

**Assessment Report on the Implementation of the National Human Rights Action
Plan of China (2012-2015)**

**Information Office of the State Council
The People's Republic of China**

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Preface

In June 2012, with approval from the Chinese government, the Information Office of the State Council published the National Human Rights Action Plan of China (2012-2015) (hereinafter referred to as the Action Plan). It is China's second national plan on human rights since the promulgation of the National Human Rights Action Plan of China (2009-2010) in April 2009. The formulation and promulgation of the National Human Rights Action Plan is an important step taken by the Chinese government to honor its solemn commitment on human rights, to ensure the implementation of the constitutional principle of respecting and safeguarding human rights and to advance China's human rights in a comprehensive way.

Local governments at various levels and the relevant departments of the central government and state organs have attached great importance to the implementation of the Action Plan. Based on the principle of "each performing its own functions and sharing the work and responsibilities," they have incorporated the Action Plan into the work plans of their regions and departments and adopted effective measures to implement it based on mid- and long-term work plans in their respective fields. Enterprises and public institutions, mass organizations, social groups, media organizations, academic and research institutions and the general public have also been actively involved in publicizing and implementing the Action Plan. Under the strong leadership of the Communist Party of China and the Chinese government, and with the joint efforts of all parties involved, all targets and tasks set by the Action Plan have been fulfilled as scheduled.

As stipulated in the Action Plan, a "joint meeting mechanism for the National Human Rights Action Plan" was created, consisting of the Information Office of the State Council and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - they jointly take the leading role in this mechanism - and relevant state legislative and judiciary organs, departments of the State Council, mass organizations and social groups, and is responsible for coordinating the implementation, supervision and assessment of the Action Plan.

In the second half of 2014, the joint meeting mechanism launched a mid-term assessment of the implementation of the Action Plan, instructed relevant departments and government institutions to deliver reports on the implementation of the Action Plan, organized experts and scholars to carry out corresponding research and investigations, convened a mid-term assessment meeting on the implementation of the Action Plan to appraise and review the implementation of the Action Plan for the earlier period, and made arrangements on how to better carry out the Action Plan in the next phase.

In July 2015, the joint meeting mechanism launched the final assessment of the implementation of the Action Plan. The final assessment was conducted in three stages - investigation, evaluation and summary. From July to December 2015, the Information Office of the State Council took representatives of media agencies and human rights experts on multiple tours of investigation in Beijing, Liaoning, Shanghai, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Guangdong, Guangxi, Qinghai, Xinjiang and other regions where they conducted interviews and research and listened to comments and suggestions of people from all walks of life and the general public. Entrusted by the joint meeting mechanism, the China Society for Human Rights Studies arranged multiple trips for human rights experts and representatives of social groups to Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Chongqing, Dalian, Jinan, Wuhan and other places to conduct investigations on the implementation of the Action Plan.

The joint meeting mechanism instructed relevant departments and institutions to make a self-assessment of the completion of their respective tasks concerning the Action Plan, and to submit written reports. On this basis, the joint meeting mechanism organized a team of human rights experts from relevant departments and institutions of the central government, mass organizations and social groups as well as the Party School of the CPC Central Committee, Nankai University, Shandong University, Southwest University of Political Science and Law, Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, and other universities and research institutions. The team examined and analyzed the self-appraisals of each department and institution in accordance with the targets set by the Action Plan, solicited opinions and suggestions from member organizations of the joint meeting mechanism and all social sectors and finally formulated the Assessment Report on the Implementation of the National Human Rights Action Plan of China (2012-2015).

It is hereby promulgated as follows.

I. Overall Implementation

China's human rights cause saw extraordinary development during the four years from 2012 to 2015. While striving to realize the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, the Chinese government combined its human rights endeavors with economic, political, cultural, social and ecological construction in accordance with its strategic blueprint to build a moderately prosperous society in all respects, comprehensively deepen reform, advance the law-based governance and strengthen Party self-discipline. It has taken various steps to strengthen the protection of human rights and worked strenuously to achieve the main targets and tasks set by the National Human Rights Action Plan (2012-2015), advancing the cause of human rights in China to a new stage.

-- Sticking to the vision of people-centered development, speeding up the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects, and ensuring people's economic, social and cultural rights

From 2012 to 2015, faced with a complex international situation and the challenging tasks of promoting reform and development while maintaining stability at home, the Chinese government stuck to the new vision of innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development, actively adapted to and promoted the 'new normal' in economic development, and made unceasing efforts to deepen reform and opening-up. It stuck to the policy of maintaining stable growth, promoting reform, making structural adjustments, improving people's lives and guarding against risks to push for more efficient, fairer and more sustainable growth. It also worked to ensure that all people can enjoy the dividend of reform and development and that they gain an increasingly greater sense of benefit.

From 2012 to 2015, China's GDP grew at an average annual rate of 7.4 percent. The per capita disposable income of urban residents increased by 7.5 percent annually while the per capita net income for rural residents increased by 9.2 percent annually. The registered urban unemployment rate was kept within 4.1 percent. 66.63 million people in rural areas were lifted out of poverty. The number of permanent urban residents has increased to account for 56.1 percent of the total population. 24.28 million government-subsidized housing units were basically completed in urban areas. Basic medical insurance was expanded to cover over 95 percent of the population and participation in basic old-age insurance plans exceeded 80 percent. A public service system was basically completed and equal access to education was better enforced. The overall health conditions of the population improved notably. Internet construction accelerated, allowing citizens easier access to enjoy their cultural rights. Greater efforts were made to improve the environment and new progress was achieved in ecological conservation. The rights and interests of ethnic minorities, women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities have been further guaranteed.

-- Building a socialist law-based country, striving to modernize the state governance system and governance capacity and guaranteeing citizens' civil and political rights

The socialist democracy was steadily moved forward. Efforts were accelerated to increase government transparency and expand the application of e-government and online administration. Citizens' rights to be informed, to participate, to be heard and to oversee were guaranteed. Further efforts were made to streamline administration and delegate powers. A power list system was established. From 2014 to 2015, the government delegated the power or canceled the requirement for government review for 557 items; canceled the requirement for verification or approval for 272 professional qualifications; and put a complete stop to the practice of non-administrative review and approval. It improved regulations governing the ruling party and punished corruption and

job-related crimes, creating a sound political and legal environment for the protection of human rights.

Efforts were made to deepen the reform of the judicial system, to optimize the allocation of judicial powers, to improve the system of judicial responsibilities and to promote judicial transparency. The system of legal proceedings was revised and improved and the legal principles were strictly implemented to ensure legally prescribed punishment for a crime, innocence until proven guilty and the exclusion of illegal evidence. Stringent efforts were made to guarantee lawyers' rights to perform their duties and to guard against and rectify wrong or false convictions. Guarantees were in place to ensure that judicial organs can perform their duties independently and justly in accordance with the law. Citizens' rights of the person and rights to a fair trial were protected in accordance with the law to ensure that they can feel fairness and justice in every judicial case.

-- Upholding core socialist values, promoting human rights theory research and human rights education, and striving to improve the public's awareness to respect and protect human rights

The ideas of prosperity, democracy, civilization, harmony, freedom, equality, justice, rule of law, patriotism, dedication, integrity and friendship were actively promoted for the whole society so as to nurture and practice core socialist values. These values are the common aspirations and spiritual prop of the Chinese people. They define the basic requirements and development direction of socialism with Chinese characteristics and play an important role in guiding and leading the development of China's human rights cause.

Human rights education and training were conducted in various forms to promote the ideas about human rights and to spread the knowledge on human rights. Human rights and legal education were incorporated into the campaign to increase the public's knowledge of the law, school education and specialized education. The level of access and specialization of human rights education has been steadily raised. Human rights and legal education for leading officials and public office holders were enhanced, with the State Council Information Office holding multiple training sessions on human rights. Higher education institutions were encouraged to open human rights courses and to train personnel and five new "national-level human rights education and training bases" were set up, completing the tasks set by the Action Plan ahead of schedule. Academic research on human rights was actively conducted and fruitful results were achieved on the research on human rights theories with Chinese characteristics.

-- Conducting international exchanges and cooperation on human rights on the basis of equality and mutual respect, faithfully fulfilling obligations under international human

rights conventions, promoting the healthy development of international human rights endeavors

From 2012 to 2015, China continued to earnestly fulfill its obligations under the international human rights conventions to which it is a signatory and held constructive dialogue with relevant treaty bodies on China's implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. China participated and passed the second round of the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review. It took an active part in multilateral human rights meetings hosted by the Third Committee of UN General Assembly and the UN Human Rights Council. China and UN Women jointly held the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

From 2012 to 2015, China held over 20 human rights dialogues and exchanges with the United States, the European Union, the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, Switzerland and others. It conducted more than 10 human rights consultations and exchanges with countries including Russia, Brazil, Pakistan and Cuba. The China Society for Human Rights Studies and the China Foundation for Human Rights Development jointly hosted four meetings of the Beijing Forum on Human Rights.

With the joint efforts of the Chinese government and its people from all ethnic groups, major targets and tasks set by the Action Plan had been fulfilled as scheduled by the end of 2015. Of these, about 48 percent of the binding targets and over 50 percent of the targets concerning the people's livelihood had been met ahead of time or exceeded, thus realizing the comprehensive implementation of the Action Plan.

Besides the binding targets stipulated in the Action Plan, the Chinese government actively responded to hot issues and peoples' complaints and made extra efforts to strengthen the protection of human rights. Starting in 2012, restrictions on students taking national college entrance exams in places where their parents work and live were gradually lifted and their rights to education were further enhanced. In December 2013, the reeducation through labor system was abolished. In August 2015, four categories of criminals serving their prison terms were pardoned under an amnesty and Amendment IX to the Criminal Law was deliberated and passed. The amendment abolished the death penalty for 9 crimes, reducing the number of crimes where the death penalty is applicable from 55 to 46.

The Communist Party of China and the Chinese government incorporated the principle of universality of human rights into China's national conditions and substantially improved

protection of people's rights to subsistence and development, promoted the coordinated development of economic, social and cultural rights as well as civil and political rights, successfully charting a path of human rights development suiting China's national conditions. The fulfilling of the Action Plan as scheduled fully demonstrates the commitment and confidence of the Communist Party of China and the Chinese government to promote the development of the human rights cause in a coordinated and orderly way and the huge advantage of the socialist system with Chinese characteristics.

There is no best, only better human rights protection. The Chinese government is keenly aware it still faces many challenges despite China's tremendous achievements in the development of human rights. Its economic development mode is still crude and it is still fraught with problems from unbalanced, uncoordinated and unsustainable development. There is still a big gap between urban and rural development. There are still problems of immediate concern to the people remaining to be solved, including medical care, education, old age care, food and drug safety, income distribution and the environment. The corruption and misconduct in some sectors cannot be ignored. There is still a long way to go to realize higher-level protection of human rights in China and hard efforts must be made.

In a congratulatory letter to the Beijing Forum on Human Rights in September 2015, Chinese President Xi Jinping pointed out that the Chinese people have gone through much suffering and know very well the great significance of human value, basic human rights and human dignity to social development and progress. It is a common objective of the human society for people to fully enjoy human rights. China will steadfastly advance the human rights cause both in China and the rest of the world and work to make greater contribution to the advancement of human civilization.

II. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

From 2012 to 2015, China continued to deepen reform and adopted a series of important measures to promote development and improve people's livelihoods, comprehensively strengthening the guarantee of people's economic, social and cultural rights. Major targets set by the Action Plan were fulfilled on schedule.

