

# **Progress in China's Human Rights in 2013**

**Information Office of the State Council**

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## **Foreword**

In 2013 China made progress in its human rights undertaking while advancing on the course of the Chinese Dream, a great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

In that year, the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Chinese government, based on China's prevailing conditions and reality, and aiming at promoting social fairness, justice and the people's well-being, comprehensively deepened the reform, promoted various undertakings in the economic, social and cultural fields, and safeguarded the people's rights to equal participation and development, so that the fruits of development would benefit the people in a better and more equal way. China's development provides all Chinese people with the opportunities to develop themselves, serve society, make successes in their life and realize their dreams. China is now reaching for a higher goal in its human rights undertaking.

In 2013 China's human rights undertaking made remarkable achievements in the following aspects:

-The people's living standards have risen steadily, as China continuously improves the urban and rural residents' clothing, food, accommodation, and transportation

conditions, further equalizes basic public services, and better protects the people's rights to subsistence and development.

-The world's largest social security system has taken shape, and both urban and rural residents, especially people in straitened circumstances, can live in dignity, with their basic living conditions better ensured.

-China's democracy and legal system have been further strengthened. China's rural and urban areas for the first time realized the same ratio of deputies to the represented population in the election to the National People's Congress (NPC) deputies in 2013. China also took an important step forward in building a clean government, as it has restricted the use of power and cracked down on corruption.

-China has continuously constitutionalized consultative democracy, and promoted the sound development of grassroots democracy. Chinese citizens now have diversified ways to realize their democratic rights according to law and in an orderly manner, and the country's political life has become more democratic.

-China has further upgraded its governance system and capacity. The exercise of power is more procedure-based, government work is more transparent, and public freedom of speech is better ensured.

-China has abolished the system of reeducation through labor, and adopted multiple measures to curb the practice of extorting confessions by torture and prevent unjust, false and erroneous litigation. In order to better protect the citizens' rights to life, health and personal freedom, China has also made great efforts to guarantee food and pharmaceuticals safety, and to prevent major accidents.

-China has continued to provide preferential policies for ethnic minorities, and made sure they can enjoy and exercise their rights according to law. China has also accelerated the comprehensive development of various social, economic and human rights protection undertakings in regions inhabited by ethnic minorities, including the Xinjiang Uygur and Tibet autonomous regions.

-China has entered a new stage in efforts to help the disabled. With their various rights well protected and an improved public service system in place, disabled people are in a better position to participate in social life as equals.

-China has speeded up its ecological progress, increased financial input, strengthened environmental protection, punished environmental crimes, and is striving to build a beautiful China.

The pursuit of the improvement of human rights never ends, for there is always room for better human rights conditions. China's progress in its human rights undertaking is there for everybody to see, and every unbiased and reasonable observer can draw a fair conclusion. At the same time, China is still a large

developing country, with conspicuous problems of unbalanced, uncoordinated and unsustainable development. Therefore, greater efforts are needed to bring higher standards to human rights protection. It has been proved that only by adhering to the socialist path with Chinese characteristics can China's human rights undertaking achieve better development, and the Chinese people realize more comprehensive development.

## **I. Right to Development**

China's economy was stable and improved in 2013, better benefiting the Chinese people. The material and cultural needs of the people have been better satisfied, and the Chinese people's right to development has been better guaranteed.

The people's living standards are steadily on the rise. In 2013 China maintained a GDP growth rate of 7.7 percent, which was relatively fast. The annual per capita net income for rural residents reached 8,896 yuan, up 9.3 percent in real terms; the annual per capita disposable income for urban residents was 26,955 yuan, an increase of 7 percent in real terms; and the rise in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) remained at the low level of 2.6 percent. China's annual grain output in 2013 reached 601.935 million tons; the number of civil vehicle holding reached 137.41 million; the number of fixed phone lines was 266.99 million, and the number of mobile phone users increased by 116.96 million to 1,229.11 million. The number of domestic tours totaled 3.26 billion, and the number of trips abroad made by Chinese citizens reached 98.19 million, up 10.3 percent and 18 percent, respectively, over the previous year. Among them, the number of trips abroad for private purposes reached 91.97 million, an increase of 19.3 percent.

Employment is expanding through various channels. Despite great employment pressure, China adheres to the employment priority strategy, taking stable growth and ensuring employment as the threshold of a proper economic range, and creating more and better-quality jobs on the basis of development. China attaches great importance to the development of labor-intensive industries, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), private enterprises and service industries that can create more jobs. In 2013 some 13.1 million urban jobs were created, an increase of 440,000 over 2012, and the registered urban unemployment rate stayed at 4.1 percent, which was relatively low. The government also provided skills training. As many as 20.49 million people participated in vocational training with government subsidies in 2013, among whom 12.275 million participated in employment skills training, 2.082 million attended entrepreneurship training, 5.487 million took part in

job skills upgrading training and 646,000 received other types of training. The number of laid-off workers receiving training reached 3.98 million. China endeavors to facilitate the transfer to non-agricultural jobs of rural people, organized more than 20,000 special job fairs for migrant workers in 2013, and trained 9.384 million farmers. The government attaches ever-more importance to the employment of young people, especially college graduates. Through employment guidance services, campus recruitment activities, the "Employment Promotion Plan for Unemployed College Graduates" and other measures, China encourages college graduates to find jobs and start businesses in various forms and through various channels.

The basic rights of workers are guaranteed. In 2013 a total of 27 provinces (autonomous regions, municipalities directly under the central government) raised their minimum wage standards, averaging a 17 percent annual hike. The average monthly income of rural workers employed away from their homes was 2,609 yuan, an increase of 319 yuan over 2012. Community-level trade unions and organizations for safeguarding workers' rights continue to maintain a relatively rapid pace of development. By the end of 2013 the formation rate of labor dispute mediation organizations in townships and subdistricts had reached 60 percent, an increase of 10 percent year on year; the formation rate of labor dispute arbitration committees had reached 91.6 percent; and the rate of labor dispute arbitration courts nationwide was 72.7 percent, up 20 percent year on year. The number of community-level trade unions increased to 2.77 million, up 4 percent over 2012; a total of 1.298 million effective collective contracts were signed throughout the country, involving 3.64 million enterprises and 160 million employees, up 6 percent, 18 percent and 9 percent over 2012, respectively. Assistance to impoverished workers was strengthened, benefiting 7.739 million people in 2013.

The government-subsidized housing projects continue to make progress. In 2013 the central government appropriated 200.3 billion yuan to help facilitate the building of government-subsidized housing and the rebuilding of dilapidated areas in all regions, and the improvement of supporting infrastructure. In the same year, construction of 6.6 million government-subsidized housing units and housing units in dilapidated areas started, and 5.4 million were basically finished. By the end of the year China had provided housing for another 36 million urban families. Cities at prefectural level and above had all worked out the conditions, procedures and waiting rules for government-subsidized housing applications by migrant workers, and the government-subsidized housing system had expanded to cover not only households with permanent urban residency but all the resident population in urban areas.

China continued to promote the renovation of rural housing, renovating 2.66 million dilapidated rural houses in 2013.

Poverty reduction in rural areas is making steady headway. In 2013 the State Council issued Opinions on Promoting Rural Poverty Alleviation through Innovation Mechanisms. The central government appropriated 39.4 billion yuan on poverty reduction, an increase of 6.2 billion yuan over the previous year. In 2013 some 16.5 million rural residents got rid of poverty. The per capita net income for rural residents in the counties which are key targets of the government's poverty-reduction work reached 5,389 yuan, an increase of 787 yuan over 2012, or up 13.8 percent in real terms, a growth rate higher than that of the average level in China.

Education in poverty-stricken areas is better ensured, with bigger efforts being made in this regard. The expenditure from public finance on education in 2013 was 2187.7 billion yuan, up 3 percent over the previous year and mainly focusing on poverty-stricken rural areas. In the same year, the central financial body allocated 19 billion yuan of nutrition subsidies (including 2.218 billion yuan of government awards and subsidies for local pilot projects) and a special fund of nearly 10 billion yuan for building student dining halls. By the end of 2013 some 32.45 million rural students receiving compulsory education were benefiting from the nutrition subsidy policy. A total of 699 counties with contiguous poor areas (including 19 regiment-level entities of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps) in 22 provincial-level administrative areas carried out pilot projects, covering 95,900 schools and benefiting 32 million students; 529 counties in 19 provincial-level administrative areas launched pilot projects, covering 39,800 schools and benefiting 10.02 million students. The central government appropriated 10 billion yuan to upgrade rural schools with poor compulsory education conditions, with the focus on supporting the central and western rural areas, regions inhabited by ethnic minorities and poverty-stricken areas in improving their compulsory education conditions. The government allocated 16.5 billion yuan of funds from the central budget to support and lead the expansion of preschool educational resources in various regions, and to encourage the local governments to establish the preschool education financial assistance system so as to help impoverished children, orphans and disabled children receive preschool education; the government also provided 4.647 billion yuan of national grants to regular senior high schools, benefiting nearly 5 million students from poverty-stricken households; secondary vocational education was made free for all rural students, urban students whose majors are related to agriculture, and urban impoverished students, and the first- and second-grade students whose majors are related to agriculture or who are from impoverished households enjoy

national grants. Thirty provinces (autonomous regions, municipalities directly under the central government) have released policies allowing the children of rural migrant workers who live in cities to take the local college entrance examinations, and 12 provinces and municipalities have started solving the problem.

