Facilities, and other laws and regulations to enrich public cultural services and extend citizens' cultural rights and interests.

It has gradually improved the legal system of intellectual property protection with the Patent Law, Trademark Law and Copyright Law at the core in the efforts to protect by law intangible property rights, strengthen intellectual property protection, motivate subjects of innovation, and promote application of intellectual property rights.

It has enacted the Environmental Protection Law, Atmospheric Pollution Prevention and Control Law, Soil Pollution Prevention and Control Law, Water Pollution Prevention and Control Law, Marine Environment Protection Law, Water and Soil Conservation Law, and other environmental laws and regulations, and established procedures and rules for environment-related tort litigation and public interest litigation to provide a solid basis for guaranteeing people's environmental rights.

2. Establishing a Strict and Impartial Law Enforcement System for Human Rights Protection

China has constantly strengthened law-based administration. By building a law-based government that has well-conceived functions and statutorily-defined powers and responsibilities, strictly enforces the law, and is open and impartial, clean and efficient, and credible and law-abiding, it has made the effective protection of people's rights and interests a criterion and an ultimate goal of government. It respects and protects human rights in strictly enforcing the law on behalf of the people.

Delimiting administrative power in accordance with the law. China has established a principle for administrative law enforcement that administrative bodies should not do things not mandated by law, introduced a list of well-defined government powers and a list of responsibilities, and prohibited any power not provided for by law, or any illegal use of power. The Administrative Litigation Law provides a clear legal basis for supervising administrative bodies' exercise of powers in accordance with the law and safeguarding the legitimate rights of citizens. Since the law was enacted and came into force, on average more than 100,000 administrative cases have been accepted each year. In its effort to improve governance, China has accelerated the transformation of government functions, streamlining administration and delegating power to the lower levels, exercising better supervision over the market, and providing efficient services to business. It has cut down the number of items subject to administrative examination and approval by the State Council departments, completely ruled out examination and approval for non-administrative licenses, and substantially reduced enterprise investment projects subject to approval by central authorities, intermediary services subject to administrative examination and approval, and licensing and recognition of professional qualifications.

Improving procedures for administrative law enforcement. China has established a sound system of benchmarks for administrative discretion, specifying the standards for administrative discretion as well as defining its scope, categories, and scale. It has improved the systems for conducting investigations, collecting evidence, notifying people subject to the administrative law enforcement of their right, managing confiscated income, and other areas of administrative law enforcement, clarified the conditions applicable to hearings, strictly implemented the system for reviewing the legality of major administrative law enforcement decisions, and carried out the system of creating legal counsel teams in government departments at all levels. It has implemented a system of disclosing information on administrative law enforcement and a system for recording the entire enforcement process so that every case of such enforcement is traceable. It has strengthened IT application and information-sharing in administrative law enforcement, worked to establish a unified information platform for administrative law enforcement, and improved the online case handling and information inquiry system.

Promoting strict, procedure-based, impartial and non-abusive law enforcement. China has made great efforts to regulate the exercise of law enforcement powers, promoted transparency in law enforcement, and worked hard to build an efficient, convenient, fair and transparent law enforcement mechanism. It has improved the mechanisms of quality evaluation and accountability of law enforcement, effectively regulating law enforcement officials' conduct and protecting the legitimate

rights and interests of persons or parties subject to their actions. It has carried out pilot reforms of the comprehensive administrative law enforcement system, integrated law enforcement functional departments, promoted comprehensive law enforcement, and strengthened law enforcement in key areas.

China has improved the qualification management system for administrative law enforcement personnel, and required defined personnel to pass the unified national qualification exam of legal profession. It has worked hard on every aspect of a law-abiding public security system and the quality of law enforcement by police, and it has implemented the system of qualification exams for law enforcement police officers. By the end of September 2018, 1,700,400 police officers all over the country had basic-level certification for law enforcement and 47,700 had gained upper-level certification.

3. Effectively Enhancing Judicial Protection of Human Rights

Based on the Constitution, Organic Law of the People's Courts, Organic Law of the People's Procuratorates, and relevant procedure laws, China has put in place sound judicial institutions by which public security organs, procuratorial organs, judicial organs, and judicial administrative organs perform their own functions, and cooperate and check each other in the exercise of the investigative, procuratorial, judicial, and enforcement powers. China has strengthened judicial protection of human rights, improved the state compensation system and judicial assistance system, put people first in its judicial system, and endeavored to embody fairness and justice in each and every legal case.