(1) Right to work

Figure 1: New urban jobs 2012-2015 (Unit: Ten thousand)

Equal rights to employment have been guaranteed. In 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015, 12.66 million, 13.1 million, 13.22 million and 13.12 million new urban jobs were created respectively, surpassing the target of 9 million new jobs every year. The registered urban unemployment rate was kept within 4.1 percent, lower than the 5 percent target.

Figure 2: Number of regions that increased minimum wages and average rate of increase (2012-2015)

The right to get work remuneration as well as rest and leave has been further guaranteed. In 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015, minimum wages were raised in 25, 27, 19 and 27 regions respectively by 20.1 percent, 17 percent, 14.1 percent and 14.9 percent. In 2012, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress amended the Labor Contract Law, again stressing equal pay for equal work. In 2015, more than 90 percent of employees working in various enterprises signed labor contracts. More than 50 percent of workers enjoyed annual leave with pay in 2015, according to a survey on human resources and social security conducted in 60 cities in November 2015.

Work safety conditions have continued to improve. The State Administration of Work Safety issued Opinions on Further Enhancing the Construction of the System of National Work Safety Emergency Platforms. The central government, 20 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government), some cities, major counties and large enterprises in high-risk industries set up separate work safety platforms. Communication and connectivity were established among the platforms of the central government, 13 provincial regions and 7 national mine emergency rescue teams. Compared with 2011, the number of all types of industrial accidents and the number of deaths decreased by 19 percent and 12.4 percent respectively and the number of major industrial accidents and the number of deaths decreased by 47.2 percent and 31 percent respectively. In 2013, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress deliberated and passed the Law on Special Equipment Safety. From 2011 to 2015, while the total number of special equipment increased by 70 percent, the number of deaths related to special equipment was kept within 300 each year for five consecutive years and the death rate for every 10,000 pieces of special equipment decreased to 0.36 in 2015 from 0.67 in 2010, matching the level of special equipment safety in medium developed countries. Relevant government departments revised the Administrative Measures for Diagnosis and Identification of Occupational Diseases and the Classified List of Hazardous Factors of Occupational Diseases, formulated five regulations including the Provisions on the Supervision and Administration of Occupational Health at Work Sites, the Measures for the Administration of Occupational Health Examination and criteria for diagnosing new occupational diseases. They also issued over 70 occupational health technical standards including the Technical Code for Dust Control in Stone Material Processing. Special campaigns were launched to control dust and hazardous materials in industries prone to occupational diseases including gold mining, cement production, stone material processing and wood furniture making.

The skills of workers have been upgraded. Rural and urban workers received extensive vocational training. By the end of 2015, the total number of skilled workers had reached

167 million, exceeding the planned target of 125 million ahead of schedule. 45.01 million of them were highly-skilled workers, accounting for 27.28 percent of the total.

(2) Right to basic living standards

Figure 3: Percentage of increase of GDP, urban residents' per capita disposable income and rural residents' per capita net income (2012-2015)

From 2012 to 2015, the increase of residents' per capita disposable income surpassed the growth rate of GDP of the same period. The annual growth rate of the per-capita disposal income of urban residents and per-capita net income of rural residents were 7.5 percent and 9.2 percent respectively, exceeding the planned target growth of 7 percent.

Tangible results have been achieved in poverty reduction. In 2012, relevant government departments formulated the 12th Five-year Plan for Poverty Reduction Village By Village. By 2015, poverty alleviation projects covering 30,000 villages had been implemented, exceeding the target of 24,000 villages. Investment totaled 144.569 billion yuan, an average of 4.8 million yuan for each village. From 2012 to 2015, the State Development and Reform Commission appropriated 21 billion yuan from the central budget for relocation of impoverished residents, which brought about an additional more than 200 billion yuan in local government input and various other investments. About 8 million people in poverty were relocated. Training programs in practical skills focusing on planting and breeding were conducted for 9.3 million impoverished laborers who chose to stay. The government allocated various poverty reduction funds totaling 25.53 billion yuan for 17 impoverished border counties (cities) and launched 3,807 poverty reduction projects in border areas, directly benefiting 306,000 households. By the end of 2015, over 729,000 technicians had been sent to grassroots levels in rural areas, covering 90 percent of all counties (cities, districts) and helping 60 million people directly or indirectly.

Figure 4: Rural population in poverty 2012-2015 (Unit: ten thousand)

The number of people living in poverty has been greatly reduced. From 2012 to 2015, the number of people living in poverty in rural areas was reduced by 66.63 million. In 2015, the state raised the national poverty alleviation standard from the 2010 level of 2,300 yuan to 2,855 yuan following a dynamic adjustment mechanism. The standards set by some provincial regions were higher than the national standard.

Figure 5: Number of housing units starting construction in various dilapidated areas 2012-2015 (Unit: ten thousand units)

Housing conditions have been improved. In 2012, the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development issued the Measures for the Administration of Public Rental Housing.

In 2014, the public rental housing system and the low-cost rental housing system merged into one. From 2012 to 2015, the state allocated 770 billion yuan to support affordable housing projects, with 29.7 million housing units starting construction and with 24.28 million units basically completed. The central government provided a subsidy of 127.1 billion yuan for redevelopment of dilapidated buildings in rural areas nationwide, with 15.24 million housing units redeveloped, exceeding the planned target by more than 200 percent.

(3) Right to social security

The social security system has been further improved. The Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security issued regulations including the Provisions on the Administration of Declaration and Payment of Social Insurance Premiums and the Administrative Measure for Assessing the Work Capacity of Employees Sustaining Work-Related Injuries. In 2014, the old-age insurance system for urban residents and the new rural old-age insurance system were unified and implemented, creating a unified national basic old-age insurance system for both urban and rural residents. By the end of 2015, the number of people underwriting the old-age insurance had reached 858 million, including 505 million for the basic old-age insurance and 353 million for the urban employees' basic pension insurance, exceeding the planned target. 31 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government) established unified planning for employees' basic pension insurance system. Enterprise retirees' basic pensions increased by about 10 percent annually for 5 consecutive years and the per capita monthly basic pension increased to more than 2,240 yuan in 2015 from 1,362 yuan in 2010.

The basic medical insurance coverage has been extended to all citizens, with the rate of participation surpassing 95 percent. By the end of 2014, the number of people subscribing to new rural cooperative medical insurance policies reached 736 million, with the rate of participation staying at 99 percent, exceeding the planned target ahead of schedule. By the end of 2014, the number of people subscribing to medical insurance for urban employees, medical insurance for urban residents and new rural cooperative medical insurance policies had exceeded 1.33 billion, an increase of over 60 million compared with that of 2010, fulfilling the planned target ahead of schedule. Per capita funding for medical insurance increased to 515 yuan in 2015, from 164 yuan in 2010, with the government grant increasing to 380 yuan for each person in 2015 from 120 yuan in 2010, exceeding the planned target. 80 percent, 70 percent and 75 percent of patients' medical treatment costs covered by urban employees' medical insurance, urban residents' medical insurance and new rural cooperative medical insurance respectively will be reimbursed. The new rural cooperative medical insurance system has generally established unified planning for outpatients to cover over 50 percent of their expenses.

Coverage of unemployment insurance, work-related injury insurance and maternity insurance continued to expand. By the end of 2015, the number of subscribers to unemployment insurance had reached 173 million, exceeding the planned target ahead of schedule. 7 provinces realized unified planning for unemployment insurance at the provincial level while all or some of the cities in 21 provinces and the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps achieved unified planning at the city level. By the end of 2015, the number of subscribers to work-related injury insurance had reached 214 million. Unified planning for work-related injury insurance at the city level was basically in place while 10 provinces (autonomous regions, municipalities directly under the central government) issued measures for unified planning at the provincial level. By the end of 2015, the number of people subscribing to maternity insurance had reached 178 million, exceeding the planned target.

The level of social assistance has steadily improved. By the end of 2015, per capita monthly subsidies for subsistence in urban and rural areas had reached 451 yuan and 264.8 yuan respectively, an average annual increase of 10 percent. The per capita annual subsistence allowance for rural residents enjoying the "Five Guarantees" (food, clothing, medical care, housing and burial expenses) under collective care reached 6,026 yuan while the figure for those under individual care stood at 4,490 yuan, an increase of 48.4 percent and 49.3 percent respectively compared with 2012. 84.06 million people received medical assistance nationwide, with a total expenditure of 27.4 billion yuan. The one-stop settlement model was in place for medical assistance expenses in 92 percent of all areas around the country.

(4) Right to health

The conditions for health care and medical security have further improved. By the end of 2015, China had trained 173,000 general practitioners through job-transfer training, on-the-job training and standardized training, more than achieving its planned goal. The average life expectancy reached 76.34 years - higher than the planned standard.

Public health services are guaranteed in a more comprehensive way. A law on mental health has been adopted and enforced. Efforts have been made to carry out the Development Guidelines for the National Mental Health Work System (2008-2015) and strengthen the construction of a mental health service system. A nationwide program has been implemented to screen, diagnose, register and visit those who suffer from severe mental problems. By the end of 2015, 4.922 million mentally ill people had been registered around the country, accounting for 85.5 percent of all such patients. The per-capita spending for public health services was raised to 40 yuan by 2015 from 25 yuan in 2011. Urban and rural residents were entitled to such free services as establishing health records, and receiving health education and vaccination. The world's biggest direct Internet reporting system has been set up for infectious diseases and public health

emergencies. A total of 265 demonstration areas have been established for the comprehensive prevention and treatment of chronic diseases, managing over 86 million people suffering from high blood pressure and over 24 million diabetics. A border prevention and control system was established that integrates risk assessment, on-site quarantines, laboratory testing, information disclosure and joint prevention and control. By June 2014, a total of 259 ports of entry in operation had been evaluated and accepted, greatly raising the abilities for disease prevention and control and the handling of emergencies at ports of entry.

The prevention of endemic diseases has been enhanced. The goal of eliminating iodine deficiency diseases has been realized. In areas with a high incidence of endemic fluorosis caused by coal burning, preventive measures have been adopted with 99.4 percent of the coal-burning furnaces and stoves modified. China has basically completed projects to provide safe drinking water and improve water quality in areas afflicted by endemic fluorosis and arseniasis which are caused mainly by unsafe drinking water. An investigation into the regional distribution of endemic arseniasis has been completed, and measures aimed at modifying furnaces and stoves or improving water quality by reducing arsenic have been basically implemented. Comprehensive prevention and control measures have been taken including the relocation of residents from areas afflicted by Kaschin-Beck and Keshan diseases and the consumption of foodstuffs from non-endemic areas. By the end of 2014, over 90 percent of the villages afflicted by Kaschin-Beck disease had brought the disease under control, and 96.4 percent of the counties where Keshan disease remained an endemic had also brought it under control, achieving the planned goals in advance.

The safety of drinking water has been further ensured. By the end of 2015, China had expanded a monitoring network for the safety of drinking water, and extended its coverage to all urban districts and over 60 percent of townships. Between 2011 and 2015, as many as 298 million rural residents and 41.33 million rural teachers and students had access to safe drinking water, and meanwhile, efforts were made to make safe drinking water accessible to 5.66 million rural people in particularly difficult areas including ethnic Tibetan areas in the provinces of Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu and Yunnan. The proportion of the rural population with access to centralized water supply was raised from 58 percent in 2010 to 82 percent in 2015, with tap water available to 76 percent of rural areas. All the progress made exceeded the planned goals.