Chinese citizens enjoy better and equal cultural services. China has continued to implement the National Construction Plan of Prefectural (City) Level Public Cultural Facilities, and has started the project of building demonstration sites of the national public service system, with 18 billion yuan of funds from the central and local public finance. By the end of 2013, with the cultural information resource-sharing program, China had built one service center at the national level, 33 sub-centers at the provincial level, 2,843 branches at the county level, 29,555 service stations at the township (subdistrict) level, and 602,000 service outlets at the incorporated village (community) level, and the service outlet coverage in some provinces (autonomous regions, municipalities directly under the central government) has extended to unincorporated villages; China has built 42,654 public electronic reading rooms, among which 27,706 are in townships, 2,282 are in subdistricts and 12,666 are in communities. In 2013 public libraries in China handed out 28.77 million library cards, 3.93 million more than in the previous year; the number of visits to libraries reached 492.32 million, 57.95 million more than in the previous year. In the same year, cultural institutes across the country organized 1.2884 million activities of various kinds to provide services to 434.31 million people. China has delivered public cultural resources directly to communities by implementing a series of major cultural projects benefiting the people, including providing radio and television services to every household of rural areas, launching the national cultural information resource-sharing program, building libraries for farmers, projecting free films in rural areas, and setting up township cultural stations. In 2013 the country's total funds for culture, sports and media services provided by the public finances reached 251.956 billion yuan, an increase of 11.1 percent as compared with the previous year. The central government spent 17 billion yuan on the building of the public cultural service system, an increase of 1.6 billion yuan, or 10.55 percent over the previous year. The government uses incremental funds mainly at the community level and in rural areas, and provides preferential policies to former revolutionary base areas, areas inhabited by ethnic minorities, border areas and impoverished regions. Public cultural services have also been made more equitable.

## **II. Right to Social Security**

China's social security has been continuously improving in recent years, as we speed up the process of completing the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects. China's social security developed rapidly in 2013, as it expanded constantly both in coverage and scope. Although not very developed, China has put in place a rudimentary social security system, which is the world's largest and suitable to China's current social conditions.

In 2012 full coverage was achieved by the new social endowment insurance system for rural residents and social endowment insurance for non-working urban residents. By the end of 2013 a total of 497.5 million rural and non-working urban residents had participated in social endowment insurance, an increase of 13.81 million compared with 2012. A total of 322.18 million people had participated in the basic endowment insurance for urban workers by the end of 2013, an increase of 17.91 million compared with 2012. In 2013 the monthly per capita basic pension for enterprise retirees, which had been continuously raised for years, reached almost 1,900 yuan, 10 percent of the average monthly pension of 2012. The new adjustment also provided preferential treatment for retired senior enterprise technicians, and retirees whose pensions were relatively low. In February 2014 the State Council issued Opinions on Establishing a Unified Basic Pension Insurance System for Rural and Non-working Urban Residents, which integrates the new social endowment insurance system for rural residents with the social endowment insurance system for non-working urban residents, and build a unified basic pension insurance system for both rural and non-working urban residents nationwide.

China has established and improved its medical insurance system to protect both rural and urban residents' right to medical treatment. So far, China has established a basic national medical insurance system, and kept raising its standard. More than 1.3 billion people, or over 90 percent of the total population have participated in medical insurance for non-working urban workers, basic medical insurance for urban residents or the new rural cooperative medical care system. By the end of 2013 some 299.06 million people had participated in the basic medical insurance for non-working urban residents. Government subsidies for basic medical insurance for non-working urban residents have been rising year by year—from 40 yuan per person in 2007 to 280 yuan in 2013. The reimbursement rate for hospitalization expenses covered by relevant policies has been raised to around 70 percent, and the maximum payment has been raised to six times local residents' per capita disposable income. The new rural cooperative medical care system has expanded rapidly to cover the entire rural population. By the end of 2013 a total of 802 million people had participated in the new rural cooperative medical care system, compared with

730 million in 2007, with its coverage rate rising from 85.7 percent to 99 percent. Government subsidies for the new rural cooperative medical care system and per capita funding have grown year by year. In 2013 per capita financing for the new rural cooperative medical care increased to about 340 yuan, of which 280 yuan was subsidies from government at various levels; the reimbursement rate for hospitalization expenses covered by relevant policies has stayed at 75 percent, and the maximum payment and the reimbursement rate for outpatient expenses have been further increased. In the same year the new rural cooperative medical care system benefited a total of 1.32 billion people, up 14.9 percent year on year, and 1.37 million patients benefited from serious illness insurance under the new rural cooperative medical care system, with a reimbursement rate of 70 percent. (more)

The urban and rural residents' medical burden resulting from serious illnesses has been greatly mitigated, because of the establishment of the medical care system for major and very serious illnesses and the smooth progress of the pilot projects for serious illness insurance for urban and rural residents. In 2012 six ministries, including the National Development and Reform Commission, jointly issued Guiding Opinions on Launching Serious Illness Insurance for Rural and Non-working Residents. So far, serious illness insurance has been piloted in 28 provincial-level administrative areas, and widely implemented in eight of them. In 2013 some 20 major diseases including lung cancer and gastric cancer were included in the serious illness insurance; children's phenylketonuria and hypospadias were included in the serious illness insurance under the new rural cooperative medical care system, bringing the number of serious diseases covered by the system to 22.

Steady development has been seen in unemployment insurance, work-related injury insurance and maternity insurance, which are playing an increasingly bigger role in helping the insured to maintain their living standards and obtain medical treatment and maternity protection. At the end of 2013 some 164.17 million people were covered by unemployment insurance, an increase of 11.92 million over the end of 2012; 199.17 million people had access to work-related injury insurance, among whom 72.63 million were migrant workers, an increase of 9.07 million and 840,000 people as compared with 2012, respectively. As many as 163.92 million people were covered by maternity insurance, an increase of 9.63 million over 2012. In 2013 some 4.17 million people benefited from unemployment insurance of different durations, and 1.97 million people received unemployment insurance allowances at the end of the year, with an average amount of 759 yuan per month, up 60.3 yuan or 8.5 percent over the previous year.



The subsistence allowance system has been further improved. By the end of 2013 there were altogether 20.613 million urban recipients of the subsistence allowance. The average amount of the allowance was 373 yuan per person per month, the amount actually paid was 252 yuan, and a total of 72.42 billion yuan in allowances was extended in 2013, up 13.8 percent, 1.3 percent and 7.4 percent over 2012, respectively. By the end of 2013 there were 53.821 million rural recipients, making up 6.1 percent of the rural population; the average amount of the allowance was 2,434 yuan per person per year, the amount actually paid was 111 yuan per person per month, and a total of 84.19 billion yuan of allowances was extended, up 18.7 percent, 2.9 percent and 17.3 percent over 2012, respectively. Altogether 5.382 million rural people enjoyed the "five guarantees" (food, clothing, medical care, housing and burial expenses) across the country, with those living in nursing homes receiving an average of 4,685 yuan per person per year, those living on their own an average of 3,499 yuan per person per year, totaling 16.16 billion yuan of the "five guarantee" funds spent in the year, up 15.4 percent, 16.3 percent and 11.5 percent, respectively, over 2012.

It is the last safety net of social security rights to provide social assistance to and meet the basic subsistence needs of people in poverty, caused by natural disasters, loss of labor capacity, or due to other reasons. By the end of 2013 some 26 provincial-level administrative areas had formulated or improved their own temporary assistance policies. In 2013 some 39.37 million households received temporary assistance. An increasing number of people are benefiting from medical aid, and the target groups are gradually expanding from urban and rural recipients of subsistence allowances and people enjoying the "five guarantees" to groups with special difficulties including low-income patients with serious illnesses, people with severe disabilities and senior citizens from low-income households. A total of 25.76 billion yuan in medical aid funds was extended in 2013, benefiting 26.39 million people.

### **III. Democratic Rights**

The Chinese Constitution stipulates that all power in the People's Republic of China belongs to the people. In China, the people exercise the rights of democratic election, democratic decision-making, democratic management, and democratic oversight through various channels and in various ways in accordance with the Constitution and other laws. In 2013 rural and urban areas in China for the first time adopted the same ratio of deputies to the represented population in the election to

the NPC; extensive, multilevel and institutional development of consultative democracy were vigorously advanced; community-level democracy as an important means of directly exercising democratic rights witnessed sound development; efforts were increased to combat corruption and build political integrity; and Chinese citizens participated in democratic management of public affairs in more diversified forms.

In 2013 China implemented the principle that everyone is equal as stipulated in the Electoral Law of the People's Republic of China, and adopted the same ratio of deputies to the represented population in the election of NPC deputies in both rural and urban areas. It abides by the principle of regional equality inasmuch as administrative areas at the same level enjoy equal legal status, all are entitled to a certain number of deputies in the highest organ of state power regardless of their population sizes. Each of the provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government is entitled to have the same minimum number of NPC deputies, which was eight for the 12th NPC in 2013. China abides by the principle of ethnic equality, and of the elected 2,987 deputies confirmed by the NPC Standing Committee, 409 are from ethnic minorities, accounting for 13.69 percent of the total and covering all the 55 minority ethnic groups in China. Female deputies to the 12th NPC account for 23.4 percent, 2.07 percentage points up over the 11th NPC in 2008. In the 12th NPC the number of community-level deputies increased, the number of migrant worker deputies doubled, and the number of Party and government official deputies shrank, compared to the 11th NPC. Of the deputies to the 12th NPC, the number of worker and farmer deputies increased by 5.18 percent over the 11th NPC, and the number of Party and government official deputies decreased by 6.93 percent.

