

中国人类学民族学研究会

China Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences

Submission to the UN Human Rights Council for

Universal Periodic Review of China

March 2018

1. The China Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (CUAES) is a non-governmental organization that is dedicated to the study of ethnic theories and policies of China. Its members come from relevant institutions and academic groups in relevant fields. We highly concern about the review on human rights in China to be undertaken by the UN Human Rights Council in October 2018. The Chinese government has made great effort in promoting and securing human rights of ethnic minorities. We have reached remarkable achievement, although faced some problems.

2. We noticed that the Chinese government protects the right of ethnic minorities in equally participating in the management of national affairs by implementing institutional guarantees. The previous National People's Congresses and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conferences all have deputies of different

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ethnic minority groups, regardless of their population size. According to the *Plan for Allocation of Ethnic Minority Deputies to the 13th National People's Congress* issued in April 2017, a total of 360 ethnic minority deputies will present at the Congress, covering all ethnic minority groups in China, which record the same number as in the 12th National People's Congress. They account for over 12% of the total deputies, higher than the proportions of their populations in the nation's total population. Moreover, ethnic minority deputies were provided with a report written in their own languages as well as simultaneous interpretation service from Mandarin to their own languages.

3. We noticed that the Chinese government has implemented policies and measures to boost the economic development of ethnic minority groups, including implementing two national action plans, namely “Program to Revitalize Border Areas and Enrich the Residents' Lives”, and “Program to Support the Ethnic Areas and Ethnic Minorities with Small Populations”, proposing the philosophy of “building a moderately prosperous society in all aspects for all ethnic groups” and “taking targeted measures to eliminate poverty”,

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and strengthening the support and assistance of eastern developed areas to western ethnic areas. The Chinese government allocated 13.925 billion RMB of poverty alleviation fund to ethnic autonomous areas in 2015, and increased the number to 27.96 billion RMB in 2016. The GDP of ethnic autonomous areas in 2016 reached 7,997.2 billion RMB, registering an increase of 8.1%, among which the growth rate of Tibet stood at as high as 11.5%, which has maintained a growth rate that was higher than the national average for years. The growth rate of income of urban and rural residents in ethnic autonomous areas also outpaced that of the national average. And the poverty headcount rate has dropped from 21% to 9%.

4. We noticed that the Chinese government has made huge investment to build infrastructure and provide social security in ethnic autonomous areas, which has improved the wellbeing of ethnic minorities. In 2016, a total of 64 billion RMB of transfer payments was allocated to the ethnic autonomous areas, 68.915 billion RMB was allocated as educational subsidies, 27.96 billion RMB was invested to reduce poverty, and another 48.656 billion RMB was used to reform the forestry industry, protect the prairie ecosystem and keep

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water and soil from erosion. In 2016, the Chinese government built 4,700 kilometers of national highway and 16 thousand kilometers of provincial expressway in ethnic autonomous areas, renovated 44 thousand kilometers of country road, and made 4,300 villages access to the asphalt road. Even in Tibet where the geological conditions are really poor, several highways have been built, linking Mainling county and Bayi county, Lhasa city and Nyingchi city, Shigatse Airport and Sangzhutse district, Gonggar Airport and Zetang town. *The 13th Five Year Plan for the Program to Revitalize Border Areas and Enrich Residents' Lives* issued by the Chinese government in 2017 made it clear that border villages will have access to road, electricity, communication, and safe drinking water, and be equipped with qualified clinic, doctors, and safety housing by 2020.

5. The Chinese government attached great importance to the use and development of languages of ethnic minorities. The Constitution stipulates, “All ethnic groups have the right to use and develop their own spoken and written languages.” The Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy also stipulates “the organs of self-government in the ethnic autonomous areas protect the right of all ethnic groups to use and

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develop their own spoken and written language.” Schools in ethnic autonomous areas teach in bilingual languages. As for the right of judicial proceedings, the Criminal Procedure Law stipulates, “all ethnic groups have the right to appeal in their own languages.” In order to ensure that Tibetans can understand the concerned procedures and documents of lawsuit, many bilingual judges have been equipped at the grassroots’ level, and Tibetan language has been used in around 75% of the hearings. What’s more, China National Radio and local radios in areas where people of ethnic minorities live in concentrated communities have broadcast in ethnic languages. Provincial TV stations in Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, Tibet, Qinghai, and Guangxi all have channels for broadcasting in local ethnic languages, covering most ethnic areas. In particular, the comprehensive coverage rate of radio and TV broadcast in Tibetan language reached over 95% of Tibet, even those living in remote areas can also listen to radios or watch TV in their own language.

6. The Chinese government has achieved remarkable result in protecting the traditional culture of ethnic minority groups. In 2015, China held the 10th Traditional Games of Ethnic Minorities, with

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6,240 athletes from various ethnic groups participating in nearly 200 events. In 2016, China held the 5th National Ethnic Minority Arts Festival, putting on 92 different shows and welcomed by all walks of life. In 2017, the Chinese government held in Tibet the 4th Tibet International Tourism and Culture Expo. The expo presented the unique picturesque sceneries and fine traditional cultures of Tibet and contributed to the protection and development of the excellent Tibetan culture.

7. Despite of the unprecedented and innovative efforts made by the Chinese government, the underdevelopment condition of most ethnic autonomous areas cannot be changed in a short time due to their geographic limitation and historical factors. Therefore, China is still faced with difficulties and challenges in further promoting the protection of the right of ethnic minorities, which take in the following forms:

7.1 The foundation for economic development in ethnic autonomous areas is still weak. The ethnic autonomous areas are mostly located in mountain areas, pasture regions, cold areas and arid areas where the living condition is severe and the development level is

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comparatively backward. The GDP of ethnic autonomous areas put together is only equal to that of Guangdong province, and the GDP of 30 autonomous prefectures is only equal to that of Shenzhen. The poverty headcount rate is two times that of the national average. In the 2016 survey for 160 thousand rural households in 31 provinces, it was found that if the poverty line is calculated as 2,300 RMB per capita for a household per year, then poverty stricken population in ethnic autonomous areas is 14.11 million, accounting for 32.55% of all poverty stricken population in rural areas across China.

7.2 There is still room for improvement in bilingual education and talent training for ethnic minorities. Most ethnic autonomous areas are in shortage of bilingual teachers, in particular those specialized in a subject. Therefore, many ethnic minority students cannot be access to Mandarin learning, which results in less choice of employment. Meanwhile, the salary of teachers in ethnic autonomous areas is still comparatively low. Besides, the government should strengthen the cultivation of talented people of ethnic minorities in science, technology and management except for the cadres.

8. We suggest that the Chinese government continues to increase

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support for the economic development in ethnic autonomous areas, improve public service capability in these areas, and improve the livelihood of ethnic minorities. Meanwhile, the government should improve the training on ethnic minority talents, since it's not only the key to widening the choice of employment of ethnic minorities, improving the capability of their self-development, improving the development level of the ethnic autonomous areas, but also an effective channel to maintain the vitality of ethnic traditions and cultures. Efforts should also be made to encourage ethnic minorities to start businesses with ethnic characteristics and special skills and also small-sized enterprises.

9. We fully understand that China is in the mist of economic and social transition, and is facing increasingly complicated challenges and difficulties that require more wisdoms and resources to solve. Even though, we wish that through the effort of the universal periodic review the Chinese government will adopt more measures and pay further attention to the protection of the right of ethnic minorities.

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