Promoting judicial protection of human rights in extended judicial reform. China has issued four outlines for five-year reform of the people's courts and three decisions on three-year reform of the people's procuratorates. The 18th CPC Central Committee incorporated the need to strengthen and improve judicial protection of human rights into the plan of deeper-level reform at the Third Plenary Session, and into the plan of comprehensively advancing the rule of law at the Fourth Plenary Session. It has enabled the people's courts to exercise judicial power and people's procuratorates to exercise procuratorial power independently and impartially in accordance with the law. It has carried out unified management of personnel and financial assets at provincial level. The Circuit Court of the Supreme People's Court has been set up, and people's courts and people's procuratorates across administrative boundaries have been established. China has adopted a quota system for judges and procurators, enabling judicial personnel to be more regularized and professional.

China has implemented a case docketing and registration system to protect the rights of the parties concerned. It has further reformed the trial-centered litigation system to ensure that court trials play a decisive role in impartial adjudication, and

implemented the judicial responsibility system to strengthen supervision over judicial activities. China has reformed and improved the system of people's jurors to promote judicial justice and enhance judicial credibility. It has established four major platforms for releasing information on judicial process, trials, written judgments, and the execution of judgments to promote judicial openness.

Ensuring that all parties enjoy the right to fair trial. China has fully guaranteed the right of criminal suspects and defendants to defense. A criminal suspect has the right to entrust a defender from the date when organs of investigation conduct the first interrogation or a compulsory measure is taken against the suspect. A defendant has the right to authorize a defender at any time. It has launched a pilot program of full coverage of legal defense in criminal cases to ensure that defendants in all criminal cases can obtain legal defense in order to promote judicial justice.

China strictly follows the principle of evidence-based adjudication to resolutely prevent and correct wrongful convictions. Suspects are acquitted in accordance with the law when the evidence does not support the allegation that a crime has been committed. China strictly controls and carefully uses the death penalty; the number of capital offences has been substantially reduced. In 2007, the Supreme People's Court took back the right to review all capital sentences.

China has established a sound legal aid system and expanded its coverage to provide legal advice and defense for criminal suspects and defendants. As of September 2018, the country had established some 3,200 legal aid institutions and more than 70,000 legal aid workstations, including some 2,500 in detention centers and 3,300 in courts, realizing full coverage of legal aid workstations in detention centers and people's courts.

Guaranteeing the legitimate rights and interests of criminal suspects, defendants, prisoners and people released after serving their sentence. China has published the Regulations on Detention Centers, and is drafting the law on detention centers. With these, China further guarantees the dignity and legitimate interests of detainees, and the right to meet lawyers, appeal, and receive medical treatment. It has formulated and strictly enforced the Prison Law, ensuring that criminals' personal dignity is not violated, and their personal rights, right to life and health, and right to education are safeguarded, and that prison affairs are open to the public. It has published the Provisions on Meetings Between Lawyers and Prison Inmates, and carried out activities for prison inmates to leave prisons and visit relatives, effectively protecting the legal rights of convicted criminals.

China has established the system of community correction. Community correction, or non-custodial correction penalties, was imposed on those whose crimes are relatively minor and who have been sentenced to public surveillance, probation, release on parole,

and temporary sanction outside prison. By the end of September 2018, a total of 4.12 million persons throughout the country had received community correction orders. Of these, 3.42 million had completed their correction, and 700,000 were still subject to their correction orders. The recidivism rate in the case of those assigned to community correction is low, only 0.2 percent.

China has improved the assistance and management system for people released after completing their prison sentence. It provides subsistence allowances, temporary assistance and other aids for those eligible, and carries out employment support policies to improve the employability of people released upon completion of their sentence.

Improving the state compensation system and judicial aid system. China has promulgated the State Compensation Law, and continued to improve systems of administrative compensation, criminal compensation and non-criminal judicial compensation. It has increased compensation for infliction of mental distress, raised standards of compensation, and guaranteed that compensation is paid in a timely manner. The daily compensation for violation of citizens' personal liberty has risen from RMB17.16 yuan in 1995 to RMB284.74 in 2018. From 2013 to June 2018, the people's courts at all levels accepted 22,821 cases involving state compensation.