The NPC vigorously promotes democratic legislation, and enhances the enforceability and operability of the laws. From March 2013 to March 2014 the NPC Standing Committee deliberated on 15 decision drafts of laws and related legal issues, and adopted ten of them; amended 21 laws including the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Consumer Rights and Interests, and promulgated the Tourism Law of the People's Republic of China and the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Safety of Special Equipment. The NPC Standing Committee evaluates law drafts before promulgation, improves the mechanism of soliciting public opinion for draft laws, and specifies that in addition to the first review draft, the full text of the second review draft should also be released to the public to extensively solicit supplementary opinions and proposals in all respects. China improves the feedback mechanism of public opinion adopted, and actively

responds to social concerns. The NPC and its Standing Committee listen to the people's opinions during legislation in the forms of forums, online opinion collection, investigation and research, allowing people to listen to legislation deliberations, and discussion by citizens and the media. From March 2013 to January 2014 some 5,728 persons presented 45,121 opinions on draft laws. Take the Environmental Protection Law of the People's Republic of China (Draft Amendment) for example. Its first draft received 11,748 opinions, and the second draft received 2,434 online opinions and 48 letters. After soliciting opinions for released drafts of major laws, the NPC Standing Committee summarizes those opinions and issues such summaries to the public in a timely manner.

China further clears and expands rights relief channels, actively responds to public interest appeals, and respects and protects public opinion. The government endeavors to resolve the prominent problems concerning petition letters and visits, stresses preventing and reducing petition problems at the source, promotes open and transparent petition presentation and solution, encourages leading officials to directly receive and visit petitioners, and improves the mechanism of joint reception of petitioners by government departments concerned. China spares no effort to promote "petition in the sunshine," advances the building of an online petition information platform, and promotes the full exposure of petition handling and results, striving to achieve effective inquiry, tracking, oversight and evaluation of petition information. China makes open all online petitions accepted for examination, and the Internet has gradually become a window for the government to learn about public opinion. (more)

Building political integrity is the premise of the effective operation of a democratic system. In 2013 the CPC and the Chinese government further intensified their efforts to combat corruption, putting power, government operations and personnel management under institutional checks to ensure that the people oversee the exercise of power and that power is exercised in a transparent manner. Institutional reform of the State Council was fully launched; the central government decentralized and canceled 416 items of administrative approvals in 2013. In view of multiple corruption problems in certain fields, the CPC Central Committee issued the Work Plan for Establishing and Improving the System of Preventing and Punishing Corruption (2013-2017). In 2013 discipline inspection and procuratorial organs at all levels received 1,950,374 complaints of related offences through petition visits and letters, including 1,220,191 accusatory and prosecutable cases; filed 172,532 cases, concluded 173,186 cases, and punished 182,038 violators. In 2013 procuratorial organs at all levels filed and investigated 37,551 cases of official crimes involving

51,306 suspects, up 9.4percent and 8.4percent respectively on a year-on-year basis. China increased its efforts to handle major cases, filed and investigated 2,581 cases of embezzlement, bribery and appropriation of public funds, each involving over 1 million yuan, and 2,871 state functionaries at and above the county/division level, including 253 officials at the prefecture/bureau level and eight at the provincial/ministerial level. The courts at all levels fully performed their duty of combating corruption through criminal trials, intensified efforts to punish embezzlement and bribery crimes, wound up 29,000 cases of embezzlement, bribery, dereliction of duty and infringement of rights by state functionaries, and convicted 31,000 persons.

In China, socialist consultative democracy is an important form of ensuring the people's democratic rights. Socialist consultative democracy values final decision-making results as well as extensive public participation in decision-making, stresses respect for the opinion of the majority as well as ensuring that the minority can fully express their opinion and protect their own rights, thereby expanding the scope of democracy so as to realize the people's democracy to the maximum extent. In 2013 China accelerated the building of a consultative democratic system with reasonable procedures and complete links, expanded the consultation channels of state power organs, Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) organizations, political parties and groups, community-level and non-governmental organizations, and conducted extensive consultations on issues relating to legislation, administration, democracy, political participation and social problems. Taking these specific consultation forms as the base, China conducted extensive consultations on major issues in social and economic development and specific problems concerning the immediate interests of the people, so as to reach and enhance agreement. As an important channel of consultative democracy, the CPPCC vigorously promotes consultative democracy, innovates consultation forms categorized by specialized topics, connecting all social circles, relying on special committees and by means of panel discussions; actively conducts consultations on particular topics, between representatives from relevant sectors of society, between parties with common concern, and with relevant departments in the handling of proposals. It promotes diversified consultation activities, invites responsible persons of related departments to listen to opinions and proposals directly, so as to transform such opinions and proposals into tangible results. The CPPCC makes specific plans for consultation topics, forms and activity organizations every year. In 2013, it carried on and innovated the biweekly "consultation symposium" mechanism, and conducted consultations on macroeconomy, architectural industrialization, protecting the

interests of workers and staff members, deepening the reform of scientific and technological systems, enhancing automobile exhaust control and other topics. Community-level democracy is being advanced in an orderly manner, and protection of electoral rights and community-level autonomy have been further strengthened. In 2013 the Procedures of the People's Republic of China on the Election of Villagers' Committees was promulgated and implemented, which further specifies the procedures and requirements of villagers' committee elections. Secret ballot and open vote-counting are fully practiced; secret ballot booths have been set up; and campaign speeches and village governance speeches are being extensively promoted. Now, 98percent of villages in China have formulated village regulations, villagers' agreements and rules for self-governance by villagers; villager's participation in decision-making and management of their own affairs has been improved by a large margin. By the end of 2013 cities and towns throughout China had held seven rounds of general elections for community residents' committees. Proprietors' management committees and other non-government and volunteer organizations are now playing a greater role in community democratic self-governance.

#### **IV. Rights to Freedom of Speech**

The Chinese government endeavors to promote and protect the freedom of speech of Chinese nationals. Freedom of speech is a basic civil right stipulated in the Constitution of the People's Republic of China. In China citizens can express their views and will and publish research and creative achievements freely within the range allowed by the Constitution and other laws. With social and economic development, the means of realizing freedom of speech has been diversified day by day, the public's information needs have been better satisfied, the space of freedom of speech has been increasingly expanded, and the people's rights to freedom of speech have steadily developed.

The channels and means for citizens to realize freedom of speech have been diversified day by day. In 2013 China printed 48.2 billion copies of newspapers, 3.3 billion copies of periodicals and 7.9 billion copies of books; some 229 million households had access to cable TV while 172 million households had access to cable DTV; radio programs covered 97.8 percent of the total population, and television programs covered 98.4 percent. In recent years China's news media have paid more attention to maintaining contact with the public, focusing on reporting real life, and playing their due role of press supervision. The public freely expresses its opinions

through the news media, brings forward criticisms and proposals, and discusses state affairs and social concerns.

The Internet has become one of the most important channels for the public to express its opinion. Over the past two decades China has injected huge amounts of funds into Internet infrastructure construction covering the whole country and benefitting all people, and promoted Internet popularization and application. Internet development and popularization in China ranks top among developing countries. In 2013 the state continued to increase policy support for and funds in information infrastructure construction, popularized satellite communication, fiber optical communication, computer networks and other related technologies. The country implemented the "broadband China" strategy, and for the first time regarded broadband network as a strategic public infrastructure for national socioeconomic development in the new era. By the end of 2013 the number of netizens in China reached 618 million and the Internet coverage rate 45.8 percent; domain names totaled 18.44 million, websites 3.2 million and webpages 150 billion; Internet forum/bulletin board system (BBS) users numbered 120 million, blog and personal webpage users 437 million, social networking website users 278 million, network literature users 274 million, network video users 428 million, microblog users 281 million and instant messaging (IM) users 532 million. Cellphone IM users numbered 431 million and cellphone microblog users 196 million. By the end of 2013 there were 5,820 websites in China providing Internet education information services, 703 providing Internet news information services, 783 providing Internet cultural products, 282 providing Internet audio-visual programs, 292 providing Internet publishing services and 2,010 providing Internet BBS services.