Food and drug safety measures have been enhanced. The China Food and Drug Administration was established in 2013. In 2015, the NPC Standing Committee amended the country's food safety law, and the departments concerned laid down a series of departmental regulations including the Provisions for the Administration of Food Business Licensing, the Provisions for the Administration of Quality and Safety Monitoring for the Sale of Edible Agricultural Products and the Administrative Procedures for Food Recalls.

The Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate promulgated the Explanations on a Certain Number of Issues Relating to the Application of Laws to Criminal Cases Harming Food Safety and the Provisions on a Certain Number of Issues Relating to the Application of Laws on Cases of Disputes over Food and Drugs. Nearly 5,000 criteria for various kinds of foodstuffs were reviewed and 683 state criteria for food safety were promulgated.

The NPC Standing Committee authorized the State Council to launch pilot schemes in certain regions aiming to establish a system of permit-holders for the sale of pharmaceuticals. The State Council also revised the Regulations for the Supervision and Administration of Medical Devices. The China Food and Drug Administration has reviewed and issued a series of regulations including the Provisions for the Supervision and Management of Medical Device Production, the Provisions for the Supervision and Management of Medical Device Operation, the Regulations on the Quality of Operation of Pharmaceutical Products and the Provisions for the Flight Check of Pharmaceutical Products and Medical Devices. An action plan was carried out to raise the national standards for drugs and medical devices, which led to the formulation of 4,368 criteria for pharmaceuticals and 562 criteria for medical devices. From 2011 to 2015, more than 720,000 cases in violation of drug administration provisions were handled. About 36,000 criminal cases involving pharmaceuticals were resolved.

Public sports facilities for national fitness have been improved. The National Fitness Program (2011-2015) has been carried out in full. The number of sports venues of various kinds exceeded 1.69 million, with a per-capita sports area reaching 1.57 square meters, which is bigger than the target size. By the end of 2014, national fitness centers had been built in over 50 percent of the country's cities and counties (districts); practical fitness equipment had been installed in over 50 percent of neighborhoods (townships), urban communities and rural administrative villages. Both goals were achieved ahead of schedule.

(5) Right to education

Figure 6: The Growth of Enrollment Rate at the Various Stages of Basic Education between 2012 and 2015

The Outline of the State Medium- and Long-term Program on Education Reform and Development (2010-2020) has been steadily implemented. In 2015, the NPC Standing Committee amended and promulgated the Education Law and the Higher Education Law. During the year, the net enrollment rate in primary schools was 99.88 percent, gross enrollment rate in junior high schools reached 104 percent, and 93 percent of the students enrolled eventually completed their nine-year compulsory education.

Pre-school education has been further developed. A 3-year action plan was implemented for the first and second stage pre-school education. Between 2012 and 2015, the central government appropriated 62.1 billion yuan for pre-school education development mainly in rural areas of central and western China to accelerate the construction of pre-school education networks in counties, townships and villages, and award and subsidize local governments in helping preschoolers, orphans and disabled children of poverty-stricken families enroll in kindergartens. In 2015, there were 223,700 kindergartens throughout the country serving 42.6483 million children. As a result, 75 percent of the children who would be starting school in three years were enrolled in kindergartens. The planned goal of having 65 percent of such children enrolled in kindergartens was achieved ahead of schedule.

An equal right to education for relocated children of migrant workers has been safeguarded. Between 2012 and 2015, the central government appropriated 34.6 billion yuan cumulatively to enable nearly 90 percent of relocated children of migrant workers in cities to obtain government financial support. For children of those migrant workers who meet the conditions of the local governments receiving them, tuition fees for public schools in cities they migrate to and additional charges for transient schooling were abolished. In 2015, there were 13.671 million children eligible for compulsory education who had relocated with their migrant worker parents to cities. 80 percent of them studied at public schools. Various local governments also actively arranged for these children to study at inclusive non-government funded schools through service purchase and other means. By the end of 2015, 29 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government) had begun to make their college entrance exams open to the children of migrant workers from other regions. Altogether, nearly 80,000 children of migrant workers took the college entrance exams in cities they had migrated to.

The conditions for running schools in poverty-stricken regions have improved. Between 2012 and 2015, the central government appropriated 102 billion yuan cumulatively to support schools deficient in compulsory education. In November 2014, the government departments concerned jointly issued a circular on unifying the standards of staffing in urban and rural primary and secondary schools, which made the standards of staffing for primary and secondary schools in rural counties and townships accord with those of their counterparts in cities, with a preferential treatment given to remote and poor regions. Between 2012 and 2015, the central government invested 14.04 billion yuan in constructing 244,000 dormitory rooms for rural teachers, which could accommodate 300,000 teachers. Between 2013 and 2015, the central government (as well as Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps) appropriated 4.392 billion yuan cumulatively for living subsidies for rural teachers in contiguous areas of extreme poverty, benefiting more than 1 million people.

The development of education in central and western regions has accelerated. The central government allocated 10 billion yuan to support the enhancement of basic capabilities for about 100 local colleges in 24 provinces and autonomous regions of central and western China (including the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps). Another 5.6 billion yuan was set aside to support the establishment of one local institution of higher learning in each of the 13 provinces and autonomous regions and the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps where there was not a single college affiliated to the Ministry of Education. Efforts were made to implement a collaborative plan to pair-up support for college enrollment in central and western regions. In this way, regions with rich education resources shifted part of their enrollment quota to central and western regions where the enrollment rate was low, and also to densely populated provinces. Between 2012 and 2015, a total of 755,000 students were enrolled into colleges through quota reallocation under the collaborative plan. The provincial gap in college enrollment has narrowed year on year.

The education conditions in senior high schools and vocational schools have improved steadily. Between 2012 and 2015, the central government appropriated 12 billion yuan as subsidies for standard senior high schools in central and western China and 1,542 schools in contiguous areas of extreme poverty to improve the conditions for running schools, benefiting more than 6 million students at school. The central and local governments have jointly allocated funds to establish state grants for standard senior high schools, which averaged 1,500 yuan for each recipient annually and increased to 2,000 yuan at the start of the spring term in 2015.

Between 2012 and 2013, the central government appropriated 1.4 billion yuan in special funds annually to support the building of 1,500 training bases for vocational education. During the 2012-2015 period, the National Development and Reform Commission arranged more than 17 billion yuan in special funds to support the enhancement of basic capabilities in 1,814 secondary vocational schools. The state also invested 2.3 billion yuan in carrying out a plan aimed at raising the quality of teachers in vocational colleges and schools. By the end of 2015, the state had arranged for more than 340,000 teachers in vocational colleges and schools to attend systematic training; succeeded in having 580 large and medium-sized enterprises participate in the training of teachers; and completed the construction of 300 sites providing specially-designed courses to train vocational teachers. Between 2012 and 2015, the central government appropriated 41.7 billion yuan as subsidies for the implementation of a tuition fee waiver program in secondary vocational schools, under which the tuition fees for all rural students, urban students who major in agriculture and those poverty-stricken students at full-time secondary vocational schools were abolished. State grant scholarships were also given to first and second-year students of full-time colleges majoring in agriculture and those not majoring in agriculture, but who come from poverty-stricken families. The annual subsidy for each

recipient was 1,500 yuan in 2013, which was raised to 2,000 yuan in 2015, covering nearly 40 percent of the students.

The financial support policies in general institutions of higher learning for students from poor families have been strengthened. Since July 2014, student loans offered by the state have been adjusted to a maximum of 8,000 yuan annually for each full-time undergraduate or college student and up to 12,000 yuan annually for each full-time graduate student. Since July 2015, all interest on loans for students has been paid through financial subsidies with a maximum term extended to 20 years. Since the autumn term of 2014, a new state grant policy for full-time graduate students has been implemented, with no less than 10,000 yuan for each doctor degree candidate annually and no less than 6,000 yuan for each master degree candidate.

(6) Cultural rights

Figure 7: The number of public cultural facilities in parts of China between 2012 and 2015

Public cultural facilities have been further improved. By the end of 2015, China had built 3,139 public libraries, 3,315 cultural centers, 40,976 cultural stations, 4,692 museums and 409 science and technology museums. Between 2012 and 2015, the central government invested 20.3 billion yuan cumulatively to support the free admission to public cultural facilities. By the end of 2015, the number of museums open to the public free of charge had reached 4,013. The central government has invested 9.223 billion yuan to make sure that radio and TV broadcasts basically cover all villages with no more than 20 households each and where electricity is available. As part of a cultural information resource sharing project, China has built 35,500 service centers and sub-centers in cities and townships and service stations at the grassroots level covering 700,000 villages and communities, which are able to share digital resources amounting to 532 TB, surpassing the planned goal. China has established 600,449 farmers' libraries, and sent more than 1 billion books and periodicals to rural areas. The country has also built 24,000 satellite digital farmers' libraries and 252 rural digital movie lines, and organized more than 50,000 movie projection teams. Satellite digital movies basically covered 640,000 administrative villages with over 9 million movie screenings purchased annually.

Figure 8: Internet construction between 2012 and 2015

Internet construction has provided more convenient conditions for citizens to enjoy cultural rights. At the end of 2015, 688 million people had access to the Internet, covering 50.3 percent of China's population, surpassing the planned goal of 45 percent. The fixed broadband users and households reached 210 million. The internet broadband ports reached 470 million, exceeding the planned goal of 370 million. Fiber optic Internet

connection covered 446 million households, surpassing the planned goal by more than 100 percent.

(7) Environmental rights

China has amended the Law on Environmental Protection, with special provisions on information transparency and public participation to guarantee the public's right to be informed, participate and supervise and provisions for improving the public interest litigation system to provide related social groups with the right to launch public interest litigations and strengthen the system of accountability.

Heavy metal pollution has effectively been brought under control. Between 2010 and 2015, the central government appropriated 17.2 billion yuan to support control over heavy metal pollution. In 2014, the total pollutant discharge of 5 major heavy metals including lead, mercury, cadmium, chromium and the metalloid element - arsenic, decreased by 20 percent as compared with that in 2007. The number of heavy metal pollution incidents decreased from more than 10 annually on average between 2010 and 2011 to an annual average of less than 3 between 2012 and 2015.

The capability for water pollution treatment has increased. In April 2015, the State Council announced "action plan for water pollution prevention and control". The percentage of inferior class V surface water decreased from 35.7 percent in 2001 to 8.8 percent in 2015. During the 2011-2015 period, sewage treatment capacity increased by an additional 48 million tons per day. In 2015, 97.1 percent of the drinking water from centralized supply sources in 338 cities at the prefecture level and above met the quality standard.

Efforts for air quality control have been boosted. In August 2015, China amended the law on air pollution prevention and control, made improving atmospheric quality as its goal, emphasized government responsibilities and improved measures targeted towards controlling air pollution. Between 2011 and 2015, the emissions of 4 major pollutants including chemical oxygen demand, ammonia nitrogen, sulfur dioxide and nitric oxide decreased 12.9 percent, 13.0 percent, 18.0 percent and 18.6 percent respectively. In September 2013, the State Council distributed the Action Plan on Air Pollution Prevention and Control, in which it clarified comprehensive treatment measures composed of 10 articles and 35 items, focusing on fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and inhalable particles (PM10). In 2015, all cities at the prefecture level and above adopted new environmental and air quality standards. China built the largest air quality monitoring network among all developing countries with 338 cities at the prefecture level and above across the country having the capability of monitoring 6 indices including PM2.5. Efforts were made to strengthen the standardization of energy conservation and low carbon. During the 2011-2015 period, the government implemented a project involving the formation and

improvement of 100 important energy-saving standards and approved the release of 205 energy-saving state criteria. In 2015, the General Office of the State Council issued the guidelines on strengthening the standardization of energy conservation. The government approved the emissions standards for 10 industries that produce greenhouse gases including steel, iron and cement and issued the phase 5 national standards for automobile fuel.