China has continued to improve the judicial aid system. It has published Decisions on the Work of Relieving Criminal Victims and several other documents, while establishing a judicial aid committee to actively dovetail judicial aid with social assistance and legal aid. From 2013 to 2017, RMB2.67 billion of judicial aid was granted to help victims in difficulty who had not been able to obtain effective compensation.

Effectively resolving difficulties in the execution of court rulings and ensuring the interests of successful litigants. China has established a sound mechanism for compulsory execution of civil judgment documents and a legal system of credit supervision, warning and punishment over dishonest debtors who have failed to respect judgements. It has also established a national online check and control system about the execution of court rulings, a network system for punishment of loss of credit, and a platform for online judicial auctions. From 2016 to September 2018, courts across the country heard a total of 18.84 million applications for execution, of which 16.94 million (including terminated enforcement procedures) were concluded. They involved sums amounting to RMB4.07 trillion.

China has regulated judicial procedures for securing, detaining, freezing, and handling assets involved, thus protecting the rights and interests of successful litigants while not infringing the legal rights of judgement debtors.

4. Establishing a Tight Rule of Law System Against Corruption

China has worked hard to promote the rule of law against corruption, and confine the exercise of power to an institutional cage, providing strong support for the legal protection of human rights.

Improving anti-corruption institutions. In 1978, procuratorial organs at all levels set up internal units to act against corruption and bribery, and units of law and discipline inspection to crack down on all crimes of corruption, bribery and malfeasance. The Supreme People's Procuratorate set up the General Administration Against Corruption and Bribery in 1995 and the Bureau Against Malfeasance and Tort in 2005. In 2007, the National Bureau of Corruption Prevention was founded. In 2018, the Constitution of the PRC was amended, the Supervision Law was enacted, and the National Supervisory Commission was set up, covering all public officials exercising public power.

Resolutely fighting against corruption. The CPC and the Chinese government have worked hard to enhance Party conduct, uphold clean government, and fight corruption. Showing zero tolerance for corruption, the campaign covers all those holding public office without exception. China imposes tight constraints, maintains a tough stance and a long-term deterrence, punishes both those who take bribes and those who offer them, and maintains a tough position on fighting corruption. From December 2012 to September 2018, commissions for discipline inspection and departments of supervision around the country filed a total of 2,153,000 cases and disciplined 2,132,000 persons. From December 2012 to September 2017, 58,000 cases of suspected criminal activity were transferred to the judiciary.

China has resolutely fought corruption that directly affects ordinary people's lives, especially in the areas of poverty alleviation, education, medical care, food and medicine, and criminal syndicate-related "protection" rackets. From 2015 to September 2018, a total of 399,800 cases of corruption and misconduct that undermine the people's interests were investigated, and 512,100 people were dealt with.

China has strengthened international cooperation against corruption, published a list of 100 most-wanted fugitives, and organized a series of "Sky Net" operations. From 2014 to September 2018, 4,719 fugitives were brought back from more than 120 countries and regions, including 54 on the list of 100 most-wanted fugitives, and illegal assets worth RMB10.37 billion were recovered.

5. Building a Positive Atmosphere for the Legal Protection of Human Rights

Enhancing public awareness of the rule of law for human rights and laying a strong foundation for the legal protection of human rights. Since 1986, China has implemented seven nationwide five-year plans on enhancing public legal awareness, popularizing the rule of law for human rights. It has also carried out a responsibility program in which state law enforcement departments are responsible for strengthening

public legal awareness. China has set December 4 as National Constitution Day, and carried out constitutional education to promote legal protection of human rights to the public. China has incorporated education on the rule of law and human rights into the national education system. Basic knowledge of human rights has been integrated into primary and secondary education, and human rights law and other courses related to human rights are offered in universities.

China has set up national human rights education and training bases. Professional periodicals including *Human Rights* and *Human Rights Studies* are published in China. Special human rights training programs are conducted for officials at all levels and different strata or groups of people. Social organizations such as the China Society for Human Rights Studies have made great efforts to advance human rights research and education and promote knowledge of the subject, laying a solid social foundation for safeguarding human rights.