Effective information acquisition is the premise for realizing freedom of speech. In China, people can obtain information through multiple channels. Open and procedure-based exercise of power, transparent legislation, government operations and judicature and other mechanisms have been further improved, which have continuously improved the effective provision of information about government work. The NPC and its Standing Committee solicit public opinion on major draft laws; local people's congresses allow people to listen to legislation deliberations, and provide timely authoritative interpretations of adopted laws through media, including their own official websites, so as to ensure that people of all walks of life accurately understand the legislation background and purpose, and the principles and contents of the laws. The State Council focuses on advancing information disclosure in administrative approval, financial budget and final accounts, government-subsidized housing, food and drug security, land expropriation and

house demolition, and other fields. The press spokesperson system has been further improved. In 2013 the Information Office of the State Council organized more than 50 press conferences centered on the Party's and the state's major conferences, decisions and work. Meanwhile, departments under the State Council and information offices under local governments held over 2,100 press conferences and briefings. More and more chief responsible persons of departments under the State Council and local governments have appeared at press conferences to actively respond to social concerns and release related information in a timely fashion. (more)

The Supreme People's Court issued the Several Opinions on Advancing the Building of Three Major Platforms of Judicial Openness and the Regulations for the People's Courts to Make Public the Judgment Documents on the Internet, so as to fully promote openness in trial procedures, judicial papers and adjudication enforcement, and to enhance public understanding of judicial decisions. The China Court's Live Trial website has been set up, on which people's courts at all levels have so far live-broadcast 45,000 court trials. The Jinan Intermediate People's Court live-telecast Bo Xilai's court trial through a microblog, which received extensive and positive attention. Internet information service websites of all kinds have greatly improved their service capability to ensure effective information acquisition by the public.

Chinese people enjoy extensive freedom of speech. Research and discussion in academic fields cover politics, society, culture and other aspects. Within the range allowed by the Constitution and other laws, the public can discuss political issues freely. Important government policies are widely discussed before and after being adopted, and opinions from all quarters can be fully expressed. The popularization and improvement of the Internet have dramatically expanded the space of freedom of speech. The public can express opinions through Internet forums, Netnews, blog/personal webpages, social networking websites, network literature, network videos, microblogs, IM and other Internet platforms. Netizens post an immense number of opinions all the time. According to statistics, Chinese netizens post and forward 250 million microblog messages and over 20 billion WeChat and other IM messages every day. According to the statistics about the texts posted by seven websites including Sina microblog and Tencent microblog, of the 20 top issues that received netizens' attention in 2013, the first 12 received over two million messages each, and the top one over 45 million messages. Netizens' attention, opinions and statements cover a wide range, including legal cases, the people's livelihood, individual rights and interests protection, patient-hospital disputes, and combating corruption.

Effective realization of freedom of speech ensures that the public oversee the government. People can present social problems through news media, the Internet and other channels, forward criticisms and proposals to governments at all levels and supervise the behavior of civil servants. Many local government websites in China have a municipal mayor's mailbox or county head's mailbox to receive letters from the public. The central discipline inspection and procuratorial organs, Supreme People's Court and Supreme People's Procuratorate have set up offence-reporting websites for the public. The public's proposals for and criticisms of government work receive high attention of governments at all levels, and have become important references for them to improve their work and decision-making.

## **V. Rights of the Person**

The effectiveness of a country's protection of its citizens' rights of life and health, of personal liberty, of personal dignity and other rights of the person is one important gauge of examining that nation's human rights protection effort. In 2013 China abolished the reeducation through labor system, waged special campaigns against human trafficking, searched for and rescued abducted and trafficked women and children, punished serious violations of its citizens' rights of the person in accordance with the law, improved the mechanism for preventing and rectifying unjust, false and erroneous charges, took various measures in ensuring the rights of suspects, defendants and detainees, and strengthened law-enforcement in key areas such as workplace safety, and food and drug production, effectively safeguarding the Chinese citizens' rights of the person.

With over 50 years of operation in China, the system of reeducation through labor played a positive role in protecting public security, maintaining social order, ensuring social stability, and educating and rescuing lawbreakers in certain historical circumstances. But over time its functions were gradually replaced with the implementation of laws such as the Law on Penalties for Administration of Public Security and the Law on Narcotics Control, and also with the improvements in the Criminal Law. Also, as the relevant laws became increasingly applicable in cases of reeducation through labor, the correction system played a lesser role over the years. Since March 2013 the system has been basically suspended in China. On December 28, 2013 the Standing Committee of the NPC passed a decision on abolishing legal provisions pertaining to reeducation through labor, putting an end to the system. It was also decided that persons who were receiving reeducation through labor as prescribed by law should be released and exempted from their remaining terms.



The rights of the person of women and children have been effectively protected. The state has implemented China's Action Plan Against Human Trafficking (2013-2020). In 2013 China cracked 5,126 and 2,765 cases of abducted and trafficked women and children, respectively, and united 631 abducted children with their biological parents through the DNA database network of public security organs. The state has issued opinions on punishing crimes of sexually assaulting minors, in accordance with the law, and rigorously cracks down upon such crimes as sexually assaulting girls under the age of 14 and teachers sexually assaulting students. In 2013 criminal charges were pressed against 2,395 persons suspected of abducting and trafficking women and children.

Special emphasis has been given to the protection of the rights of the person of people with mental disorders. The Law on Mental Health came into effect May 1, 2013, and applies the principles of free will and restriction on involuntary hospitalization for patients with mental disorders. It is prohibited to use constraints and isolation and other protective measures as means for punishing mentally disturbed patients, and medical institutions are not allowed to force their patients with mental disorders to engage in production or other kinds of labor.

The state punishes crimes seriously undermining the people's sense of security and infringing upon the citizens' rights of the person. In 2013 China's procuratorial organs at all levels issued arrest warrants for 500,055 persons suspected of severe violent crimes, gang crimes, repeated crimes against property, and drug dealing. A total of 580,485 persons were indicted for criminal acts. People's courts at all levels concluded 250,000 cases of homicide, robbery, kidnapping, explosion, rape, trafficking of children and women, and gang-related organized crime, convicting 325,000 persons. (more)

Measures for preventing and rectifying unjust, false and erroneous charges have been further strengthened. In 2013 the Ministry of Public Security issued the Notice on Further Strengthening and Improving the Criminal Enforcement and Case Handling, and Effectively Preventing Unjust, False and Erroneous Charges and other related documents, in an effort to improve the system for preventing erroneous charges, reinforce supervision over law enforcement and case handling in an all-around, real-time manner that covers the whole procedure, and prevent unjust, false and erroneous charges at the source. The Supreme People's Procuratorate issued the Opinions on Diligently Performing Procuratorial Duties and Preventing and Rectifying Unjust, False and Erroneous Charges, and strives to improve the mechanism for identifying, correcting and preventing erroneous charges during the procuratorial phase and also the accountability system. It exercises strict supervision

over case handling, to ensure that the facts are accurate, evidence genuine, procedures correct and laws applicable. In 2013 the Procuratorate supervised the withdrawal of 25,211 ineligible charges filed by organs of investigation; and rectified 72,370 occasions of misuse of coercive measures, collection of evidence by illegal means and extortion of confession by torture; decided against arrest on 100,157 occasions and against prosecution on 16,427 persons for lack of evidence and for cases that did not constitute crimes. The Procuratorate protects the right of action of suspects and the right of practice of lawyers. In 2013 it supervised the correction of 606 cases of improper surveillance of suspects who were confined to designated residences, and 2,153 cases of obstructing the exercise of the right of action by defenders; strengthened the examination of necessity for detention, and advised the release of or change of coercive measures for 23,894 suspects. The Procuratorate attaches importance to protecting the legitimate rights and interests of detainees. In 2013 it supervised the correction of violations of law during the execution of penalties and supervision activities on 42,873 occasions, urged the closing of long-pending cases with suspects in prolonged detention, and supervised the correction of extended custody on 432 occasions. In 2013 the Supreme People's Court issued 548 judicial interpretations on the application of the Criminal Procedure Law-the most judicial interpretations to a law since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. The exclusion of illegal evidence, the principle of no additional penalty for making appeals and other principles that protect the litigation right of defendants have been implemented with detailed measures. On October 9, 2013 the Supreme People's Court issued the Opinions on Establishing and Improving the Working Mechanism for Preventing Unjust, False and Erroneous Criminal Charges. Adhering to the principle of assuming innocence until proven guilty, the Opinions stipulate that the defendants should be acquitted in accordance with the law in case of insufficient incriminating evidence; confession extorted by torture or other illegal means should be excluded, as should confession obtained from interrogation sessions conducted at undesignated sites, from interrogation sessions the whole procedure of which is not videotaped, and from interrogation sessions in which the possibility of the use of illegal means cannot be ruled out. The Court ensures that innocent persons are not held criminally liable. In 2013 the people's courts at all levels acquitted a total of 825 defendants in accordance with the law, and ran retrials of unjust, false and erroneous charges discovered during appeal and quashed the original judgments in these cases.

Protection of the rights of the person of criminal suspects, defendants and detainees has been enhanced. In 2013 the Ministry of Public Security issued the Regulations on

the Use and Administration of Areas and Sites for Law Enforcement and Case Handling by Public Security Organs, which stipulates the use and administration of areas for case handling, with a strict code for audio- and video-recording interrogation and inquiry sessions. The Ministry adopted a new version of the Standards for Building Detention Centers, vigorously promoted the use of social resources for detainees' medical care, and required all detention centers to be made open to the public to ensure a higher level of transparency of law enforcement. The people's procuratorates further improved synchronized audio- and video-recording system, effectively protecting the legitimate rights of suspects.