Ecosystem construction has been further pushed forward. With the establishment of the State Committee on Biodiversity Protection, the Ministry of Environmental Protection issued China's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2011-2030), and started China's Action for United Nations Decade on Biodiversity. Between 2011 and 2015, China invested 89.8 billion yuan in projects for the conservation of natural forest resources, and put 1.08 million square kilometers of natural forests under effective protection. Efforts were made to continually push forward the construction of key forest shelterbelts in northeast, north and northwest China, the control over the sources of sandstorms affecting Beijing and Tianjin, the comprehensive treatment of stony desertification in karst areas, the key ecological projects of pastureland rehabilitation and the launch of a new round of projects to return farmland back to forestry and pastureland. Between 2011 and 2015, China had already built a localized biodiversity protection network with nature reserves acting as the backbone. The area of established nature reserves reached 1.47 million square kilometers, accounting for 14.84 percent of the country's total land area. Over 90 percent of the country's land ecosystems, 89 percent of wildlife species under state protection and 86 percent of wild plant species under state protection were conserved in nature reserves. By the end of 2015, China's forest coverage reached 21.66 percent. More than 260,000 square kilometers of land suffering from soil erosion had been treated, which was more than the projected figure. By the end of 2014, the national greenery coverage in urban areas was 40.22 percent, surpassing the planned goal ahead of schedule.

Efforts were made to continually strengthen the enforcement of environmental laws and an accountability system. To implement and put into effect the newly amended Law on Environmental Protection and a circular issued by the General Office of the State Council on strengthening environmental protection supervision, environment monitoring bodies across the country actively innovated with new methods and modes of supervision and law enforcement, and successively carried out targeted actions and inspections on environmental protection and cracked down severely on environmental law violations and environmental pollution crimes, and effectively safeguarded the environmental rights of the public. A compensation system for the damage to the ecosystem has been further improved.

III. Civil and Political Rights

Between 2012 and 2015, the construction of socialist political democracy and the rule of law have been pushed forward in a comprehensive way, citizens' civil and political rights have been effectively protected, and the people have been guaranteed and supported to act as masters of their own country.

(1) Rights of the person

The amended Criminal Procedure Law adopted in March 2012 clearly stipulated the respect and protection of human rights, and improved the evidence collecting system, compulsory measures, defense system, criminal investigation, trial procedures and enforcement procedures.

The personal rights of suspects in lawsuits are guaranteed. The Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate and the Ministry of Public Security promulgated regulations in greater detail on the applicable conditions, approval procedures and informing procedures for the adoption of such compulsory measures as arrest, release on bail pending trial, and residential surveillance. Between 2012 and 2015, the procuratorates throughout the country disapproved the arrest of 816,379 people, among whom 340,491 were not arrested on the grounds that they were posing no danger to society, 63,809 were not arrested on the grounds that their behavior constituted no crimes, and 379,290 were not arrested on the grounds of unclear facts and insufficient evidence. The public security organs strictly followed rules that required notifying the family members of criminal suspects within 24 hours of detentions or arrests. During the first interrogation or while taking compulsory measures, the security personnel should inform the suspects of their right to retain defense lawyers, or to apply for legal aid. An internet appointment platform has been established to publicize phone numbers for appointments and provide convenience for lawyers to meet suspects. Great efforts were made to push forward the construction of legal aid centers within detention houses to make sure that detainees and their families obtain timely legal aid. During a criminal investigation, defense lawyers can inquire about the accusations and major established facts implicating the suspects in the crimes and the situation on compulsory measures taken by the investigation organs.

The supervision and examination against extortion of confession by torture and other illegal acts have been strengthened. Between 2012 and 2015, procuratorial organs made 869,775 remedial proposals on illegal acts during criminal investigations including abusing compulsory measures, collecting evidence through illegal means and extorting confessions by torture. In 2015, China handled 208 cases against 243 procurators for their violation of laws and disciplines. Since 2012, the country's procuratorial organs have continued to take stern actions to investigate and deal with cases concerning staffers of state functionaries who violated citizens' personal rights by taking advantage of their functions and powers.

The regulations on comprehensive collection and examination of evidence have been strictly implemented. Public security organs put all evidence collected proving guilt or innocence, felony or misdemeanor on file, with all records then transferred to examine the reliability, legitimacy and probative value of evidence. The people's procuratorates placed on record all the proposals made by defense lawyers about cases of suspects constituting no crimes, causing no harm to society or excluding evidence collected through illegal means. Before the end of criminal investigations, if defense lawyers make demands, public security organs are required to listen to their views, verify facts according to specific circumstances and place them on record. If defense lawyers submit opinions in written form, the document should be attached to the other records. The public security organs have standardized the use and management of the venues of law enforcement and case investigation. Case investigation areas are separated physically from other areas to ensure that criminal suspects have food and drinks and necessary time for rest in these venues. After being taken into public security organs, criminal suspects should be taken directly to case investigation areas where video surveillance systems should be installed. By the end of 2015, public security organs at various locations had completed the standardized renovation of the venues of law enforcement and case investigation.

The system of community-based correction has been further improved. The amended Criminal Procedure Law adopted in 2012 stipulated that those criminals sentenced to public surveillance, probationary suspension, parole and serving terms outside of jail temporarily, should undergo community-based correction according to law, and be subject to the administration of community correctional institutions. According to the provisions of the Criminal Law and the Criminal Procedure Law, the Ministry of Justice worked with other related departments in jointly laying down Measures for the Implementation of Community Correction, and made comprehensive stipulations on the delivery, execution and legal supervision of community correction. Efforts were made to strengthen education and management and effectively raise the quality of community correction. To help those serving sentences adapt to society, the government formulated, improved and fulfilled earnestly the assistance policy, and coordinated with others to find solutions to the problems concerning the employment, schooling, subsistence allowances, provisional aid and social security, which has helped create conditions for those serving sentences to feel reassured in receiving community correction and assimilate back into society. By the end of 2015, China had established 1,339 community-based correction centers at the county (district) level, which received cumulatively 2.702 million people serving sentences, and released cumulatively 2.004 million such people. There were 698,000 people serving sentences on the roster to receive community correction, and the rate of recidivism for people receiving community correction has remained at a relatively low level of 0.2 percent.

In December 2012, the NPC Standing Committee adopted a decision to abolish laws and regulations on reeducation through labor.

In August 2015, the NPC Standing Committee decided to grant amnesty to four categories of prisoners. By the end of 2015, official pardons had been given to 31,527 prisoners according to law.

(2) Rights of detainees

Supervision over detention has been strengthened. For those detainees who are sick or injured or in a situation eligible for release on bail or residential surveillance and unsuitable for continued detention according to the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Law, public security organs will change compulsory measures according to law. Between 2012 and 2015, procuratorial institutions across the country proposed release or changing compulsory measures for 83,341 people who were involved in cases unnecessary for detention, and case-handling organs accepted such proposals for 77,591 detainees, with the adoption rate standing at 93.1 percent. Supervision over the term of criminal detention was intensified in a comprehensive way. Between 2012 and 2015, 1,974 detainees were found to be in extended custody, calls for correction were then made about 1,967 detainees, and the situations of 1,939 detainees have been corrected so far. Efforts were made to guarantee the legal rights of detainees. In 2013, the Ministry of Public Security organized the amending of Construction Standards for Detention Houses that call for the all-round adoption of the goal of one bed for one inmate in newly built, renovated and expanded detention houses. The Ministry of Public Security worked together with the National Health and Family Planning Commission to specialize and socialize medical care for inmates in venues under public security supervision and establish medical records for detainees, with professional medical institutions in charge of daily medical and health care services. The systems of physical examination for detainees when they are taken into custody, regular body surface examinations for detainees and the notification of the rights and obligations of the detainees and emergency alarming procedures were strictly implemented. The system of interrogation and remand of criminal suspects was also strictly carried out. The systems of assessing detainees' security risk, psychological intervention and investigation, and handling of their complaints were continually improved. The same was so for the system and working mechanism for inviting special supervisors to inspect the detention houses. Various regulations were formulated concerning detainees' rights of the person and belongings, and their litigation rights in detention houses of public security organs. Through the working mechanism and system regarding the establishment of procurator mailboxes, detainees' requests to see resident procurators, meetings between resident procurators and detainees in detention houses and prisons, people's procuratorates were able to find out whether there were violations of the rights of detainees, such as physical punishment, torture, insult and retaliation, and propose remedies and supervise the

prisons and detention houses for correction. Between 2012 and 2015, procuratorial organs across China proposed to supervisory organs 7,770 remedies for practices that had been conducted on detainees, including physical punishment, torture, the illegal use of instruments and confinement. All of the practices were corrected. In March 2015, Regulations on the Handling of Cases Involving the Death of Detainees in Prisons were enforced to provide for concrete steps for reporting, investigating and handling, inspecting and establishing accountability.

(3) Right to a fair trial

The system of excluding illegally obtained evidence has been further improved. In 2013, the Supreme People's Procuratorate issued Proposals for Investigation and Supervision Departments to Investigate and Verify Illegal Behaviors during Criminal Investigations (for trial implementation), and further improved the working mechanism for supervising illegal behaviors during criminal investigations. The Supreme People's Court's judicial interpretation on the application of the Criminal Procedure Law also provided for specific rules on the scope of witnesses appearing in court; the scope of appraisers appearing in court; the protection of witnesses, and subsidies for providing testimonies. In a special chapter devoted to eliminating illegal evidence, it clearly stipulated the procedures to apply for excluding illegal evidence and examine and investigate the legitimacy of evidence collection. In 2013, the Supreme People's Court promulgated Regulations on Establishing a Sound Working Mechanism to Guard against Unjust, False or Erroneous Charges in Criminal Cases. For cases having insufficient evidence, defendants should be found not guilty. It provided for eliminating all confessions extorted by torture or other illegal methods, not collected through interrogation in designated venues of case investigation, or confessions collected without audio-visual recordings of the whole interrogation process and those that could not exclude the possibility of being collected through illegal means. Between 2012 and 2015, the people's courts at various levels found 3,369 suspects not guilty.

The right to defense by suspects and defendants was safeguarded. In 2013, the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the Ministry of Public Security and the Ministry of Justice jointly issued Regulations on Legal Aid for Criminal Proceedings. Criminal suspects and defendants who could not afford to retain defenders may apply for legal aid. In particular cases, the public security organs, people's procuratorates and people's courts should notify legal aid agencies to designate lawyers for criminal suspects and defendants who do not authorize defenders.

The right of lawyers to practice law has been safeguarded. In 2015, the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the Ministry of Public Security, the Ministry of State Security and the Ministry of Justice jointly issued the Provisions on Protecting Lawyers' Practicing Rights in Accordance with the Law, further detailing the

rights of lawyers to know, apply, appeal, meet, review case files, collect evidence, question, cross-examine, debate and make defense, etc. Measures were put in place to make it more convenient for lawyers to participate in litigations, and improve the mechanisms for relief and accountability aimed at protecting the rights of lawyers in practicing law. It was clearly stipulated that related institutions should in a timely manner stop, and handle in accordance with the law, any insults, defamations, retaliations, and personal injuries received by lawyers while practicing law and offer protection if necessary.