VI. Facilitating the Development of Human Rights in the World

Over the past 40 years of reform and opening up, China has redoubled its efforts to promote human rights, sharing its experience in this regard with the rest of the world, and creating more development opportunities for all countries. China follows the principle of achieving shared growth through discussion and collaboration in global governance, with a mission of making more and greater contributions to humanity. China values the rights to subsistence, development and peace and all other human rights, and strives to further this cause throughout the world.

Increasing foreign assistance. Over the years, China has provided foreign assistance to Asian and African developing countries for use in poverty reduction, education, healthcare, agriculture and infrastructure, involving major construction projects in agriculture, industry, transport, energy and power, information technology and communication, helping resolve national problems and safeguard the local peoples' life needs.

From 1950 to 2016, despite its own limited development and living standards, China provided RMB400 billion of foreign aid to other countries, conducted over 5,000 foreign assistance projects – of which almost 3,000 are turn-key projects – and organized 11,000 training programs in China for more than 260,000 persons from other developing countries. By 2017 China had dispatched 25,000 medical workers to 72

countries and regions in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe and Oceania, who have treated 280 million patients and saved countless lives, winning high praise from the governments and peoples of the recipient countries.

Improving development capacity. In recent years, President Xi Jinping has announced a raft of foreign assistance initiatives and measures, which fully demonstrate that China as a major country lives up to its responsibility for advancing the interests of humanity.

Within the framework of South-South cooperation China has steadily expanded its assistance to other developing countries, with more efforts to build and improve platforms for regional cooperation, while fully relying on mechanisms such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), BRICS, the ASEAN Plus China (10+1) Summit, China-ASEAN Expo (CAEXPO), Lancang-Mekong Cooperation (LMC), the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), China-CELAC Forum, and China-Arab States Cooperation Forum (CASCF). All are designed to improve the development capacity of the countries involved.

China has proposed the Belt and Road Initiative, initiated the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the New Development Bank (NDB) for development projects in BRICS, set up the Silk Road Fund and the Assistance Fund for South-South Cooperation, and founded the Center for International Knowledge on Development (CIKD) and the Institute of South-South Cooperation and Development (ISSCAD). All the above are aimed to encourage the recipient countries to enhance their capacity for self-development, reduce poverty, improve their people's living standards, and protect the environment.

The port-industry-city integrated development model, initiated by China and adopted by Djibouti, Colombo in Sri Lanka and Kuantan in Malaysia, has been welcomed by these Belt and Road countries.

China is steadily increasing foreign assistance training. By organizing training courses, dispatching management personnel, technical professionals and young volunteers, and offering scholarships, China has provided advanced study and training for government officials, higher education degree and diploma programs, and technical training and exchange programs for various kinds of personnel from other developing countries, to share development experience and technologies in a timely manner.

From 2013 to 2017, by establishing economic and trade cooperation zones in the Belt and Road countries, China helped create more than 200,000 jobs in the host countries. Once the 10 major China-Africa cooperation programs are in place, they will help Africa add a total highway length of nearly 30,000 km, add clean water treatment capacity of over 9 million tons/day, and create about 900,000 jobs. The

Mombasa-Nairobi Standard Gauge Railway (SGR), which opened to traffic in 2017, has helped increase Kenya's GDP by 1.5-2 percent.

Providing humanitarian relief. In the early days of reform and opening up, China's humanitarian relief focused on helping other developing countries respond to severe natural disasters. This included emergency aid to a number of African countries stricken by severe droughts and to Bangladesh hit by windstorms.

After 2001, China increased its participation in international humanitarian relief, taking an active part in activities launched by UN organizations and expanding its share of aid year by year.

Since 2004, China had provided over 300 international humanitarian relief programs, with an average annual growth rate of 29.4 percent. These relief programs mainly comprise:

- technical aid to Southeast Asian countries against avian influenza;
- material and personnel assistance and assistance in cash
 - to Guinea-Bissau against locust plague and cholera,
 - to Mexico against A/H1N1 flu,
 - to Africa against Ebola, yellow fever, plague and other infectious diseases,
 - to Iran, Haiti, Chile, Ecuador and Mexico against earthquakes,
 - to Madagascar against hurricanes,
 - to Indian Ocean countries against tsunami,
 - to Pakistan against floods,
 - to the US against Hurricane Katrina,
 - to Chile against mountain fires,
 - to the Caribbean countries against hurricanes;
- food and goods assistance to the DPRK, Bangladesh and Nepal.

