



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

Nineteenth session

Agenda item 9

**Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance, follow-up and implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action**

### **Written statement\* submitted by the China NGO Network for International Exchanges, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[29 February 2012]

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\* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

## Human rights in Tibet\*\*

China is a unified multi-ethnic country with 56 ethnic groups. In addition to the same rights and obligations as the Han ethnic group, the 55 minority ethnic groups in China also have some other rights, which have been fully prescribed in the Constitution and the Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy. The Constitution stipulates that: All ethnic groups in the People's Republic of China are equal. Discrimination against and oppression of any ethnic group are prohibited.

The 56 ethnic groups created the country together in the long course of historical development. Now some people with ulterior motives distort or even falsify history to advocate "Tibet independence", trying to split from China a quarter of its territory, and undermining China's unity, peace and stability. This is intolerable to all the Chinese people and all the countries pursuing the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

The freedom of religious belief is a fundamental right of Chinese citizens. Under the protection of the Constitution and laws, the religious people in Tibet fully enjoy the freedom of conducting normal religious activities. At present, there are over 1,700 sites for various religious activities and over 46,000 Buddhist monks and nuns in Tibet.

Guoluo and Yushu, the Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures in Qinghai Province, are the origin of the Yangtze River, the Yellow River and the Lancang River. Here, the traditional animal husbandry is in low efficiency, leading to heavy overgrazing. As a result, the grassland ecosystem is constantly deteriorating, with 90% of the grassland suffering degradation. If this is left unchanged, it will be difficult for cattle and sheep to survive. This, in turn, will cause great difficulties to the herders who rely on cattle and sheep, and will cause devastating damages to the ecology of the region. For the survival of the herders and for the protection of ecosystem, eco-migration has been implemented in the region since 2006. Herders are encouraged to live in centralized residential areas. Houses are built with no charge for the migrant herders to live on a voluntary basis. They also receive living allowance and vocational trainings to help them find jobs. Many Tibetan herders have voluntarily left the pastures under ecological degradation and moved into urban communities. This has alleviated the ecological pressure, improved the living standards of the herders and ensured better conditions for the growth of the next generation.

All ethnic groups have the freedom to use and develop their own spoken and written languages. According to the Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy, when recruiting employees, the enterprises and public institutions in the ethnic autonomous areas shall preferentially recruit the ethnic minority candidates. The newspapers, radio and TV programs in Tibet are in both Tibetan and Han languages. During the recruitment of workers, cadres and students in the Autonomous Region, candidates using different languages are treated equally, and a preferential treatment is given to Tibetan speakers.

Patriotic and legal educations are nation-wide educational work frequently carried out in any sovereign state. In every country, any religion must adapt to their different societies, adapt to the social development and the progress in civilization and comply with national laws, regulations and relevant rules. As Chinese citizens, Buddhist monks and nuns are obliged to abide by laws and receive the education on patriotism and legal system just like other citizens. Like the similar activities carried out in other regions of China, the patriotic and legal educations in Tibet are aimed at educating people to love their motherland, safeguard national unity and territorial integrity, maintain unity among ethnic groups,

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\*\* The China Ethnic Minorities Association for External Exchanges, an NGO without consultative status, also shares the views expressed in this statement.

oppose dissension and love peace. Patriotic and legal educations in temples are for the purpose of establishing normal order of Tibetan Buddhism and enhancing the civic and legal awareness among the monks and nuns, so that they may use laws as a weapon to protect their legitimate rights and interests. The education has received solid support from the religious people across the country, including the religious people of various ethnic groups in Tibet.

A handful of secessionists use some temples as their bases to commit the political activities that split the motherland, violate the laws of the State and damage the people's interests. Imposing legal punishments on a small number of law-violating monks and nuns is to protect the normal religious order in the temples. No country will allow the existence of any social organization or individual beyond the control of laws, let alone allowing them to conduct illegal activities by taking advantage of religion.

On March 14, 2008, a group of lawbreakers committed vandalism, robbery and burning in the main roads of Lhasa, capital of the Tibetan Province, and killed innocent people by cruel means. In this serious violent crime, 18 innocent people were killed and nearly 400 were injured. This was a great destruction of human rights and caused great anger and common opposition of the people of all ethnic groups in China, who required that the perpetrators should be severely punished so as to bring justice to the victims.

Starting from January 23, 2012, when the Chinese people of all ethnic groups are joyfully celebrating the Chinese New Year, a handful of lawbreakers illegally gathered in some parts of Sichuan Province and Qinghai Province and committed violent crimes of assaulting and smashing. During the process of their crimes, the criminals shouted openly the slogans supporting "Tibet Independence", smashed police cars and even violently attacked the police with knives or firearms, leading to the injury of nearly 20 civil policemen. In self-defence, the police shot down two criminals. The local people have expressed opposition and condemnation against these criminals and believe that these criminals should be severely punished according to law.

All Chinese citizens are equal before the law. It is an obvious truth known to all with common sense that any one that commits a crime, regardless of his/her ethnic group, will be brought to justice, and innocent people will not be subject to sanctions. However, some people with ulterior motives distorted facts to mislead the foreign media and hurt Chinese people's feelings. This will not be agreed by any persons or organization with sense of justice. Only when citizens abide by laws, the society is in peace and stability and the politics and people are harmonious can economy and society develop rapidly and human rights be guaranteed to the greatest extent. In an environment where citizens commit crimes, the country falls apart and the situation is volatile, the human rights, especially those of the ethnic minorities, are more vulnerable to infringement.

China NGO Network for International Exchanges calls upon the UN Human Rights Council and all member states of the UN Human Rights Council to:

Strive to build equal, united, cooperative and harmonious relations among ethnic groups, so as to fully protect the rights of ethnic minorities.

Support countries to fight against separatist activities for the purpose of maintaining normal social order, set no double standards and not to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries in the name of human rights.

Actively build a platform to promote exchanges between non-governmental organizations and help them learn from each other, share information, eliminate misunderstanding and work together for the protection of the human rights of the ethnic minorities.