A system of simultaneous audio and video recording has been put in place. Between 2012 and 2015, 3,512 people's courts nationwide were provided with full access to the internet and relevant data, and opened various services. More than 18,000 tribunals were equipped with the necessary technology to enable them to record each and every serious case. 2,160 long-distance inquiry systems were set up, making possible long-distance inquiries between upper and lower-level courts and between a court and a detention station. Procuratorial organs made it clear that people who handle functionary crimes would be held responsible for selectively practicing audio/video recording, or for deliberately shutting down the audio/video recording system in an attempt to prevent oversight. Audio and video recording equipment has been installed inside all interrogation rooms in case-handling areas of public security organs and detention houses, and the practice of audio and video recording in the interrogation of suspects has been started nationwide in accordance with the law.

Tighter checks have been placed on the application of the death penalty. In August 2015, nine crimes were removed from the list of crimes subject to the death penalty in the Amendment (IX) to the Criminal Law, and therefore the number of crimes subject to the death penalty decreased from the previous 55 to 46. In 2012, the Supreme People's Procuratorate established the Oversight Office on the Review of the Death Penalty, in an effort to strengthen legal supervision procedures on the review of the death penalty. Since 2012, the Supreme People's Court has issued 56 exemplary cases of guiding importance, with 3 of them involving criminal acts where the death penalty was applicable. Second trials of death penalty cases have all been conducted in open courts. More importance is given to listening to the opinions of defense lawyers in the course of reviewing death penalty cases. When a higher people's court reviews a death penalty, for which the defendant didn't ask for a defense lawyer, it is required to ask legal aid agencies to designate a lawyer for defense service.

On January 1st, 2014, courts nationwide formally launched work on the standardization on sentencing. On May 1, 2015, people's courts started implementing the mechanism of case registration.

The Law of Civil Procedure and the Law of Administrative Procedure have been revised. The procedure of cases involving small sums and the procedure of cases involving public interest have been introduced. The evidence system, the system of publicizing judgment documents and the supervision procedure on trials have been improved. Additions were made concerning the conversion of the procedure of cases involving small sums to common procedures and the principle of sharing responsibility in evidence collection. A system is in place, which requires the head of an administrative organ that is being sued to appear and respond in court. The trial process and evidence regulation of cases of administrative procedures have been improved further, and individuals and organizations that have been harmed by illegal administrative acts are provided with a strengthened guarantee of their right to secure judicial aid.

A state compensation system has been effectively implemented. Between 2012 and 2015, the people's courts at various levels concluded 12,300 state compensation cases. In 2015, the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate jointly promulgated the Interpretations on Certain Issues Relating to Laws Applicable to Criminal Compensation Cases, which specified scenarios where criminal liability shall cease to be looked into. This further solves the problem of citizens being unable to apply for state compensation due to the procrastination and inconclusiveness of criminal cases.

(4) Freedom of religious belief

Freedom of religious belief is fully guaranteed. The freedom of religious belief of citizens is protected according to the Constitution and the law. Citizens have the liberty to believe or not to believe in religions. In either case, their legitimate rights are equally protected. Normal religious needs of citizens who have religious beliefs are guaranteed according to the law and their customs are respected.

Normal religious activities are protected by law. The State Administration for Religious Affairs promulgated the Measures for Confirming the Qualifications and Determining the Professional Titles of Teachers of Religious Schools (for trial implementation) and the Measures on the Granting of Degrees by Religious Schools (for trial implementation), so as to further protect the legitimate rights and interests of teachers and students of religious schools and regulate the schools' management. Between 2012 and 2015, the administration canceled or adjusted 12 items subject for administrative approval in the field of religious affairs.

The work on the protection of pilgrimage activities of Muslims has constantly improved. The State Council established the mechanism of the inter-ministerial joint meeting on the work of pilgrimage made by believers in Islam. The facilitation of pilgrims' accommodation, food and drinks, and transport has been further elevated, and the work

on their physical examination and vaccination, medical service, epidemic prevention and pilgrimage security when they stay abroad has been improved continuously.

The construction of religious sites and colleges is supported. Between 2011 and 2015, a total of 200 million yuan was invested in the renovation and expansion projects of religious places in Tibet. By the end of 2015, all of the 87 temples scattered in 17 townships of 5 counties, that were damaged by the Yushu earthquake and placed on the list of religious places slated for reconstruction, had been rebuilt. Breakthroughs were made in the construction of the Tibet College of Buddhism. The college has so far trained nearly 2,000 monks and nuns, established the department of nuns, and opened several branch schools. The Gansu and Qinghai Buddhist seminaries in the Tibetan Language Family as well as the new campus of the Sichuan Tibetan-language Buddhist Seminary are to be completed and will come into operation soon. From 2012 to 2015, the State set aside a total of nearly 15 million yuan to support and assist the Islamic circle in repairing and preserving major mosques and religious sites that possess value for protection as cultural relics. The revamping and expansion project of the China Islamic Seminary has been completed. In 2012, the State invested 513 million yuan in the construction of new buildings of the Buddhist Academy of China.

Full coverage of the social security system has been realized for religious workers. By the end of 2013, participation on a voluntary basis in medical insurance among religious workers had reached 96.5 percent, participation in old age pension schemes had reached 89.62 percent, and religious workers who qualified for subsistence allowance and the Five Guarantees (food, clothing, medical care, housing and burial expenses) had all been provided for by the program.

The Chinese religious circle has formed friendly relations and conducted exchange activities with religious organizations from more than 80 countries.

(5) Right to be informed

The disclosure of government information has been further promoted. The State Council implemented the Provisions on the Disclosure of Government Information. Emphasis was put on the disclosure of information relating to administrative examination and approval, financial budgets and final accounts, government-subsidized housing, food and drug safety, land requisition and resettlement as well as information in other fields. "Beautiful China - Action for Barrier-Free Access to China Government Service" was launched in 2013, under which 126 government service websites were revamped for barrier-free access. The mechanism on government working in a transparent way has been fully pushed forward. The scope of service and responsibility of government personnel are publicized and information relating to the handling of matters is made known according to law.

The Rules on the Disclosure of Government Information of the National Audit Office has been revised and improved. In 2015, the National Audit Office launched its government affairs account on WeChat, the China Audit newspaper digital APP, and the China Audit Digital Publication Website. Between 2012 and 2015, the National Audit Office issued 124 notices on the auditing results, held 50 news conferences, accepted more than 220 media interviews, and conducted more than 30 live online press briefings and online interviews.

Between 2012 and 2015, the State Council Information Office organized 322 news conferences on the major meetings, major decisions and major work of the CPC and the State. The CPC Central Committee, the State Council and local CPC committees and governments organized more than 9,300 news conferences and news briefings.

Judicial openness has been continuously deepened. The Supreme People's Court established three major platforms for the disclosure of court proceedings, judgment documents and enforcement information. By the end of 2015, 14.48 million judgment documents and 34.347 million pieces of information concerning people subjected to enforcement, were released. In 2015, the China Law Court Live Broadcast Website offered live video streaming of 3,795 court hearings. By the end of 2015, the system for the disclosure of information of cases with the people's procuratorates had released 2.54 million pieces of information concerning case procedures, 1.02 million pieces of information concerning major cases, and 760,000 effective legal documents. The Ministry of Public Security promulgated regulations, demanding the release to the general public and specially targeted people of law-enforcement evidence, progress of procedures, results and other information. Public security organs at various levels have made it easier for the public to handle issues, search and supervise by opening online public security bureaus, online police stations, micro-blogs and by other means.

The system for transparency of enterprise and village affairs has been further implemented. By September 2015, among all enterprises and public institutions with trade unions, 4.931 million had established a separate system of making enterprise affairs public, and 4.106 million non-public sector enterprises had established a separate system of making enterprise affairs public, accounting for 93 percent of the total, far exceeding the targeted goal of 80 percent. More than 90 percent of the counties (cities and districts) nationwide have compiled a unified catalogue of village affairs for disclosure, 91 percent of the villages have put in place the system of disclosure of village affairs, and 92 percent of villages have set up committees for supervision of village affairs or other forms of bodies in overseeing village affairs.

(6) Right to participate

In accordance with the relevant stipulations of the Election Law amended in 2010, during elections of deputies to the people's congresses at various levels from 2011 to 2013, the principle began to be executed formally and fully that deputies are elected in the same proportion to the populations of urban and rural areas, demonstrating the equality among all people, regions and ethnic groups.

The channels through which the public get involved in legislation have been widened. In 2015, the Legislation Law was revised, broadening the channels for citizens to participate in legislation in an orderly way, conducting legislation consultation, and improving the systems of legislative debate, hearing and openly soliciting opinions on draft laws. From March 2013 to December 2015, 140,753 people raised more than 340,000 opinions on relevant draft laws. Each time the deadline for soliciting opinions is over, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress will sort out and summarize the opinions on draft laws and make prompt feedback to society on opinions about important draft laws. From 2012 to 2015, through the Chinese Government Legal Information Website, 64 laws and administrative regulations were offered up for public comment with more than 283,000 opinions collected, and 465 departmental rules opened for public comments with more than 89,000 opinions gathered. In March 2016, based on opinions collected from all sides, the National People's Congress deliberated on and adopted the Charity Law, protecting the legitimate interests of participants in charitable activities.

The right of members of non-Communist parties and personages without party affiliation to make comments, raise proposals and deliver reports on social conditions and public opinions at various meetings of the CPPCC has been respected and guaranteed. From 2012 to 2015, various non-Communist parties and the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce put forth a total of 1,461 proposals and 11,998 reports on social conditions and public opinions.

Mass organizations and social groups take an active part in public management. Trade unions involved themselves in the study of the revising of the Regulations on Supervision of Labor Security. Since 2012, trade unions at all levels have performed their duty in supervising the implementation of labor laws. By 2015, trade unions throughout the country had established up to 960,000 labor law supervision organizations, with a total of nearly 2.13 million supervisors. The Communist Youth League of China, the All-China Women's Federation and other mass organizations conveyed their requests through multiple channels.

The system of trade union organizations and workers' congresses has constantly improved. The All-China Federation of Trade Unions issued the Opinions on Strengthening the Construction of Grassroots Trade Unions under New Situations and the Plan of Work on the Construction of Grassroots Organizations (2014-2018), to expand the effective coverage of trade unions. By the end of September 2015, about 13

million workers who moved from rural to urban areas for employment had been newly adopted as members of trade unions. Relevant departments have formulated Measures of Implementation on Workers' Congresses in State-owned Cultural Units, Enterprises and Institutions (Temporary). By the end of September 2015, among all the enterprises and public institutions with trade unions throughout the country, 5.059 million had established a separate system of workers' congresses, regional (professional) workers' congresses had covered 1.873 million enterprises, and 4.207 million non-public sector enterprises had established a separate system of workers' congresses, accounting for 94.6 percent, exceeding the projected target of 80 percent.

The system of people's self-governance at grassroots level has been further improved. The Ministry of Civil Affairs has formulated the Regulations and Procedures on the Election of Village Committees, and more than 98 percent of village committees are directly elected according to law. The systems of conferences of villagers (residents), conferences of deputies of villagers (residents), consultative conferences of villagers (residents), etc, have been implemented, guaranteeing the participation of the masses in the management and decision making of public affairs at grassroots level. Relevant departments have worked out the Opinions on the Enhancement of Consultation between Urban and Rural Communities, refining the system of democratic consultation at grassroots level.