In March 2014 when Ebola broke out in many West African countries, China provided four rounds of humanitarian relief, with a total value of RMB750 million, and deployed more than 1,000 experts and medical workers.

China has enacted laws and regulations on international humanitarian relief and improving its related working mechanisms, and forged stronger cooperation on humanitarian relief with UN organizations and NGOs. In 1979, China joined the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and World Food Program (WFP), resumed its activities in the Executive Committee of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and made many donations to the UNHCR. The Red Cross Society of China (RCSC), China Charity Federation (CCF), China Welfare Institute (CWI), China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation (CFPA) and private charities, along with legal persons of certain enterprises and societies in China, have all engaged in international humanitarian relief, demonstrating to the international community

China's sincere desire to engage in international humanitarian relief and to protect human rights through tangible actions.

Safeguarding world peace. China, along with other countries, is constantly committed to maintaining world peace, supporting international and regional anti-terror cooperation, and creating a peaceful and harmonious environment for the development of human rights in the world. China has made a significant contribution to the right to peace by promoting development with peace and by consolidating peace through development.

In recent years, China has provided solutions to regional flashpoint issues: putting forward proposals and initiatives for the Palestinian issue on many occasions; engaging in serious negotiations on the Iranian nuclear issue; actively mediating for the national reconciliation in South Sudan; pressing for a political settlement to the Syrian issue; promoting peace negotiations between the Afghan government and Taliban; and facilitating the political settlement of the Korean Peninsula issue.

China has firmly supported and vigorously participated in UN peacekeeping operations. In April 1990, China dispatched the first five military observers to the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), marking China's official participation in UN peacekeeping operations. By May 2018, China had dispatched 37,000 military and 2,700 police personnel to participate in 30 UN peacekeeping missions in Sudan, Lebanon, Cambodia, Liberia and other countries and regions. China ranks first in terms of the number of peacekeepers among the permanent members of the UN Security Council, and is the second largest donor country to UN peacekeeping operations. In September 2017, China completed the registration of 8,000 standby peacekeeping forces in the UN.

These are the significant measures by which China has met its responsibilities as a major country, fulfilled its promise to support UN peacekeeping operations with concrete actions, and promoted the cause of human rights throughout the world.

VII. Active Participation in Global Governance of Human Rights

Over the 40 years of reform and opening up, upholding the principles of equality and mutual trust, inclusiveness and mutual learning, and cooperation and win-win benefits, China has been active in UN human rights undertakings, fulfilling its international human rights obligations, conducting extensive international cooperation

on human rights, and advancing the global governance of human rights in a fair and rational direction.

Fulfilling obligations in international instruments on human rights. To date, China has signed 26 international human rights instruments, including six major ones such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

China fulfills all the obligations prescribed in relevant international conventions, ensuring that its legislation and any amendments as well as its policy formulation are consistent with these conventions, and completing and submitting periodic reports to give feedback on the progress made and any difficulties and problems encountered in implementing international conventions on human rights.

China accepts reviews from the treaty body on its implementation of these conventions. By August 2018, China had submitted 39 implementation reports on 26 occasions to these treaty bodies and received 26 reviews. During the reviews, China conducted constructive dialogue with the relevant treaty bodies and adopted their suggestions in accordance with the actual conditions in China.

China supports the necessary reform of the human rights treaty bodies, promoting dialogue and cooperation between the treaty bodies and signatory states on the basis of mutual respect.

China recommends Chinese experts as candidate members of the treaty bodies, many of whom have been chosen to serve on bodies such as the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the United Nations Committee against Torture, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Participating in establishing international rules and mechanisms for protecting human rights. Since the launch of reform and opening up in 1978, China has attended the meetings of the drafting groups of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and other important documents on human rights protection, making a significant contribution to drafting, revising and improving these rules.

