
**Submission by China Law Society (CLS) to
United Nations Universal Periodic Review of China**

March 2018

1. China Law Society pays high attention to the HRC Review of Human Rights to China in 2018. During the last 5 years, the Chinese government has done a great deal of work, and obtained remarkable achievements in promoting and protecting human rights, especially in supporting, encouraging and promoting legal societies to safeguard citizens' rights and interests. However, problems still exist. We hereby propose comments and suggestions focusing on the development of legal societies, as well as their roles in promoting and safeguarding human rights.

2. In our opinion, as an important part of Non-Governmental Organizations, legal societies play an important role in participating in social governance, safeguarding fairness and justice, publicizing the concept of rule of law, and protecting citizens' rights and interests. Despite that China has not set up national human rights institutions as the Paris Principles pointed out, Chinese legal societies have actually been functioning as the "civil human rights institution" to some extent. The prosperous development of legal societies will be conducive to the

advance and promotion of human rights' legal protection, and ensure more and broader rights and freedom of citizens according to law.

3. We are glad to see that since 2013, the Chinese government has further enhanced the implementation and supervision of the Constitution, so as to protect citizens' constitutional rights, interests and freedom of speech, press, parade, assembly, association, etc. in accordance with law. In 2016, the Chinese government revised the Regulations on Registration and Administration of Social Organizations and improved related concrete measures, providing strong fundamental guarantee for the fast development of legal societies and the legal reference for their work.

4. We are glad to see that with the support of the Chinese government, Chinese legal societies have developed prosperously. Taking China Law Society as an example. Up to June 2017, China Law Society has covered all provinces and cities by setting up 32 provincial-level law societies and over 360 municipal-level law societies, and covered over 85% counties by setting up over 2300 county-level law societies. Governments at all levels carried out encouraging and supporting policies based on local situations, and created necessary conditions for the long-term and healthy development of legal societies.

5. Since 2014, focused on the central task of China's rule of law construction, the various legal societies in China have carried out their work actively according to their self-positioning, thus contributed remarkably to protecting citizens' legitimate rights and interests, promoting the rule of law in China, and advancing the development of human rights cause in China.

5.1 Actively participating in legislation, so as to promote scientific and democratic legislation in accordance with the law. Arranging legal experts to participate in the Experts' Consulting Meeting on Legislation hosted by China Law Society. Only in the year of 2017, China Law Society hosted 33 Consulting Meetings, discussing and providing advices on 22 laws, 10 administrative regulations and 1 important regulatory document. The Experts' Consulting Meeting on Legislation has become an important channel for legal societies to participate in national legislation.

5.2 Actively participating in litigation service and judicial mediation. Legal societies set Litigation Service Center or Mediation Center in courts at various levels, arranging legal experts and practicing lawyers to take turns on duty to provide free legal consulting service for relevant litigant parties. For example, in 2015 and 2016, China Law Society arranged over 200 legal experts and lawyers to participate in litigation

and mediation service in the Supreme People's Court, settled over 20 disputes of national influence, and protected the legitimate rights and interests of both parties.

5.3 Carrying out all-around primary-level legal service. Legal societies organize legal practitioners to actively participate in public benefit activities through legal clinics, legal service stations, legal service communities, and mediation centers which are widely set up in communities, villages and towns, schools, hospitals and prisons, and to provide various kinds of legal services for primary-level citizens, especially for such special groups as women and children, prisoners and the disabled, so as to effectively protect their legitimate rights and interests, including human rights.

5.4 Widely carrying out legal publicity. After over 10-year development, the activities of "Popularizing Legal Culture to Locals" and "One Hundred Lectures by One Hundred Jurists "(Double Hundred) have become nationally famous brands for legal publicity. From 2013 to 2016, the "Double Hundred" activities have delivered over 6500 lectures in the whole country. The number of direct audience has been over 2.64 million.

6. In the mean time, we notice that because the economic and social

development in China is still unbalanced and inadequate, there are still many shortcomings in the area of people's livelihood. Citizen's legal awareness still needs to be improved. The task of comprehensively implementing the rule of law is still arduous. There are still problems for the Chinese government to promote legal societies' development and to make use of legal societies to promote and guarantee human rights. For example, some policies that benefit legal societies were not fully implemented because some local governments had not fully understood the importance and necessity of legal societies building; the number of legal societies in China is still small, especially insufficient in the remote, poverty-stricken or ethnic areas. The capacity differences of legal societies in different regions still exist. Some legal societies still have internal management problems and cannot recruit and keep excellent talents.

7. We think that the healthy development of legal societies cannot be achieved without the support and assistance of the government. We suggest the Chinese government further enhance the support for legal societies, and improve their ability to provide legal guarantee for human rights.

8. We hope that the Chinese government can further improve social

governance system, implement supporting policies for legal societies, especially for those in rural and remote areas, and increase its input in talents, finance, and material resources, by purchasing their services and reducing their taxes, so as to improve local law societies' capability.

9. We suggest that legal societies should expand the channels of legal service, pay more attention to the human rights protection of special groups, and effectively guarantee their rights of the person, property and personality.

10. We suggest that legal societies should further innovate their working patterns, strengthen the construction of informatization and intelligentization, adopt the "Internet + Legal Service" mode, take advantage of various websites and instant messaging platforms, so as to provide convenient, prompt and safe on-line legal services for citizens.

11. We suggest that legal societies should enhance the building of their own capability, improve working mechanisms and systems based on their self-positioning, continuously attract, rally and cultivate excellent talents, particularly encourage, guide and arouse the enthusiasm of those judges, procurators, lawyers, and legal experts who just retire or resign from leading posts to participate in legal societies' work, and improve the

authority and expertise of legal service.