Social groups have become an important channel through which the masses of people take part in social management and public service. Their structures have been continuously optimized and their quality has been steadily improved. By the end of 2015, the number of social groups registered nationwide according to law had reached about 660,000, an increase of 32.3 percent over the corresponding period of 2012. Social groups of various types nationwide had generated incomes of around 260 billion yuan, providing about 8.5 million people of various kinds with employment, and accepted donations of approximately 90 billion yuan. Direct registration for professional associations of such types as commerce, science and technology, charity, urban and rural community service has been explored and practiced. The delinking between chambers of commerce and administrative organs has been activated. The strengths and role that social groups in the philanthropic field have in poverty and disaster relief and dealing with various emergencies have been fully utilized. Privately-run schools, hospitals and homes for the aged and other social service facilities, that are not for profit, have been actively nurtured and developed, to meet the increasing demands of the people for diversified public services. Government has been encouraged to transfer its functions to and purchase services from social groups. Consultation between social groups, especially grassroots social groups in urban and rural areas, has been explored.

(7) Right to be heard

The construction of consultative democracy has been pushed forward. In 2013, the CPPCC initiated Bi-weekly Consultative Forums, which were held about 20 times a year, focusing on specific topics, taking advantage of the inclusiveness of the National Committee, relying on special committees and taking the form of discussion meetings. The CPPCC held consultations on specific issues, consultations with representatives of specific sectors of society, consultations with Party and government departments and consultations on the handling of proposals.

The internet information platform has enriched channels through which citizens can have their voices heard. By the end of 2015, China's online population had reached 688 million and the internet penetration rate had reached 50.3 percent. Netizens make remarks and comments through online news commentaries, forums, blogs, micro-blogs, WeChat accounts and other internet platforms, putting forward criticisms and suggestions on the work of the government at various levels and exercise supervision over the conducts of civil servants.

The channels for people to make complaints in the form of letters and visits have been continuously broadened. Letters and visits and other traditional channels for citizens to express opinions have been optimized. Efforts have been made to make sure that complaints can reach officials through their letter boxes and short messages or through video links. A system has been put in place to collect suggestions from the public. The operational mechanism of the nationwide complaint system has been improved, with the process of complaints being received and handled open to the public and subject to citizens' comments and social supervision. Interconnection and inter-working have been realized in all provinces of China and 30 ministries and ministerial-level commissions, and online complaint making has gradually become the main channel for citizens to make demands.

The rights of workers in enterprises and public institutions to be heard are guaranteed. Relevant departments jointly produced the Regulations on Democratic Management of Enterprises, under which the formulation and revision of labor rules and regulations of enterprises, major decisions about the operation and management of enterprises, and important matters concerning the immediate interests of workers must be submitted to workers' congresses for deliberation. During the adjournment of workers' congresses, workers' demands are promptly conveyed through joint meetings of leaders of workers' delegations, workers' democratic management committees, talks between labor and capital and other channels.

The State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television has implemented the Measures for the Administration of Press Cards and the Measures for the Administration of Correspondent Bureaus of Newspapers and Periodicals, to protect

the legitimate rights of news media and their branches and reporters to interview and supervise by public opinion.

(8) Right to oversee

The NPC and its Standing Committee have continuously strengthened supervision. In 2015, the Legislation Law was revised, the system of filing and examining laws, regulations and regulatory documents was strengthened, and clear guidelines were set out on voluntary examination feedback to applicants for examinations and openness to society. From 2012 to 2015, the NPC Standing Committee held 12 special consultations, carried out 15 special investigations and surveys, and conducted inspections on the enforcement of 17 laws. In 2014, the General Office of the NPC Standing Committee formulated A Number of Opinions on the Improvement of the Work of Special Consultations, listing reports and bills that involve reform of a high rate of difficulty, reflect numerous problems, draw high degrees of public attention, and concern the immediate interests of the general public as topics of special consultation, and organically combining the three forms of supervision, law-enforcement inspection, report hearing and special consultation. In 2015, the NPC Standing Committee carried out inspections on the enforcement of 6 laws including the Law on Vocational Education, the Law on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Consumers and the Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Water Pollution.

The CPPCC actively explored ways to improve the system of democratic supervision. In 2015, it launched several supervisory investigations and surveys especially concerning the treatment of pollution of the Tengger Desert, reform of the system of investment examination and approval and other significant matters, putting forth criticisms and suggestions in relation to the problems that had emerged in the execution of the decisions.

Supervision over regulations and regulatory documents has been strengthened. By the end of 2015, relevant departments had by official order nullified 35 rules and regulations, comprehensively amended 24, and partially amended 182. Between June 2012 and June 2014, they dealt with 81 rules and regulations on administrative authorization, administrative compulsion and administrative punishment that had been illegally put in place. They especially conducted concentrated examinations on and supervised and urged amendments to those departmental rules and regulations related to items of administrative examination and approval that had been canceled or delegated by the State Council.

The systems of administrative accountability, administrative review and administrative proceedings have been further improved. From 2012 to 2014, administrative review organs at various levels accepted about 340,000 applications for administrative

reconsideration and concluded 320,000 cases, or 94 percent of the total. The Supreme People's Court promulgated the Guiding Opinions on People's Courts Exercising Trans-Administrative Regional and Centralized Jurisdiction of Administrative Cases, promoting relevant institutional reforms. By the end of 2015, people's courts that transcend administrative divisions, including the No. 4 Intermediate People's Court of Beijing and the No. 3 Intermediate People's Court of Shanghai, had been put in place.

Social supervision has been strengthened. The Supreme People's Procuratorate and the Ministry of Justice printed and distributed the Plan of Reform on the Enhancement of the Mechanism of People's Supervisors. By the end of 2015, more than 15,000 people's supervisors had been recruited and 3,786 special procurators had been appointed. People's supervisors oversaw 7,974 cases of functionary crimes which procuratorial organs either "planned to dismiss" or "planned not to proceed with charges." People's supervisors raised opinions of disagreement to the planned decisions of procuratorial organs over 212 cases, put forth 992 suggestions for the correction of some scenarios that occurred in the course of procuratorial organs handling functionary crimes, and made 156 suggestions on procuratorial work and the construction of the procuratorial team. The supervisory role of the internet has been fully utilized. In recent years, the discipline inspection and supervision organs of the CPC Central Committee, the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate and others have opened offence-reporting websites and a large number of problems that were raised on the internet have been resolved, which played an important role in preventing and penalizing embezzlement and corruption.

IV. Rights of Ethnic Minorities, Women, Children, the Elderly and People with Disabilities

From 2012 to 2015, China has taken measures to effectively protect the rights and interests of ethnic minorities, women, children, the elderly and people with disabilities, and basically achieved the planned goals.

(1) Rights of ethnic minorities

The right of ethnic minorities to participate on an equal footing in the management of state and social affairs has been protected in accordance with the law. All 55 ethnic-minority groups in China have representatives in the National People's Congress. All the ethnic-minority groups with a population of more than one million have members on the NPC Standing Committee. In each of the 155 ethnic autonomous areas, among the chairpersons and vice-chairpersons of the standing committee of the people's congresses there was one or more citizens of the ethnic group or groups exercising regional autonomy in the area concerned, and the head of any autonomous region, autonomous prefecture or autonomous county (banner) has to be a citizen of the ethnic

group exercising regional autonomy in the area concerned. The proportion of ethnic minority civil servants in the national total has surpassed that of the ethnic minority population in the national total.

Cultivation of ethnic minority talents has steadily progressed. Since 2012, relevant state organs have selected more than 2,100 cadres from Western China and other ethnic regions and dispatched them to organs of the CPC Central Committee and the state as well as to regions with a comparatively prosperous economy where they assume a temporary post for personal training and development. The state carried out "Light of the West", "The Special Cultivation Plan for Leading Professionals of Science and Technology in Ethnic Minority Regions" and other major talent development policies and projects, training more than 3,000 technological professionals for Tibet, Xinjiang and other western regions. Medical undergraduate students expected to provide general practices in targeted ethnic minority regions are educated free of charge, with the government offering a subsidy at a standard rate of 6,000 yuan per student per annum (for 5-year undergraduate programs). Since 2013, the state has launched training projects in ethnic areas, including training of rural health workers in major practices, training of leading doctors in county-level hospitals and training of general practitioners in job transfers.

The right of ethnic minority groups to develop their economy has been guaranteed. Between 2012 and 2015, the central government arranged an ethnic minority development fund of 14.824 billion yuan, in exclusive support of the actions to enrich border areas and their residents, efforts to develop ethnic minorities with a relatively small population, efforts to promote ethnic minority style villages and stockade villages, and efforts to preserve and develop ethnic minorities' traditional handicraft. The state appropriated 5.8 billion yuan from the central budget to help the construction of infrastructure, improvement of production and living conditions of the general population and the development of social undertakings in border regions and areas inhabited by people of ethnic minorities with a comparatively small population. The number of poverty-stricken people in the 5 autonomous regions of Inner Mongolia, Guangxi, Tibet, Ningxia and Xinjiang and the 3 provinces of Guizhou, Yunnan and Qinghai plummeted from 31.21 million in 2012 to 18.13 million in 2015. In the same period, the GDP of the eight ethnic minority regions increased from 5850.5 billion yuan to 7473.6 billion yuan, and the per capita disposable income of permanent residents in cities and towns soared from 20,542 yuan to 26,901 yuan.

The development of education among ethnic minorities has gained speed. Boarding school students from ethnic groups with a relatively small population who receive compulsory education in rural areas are provided with a living allowance at a standard rate of 250 yuan per person per annum. The policy of free board, lodging and tuition is applied to children of farmers and herdsman in the Tibet Autonomous Region, and the

standard of expenses has steadily increased with the current standard being 3,000 yuan per person per annum. Every year, a separate compulsory education aid of 20 million yuan is set aside for the special purpose of subsidizing the living allowances of poverty-stricken students in boarding schools in the Tibet Autonomous Region. The government launched the standard high school construction project in ethnic minority regions with a weak educational infrastructure, with 7 billion yuan appropriated from the central budget from 2012 to 2015 in support of the construction of 318 standard high schools in ethnic minority regions. The state continues to implement the preferential policy in favor of ethnic minority students in national entrance exams. From 2012 to 2015, institutions of higher-learning directly under the State Ethnic Affairs Commission planned a total enrollment of over 124,000 undergraduate students, including more than 46,000 from the eight ethnic minority regions. Institutions of higher-learning affiliated with other central departments and local institutions of higher-learning planned a total enrollment of 185,000 ethnic minority students in preparatory classes. Between 2012 and 2015, projects for the cultivation of high-level talents from ethnic minority groups recruited and trained a total of 16,000 post-graduate students and 4,000 PHD students.

Bilingual education has made steady headway. In 2015, the schools that offered bilingual education, ranging from preschools to standard high schools, numbered more than 12,000 with 225,400 bilingual teachers and 3.4912 million students. Every year, more than 3,500 types of secondary and primary school textbooks in ethnic minority characters were published with more than 100 million copies printed.

Teaching conditions in ethnic minority regions have been further improved. From 2012 to 2015, the central government allocated 1.025 billion yuan in support of the middle and western China projects and kindergarten teacher projects under the National Cultivation Plan in 5 ethnic autonomous regions, providing training to more than 870,000 teachers of secondary and primary schools and kindergartens. Normal universities directly under the Ministry of Education offer free education and provide 42,000 teachers to ethnic minority regions. "The Plan of Cultivation of Postgraduate Teachers in Rural Education" provided 4,364 rural teachers to ethnic minority regions. Between 2011 and 2015, 528 projects in aiding Xinjiang education were carried out, with an investment of 10.8 billion yuan, and offering training to 130,000 teachers. 5,300 teachers were selected and dispatched from other regions to Xinjiang for the projects. By the end of 2015, the number of various projects to support education in Tibet had reached 405, with the funding adding up to 938 million yuan, providing training to 6,829 people and moving 3,585 people to Tibet to support the projects. The number of various projects to support education in Qinghai had reached 134, with a total funding of 670 million yuan.