As one of the major promoters, China participated in drafting the Declaration on the Right to Development, assisting the United Nations Commission on Human Rights

(UNCHR) and the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to organize global discussions on fulfilling the right to development, and is committed to building mechanisms for actualizing the right to development.

In 1993, China pushed for the adoption of the Bangkok Declaration among Asian countries. The same year, as the vice presidency of the Second World Conference on Human Rights, China participated in drafting the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action. In 1995 in Beijing, China hosted the Fourth World Conference on Women.

Since 2006, China has supported UNHRC in establishing specialized mechanisms for securing safe drinking water, cultural rights, and the rights of persons with disabilities, in calling for special conferences on food security and global financial crisis, and in improving the international mechanisms for protecting human rights.

China is one of the first countries that attended the UN Climate Change Conference. China is an enthusiastic participant and an effective proponent in international climate negotiations, and has contributed to the adoption of the Paris Agreement. China has facilitated the formulation and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by the United Nations.

Engaging in UN human rights undertakings. From 1979 to 1981, China attended the meetings of the UNCHR as an observer state. In 1981, China was elected a member state of the UNCHR at the meeting of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). In 1982, China became an official member state of the UNCHR and has maintained this position ever since. Since 1984, a succession of experts recommended by China have been elected members and alternate members of the United Nations Sub-commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities. China takes an active part in discussions and negotiations of relevant issues in the UNCHR.

To build a fair, objective and transparent international mechanism for protecting human rights, China is a vigorous proponent of reform of the UN special mechanisms for protecting human rights; it played a significant role in the negotiations and final vote on establishing the UNHRC. Since March 2006, China has been elected a UNHRC member state four times. China maintains constructive contacts with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), encouraging the OHCHR to perform its duties fairly and objectively, and directing more attention to the concerns of developing countries.

China conducts cooperation with the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. Since 1994, China has invited the following UN representatives to visit the country: the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on

Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, the United Nations Working Group on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the United Nations Independent Expert on the Effects of Foreign Debt and Other Related International Financial Obligations of States on the Full Enjoyment of All Human Rights, Particularly Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights. China handles letters from the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council with due attention, carrying out any necessary investigations and giving timely replies.

China is deeply involved in international mechanisms for protecting human rights, assisting multilateral human rights organizations to address such issues in a fair, objective and nonselective manner. China has implemented the suggestions adopted during the first and second Universal Periodic Review (UPR) cycles, and is actively participating in the third UPR cycle. China has been reelected a member state of the United Nations Committee on Non-governmental Organizations. Chinese experts have been appointed members of the UNHRC Advisory Committee and the Working Group on Situations. China encourages its NGOs to participate vigorously in the UNHRC and other human rights protection mechanisms.

Conducting extensive international exchanges and cooperation concerning human rights. China is committed to promoting constructive dialogue and cooperation on human rights with other countries based on equality and mutual respect, and to organizing extensive exchanges to this end. Since the 1990s, China has established dialogue and negotiation mechanisms for human rights protection with more than 20 other countries. China has organized dialogue and exchanges on human rights and exchanges between legal experts, and technical cooperation on human rights with international organizations and Western countries, including the US, the EU, the UK, Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand, to enhance communication, understanding and mutual learning between governmental departments, judicial organs and academia. China has held human rights discussions with Russia, Egypt, South Africa, Brazil, Malaysia, Pakistan, Belarus, Cuba and the African Union, to share experience and enhance cooperation.

In recent years, China has hosted several international forums and seminars on human rights in Beijing, including the Conference Commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the Adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2016), the 16th Informal Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Seminar on Human Rights (2016), the International Seminar Commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the Adoption of the Declaration on the Right to Development (2016), and the First South-South Human Rights Forum (2017). All of these have strengthened international

dialogue and exchanges on human rights. The China Society for Human Rights Studies (CSHRS) and other human rights NGOs in China promote exchanges and cooperation on human rights. They have organized the Beijing Forum on Human Rights on nine occasions, China-Europe Seminar on Human Rights on four occasions, and the International Seminar on Human Rights and Museology several times, as well as the China-Germany Seminar on Human Rights and the Sino-American Dialogue on the Rule of Law and Human Rights. These play an important role in increasing exchanges and mutual learning among civilizations. Every year China receives human rights representatives from many countries and international organizations, and arranges for foreign visits by Chinese human rights delegations, to strengthen its exchanges and cooperation on human rights with other countries and enhance mutual knowledge and understanding.