The state strengthened its efforts to defuse threats to people's security and health in their work and life. The legislature improved relevant laws for dealing with key problems related to personal safety, and the Standing Committee of the NPC enacted the Law on Special Equipment Safety, strengthening supervision and control over the whole process of the manufacturing and installation, operation and utilization, maintenance and care, and examination and testing of special equipment. The Law established an identity management system, an accountability system of product quality, and a recall and scrap system for special equipment, strengthening supervision of special equipment safety in accordance with the law so as to protect the people's rights of life and property. Departments of law enforcement continued to strengthen their troubleshooting effort in focus industries and areas, defusing hidden dangers on 6.815 million occasions with a correction rate of 97.9 percent in 2013. More effort was put into the investigation of accidents and a time limit was set for the cracking of related cases under the supervision of relevant authorities, and 44 cases of serious and major accidents were investigated and handled. The average period for closing a case was 109 days shorter on a year-on-year basis, and investigation reports of accidents were made public in a timely manner. Procuratorial organs conducted immediate intervention in the case of serious and major accidents, and investigated cases of dereliction of duty, malfeasance, bribery and other power-abuse crimes behind fires and mining accidents, with a total of 1,066 persons investigated. The state attaches great importance to food and drug safety, and has issued relevant judicial interpretations for punishing crimes that harm food and drug safety in accordance with the law. In 2013 procuratorial organs at all levels pressed charges against 10,540 persons suspected of manufacturing and selling poisonous or hazardous food, adulterant drugs or drugs of inferior quality, and the Supreme People's Procuratorate set time limit to urge the handling of 785 cases of crimes that menaced food and drug safety.

The people's courts at all levels concluded 2,082 relevant cases, with 2,647 persons convicted.

## **VI. Rights of Ethnic Minorities**

China has established the principle that all ethnic groups are equal and jointly participate in the management of state affairs on the constitutional, legal and systemic levels. The state respects the cultural differences and lifestyles of ethnic groups, and ensures the equal rights of ethnic minorities in politics, economy, culture, language and folk customs, religious belief and other aspects, with coordinated measures. In 2013 China's ethnic minorities and areas inhabited by ethnic minorities made new achievements and developments in various undertakings, and all ethnic minorities fully enjoyed and effectively exercised their basic rights.

The political rights of ethnic minorities are fully guaranteed. Areas inhabited by ethnic minorities in compact communities exercising regional ethnic autonomy enjoy autonomous rights in a wide range of areas, including legislative power, flexibility in the execution of relevant state laws and regulations, the right to use their own spoken and written languages, personnel management power, financial management power, and the right of independently developing their special culture and education. The advantages of regional ethnic autonomy are best exemplified in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. Xinjiang is an ethnic autonomous area mainly inhabited by the Uygur people. It is China's only autonomous region with all three administrative levels of autonomous areas (region, prefecture and county). In other parts of Xinjiang inhabited by ethnic minorities, except the Uygur, in compact communities, there are five autonomous prefectures where the Kazak, Hui, Kirgiz and Mongolian people are concentrated; six autonomous counties where the Kazak, Hui, Mongolian, Tajik and Xibe people live; and 42 townships where various ethnic minorities live. Autonomous organs at all levels in Xinjiang formulate and implement autonomous regulations, local rules and regulations, and legally binding decisions in light of their actual conditions, ensuring the autonomous rights of ethnic autonomous areas.

All China's 55 ethnic minority groups elect deputies to the NPC and members to the National Committee of the CPPCC. The chairpersons or vice chairpersons of the standing committees of the people's congresses of all 155 areas where regional ethnic autonomy is exercised, as well as the heads of government of autonomous regions, prefectures, counties or banners are citizens of the ethnic group or groups

exercising regional autonomy in the areas concerned. In the Tibet Autonomous Region the chairpersons of past standing committees of the people's congress and the heads of the people's government have all been Tibetans. Tibetan deputies and deputies from other minority groups to the NPC have always constituted the absolute majority among deputies of the region at all levels. In Tibet, of the 34,244 directly and indirectly elected deputies to the NPC at all four levels, 31,901 persons, or 93 percent, are from the Tibetan or other minority communities. Also, 82.05 percent of the total number of the Tibet Autonomous Region's officials are Tibetan or from other minority groups, and 80.06 percent of the total number of leading officials of counties and townships are Tibetan or from other minority groups.

The socioeconomic rights of ethnic minorities are fully protected. The state continues to increase funds in promoting socioeconomic development in areas inhibited by ethnic minorities, and significant achievements have been made in this regard. In 2013, with more transfer payments diverted to ethnic minority areas, the central government arranged 46.4 billion yuan of transfer payments to ethnic minority areas, up by 10.5 percent as compared with 2012. The state increased poverty-reduction funding by a large margin for the Inner Mongolia, Guangxi, Tibet, Ningxia and Xinjiang autonomous regions, and Guizhou, Yunnan and Qinghai provinces, which have large numbers of ethnic minority inhabitants. The central government appropriated 16.605 billion yuan as poverty-reduction fund, or 43.76 percent of the total volume from all sources, growing by 16.8 percent compared to 2012. In 2013 the state took concrete measures to implement three special programs, as stated in the Twelfth Five-year Plan, namely, supporting the development of minority groups with small populations, vitalizing border areas and bring prosperity to their residents, and developing special undertakings for ethnic minorities. The state continued to increase support to ethnic minorities and areas inhabited by minorities, providing 1.45 billion yuan as specialized funds for the development of minority groups with small populations, 2.79 billion yuan as specialized funds for vitalizing border areas and bringing prosperity to their residents, and 400 million yuan as specialized funds for protecting ethnic minority villages with cultural significance. These funds increased by 13.1 percent, 50 percent and 53.8 percent, respectively, as compared to 2012. In 2013 the GDP of the Tibet Autonomous Region reached 80.767 billion yuan, growing by 12.5 percent over the previous year; the per capita net income of farmers and herdsmen was 6,578 yuan, increasing by 15 percent over the previous year and well into the 11th year of double-digit growth; and the per capita disposable income of urban residents reached 20,023 yuan, up by 11.1 percent compared with 2012. In 2013 the GDP of

Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region was 851 billion yuan, growing by 11.1 percent compared to the previous year; and the per capita GDP was 37,847 yuan, an increase of 9.7 percent. In 2013 the per capita net income of rural residents in Xinjiang reached 7,296 yuan, growing by 14.1 percent over the previous year; and the per capita disposable income of urban residents was 19,874 yuan, increasing by 10.9 percent over the previous year. The per capita total income of urban households was 22,388 yuan, up by 10.9 percent compared to the previous year and was 69.5 times more than that of 1978. In 2013 the per capita living space of Tibetan farmers and herdsmen and urban residents was 30.51 sq m and 42.81 sq m, respectively, and significant progress was made in various undertakings for improving the local people's lives. The housing project for farmers and herdsmen, in particular, was completed after eight years of incremental investment that totaled 27.357 billion yuan. The region's 2.3 million farmers and herdsmen of 460,300 households moved into solid and convenient houses, and a historic improvement was made in the working and living conditions of farmers and herdsmen. More progress was made in the building of supporting facilities in rural areas, including water, power, road, communications, gas, radio and television, and postal services. A total of 94.6 percent and 99.7 percent of Tibet's townships and towns respectively now have access to postal services and the road network, respectively, and 97.4 percent of incorporated villages have access to road transportation. The Motuo Highway opened to traffic in 2013, connecting China's last isolated county to the national road network. Construction of the Sichuan-Tibet highway network project began. The Qinghai-Tibet Railway transported a total of 2.199 million passengers and 4.052 million tons of cargo, and civil aircraft carried 2.73 million passengers. (more)

Ethnic minority cultures and cultural undertakings in areas inhabited by ethnic minorities prospered. By 2013 China had 32 publishing houses that publish books in the languages of ethnic minorities, and 13 electronic publishers produce audio-visual products in languages of ethnic minorities. In 2013 222 titles of periodicals, 99 types of newspapers and 9,429 book titles were published in languages of ethnic minorities. In 2013 a total of 73 radio stations in ethnic autonomous areas ran 441 programs, including 100 programs broadcast in ethnic languages; and 90 television stations ran 489 programs, including 100 programs broadcast in ethnic languages. There were also 50,834 cultural institutions of various types, including 653 libraries, 784 cultural centers, 8,153 cultural stations and 385 museums. The traditional cultures of minority groups are protected. The state established an experimental area for the protection of the culture and ecology of ethnic minorities living in southeastern Guizhou Province, effectively promoting the overall conservation of

the intangible cultural heritage in ethnic minority areas. The state continues to strengthen the protection and development of traditional medicine of ethnic minorities. The state supports experienced elderly experts of ethnic medicine to set up offices to pass on their medical inheritance, and supports the establishment of inheritance offices for different schools of Tibetan, Mongolian, Zhuang and Hui medicines. A program for the categorization of ethnic medicine literature and the selection and promotion of medical techniques has been initiated, covering 29 ethnic groups in 11 provinces and autonomous regions. A total of 150 titles of important ethnic medicine literature has been sorted out and categorized, and 140 medical treatment techniques have been selected for promotion. By 2013 there were 199 hospitals nationwide that specialize in ethnic medicine.