The cultures of ethnic minorities are protected. By the end of 2015, 9 natural and cultural sites scattered in ethnic minority regions including the Potala Palace had been added to the World Cultural Heritage List. 14 ethnic minority arts including Uyghur Muqam of

Xinjiang had been added to the UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity and another 4 including Qiang New Year Festivals had been added to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. 10 experimental zones for cultural protection in ethnic minority regions have been established. 479 ethnic minority heritage items and 524 inheritors from ethnic minority groups have been put respectively on the four national representative lists of intangible cultural heritage and the four national lists of representative inheritors of intangible cultural heritage that have been made public. The book series of explanatory notes on ancient books of ethnic minority groups, entitled Synopsis on the General Catalogue of Ancient Books of Ethnic Minority Groups of China, was published in 2014.

The spoken and written languages of ethnic minority groups have been protected and developed. Efforts have been made to promote the regulation, standardization and computerized processing of these languages. Projects have been initiated for the research and formulation of regulations on the transliteration of people's names to Mandarin from Mongolian, Tibetan, Uygur, Kazakh, Yi and other minority languages. Work has been done on the research and formulation of the table on commonly used Mongolian words, the regulation of translation between Tibetan and Latin, and the standards on determining correct characters and pronunciations in modern Uygur literature language. Databanks on minority languages on the brink of extinction have been set up. The Project on the Protection of Chinese Language Resources has been initiated and implemented. By the end of 2015, 54 ethnic minority groups were using more than 80 spoken languages of their own ethnic groups, and 21 ethnic minority groups were using 29 written languages of their own ethnic groups. Up to 200 radio stations nationwide broadcast in 25 ethnic minority languages. 32 publishing houses of various types publish books in ethnic minority languages. 11 film dubbing centers have been set up throughout the country, using 17 ethnic minority languages and 37 ethnic minority dialects. From 2012 to 2015, they finished the dubbing of a large number of movies into minority languages amounting to more than 3,000 versions.

(2) Women's rights

Figure 1: Proportions of females in various-level people's congresses and people's political consultative conferences

Women enjoy the chance to participate on an equal footing with men in the management of state and social affairs. Female deputies account for 23.4 percent of all deputies in the 12th NPC, 2.07 percentage points higher than the previous congress. There are 25 female members in the 12th NPC Standing Committee, accounting for 15.5 percent of all members. There are 399 female members in the 12th CPPCC, accounting for 17.84 percent of the total. Women deputies who served their tenures from 2011 to 2013 accounted for 24.76 percent of all deputies in the provincial people's congresses, and

female members accounted for 22.22 percent in the provincial people's political consultative conferences. In 2015, the proportion of females in the leadership of provincial governments increased notably from that in 2012. In 2014, females in enterprises made up 40.1 percent and 41.5 percent of the members on boards of directors and boards of supervisors, respectively.

Women enjoy the equal right with men to employment. The state implemented the same-age retirement policy for both cadres of section rank in authority organs and public institutions and technical personnel with senior professional titles. In 2014, female employees accounted for 44.8 percent of all people employed across the country. The state implemented an interest-deducted small loan policy, where the government pays part of the interest, to encourage women's employment and self-employment. Since 2009, it has provided 260.704 billion yuan in guaranteed loans for startups, with subsidized interest payments, to aid nearly 10 million women to start businesses or find a job.

The freedom of women in rural areas to enjoy land rights in accordance with the law is basically guaranteed. The state carried out legal publicity and training in grassroots village committees and strengthened the efforts to file, review and rectify village regulations and folk rules. In the process of determining and registering the right to land contracting and management, and in the process of issuing certificates concerning this right, women's rights to land were reflected through registration books and real estate ownership certificates.

The level of health services for women has been raised continuously. In April 2012, the State Council promulgated the Special Rules on the Labor Protection of Female Employees, revising and improving some items including the scope of application and range of forbidden labor, as well as extending statutory maternity leave to 98 days. In 2015, maternity insurance covered 77.12 million women across the country and per capita treatment expenditure reached 16,456 yuan, 2,000 yuan more than in 2014. In 2015, 12.05 million couples who wanted to have babies received free physical tests, with the average coverage rate in target groups amounting to 96.5 percent. During the period of 2011-2015, nearly 50 million pregnant women in rural areas received hospital delivery subsidies, and the rate of women in the countryside giving birth in hospitals increased from 97.8 percent in 2010 to 99.5 percent in 2015. The maternal mortality rate lowered from 30 out of 100,000 in 2010 to 20.1 in every 100,000 in 2015. By the end of 2015, 51.95 million and 7.47 million rural women had free tests for cervical cancer and breast cancer, respectively.

The state legislated to protect women from domestic violence. On December 27, 2015, the NPC Standing Committee approved the Anti-domestic Violence Law, in which systems, such as police cautions, writ of habeas corpus and mandatory reporting, were specially set up. The Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the

Ministry of Public Security and the Ministry of Justice jointly issued the Opinions on Handling Domestic Violence Cases in Accordance with the Law, so as to intensify the prompt judicial intervention in domestic violence. From 2014 to 2015, the Supreme People's Court published a total of 15 typical cases related to domestic violence. Some local public security organs and courts effectively prevented and stopped domestic violence in a timely way by actively exploring and using police cautions and personal safety protection orders.

The state has made headway in cracking down on the crimes of abduction and trafficking of women. The General Office of the State Council published China's Action Plan Against Human Abducting and Trafficking (2013-2020) in order to strengthen efforts to crack down on such crimes. From 2014 to 2015, a total of 2,412 cases of abducting and trafficking women were cleared up by public security organs. China also launched campaigns against cross-border crimes of abducting and trafficking women, promoting cooperation processes with six Mekong River Sub-region countries.

(3) Children's rights

Children's right to health is effectively guaranteed. The mortality rate of infants reduced from 13.1 out of 1,000 in 2010 to 8.1 in 2015. And the mortality rate of children under the age of five was 10.7 out of 1,000, 5.7 points lower than in 2010. In 2014, the incidence rates of low weight in infants and children under the age of five were 2.6 percent and 1.48 percent, respectively, with the expected goals achieved ahead of schedule. Over 97 percent of children were vaccinated in the national immunization program. In 2014, the average vaccination rate exceeded 99 percent going forward.

The state has steadily implemented a nutrition enhancement program for students receiving compulsory education in rural areas. By the end of October 2015, the national pilot program was launched in 699 concentrated destitute counties in 22 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government), benefiting 21.1516 million students. Also by the same time, the program was carried out on a local trial basis in 673 counties in 23 provinces, benefiting 10.9078 million students.

The situation regarding school buses and campus safety has been continuously improved. A series of normative documents, including the Regulation on School Bus Safety Management formulated by the State Council and the Standard for Compulsory Education School Management set up by the Ministry of Education, have been promulgated since 2012. By the end of 2015, a total of 37 pilot zones on safety education had been set up throughout the country, covering 128,000 schools with 52 million students.

Left-behind children are taken good care of. The central government supported the implementation of the "Pilot Project on Community Care Services for Rural Left-behind Children," benefiting more than 200,000 left-behind children. It has collected 67 million yuan in social charity funds to aid the establishment of 670 "Happy Homes for Children" across the country since 2014. A series of care activities, including acting parents, twinning and help for children in need, was carried out, benefiting 13.129 million such children.

Female minors' rights are further protected. The Amendment (IX) to the Criminal Law abolished the crime of prostituting female minors under the age of 14, improving the legal system on protecting female minors from sexual abuse. The state continues to launch special operations to combat attempts to identify the sex of a fetus other than for medical purposes and attempts to terminate a pregnancy once the sex of a fetus identified is not desired. In 2015, in terms of the gender ratio, for every 100 females there were 113.5 males, the seventh narrowing of the gap in a row since 2009.

Efforts to protect and support minors have been further intensified. By the end of 2015, there were 1,605 welfare institutions for children and 407 independent relief and protection agencies for minors nationwide, both of which increased substantially over the same period in 2012. In 2015, 23,000 orphans with disabilities were adopted by families, accounting for 4.4 percent of all such orphans, and a total of 149,700 children across the country were provided with relief. The state made sure that children affected by AIDS/HIV related illnesses can learn or continue their study at school without being affected by family difficulties. It has made efforts to protect the privacy of AIDS/HIV-affected children and prevent them from any form of discrimination. The Amendment (IX) to the Criminal Law strengthened criminal punishment for buyers of abducted women and children, and those engaged in any activity concerning the buying of abducted women and children will be held criminally responsible. By the end of 2015, the national anti-trafficking DNA database had helped over 4,000 missing children find their parents. From 2014 to 2015, the state solved 2,216 cases of trafficking in children. The Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate and related departments successively promulgated the Opinions on Punishing the Crime of Sexual Assault against Minors and the Opinions on Legally Handling Several Issues on Guardians' Infringement upon the Rights and Interests of Minors, so as to beef up judicial protection on juveniles. The state implemented the Provisions on the Prohibition of Using Child Labor, and further intensified efforts to safeguard children's rights and interests in the field of labor.

(4) Senior citizens' rights

The social security system for the aged is gradually being improved. The advanced-age allowance system was set up in 23 provinces (autonomous regions or municipalities directly under the central government). The old-age service allowance system for seniors

in financial difficulty was carried out in 20 provinces (autonomous regions or municipalities directly under the central government). The nursing care allowance system for senior citizens with disabilities was launched in 8 provinces (autonomous regions or municipalities directly under the central government), while accident injury insurance for the elderly was introduced in 20 provinces (autonomous regions or municipalities directly under the central government).

Figure 2: Basics of national old-age services by the end of 2015

The old-age social service system is being rapidly developed. By the end of 2015, there were 115,000 institutions and facilities offering services for the elderly, an increase of 151 percent from 2012. Home-based care service facilities for the aged covered basically all urban communities and over 50 percent of rural communities. By the end of 2015, there were a total of 6.717 million beds for the elderly nationwide, averaging 30.3 beds for every thousand senior citizens, 60.9 percent and 40.5 percent higher than those in 2012 respectively, which far exceeded the planned targets.

Senior citizens' cultural lives are being much enriched. By the end of 2015, there were 763,00 schools for the elderly across the country, 180 national-level and over 500 provincial-level community education pilot zones and demonstration zones, with the elderly accounting for over 60 percent of all participants in community education. There were 24 newspapers and 24 periodicals specially for the aged. The state provided a variety of digital cultural resources suitable for the elderly through various channels including the National Cultural Information Resources Sharing Project, the National Digital Culture Network and Chinese Culture Network TV.

(5) Rights of people with disabilities

The system on the protection of rights and interests of people with disabilities has been constantly improved. Since August 2012, the State Council successively formulated the Regulations on the Construction of a Barrier-free Environment and the Opinions on Accelerating the Development of a Well-off Course for People with Disabilities. The Supreme People's Procuratorate and the China Federation of the Disabled jointly distributed the Opinions on Effectively Protecting the Disabled Persons' Lawful Rights and Interests in Procuratorial Work. The state has established and improved mechanisms for the provision of legal assistance to the disabled, offering free, timely and convenient legal services for them.