Providing Chinese solutions to global human rights governance. China is actively engaged in global governance of human rights, making proposals at the United Nations General Assembly and the United Nations Human Rights Council and on other occasions to promote the establishment of an international human rights system that is fair, just, reasonable and effective.

China proposes the view that “The rights to subsistence and development are the primary, basic human rights.” China adheres to the principle that all human rights should develop side by side, and that both the universality and the particularity of human rights should be taken into account. China emphasizes advancing development through cooperation and promoting human rights through development. These perspectives and proposals lead the cause of human rights both in developing countries and in the wider world.

The idea of building a global community of shared future, as proposed by President Xi Jinping, has elicited a positive international response. The concept has been written into many resolutions of the United Nations Human Rights Council and the United Nations Security Council, and is being recognized by more and more countries. It is an example of Chinese wisdom and a Chinese solution to future world development, including global governance of human rights. China has supported the passing of many resolutions by the UNHRC, including the President’s Statement on the Twentieth Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and of the Adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Promoting the Right to Health through Enhancing Capacity-building in Public Health, The Contribution of Development to the Enjoyment of All Human Rights, and Promoting Mutually Beneficial Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights. Particularly, the passing of the resolution, The Contribution of Development to the Enjoyment of All Human Rights,

for the first time introduced the concept of “promoting human rights through development” into the international human rights system.

On behalf of over 140 countries, China has delivered speeches on issues such as “enhancing cooperation on human rights”, “actualizing the right to development” and “building a global community of shared future” on many occasions; China has also hosted side events and exhibitions at the UN with the theme of “promoting human rights through poverty reduction”.

VIII. Path of Human Rights Protection Suited to National Conditions

Over the past four decades of reform and opening up, China has made significant progress in human rights, creating a new path of human rights protection based on China’s history and national conditions, and the successful experiences of other countries. This path is the result of the Chinese people’s experimentation in practice and theoretical innovation led by the CPC, and embodies the essence of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

Human rights protection centered on the people. People are the fundamental driving force of history. People-centered development toward a better life was the original aspiration and remains the distinct goal of China’s reform and opening up. To realize this aspiration, the state respects the people’s principal position in the country, safeguards their political rights, expands orderly political participation in all fields at all levels, and ensures the people’s rights to equal participation and equal development. Furthermore, the state takes the people’s wellbeing and common prosperity as its ultimate goal, enables the people to be the main contributors, promoters, and beneficiaries of development, and works to fulfill their aspirations for a better education, more stable jobs, higher incomes, more reliable social security, better medical and health care, improved housing conditions, and a beautiful environment, advancing the all-round development of the people. Since the 18th CPC National Congress the CPC has given prominence to the principle of people-centered development by putting the interests of the people above all else, focusing its efforts on their aspiration for a better life, and enhancing the protection of all basic human rights. The CPC and the Chinese government plan reform policies and set reform measures in the interests of the people, and always make sure that reform responds to public demand. China’s national rejuvenation represents a process of promoting social fairness and justice, advancing

human rights, realizing, safeguarding, and developing the fundamental interests of the people, ensuring that the fruits of development better benefit all the people in a fair way, and enabling every person to enjoy self-development and serve society with dignity.

Integration of the principle of universality of human rights with China's national conditions. The universality of human rights is grounded in human dignity and value, and based on common interests and basic moral norms shared by all. There is no universally applicable model for fulfilling human rights, and human rights can only advance in the context of national conditions and people's needs. The CPC and the Chinese government approach human rights from a historical, dialectical and developmental perspective, and take advantage of the strengths of socialism with Chinese characteristics while bearing in mind the overarching condition that China is still and will long remain in the primary stage of socialism, integrating universality with particularity. The central authorities take proactive steps to meet the people's need for development, and advance human rights in a planned and progressive manner.