People of ethnic minority groups in Xinjiang enjoy freedom of religious belief, and their customs and social mores are fully respected. In accordance with the Constitution and the Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy, the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region promulgated the Regulations on the Administration of Religious Affairs of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, Interim Regulations on the Administration of Venues for Religious Activities of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, Interim Regulations on the Administration of Religious Staff of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, Interim Regulations on the Administration of Religious Activities of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, and other government regulations, in an effort to protect normal religious activities and safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of religious groups and religious believers. The religious believers from ethnic minority groups in Xinjiang are entitled to conducting normal religious activities according to law in venues for such activities and in their homes, rights with which no one may interfere. Currently there are ten minority groups in Xinjiang that mostly believe in Islam, with a total population of around 13.7 million. There are 24,000 mosques with 290,000 staff members. In Xinjiang there are also 120,000 Buddhist believers, with 53 venues for activities and 326 staff members; about 60,000 Protestant followers and 374 clergymen; 6,000 Catholic followers, with 20 venues for activities and 25 priests; 1,000 Orthodox believers with three venues and two priests; and 300 Daoist believers with one venue for activities. Xinjiang has published and distributed the Koran, Sahih al-Bukhari, Tafsir al-Mizan, Selected Texts of Expostulation (a1-Wa 'z) and other religious classics and books in the Uygur, standard Chinese, Kazak and Kirgiz languages. The central government and governments at all levels of Xinjiang have developed a series of policies and regulations to ensure that the customs of ethnic minorities in food and drinks, clothing, festivals, marriages and funerals are respected and given consideration.

Each year governments at all levels in Xinjiang make special arrangements for the production and supply of meat, non-staple food and other necessities for the daily life of ethnic minorities ensuring the production and supply of special foods for these ethnic minorities, and lends special consideration to the ten groups dominated by Islamic believers. In Xinjiang, Moslems of all ethnic groups enjoy days off on the occasions of Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.

The cultural legacies of Tibet are effectively protected, and the local religion and traditional customs and social mores are respected. Currently Tibet has 4,277 sites of cultural relics. The Potala Palace, Norbulingka Summer Palace and Jokhang Temple have been included in the UNESCO World Heritage List; Lhasa, Shigatse and Gyantse have been entered on the national list of historical and cultural cities; and the Tibet Museum is a first-rank national museum. Seventy-six items on China's national intangible cultural heritage list are located in Tibet, 323 at the autonomous regional level, 76 at the city level and 814 at the county level. There are 68 recognized successors to their own intangible heritages in Tibet at the national level and 227 at the autonomous regional level, and 117 Tibetan Opera troupes. The epic Gesar and Tibetan Opera were included on the list of Masterpieces of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2009. The state actively protects and develops Tibetan medicine. Currently Tibet has 19 medical institutions that specialize in traditional Tibetan medicine, more than 50 county-level hospitals have a Tibetan medicine department, and the service network of Tibetan medicine has basically covered the whole region. The state respects the customs and social mores of the Tibetan people, and ensures that the ethnic communities of Tibet lead their lives in accordance with their traditional customs and engage in social activities in ways they prefer. The state respects the freedom of religious belief of all the people in Tibet, and ensures that they can practice their religions, conduct ceremonial activities, participate in major religious and folk festivals and engage in other normal activities of their own free will. Currently there are 1,787 venues for religious activities of various types in Tibet, with 46,000 resident monks and nuns, and 358 living Buddhas. Traditional religious activities, such as scripture study and debate, rank promotion, initiation, abhiseca (empowerment) and training, are conducted in an orderly manner, and traditional activities are held at major religious festivals. The living Buddha reincarnation system is a unique practice for the continuation of the living Buddha of Tibetan Buddhism, which is respected by the state. Since the Democratic Reform in Tibet in 1959, over 60 reincarnated living Buddhas have been certified and recognized by the state in accordance with historical conventions and following religious rituals. Many religious believers have sutra halls or small shrines set up in



their homes, and they have the liberty to engage in religious activities such as turning prayer wheels, going on pilgrimages, and having monks and nuns perform religious rites. The Tibet Autonomous Region and all of its seven prefectures and cities have Buddhist associations, and the Tibet branch of the China Buddhist Association has a Buddhist academy and a sutra printing house, and publishes Tibetan Buddhism, a journal in the Tibetan language. Religious cultural items, such as murals, sculptures, statues, Thangka paintings, scriptures, ritual items and shrines in Buddhist temples, are protected and renovated when this is needed. Large quantities of religious literature and classics are rescued, sorted out and published. The traditional sutra printing houses of different temples are maintained and developed. Currently there are 60 major sutra printing houses, such as the ones at Muru Nyingba Monastery and the Potala Palace. They print a total of 63,000 titles of scriptures annually, and there are 20 private bookstalls selling scriptures in Tibet.

Ethnic minorities have the right to use and develop their own spoken and written languages. The state takes concrete measures to ensure the legitimate use of ethnic languages in the administrative and judicial sectors, news and publication, radio, film and television, culture and education, and other areas. Ethnic minority students can use their own languages in the college entrance examination. China National Radio and local radio stations broadcast in 21 ethnic languages on a daily basis, and the coverage of radio and television broadcasts in ethnic languages in border areas has further increased. The state promotes bilingual teaching in ethnic areas. By 2013 bilingual teaching was done in the classroom in more than 10,000 schools around the country, and 29 languages of 21 ethnic minority groups were used together with standard Chinese-Putonghua. China has 15 institutions of higher learning for ethnic minority students, with approximately 240,000 students on campus. The state continues the preferential policy toward ethnic minority students in college admissions by lowering the admission scores for or granting extra scores to them, and by granting priority admissions to these students when they are competing with Han students under the same conditions. Special consideration is also given to students from ethnic minority groups with small populations.

The learning and use of the Tibetan language is protected by law. Both the Tibetan language and standard Chinese are used in the decisions and regulations passed at the people's congresses at all levels in the Tibet Autonomous Region, as well as in the official documents and public notices issued by people's governments at all levels and their subordinate departments. In judicial litigation the Tibetan language is used during trials when there are Tibetan parties involved, and the legal instruments are written in Tibetan in such cases. Both Tibetan and standard Chinese

appear in the official seals, credentials, forms, envelopes, letter paper, writing paper, insignias of different entities, and are used in the signs and plaques of government organs, factories and mines, schools, train stations, airports, stores, hotels, restaurants, theaters, tourism spots, stadiums and libraries, and on street nameplates and road signs. Tibet has 14 journals and ten newspapers published in the Tibetan language. The Tibet People's Radio Station runs 42 programs broadcast in Tibetan (including the Kangba dialect), broadcasting 21 hours of news programs in the Tibetan language and 18 hours of radio programs in the Kangba dialect on a daily basis. The Tibet Television Station Satellite Television broadcasts around the clock in Tibetan. In 2013 the Tibet Autonomous Region published 780 titles of books written in Tibetan, printing a total of 4.31 million copies. For many Tibetan-language users, reading, listening to and watching domestic and international news and getting other information through the Internet, mobile phones and other platforms compatible to the Tibetan language have become part of their daily life.

In Xinjiang, there are 13 ethnic groups who have lived there for generations, and they use ten different spoken and written languages. During the performance of official business, organs of the autonomous region and the autonomous prefectures and counties use both standard Chinese and the local ethnic languages. The languages of the ethnic minorities are also widely used in the press, publication, radio, film and television. The Xinjiang Daily is published in the Uygur, standard Chinese, Kazak and Mongolian languages; the Xinjiang Television Station broadcasts in the Uygur, standard Chinese, Kazak and Mongolian languages; and the Xinjiang People's Publishing House publishes in the Uygur, standard Chinese, Kazak, Mongolian, Kirgiz and Xibe languages. More than 70 percent of the books and audio-visual products published by publishing houses in Xinjiang are in local ethnic languages. In 2013 subtitles in ethnic languages were added to 100 films and 5,975 episodes of TV series, and four TV dramas were made with ethnic minority themes.

## **VII. Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

China has 85 million disabled people. The Chinese government has developed its programs for disabled people in a planned way in accordance with the Law on the Protection of Disabled Persons, Program for Disabled Persons during the 12th Five-year Plan and the Outline of Development-oriented Poverty Reduction for Disabled Persons in Rural Areas (2011-2020). In the meantime, it also commits itself to the duties defined in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, actively implements the third Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (2013-2022)-

Incheon Strategy, and promotes the coordinated development of disabled people and socioeconomic progress, so that the protection of disabled persons in China has risen to a higher and more standard level.

Rehabilitation programs for disabled persons are being carried out in an orderly manner. The Chinese government has improved the work mechanism for disabled persons' rehabilitation, aiming to make sure that every disabled person has access to rehabilitation services. It encourages disability-rehabilitation entities and medical institutions to strengthen their ties so as to establish a three-tier rehabilitation medical system within which the two assume different responsibilities and cooperate closely with mutually complementary abilities. China has enacted the Standards of Screening for Disabilities Among 0-6 Year-old Children (Trial), and, according to which, the rehabilitation of disabled children is moved ahead by establishing an institution of early disability screening, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation. At the same time, community rehabilitation is further developed. Rehabilitation services are provided to disabled people inside their communities and homes, with 2,862 community demonstration stations being supported. The role of parent-training schools is emphasized in China. In 2013, 1,131 disability rehabilitation entities conducted the training of the parents of disabled children. The Chinese government launched the "Project of Fostering Hundreds of World Top-notch Rehabilitation Experts, Thousands of Domestic Leading Rehabilitation Specialists and Ten Thousands of Young Rehabilitation Talents," training some 256,000 management and professional personnel at various levels and of various kinds nationwide in 2013, including 25,000 rehabilitation management staff, 55,000 rehabilitation specialists and 177,000 community rehabilitation coordinators.