People with disabilities are covered by social security. By 2015, the state had established a living subsidy system for the financially-challenged disabled population and nursing care allowances for the severely disabled across the country. There were 10.884 million people with disabilities in both urban and rural areas receiving minimum subsistence

allowances, nearly 22.3 million people with disabilities in both urban and rural areas participating in social endowment insurance schemes and 3.023 million urban disabled dwellers participating in basic medical insurance schemes. During the period of 2012-2015, 4.962 million impoverished people with disabilities in rural areas were lifted out of poverty and 3.17 million poor disabled residents in rural areas received skills training, with the planned targets achieved in advance. The central government allocated a total of 3.74 billion yuan in rehabilitation and poverty-relief interest-deducted loans to support 743,000 impoverished disabled people. The state subsidized the renovation of dilapidated houses of 1.164 million rural households with disabled members.

The rehabilitation service for people with disabilities is being continuously enhanced. By the end of 2015, a total of 222,000 communities had established rehabilitation stations across the country. From 2012 to 2015, 8.544 million people with disabilities received community rehabilitation services. 12.466 million received basic rehabilitation services, achieving the expected goal ahead of schedule. From 2011 to 2015, the central government appropriated 432 million yuan to support rehabilitation training for 36,000 autistic children living in poverty. The supporting devices network covering both urban and rural areas is gradually being improved, offering 6.655 million supporting devices of various types.

The rights of people with disabilities to education, employment and culture are further guaranteed. The state implemented the Special Education Promotion Program (2014-2016), in an effort to fully expand the reach of special education and guarantee the ability and the quality of education and teaching. In 2015, there were 2,053 special education schools nationwide, with a total enrolment of 442,200 students and 50,300 full-time teachers. From 2012 to 2015, the central government appropriated 925 million yuan as a special education subsidy. The state carried out "the Special Education School Construction (Second Phase) Project" and allocated more than 2.442 billion yuan to support the infrastructure construction of 61 secondary vocational schools and vocational higher education institutions for people with disabilities and special normal schools for higher learning. In 2015, related departments published the Administrative Provisions on Disabled Persons' Participation in the National College Entrance Examination (temporary), in an effort to guarantee disabled people's right to receive education equally, and actively enhanced the revision work on the Education Regulations for the Disabled in order to strengthen legal guarantee. In 2012 they published the Notice on Strengthening Vocational Training for People with Disabilities to Promote Employment, so as to make sure that the disabled who wish to find a job can get relevant vocational training. Starting from 2014, the recruitment of disabled college graduates by Party and government organs, public institutions, state-owned enterprises and other units were guaranteed by policies. By the end of 2015, the state had set up reading rooms for people with visual impairments in public libraries at all levels, with an additional collection of 486,000 books in braille and 21,000 seats in those rooms. The state hugely expanded the scale of

publications in braille. From 2011 to 2015, the state published 476 textbook titles with 692,000 copies in braille printed, 5,526 books for blind people with 1.3319 million copies printed, 1,138 big-word books for people with poor eyesight with 1.1234 million copies printed, and 2,400 types of audio books for the blind with a total length of 16,000 hours. The expected goals were achieved ahead of schedule and exceeded. Some excellent publication projects for the blind people were included in the National Publication Plan. Any qualified project was supported by the National Publication Fund.

The state quickened the construction and renovation of barrier-free facilities. Related departments revised and carried out the Management Measures for Air Transport of Persons with Disabilities and the Standards for Barrier-free Designs; published the Guiding Opinions on Strengthening the Construction of a Barrier-free Environment in Villages and Towns; and drew up and implemented the Requirements on Barrier-free Technologies for Website Design. It provided special seats for people with disabilities in all trains and allowed guide dogs to board trains. The state established additional barrier-free parking places on urban roads and in public parking areas within buildings and set up audio signal devices for people with visual impairments on pavement traffic signal facilities. It subsidized 573,000 families of the disabled to carry out renovation of barrier-free facilities.

V. Human Rights Education

From 2012 to 2015, China redoubled its efforts in promoting human rights concepts; publicizing human rights knowledge; carrying out human rights education; and going all out to raise the awareness of honoring and safeguarding human rights throughout Chinese society.

The State Council Information Office and another eight human rights education and training bases jointly held a total of 144 training sessions about human rights for Party cadres and government employees at various levels, judiciary and media personnel. Administrative institutes at various levels conducted courses in human rights, providing human rights knowledge education among cadres at various levels.

Starting from 2012, the state made sure that knowledge about personal rights, economic rights and the right to receive education was included in courses and textbooks in all primary and secondary schools in accordance with both the newly-revised course standard for every subject of nine-year compulsory education and the characteristics of students' age. It also made sure that students were aware of citizens' legitimate rights and duties, in an effort to enhance the awareness of rights among students.

In accordance with the requirements in the Action Plan, institutions of higher learning strengthened the development of human rights related majors, offered related courses for

four-year college students majoring in law, compiled human rights teaching materials and accelerated the education for special talents on human rights. They enriched courses on human rights education by independently offering the general course "Introduction to Human Rights" and some selective courses including "Human Rights Law", "International Human Rights Law" and "Special Features on Human Rights Law". Institutions of higher learning enrolled masters and Ph.D. candidates in disciplines including human rights law, politics and philosophy of human rights, and set up post-doctoral research centers in human rights. The China University of Political Science and Law and the Southwest University of Political Science and Law independently offered secondary disciplines on human rights law.

The media including TV and radio stations, newspapers and periodicals and online media, through news broadcasts, commentary, call-ins, interpretation, interviews, Weibo and WeChat interaction, energetically spread human rights knowledge, made the awareness of guaranteeing human rights according to law deeply rooted in people's mind and created a good social environment where the state honors and guarantees human rights and citizens obey laws.

In April 2014, five new national-level human rights education and training centers were opened, including human rights research centers at Renmin University of China, Fudan University, Shandong University, Wuhan University and Southwest University of Political Science and Law, which achieved planned goals in advance.

Theoretical research on human rights was carried out by the China Society for Human Rights Studies, China Human Rights Development Foundation and National Human Rights Education and Training Base. They edited and published a series of books on human rights, including China's Human Rights in Action and Report on the Development of Human Rights in China. They also set up an academic exchange platform for human rights, and started to publish academic periodicals including Human Rights, Human Rights Studies, China Human Rights Review and the Research on the Rights of the Disabled. They developed human rights training materials including Series on Human Rights Knowledge and publicized human rights knowledge throughout the Chinese society. They made efforts to conduct academic exchanges with domestic and foreign counterparts by holding and attending international academic meetings.

VI. Fulfillment of Obligations to International Human Rights Conventions, and International Exchanges and Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights

From 2012 to 2015, China continued to earnestly fulfill its obligations to the international human rights conventions to which it has acceded, conducted international exchanges and cooperation in the field of human rights, and enhanced the healthy development of the international human rights cause.

(1) Fulfillment of obligations to international human rights conventions

In September 2012, China attended the dialogue meeting held by the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities deliberating China's first report on implementing the "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities," giving a detailed account of the achievements China had made in the cause of persons with disabilities with full and accurate data, and providing full answers to the questions raised by the committee.

In September 2013, China attended the dialogue meeting held by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child which deliberated China's third and fourth combined report on implementing the "Convention on the Rights of the Child" and China's first report on implementing the "Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict", introducing China's actual situation on the implementation and giving a serious and full answer to the questions raised by the committee.

In June 2013, China submitted to the UN Committee against Torture its sixth report on implementing the "Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment." In November 2015, China attended the dialogue meeting held by the committee, and during the deliberations on the report, fully outlined China's situation on the implementation of the convention providing full answers to the questions raised by the committee.

In May 2014, China participated in the dialogue meeting held by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which deliberated the second report on implementing the "International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights", giving a detailed account of China's achievements made in the fields of guaranteeing economic, social and cultural rights and answering the questions raised by the committee.

In October 2014, China attended the dialogue meeting held by the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, which deliberated China's seventh and eighth combined report on implementing the "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women", giving an account of China's achievements in gender equality and women's development, and also gave full and detailed answers to the questions raised by the committee.

(2) Conducting international exchanges and cooperation in the field of human rights

In October 2013, China smoothly underwent the second-round Universal Periodic Review (UPR) held by the UN Human Rights Council, giving a detailed account of developments in China's human rights situation, the challenges it faced and the goals it had set. China

seriously studied the proposals put forward by all the other countries. With an open and serious attitude, it actively responded and adopted a total of 204 proposals, accounting for 81 percent of all suggestions, for which China was spoken highly of by all parties. In March 2014, the UN Human Rights Council approved the UPR report on China.

China attended a series of multilateral meetings on human rights issues including the 67th to 70th meetings of the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly, the 20th to 30th meetings of the UN Human Rights Council, and the annual and follow-up sessions of the UN Committee of Non-government Organizations, actively proclaiming its stance and policies on human rights, its opposition to the combining of human rights with politics and double standards, and speaking out boldly to uphold justice for developing countries. China enhanced the UN Human Rights Council Special Procedures to give an equal stress to economic, social and cultural rights, as well as civil and political rights, and carried out work in a fair, objective and non-selective manner. In November 2013, China was elected by a handsome majority as a member of the UN Human Rights Council for the period from 2014 to 2016. In April 2014, China was successfully re-elected as a member of the UN committee of Non-government Organizations.

In February 2012, China and some countries holding similar stances jointly backed the UN General Assembly in approving the resolution on the structural reform of human rights treaties, launching the General Assembly process of the reform. In April 2014, the UN General Assembly approved the reform plan by reaching consensus through consultation. More consensus was reached on the strengthening of treaty bodies' effectiveness, which reflected the concerns of all parties in a much balanced manner.

China continued its cooperation with the Special Procedures of the UN Human Rights Council, answering letters from it in a serious and timely manner, and conducting constructive and interactive dialogue with the UN Human Rights Council and its Special Procedures. China played host to a working group from the UN Human Rights Council on the elimination of discrimination against women in both law and practice and independent experts on the influence of foreign debt on human rights respectively in December 2013 and June 2015.

China continued to hold dialogues and exchanges on human rights with various countries on the basis of equality and mutual respect. Since June 2012, China has held more than 20 dialogues on human rights with the United States, the European Union, the United Kingdom, Germany, Australia and Switzerland; conducted exchanges with legal experts from the US; launched technical cooperation on human rights with Australia and twice received the EU Special Representative for Human Rights. China conducted over 10 consultations and exchanges on human rights with Russia, Brazil, Pakistan, Cuba, Belarus, Laos and Sri Lanka. The State Council Information Office twice sent human

rights delegations to visit the US, Canada, Brazil and Mexico, respectively in 2014 and 2015, conducting exchanges and cooperation on human rights.

In September 2015, China and UN Women jointly held the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, with more than 80 state leaders participating in the conference. During the summit, China stated its opinions on women-related issues and made an important promise to enhance gender equality and improve women's status. China also took a constructive part in a series of multilateral international meetings including meetings of the UN Committee on Social Development and the high-level meeting of the UN General Assembly on disability and development, and actively participated in the discussions and resolution consultations on issues about people with disabilities. Since 2012, China has participated in regional and sub-regional exchange activities on human rights including the 12th to 15th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Informal Forums on Human Rights, conducting exchanges with over 40 Asian and European countries.

From 2012 to 2015, China's NGOs, including China NGO Network for International Exchanges, dispatched delegations to the 19th to 30th sessions of the UN Human Rights Council. The China Society for Human Rights Studies and China Human Rights Development Foundation jointly held the "Beijing Forum on Human Rights" on four occasions, each of which attracted high-level officials on human rights, experts and scholars and those in charge of related institutions from over 30 countries and regions.