Primary focus on the rights to subsistence and development. From the mid-19th century China suffered repeated foreign aggression and fell to the status of a poor and weak country. The experience of numerous hardships taught the Chinese people that the rights to subsistence and development are the primary rights – the preconditions and the foundation for all other human rights. A process of self-actualization for individuals, development is a means to eliminate poverty and paves the way for realizing other human rights. Taking development as its top priority, China is committed to liberating and developing the country's productive forces and eliminating poverty. The country has achieved outstanding economic success and realized the historic leaps from poverty to secure access to food and clothing, and thence to moderate prosperity. In the light of its national conditions, China pursues innovative, coordinated, green, open and inclusive development, highlights balance and sustainability, and promotes harmony between urban and rural areas, between regions, between the economy and society, and between humanity and nature to lay a solid foundation for fulfilling and protecting the right to development.

Coordinated progress in all human rights as a major principle for human rights protection. Over the past 40 years, adhering to the principle of interdependence and inalienability of all human rights, China has coordinated the planning and promotion of all rights and endeavored to strike a balance between economic, social and cultural rights and civil and political rights, and between individual rights and collective rights. Moving toward the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation set out by the 18th CPC National Congress, the CPC has advanced the overall plan of seeking economic, political, cultural, social, and ecological progress, and made comprehensive moves to complete a moderately prosperous society in all respects, to extend reform, to advance

the rule of law, and to strengthen Party discipline. In this way China has made comprehensive progress in human rights through an integrated approach.

Institutional guarantee of human rights under the rule of law. The rule of law is a symbol of human progress and an important guarantee of human rights. China has made rule of law the fundamental strategy for governing the country and worked to build a socialist country under the rule of law. The state enhances comprehensive protection of human rights under the rule of law, ensures that the people enjoy their rights and freedoms to a fuller extent, and strives to realize social fairness and justice, in an effort to bring about the all-round development of individuals and comprehensive progress of society. Since the 18th CPC National Congress the CPC and the Chinese government have made comprehensive moves to advance the rule of law, taking a holistic approach to building a country, a government and a society where the rule of law applies. The central authorities have given greater prominence to respecting and protecting human rights in building a socialist country under the rule of law, and placed human rights under the full protection of the rule of law through strengthening legislation, law enforcement, administration of justice, and observance of law.

A global community of shared future as a way to improve global human rights governance. China is a supporter, practitioner and promoter of the sound development of the international human rights cause. Since reform and opening up China has pursued common development across the world, aiming for a better life for the Chinese people and the peoples of other countries. China has developed rapidly by taking advantage of opportunities created by a peaceful international environment. It has in turn upheld and promoted world peace and common propensity through its own development, and made an outstanding contribution to the cause of international human rights. China calls for inclusiveness, exchanges, and mutual learning between cultures and between countries to advance human rights together. International human rights issues should be resolved through consultation. Building a global human rights governance system needs the participation of all countries, and progress in human rights benefits all peoples in the world. All member states have the responsibility to abide by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, uphold the principle of sovereign equality, and engage in human rights exchanges and cooperation in a constructive way. China conducts extensive and in-depth cooperation on international human rights, and promotes a fair and equitable global system for human rights governance by working together with other countries to build a global community of shared future.

Conclusion

The past 40 years of reform and opening up have seen a growing sense of gain, happiness and security, and noteworthy progress in the cause of human rights in China. It is a fact that the Chinese people have never enjoyed a more extensive range of human rights than they do today.

China is the largest developing country in the world. Its progress enables the Chinese people to enjoy human rights to a fuller extent, contributes significantly to the development of humanity, and shares with the world China's experience in protecting human dignity and enriching the diversity of human rights culture.

There is always room for improving human rights. To protect human rights to a fuller extent, China still has a long way to go and faces many difficulties and challenges. As China is still and will long remain in the primary stage of socialism, pressing problems caused by unbalanced and inadequate development await solutions. Many areas concerning public wellbeing require improvement. Poverty alleviation remains a formidable task. The people's aspirations regarding employment, education, health care, elderly care, and environment are yet to be satisfied, and protection of human rights under the rule of law needs to be enhanced.

The Chinese people are striving to achieve the Two Centenary Goals and the Chinese Dream under the leadership of the CPC Central Committee led by President Xi Jinping. Through perseverance in the coming decades, they will enjoy better protected human rights and greater dignity, freedom and happiness. The cause of human rights in China can look forward to prospects of a brighter future.