A series of key rehabilitation projects is being carried out. By 2013 there were 901 city districts and 2,014 counties or county-level cities in China that provided community rehabilitation services. In the same year an additional 1.69 million disabled people enjoyed such services, and 7.468 million disabled people were rehabilitated to various degrees, among whom 746,000 received cataract surgery, 32,000 children with hearing impairments received hearing restoration or language training, and 153,000 children with intellectual disabilities, brain paralysis or autistic disorders received training guidance in rehabilitation institutions and their communities and families. The Chinese government helped 6,721 physically handicapped children from poor families and 418 disabled persons suffering from leprosy to receive surgery, and provided comprehensive rehabilitation services to 5.84 million patients with mental impairments, and provided remedial aid to 469,000 mentally impaired patients in poverty. A total of 1.283 million assistance devices

were offered to people with disabilities, among which 329,000 were provided for free by the National Public Welfare Lottery Foundation.

The system of safeguarding and promoting disabled persons' access to education and employment is being improved, with the emphasis on the enrolment of disabled children who were registered as having not attended school. China has drawn up the Promotion Plan for Special Education (2014-2016), expanded the coverage of compulsory education, developed preschool education for disabled children in different ways according to different local conditions, accelerated the progress of disabled teenagers' senior high school-level education, centering on vocational education, and improved higher-learning education for disabled people. The Chinese government increased financial input, enhanced the quality and quantity of teachers, and further improved curriculum for disabled people. It continued to implement the Plan for Building Special Schools (Phase II), providing 800 million yuan of specialized funds to support the building of 27 normal colleges for special education and middle and higher-learning schools for disabled people. The central government provided another 55 million yuan of special subsidies to strengthen the special school building in ten central and western provinces. A national special disability lottery program was held, raising funds for 10,000 disabled children from poverty-stricken families to have access to preschool education and for 23 special middle or higher-learning schools to improve their teaching facilities and practical training centers. There were 7,538 disabled students enrolled by ordinary institutions of higher-learning in 2013. The government drew up the Opinions on Promoting the Employment of Disabled Persons in Proportion to Total Employment, increasing the skill training opportunities and job posts for disabled people. Over the year, 369,000 disabled people were employed and 480,000 received training in urban areas; in rural areas 856,000 received training in practical skills. The government encouraged and supported welfare enterprises so as to promote the employment of disabled persons and ensure their equal status in society. By 2013, there were 18,000 welfare enterprises in China, employing a total of 542,000 disabled people. (more)

The social security system for disabled persons is being further improved. The Chinese government has enlarged the range of disabled people's social welfare and raised their benefit level. By 2013 over 6.28 million disabled persons in both urban and rural areas received the minimum subsistence allowance, 4.014 million disabled persons in urban areas and 16.383 million in rural areas participated in the respective endowment insurance systems, and 944,000 disabled people were looked after by social services. The governments explored ways to provide poverty-stricken

disabled people with living subsidies and severely disabled people with care subsidies. Some 15 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government) established the system of granting living subsidies to poverty-stricken disabled people, and eight provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government) established the system of granting care subsidies to severely disabled people, benefiting over 6 million disabled people.

The development-oriented poverty alleviation for disabled persons is being strengthened. The Chinese government included poverty alleviation and development of disabled persons in relevant programs, and made disabled people a priority when carrying out poverty alleviation policies and measures. Poverty-stricken disabled people were included in the overall poverty monitoring, and a statistics system for development-oriented poverty alleviation for disabled people in contiguous poverty-stricken areas was set up. The assistance to and poverty alleviation for disabled people in agricultural sector was strengthened in a bid to increase their incomes. Local governments also supported disabled people by providing agricultural technology services or helping them found special cooperatives, strengthened the skill training in agricultural production and business management for disabled people in rural areas, assisted rural families with one or more disabled members to buy and use agricultural machines, and accelerated the improvement of conditions for the supply of gas to them for daily use by giving preferences and increasing subsidies. The renovation of dilapidated houses of poor families with one or more disabled members was given high priority, and the proportion of renovated houses of poor families with one or more disabled members in the total of renovated houses in the year was higher than the proportion of existing dilapidated houses of poor families with one or more disabled members in all dilapidated houses. According to the Project Plan for Screening Illnesses Among Newborn Babies in Poverty-stricken Areas in 2013, local governments conducted screening for phenylketonuria, congenital hypothyroidism and hearing loss among 490,000 newborn babies in rural areas, and provided the sick babies with rehabilitation aids in 14 national contiguous poverty-stricken areas involving 200 counties in 21 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government). In 2013 some 1.206 million disabled people in rural areas got rid of poverty and 122,000 rural families with one or more disabled members renovated their houses.

Access for disabled people is being improved. China has enacted the Regulations for Building a Barrier-free Environment, making efforts to remove environmental

barriers in both urban and rural areas. In 2013 the Chinese government helped improve access for 136,000 families with one or more disabled members, and granted 657,000 disabled people fuel subsidies for motorized wheelchairs. In order to make disabled people's travelling more convenient, the China Civil Aviation Administration amended the Regulations of Air Transport for Disabled Persons (Trial), and the China Railway Corporation arranged special seats for disabled persons in every train, providing 48,000 special tickets for disabled persons and making 1,268 carriages barrier-free. Various cities and counties started to build a barrier-free environment. Some of the websites of 117 ministries and commissions as well as provincial governments claimed that they had become barrier-free in accordance with the Technical Norms for Designing Barrier-free Accessible Websites. China accelerated the R&D for assistance devices and began researching and laying down technical criteria for devices for the blind and screen readers. The Chinese government launched the "2013 Beautiful China Actions for Barrier-free Access to Government Information," improving the websites of various government departments, and began to build a barrier-free information system in the cities.

### **VIII. Right to a Clean and Healthy Environment**

Aiming to solve the environmental and ecological problems caused by the country's rapid economic growth, the Chinese government continued to promote ecological progress in 2013, constantly improving environmental protection systems and enhancing environmental management and ecosystem preservation. Focusing on solving the major environmental problems that seriously endanger people's health, it investigated and punished harshly illegal pollution and environmental crimes, so as to safeguard people's right to a healthy and clean environment.

The planning and mechanisms for protecting the environment and ecosystems is being furthered improved. China formulated and implemented a series of policy documents and plans for environmental protection, including the Prevention and Control of Environmental Risks of Chemical Products, during the 12th Five-year Plan Period (2011-2015), Action Plan for Preventing and Controlling Air Pollution, Detailed Rules for the Implementation of the Action Plan for Preventing and Controlling Air Pollution in Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei and the Surrounding Areas, Plan for Monitoring and Early-warning of Heavily Polluted Weather in Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei and the Surrounding Areas, Work Plan for Preventing and Controlling Groundwater Pollution in the North China Plain, Opinions on Strengthening Environmental Protection and Management in Key National Ecological Function Zones, Methods for Assessing the

Implementation of the Strictest Management System of Water Resources and Opinions on Accelerating Progress in Water Ecological Systems. With 135 newly issued items in 2013, China had a total of 1,499 items of national criteria for environmental protection currently in effect.

The Ministry of Environmental Protection of China has signed target responsibility agreements for preventing and combating air pollution with 31 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government). The Chinese government has promoted the building of PM2.5 monitoring stations in key and model cities for environmental protection. It completed the assessment of environmental impacts of the western China development strategy in 2013, and launched the assessment of environmental impacts of the central China development strategies. Limitations on air pollutants were imposed for the thermal power, steel, petrochemical, cement, non-ferrous metal and chemical engineering industries as well as coal-fired boiler projects in key control areas. The Ministry of Environmental Protection and China Insurance Regulatory Commission jointly developed the Guidelines for the Pilot Projects of Compulsory Environmental Pollution Liability Insurance, stipulating that enterprises connected with heavy metals, enterprises that had been insured according to local regulations and other high-environmental-risk enterprises must take out environmental pollution liability insurance. The second stage of experiments in environmental function zoning was launched in ten provinces (autonomous regions), and the experiment for ecological red-line demarcation technology was launched in Inner Mongolia, Jiangxi, Guangxi and Hubei. The state set up an inter-ministry coordination mechanism for preventing and controlling air pollution and a cooperative mechanism for preventing and controlling air pollution in Yangtze River Delta areas and Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei and the surrounding areas. The liability and assessment system for water resources management was put into effect. Inspection teams for the implementation of the strictest management system of water resources was set up in 31 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government), with the local government head assuming responsibility. The targets of the "three red lines" (for water resources exploitation, water efficiency and pollution in water-related zones) were further divided and assigned. China began devising the Plan of Water Resources Protection, finished the measurement of assimilative capacities of major rivers and lakes, and proposed a phased schedule for emission limitations.

