

中国少数民族对外交流协会

China Ethnic Minorities' Association for External Exchanges

Submission to the UN Human Rights Council for Universal Periodic Review of China—— Human Rights in Xinjiang

March 2018

1. China Ethnic Minorities' Association for External Exchanges (CEMAFEE) pays great attention to the universal periodic review conducted by the United Nations Human Rights Council, and notes relevant recommendations on ethnic affairs in China made through conclusions 219 to 240 of the 2013 *Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*, especially the concerns about the situation in Xinjiang expressed through recommendations 231, 233, 234, 235 and 239. In recent years, CEMAEE has conducted investigations on relevant situations in Xinjiang, China.

2. We are pleased to see that the political rights of the citizens in Xinjiang have been well protected. The right to vote and right to be elected are fully protected. In Xinjiang, as elsewhere in China, citizens aged 18 or above enjoy the right to vote and the right to be elected in accordance with the law. As the Constitution and relevant state laws prescribe,

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people of all ethnic groups in the autonomous region directly elect deputies to the people's congresses at county (city or urban district) and township (town) levels, and these deputies then elect deputies to the prefecture (prefecture-level city) people's congress, the people's congress of the autonomous region, and the National People's Congress (NPC). The 12th NPC (2013-2017) has a total of 60 deputies from Xinjiang, of whom 38 (63.33 percent) are from ethnic minority groups. In 2016, the number of ethnic minority officials in the region's civil service reached 91,076, accounting for 40.24 percent of the region's total number. Of them, women officials of ethnic minority origins accounted for more than 66 percent of the total number of female officials in Xinjiang.

3. We note with appreciation that great achievements have been made in the economic development in Xinjiang. From 1978 to 2016, Xinjiang's GDP has soared from RMB 3,907 billion to RMB 961,723 billion, and its per-capita GDP has grown from RMB313 to RMB 40,427, up by 245.2 times and 128.2 times respectively. The per-capita disposable income of urban residents has risen from RMB 319 to RMB

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28,463 and that of rural residents from RMB 119 to RMB 10,183, up by 88.2 times and 84.6 times respectively. The autonomous region has directed a considerable effort to infrastructure construction in tap water, power and gas. By the end of 2016, the eight million rural population was guaranteed access to safe drinking water, and 72.5 percent of rural households had access to tap water. Xinjiang has taken targeted measures to alleviate and eliminate poverty. By the end of 2016, the incidence of poverty had dropped to 10 percent. To guarantee the labourers' right to work, Xinjiang has given priority to promoting equal employment opportunities, and encouraged different sectors to create more jobs through multiple measures. At the end of 2016, 12.6311 million people in rural and urban areas of Xinjiang were employed and the registered urban unemployment rate was 3.22%, with 455,000 new jobs created in urban areas over the course of the year.

4. In our opinion, the social security system in Xinjiang has been gradually improved. In 2016, Xinjiang launched serious illness insurance for urban and rural residents and urban workers, and personal accident insurance was made

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available to all residents free of charge. By the end of 2016, the coverage of old-age insurance for urban and rural residents stood above 95%. Epidemic prevention institutions have been set up, and a relatively complete urban-rural epidemic prevention system has been formed, bringing major epidemic and endemic diseases under effective control. Public health has seen a steady improvement. From 1949 to 2016, the mortality rate dropped from 20.82% to 4.26%. The average life expectancy has increased from 30 years old to 72.35 years old. Since 2016, urban and rural residents can have a free health check-up every year. The right to education has received constant attention. From 1949 to 2016, the number of elementary schools has increased from 1,335 to 3,526, secondary schools from 9 to 1,416, secondary vocational schools from 11 to 167 (excluding skilled workers schools), and higher education institutions from 1 to 41. The number of university students has risen from 400 to 420,100, and secondary vocational school students have increased from 2,000 to 235,100. The nine-year compulsory education is now generally available to all children. In southern Xinjiang, all children have access to three years of preschool

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education and a 12-year basic education. Expenditure on education accounts for over 5% of the total fiscal revenue, and continues to grow as government revenues increase.

5. We also note that the cultural rights of citizens in Xinjiang have been well safeguarded. Xinjiang now has 13 publishing houses publishing books, audio and video products, and e-publications in six languages - Uygur, Han Chinese, Kazak, Kirgiz, Mongolian and Xibe language. Xinjiang publishes 110 newspapers, including 52 in ethnic minority languages, and 200 periodicals, including 120 in ethnic minority languages. Xinjiang People's Broadcasting Station now provides 15 radio channels in five languages - Uygur, Han Chinese, Kazak, Mongolian and Kirgiz. Xinjiang TV provides 12 TV channels in four languages - Uygur, Han Chinese, Kazak and Kirgiz; it is, therefore the provincial-level TV station with the most channels and broadcasts in different languages throughout the country. Cultural heritage has been effectively protected. Currently, Xinjiang has three projects on the UNESCO *Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* and the *List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent*

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Safeguarding - the Art of Xinjiang Uygur Muqam, the Kirgiz Epic of *Manas*, and the Uygur Meshrep. All ethnic groups in Xinjiang possess intangible cultural heritage items at both autonomous region and/or state levels.

6. We have also seen that the freedom of religious belief of the citizens in Xinjiang has been guaranteed. Xinjiang has strengthened its management of religious affairs in accordance with the law, protecting venues for lawful religious activities. It has implemented a policy for planning and organizing pilgrimages to Mecca, and has strengthened services to ensure that all such pilgrimages are safe and orderly. Xinjiang has published translations of the religious classics of Islam, Buddhism, and Christianity in multiple languages. It has printed and distributed 1.76 million copies of the *Quran* and *Sahihs of Al Bukhari*. *Xinjiang Muslims*, a periodical has been established and is published in Uygur, Han Chinese, and Kazak. An internet portal for Xinjiang's Muslims is available in Uygur and Han Chinese. Religious organizations have organized training courses on religious knowledge and etiquette for citizens with religious beliefs. Xinjiang has 112 religious organizations, which receive help

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from the government to improve their conditions and allow them to play a broader role. Steady improvements have been made in the training system to cultivate clerics, by offering them systemic training, enhancing their overall qualities, and raising religious organizations' capacity of self-management. The central government supports the Xinjiang Islamic Institute in expanding its campus, improving teaching conditions, and enrolling more students. Efforts have been made to facilitate overseas religious exchanges. The clerics from Xinjiang's religious circles and students at religious institutes have won prizes in competitions for reciting the *Quran*. Since 2001, Xinjiang has sent more than 70 clerics and students from the Islamic Institute to study at institutions of higher learning in Egypt, Pakistan, and other countries, and has set up scholarships to award those who achieve outstanding performance.

7. Despite the continuous acceleration of economic and social development in Xinjiang, due to geographical conditions, history, culture and other objective reasons, Xinjiang lags behind the more developed parts of China, and there are still gaps in certain respects of its development.

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8. Our recommendation is that the governments at central and local levels should step up the support for Xinjiang and promote the sustained and sound economic and social development in Xinjiang; continue to stimulate the endogenous vitality for development in Xinjiang and achieve sustained and healthy development with regional characteristics; constantly improve various rules and regulations related to the protection of human rights, and step up efforts in the planning and practices of promoting social security for all groups in various fields in Xinjiang. Therefore, through continuous efforts, constantly bring about new developments and progress in human rights in Xinjiang, and maintain the upbeat situation in Xinjiang characterized by development, stability, ethnic unity and harmony, and the peace and contentment of the people.