中国互联网发展基金会
CIDF China Internet Development Foundation

Submission to the United Nations
Universal Periodic Review of China

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Internet Rumor Governance

1.China Internet Development Foundation（CIDF）is very concerned about the universal periodic review of Chinese human right practices in the third round raised by United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner.

2. According to the 40th *China Internet development statistics report* submitted by CNNIC, as of June 2017, the population of Chinese Internet users reaches 751 million. And early statistics from China's Ministry of Industry and Information show that China's mobile Internet users are more than 1.15 billion, which means that China is utterly an Internet

giant.

3. Chinese government is gathering the strength of the whole society, and focusing on thoroughly reforming the society with applications of information technology, meanwhile firmly developing the country's innovation, and taking Internet, big data, cloud computing as main means for changing the pattern of economic growth as well as upgrading the way of social governance.

4. In most parts of China, smart phones, mobile Internet, and cash-free payments have been pervasive in people's daily life. Chinese netizens are becoming symbiotic with the Internet. They are accustomed to using smart phones to meet all kinds of needs in their daily life.

5. However, when people are enjoying the convenience brought by Internet, the rapidly developing Internet industries also face some social problems, such as online rumors, spread of Internet virus, personal information leakage, Internet fraud and other criminal activities. These problems damage the basis of healthy development of data economy, cause personal injury and loss of property, and what's worse, bring outserious criminal offences.

6 . We notice that Chinese government has been commiting

itself to maintain a clearer cyberspace for Internet users, so that netizens can use the Internet more safely, however, there remain some problems in practice as well. Online rumors are the stubborn "cancer" which is hard to be cut off in the rapid development of China's Internet. Although Chinese government has taken a series of targeted measures, the Internet rumors are like "boundless grasses", even "wildfire" can not end them, and they will come to live when the spring breeze blows again.

7. Online rumors disseminate false information, mislead Internet users, damage reputation and property interests of the people, furthermore, impair the national security and public interest. When the case of Tianjin Port explosions in 2016, and child abusive case of RYB Education Kindergarten in 2017 happened, some Internet rumors even targeted at Chinese army and local government.

8. According to Tencent, one of the most important Chinese Internet service providers, its latest report on *Online Rumors Governance* shows that the reason why online rumors keep persisting despite of repeated prohibitions is that these rumors are involved with the common concerns with Internet users, for example, 38.77% of the online rumors is about health and fitness, 27.08% relates to anecdotes, 13.23% relates to food safety.

9 . Internet virus, Internet financial fraud and personal information leakage are also social problems that Chinese government, Internet users and Internet service providers have to face together. These problems cause hundreds of billions of economic losses to Chinese Internet industry and Internet users each year. According to People's Daily, Xinhuanet and other media channels, WannaCrypt swept more than 150 countries in the first half of 2017, and nearly 30 thousand Chinese organizations suffered losses of varying degrees.

10. Internet financial fraud cases have been happening frequently in China. According to the data released by Internet Society of China, from the second half of 2015 to the first half of 2016, Chinese netizens suffered economic losses of 91.5 billion yuan, 133 yuan per capita, due to SMS fraud and personal data leakage. The cases of Xu Yuyu, Song Zhenning and other people who commited suicide due to Internet financial fraud have triggered public discontentment with government's Internet governance. Finally, Chinese government has started to take a series of tougher measures since 2016.

11. We notice that Chinese government values much on making laws, administrative regulations and some other measures to solve these problems. The *Network Security Law*, passed in 2016 and formally implemented in 2017, and a series

of other laws and regulations start to come into effect, helping alleviate the above problems, to some extent, control illegal acts like Internet rumors.

12. We support the targeted activities made by the Ministry of Public Security, the Ministry of Industry and Information and some other government departments in recent years to combat online rumors, Internet fraud, Internet virus and personal information leakage. We highly praise the measures that Cyberspace Amininistration of China has taken to build a clearer Internet environment. Meanwhile , we deeply hope that when taking measures, Chinese government can follow the rule of law, consider the demands of different parties, examine and distinguish carefully, balance different interests, support the legitimate expression of the public, and give more space for development of Internet technology and industries.

13 . Since 2015, Cyberspace Amininistration of China has conducted several rounds of investigation on WeChat and Weibo public homepages which spread online rumors; in 2016 and 2017, Cyberspace Amininistration of China jointly with the Ministry of Public Security and the Ministry of Industry and Information closed down a number of websites, public homepages of Weibo and WeChat, which publish, disseminate rumors and illegal information , mislead the public. These

measures have played an active role in purifying the cyberspace, helped netizens to speak rationally online. The society responded positively to these measures.

14. We notice that in the process of cracking down online rumors, Internet viruses, financial fraud and personal data leakage, the national and local complaint centers led by Chinese government are playing a growing role. According to the surveys of November 2017, China Internet Illegal Information Hotline receives 6 million and 162 thousand cases. About 6 million 10 thousand cases are handled directly or transferred to law enforcement departments, and 5 million and 615 thousand cases are given feedbacks to Internet users through various channels.

15. We believe that in the process of combating online rumors, if Chinese government can enhance transparency in work and be more active in information disclosure, it will be more helpful in the governance of rumors. We are gald to see and give significant support to the government using big data, cloud computing and other technologies to improve the accurate identification of online rumors, Internet viruses, personal information leakage and Internet financial fraud, to increase the capacity of fighting against these crimes.