Funds used for environmental protection is being increased. The Chinese government provided some 338.3 billion yuan in 2013 for conserving energy and protecting the environment, seeing a 14.2 percent year-on-year growth. The Plan of

Capability Development in Environmental Monitoring during the 12th Five-year Plan Period was drawn up and implemented. The central government put 1.6 billion yuan into a pilot project for protecting the environment and ecosystems of lakes with good water quality. The State Council reviewed and passed the Overall Plan for Protecting the Environment and Ecosystems of Lakes with Good Water Quality (2013-2020). The transfer payment for key ecological function zones reached 42.3 billion yuan, covering 492 counties. The central government also spent 2.5 billion yuan on combating heavy metal pollution, the first portion of five billion yuan used to support air pollution control in Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei, Shanxi, Shandong and Inner Mongolia, and six billion yuan used to improve the comprehensive environment in rural areas.

Environmental protection measures are being furthered enhanced. In 2013 China set up 21 national nature reserves. Some 16 provinces (autonomous regions), including Hainan, Heilongjiang and Anhui, launched the Ecosystem-friendly Province (autonomous region) Project and over 1,000 cities (counties) launched the Ecosystem-friendly City (county) Project, with a total of 55 national-level ecosystem-friendly cities (counties) and 2,986 national-level ecosystem-friendly townships being set up. In addition, 46 cities (districts) launched the Water Ecosystem-friendly City Project. China's urban green areas reached 2,367,842 ha, covering 39.59 percent of the total urban land, with the per capita green area in public parks being 12.26 sq m. When 496 monitoring stations in 74 cities gave real-time updates of monitoring data of six pollutants, including fine particles (PM<sub>2.5</sub> particles), a second batch of 116 cities were also building pollutant-monitoring stations and began providing real-time updates. The state deepened the prevention and control of water pollution in key basin areas. In order to strengthen water resources protection in basin areas, it launched the projects to enhance water resources monitoring capacity, established 14,000 national monitoring stations in water-consuming units, water function zones and provincial borders, and achieved online water-quality monitoring in 175 key drinking water source areas, so as to put water quality of over 70 percent of water volumes used with permission, 80 percent of key water function zones and all major inter-provincial and boundary rivers under surveillance. The state formulated the Management Measures of Water Function Zones, enhancing classified and categorized supervision and management. Among 577 water-quality monitoring sections in China's seven major river systems, 66.7 percent of water sections were graded in categories I-III, and 10.8 percent were graded as inferior category V, an increase of 2.6 percentage points and a decrease of 1.5 percentage points, respectively, compared with 2012.



Aiming to prevent and control air pollution, projects of emission-reduction by means of updating facilities are being greatly boosted. The large-scale smog in China's central and eastern areas since 2013 has caused great concern of the public. The State Council issued the Action Plan for Preventing and Controlling Air Pollution in September 2013, imposing 35 concrete measures, including reducing the emission of air contaminants, upgrading the industrial structure, speeding up enterprises' technical transformation, optimizing the energy mix, and applying strict criteria for energy conservation and environmental protection. China established a joint prevention and control system for regional pollution, promptly reacted to severe pollution days, mobilized the whole of society to participate in the actions of maintaining clean air, promoted air pollution control and reduced smog. In 2013 the desulfurization facilities of the active thermal power generating units with a capacity of 34 million kw were retrofitted to increase capacity, and the ratio of generating units with desulfurization facilities came to account for 90 percent of all generating units in China's coal-fired thermal power stations. A capacity of 205 million kw were retrofitted with generating units with NO<sub>x</sub> reduction facilities in the year, reaching 50 percent of China's total thermal installed capacity. The gas bypass of desulfurization facilities of thermal power generating units with a capacity of 203 million kw was cancelled, with the capacity of desulfurization generating units without gas bypasses accounting for 46 percent of the total thermal power installed capacity. Cement clinker plants with a capacity of 570 million tons were retrofitted with NO<sub>x</sub> reduction facilities, accounting for 50 percent of the total capacity. The emissions of four major pollutants-organic pollutants (measured by chemical oxygen demand), ammonia nitrogen, sulfur dioxide and NO<sub>x</sub>-decreased by 2.93 percent, 3.14 percent, 3.48 percent and 4.72 percent, respectively, compared with 2012, with the emission of NO<sub>x</sub> dropping below the 2010 reduction benchmark for the first time. The daily sewage treatment capacity in towns (including both incorporated towns and industrial parks) increased by 11.94 million tons in 2013, and 84.8 percent of the garbage in cities at all levels was made harmless after treatment.

Specialized environmental-protection inspections are being conducted, and environmental crimes are being cracked down on. Some 1.83 million law-enforcement personnel were sent to inspect 710,000 enterprises in 2013, investigating and dealing with 6,499 cases of environmental violation and illegal activities, and handling 1,523 cases within a set time limit under the supervision of higher authorities. The central government paused project environmental approvals of 16 cities in the provinces that had failed the 2012 examination of the implementation of the Plan for Preventing and Controlling of Heavy Metal Pollution

during the 12th Five-year Plan Period. More than 300,000 tons of chromium slag was treated in the year, almost equal the total discharged volume, and 17 batches of solid waste were prevented from illegal entry. The revised Civil Procedure Law, which went into force January 1, 2013, established the environment-related public interest litigation system, stipulating that law-designated governmental organs and organizations can legally challenge activities that damage the public interest, such as those polluting the environment and those infringing consumers' lawful rights and interests. According to the Interpretation of Several Issues Concerning the Application of the Law in the Handling of Criminal Cases of Environmental Pollution jointly issued by the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate in June 2013, environmental crimes will be harshly punished, and the environmental regulatory authorities' misprisions in environmental monitoring will be liable to extra punishment. In 2013 public security organs all over China filed 779 environmental cases and roped in 1,265 criminal suspects; people's procuratorates at all levels charged 20,969 suspects with major contamination accidents, illegally mining or illegally felling trees, investigated 1,290 officials for work-related crimes in projects concerning environmental monitoring, pollution control and ecosystems restoration, and required related government departments to fulfil their statutory duty of supervision according to law by means of prosecutorial advice and urging them to bring to light illegal conduct; people's courts at all levels accepted and heard 134 environmental cases, with 104 concluded, and applied criminal sanctions to 139 persons. Moreover, the Supreme People's Court announced such typical cases of environmental-pollution crimes as the Zijin Mining Group's pollution spill at the Zijinshan Gold and Copper Mine, pollution accidents of Chengjiang Jinye Industry and Trade Co., Ltd. in Yunnan, a pollution accident of Yunguang Chemical Industry Co., Ltd. in Chongqing, and the dumping of hazardous substances by Hu Wenbiao and Ding Yuesheng.

## **IX. Foreign Exchanges and Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights**

In 2013 China continued to take the initiative in exchanges and cooperation with other countries in the realm of human rights. It played a constructive role in the UN's human rights bodies and endeavored to promote the sound development of human rights on the international stage.

Participating in UN multilateral human rights conferences. Chinese delegations attended the relevant meetings of the Third Committee of the 68th Session of the UN General Assembly and the Committee on Non-governmental Organizations, and

the 22nd to 24th sessions of the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), and participated in the 15th to 17th sessions of the HRC's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Team. In those meetings, China played a constructive role by stating its views on human rights policies and proactively participating in reviews and discussions of human rights issues.

Passing the UPR second cycle. China passed its second UPR in October 2013 at Geneva. Representatives of the most of the 137 states participating the review fully acknowledged China's achievements and progress in human rights, supporting China in further promoting and protecting human rights based on its actual conditions. With an open mind and in a serious manner, the Chinese government positively responded to the suggestions and opinions raised by other countries' representatives during the review, accepting 204 opinions (81 percent of all the opinions) concerning over 20 fields, including poverty reduction, education and the judiciary. The review report of China's second UPR was adopted by the HRC March 20, 2014.

Attaching great importance to the implementation of international human rights conventions. China has joined 26 international human rights conventions, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. In 2013 China submitted to the Committee Against Torture (CAT) the sixth report of its implementation of the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. China's consolidated report of the third and fourth implementations of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and first report of implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict passed the review of the Committee on the Rights of the Child without a hitch.

Taking an active part in UN activities concerning human rights. On November 12, 2013, China was elected with 176 votes an HRC member state for 2014-2016. China continued to support the work of the UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), promising to raise its donations to the OHCHR to US\$800,000 each year from 2014 to 2017. It received a visit from the HRC's working group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice. The Chinese government actively participated in and promoted the intergovernmental process of the UN General Assembly on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system, and attended several rounds of multilateral unofficial negotiations and seminars to set forth its position and assertions on improving the human rights treaty body system. Chinese experts were elected as members of the HRC Advisory Committee and CAT.

Increasing mutual understanding through dialogues and communication on human rights. China held human rights communication and discussions with Russia and Pakistan, and human rights dialogues with the United States, the European Union, Germany and other countries. It sent legal experts to hold dialogues with their US counterparts, conducted technical cooperation projects on human rights with Australia and received a visit from the European Union's Special Representative for Human Rights. It also sent a delegation to attend the 13th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Informal Seminar on Human Rights. The China Society for Human Rights Studies and the China Foundation for Human Rights Development jointly held the sixth session of the Beijing Forum on Human Rights. Focusing on "Constructing an Environment for Sustainable Human Rights Development," the forum discussed in a broad and profound way the relationship between human rights and the rule of law, social progress and regional security.

Working closely with other countries, China will continue to spare no efforts to promote the healthy development of human rights worldwide.