

Human Rights Record of the United States in 2013

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

Foreword

The State Department of the United States, which posed as "the world judge of human rights," made arbitrary attacks and irresponsible remarks on the human rights situation in almost 200 countries and regions again in its just-released Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013. However, the U.S. carefully concealed and avoided mentioning its own human rights problems. In fact, there were still serious human rights problems in the U.S. in 2013, with the situation in many fields even deteriorating.

-- In 2013, 137 people died in 30 mass killings, which caused four or more deaths each, in the U.S.. A shooting rampage in the headquarters of the Naval Sea Systems Command in Washington, D.C. left 12 people dead.

-- The U.S. engaged in a tapping program, code-named PRISM, exercising long-term and vast surveillance both at home and abroad. The program is a blatant violation of international law and seriously infringes on human rights.

-- The use of solitary confinement is prevalent in the U.S.. About 80,000 U.S. prisoners are in solitary confinement in the country. Some have even been held in solitary confinement for over 40 years.

-- The U.S. still faces grave employment situation with its unemployment rate remained high. Rates of unemployment for the lowest-income families have topped 21 percent. The homeless population in the U.S. kept swelling and it had climbed 16 percent from 2011 to 2013.

-- There are a large amount of child laborers in the agricultural sector in the U.S. and their physical and mental health was seriously harmed.

-- Frequent drone strikes by the U.S. in countries including Pakistan and Yemen have caused heavy civilian casualties. The U.S. has carried out 376 drone strikes in Pakistan since 2004, causing deaths of up to 926 civilians.

-- The U.S. remains a country which has not ratified or participated in a series of core UN conventions on human rights, such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

I. On Life and Personal Security

The U.S. was haunted by an increasing number of violent crimes in 2013 with frequent occurrence of firearms-related criminal cases, public information show. American citizens' lives and personal safety are threatened by an increasingly dangerous environment.

The number of violent crimes has risen sharply. According to the Uniform Crime Reports, released by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 2013, the U.S. registered 1,214,464 violent crimes in 2012, of which 14,827 are murders and nonnegligent manslaughters, 84,376 forcible rapes, 354,522 robberies and 760,739 aggravated assaults. According to statistics revealed by the Bureau of Justice on October 24, 2013, the rate of violent victimization increased from 22.6 victimizations per 1,000 persons age 12 or older in 2011 to 26.1 in 2012.

On April 15, 2013, twin bombings ripped through Boston Marathon, leaving three dead and 264 injured. Among the killed was an 8-year-old. U.S. authorities called the bombings a terrorist attack (USA Today, December 6, 2013).

The Washington Post reported on January 1, 2014, that Robert Senquan Spencer, 21, was dead from a shotgun blast on a Southwest Washington street, becoming the District's 80th homicide victim of 2013. The District had 103 homicides in 2013 - a sharp increase from 88 in 2012.

American citizens keep the world's largest number of privately owned guns. According to figures released by the FBI in 2013, the total number of background checks conducted for gun sales in 2013 add up to 21,093,273, beating the previous 2012 record of 19,592,303 by 1,500,970 (www.townhall.com, January 7, 2014). As of 2013, there were about 300 million guns in the U.S.. On average, more than 100,000 Americans are being shot each year, and 30,000 deaths are caused by the use of guns. Victims are either killed in gun-related crimes or died in suicide or

nonnegligent manslaughter. The U.S. government failed to take effective measures to control guns. (www.gunfaq.org, www.guncrimestatistics.com).

After the mass shootings in Colorado and Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012, there were strong calls in the United States for stricter controls on firearms. On April 17, a bipartisan bill to support expanded background checks on firearms was blocked in the Senate. Previously, plans for a ban on assault weapons and high-capacity magazines had already been removed from the gun-control bill (www.bbc.co.uk, April 17, 2013). At the same time, states in the U.S. continue to loosen their gun laws. On January 5, Illinois became the last state in the U.S. to allow average citizens to carry around concealed firearms. Anyone with firearm owner's identification card in the U.S. is allowed to pack heat in places except the no-go zones including schools, parks and restaurants (www.usatoday.com, January 8, 2014).

Gun violence is rampant in the U.S.. There are 11,000 Americans killed by gun violence every year (www.telegraph.co.uk, December 17, 2013). Information collected regarding types of weapons used in violent crime showed that firearms were used in 69.3 percent of the nation's murders, 41 percent of robberies, and 21.8 percent of aggravated assaults, according to the Uniform Crime Reports released by the FBI in 2013. Every year, there is serious gun violence in the U.S.. On October 21, 2013, Attorney General Eric Holder said the average number of mass shooting incidents has tripled in recent years. According to Justice Department figures on mass shootings, 404 people were shot and 207 people were killed from 2009 to 2012 (www.huffingtonpost.com, October 21, 2013). According to a report published on the USA Today on December 16, 2013, 137 people died in 30 mass killings - four or more people killed, not including the killer - in 2013.

On September 16, 2013, civilian contractor and military veteran Aaron Alexis, a resident of Texas, went on a shooting rampage after he entered the headquarters of the Naval Sea Systems Command in Washington, D.C. in the morning, killing 12 people and injuring several others. An eye witness said the gunman began shooting from a fourth-floor overlook in the hallway and was aiming down at people in the building's cafeteria on the first floor. Aaron Alexis was shot dead in a 30 minutes' exchange of gunfire with authorities (www.usatoday.com, September 17, 2013).

II. On Civil and Political Rights

The U.S. government took liberty in monitoring its citizens, which shocked the world. Tortures in the U.S. prisons raised concerns. Elections and the checks-and-balances systems were plagued by malpractices and inefficiency, impairing civil interests.

The U.S. government exercises massive and unrestrained information tapping on its own citizens. Edward Snowden, a former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) employee, revealed a tapping program carried out by the National Security Agency (NSA), code-named PRISM. Under the program, the U.S. intelligence, by virtue of data provided by nine Internet companies, including the Microsoft, Google, Apple, Facebook, and Yahoo, and other major telecom providers, tracked citizens' private contacts and social activities recklessly (www.washingtonpost.com, June 7, 2013).

The website of The Washington Post revealed on June 7, 2013, that the NSA and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) were tapping directly into the central servers of some Internet companies, and users' data, extracting their emails, chats, audio and video data, documents and photos in real time, and putting certain targets and their contacts under full surveillance. According to a government document disclosed by The New York Times on September 29, 2013, the NSA, since November 2010, had been exploiting its huge collections of U.S. citizens' data to identify their associates, their locations at certain times, their traveling companions, and other personal information. The scrutiny program, which links U.S. citizens' phone numbers and e-mails in a "contact chain", exposed large amount of citizens' privacy to the government. The website of the Guardian, a British newspaper, revealed on June 6, 2013, that one of the largest U.S. telecommunications providers, the Verizon Business Network Services Inc, was required to provide to the NSA all the telephony metadata within its system, including telephone numbers, locations and call durations. Germany's Spiegel Online reported on September 7, 2013, that internal NSA documents showed that the U.S. intelligence has the capability of tapping user data from the iphone, devices using Android as well as BlackBerry, a system previously believed to be highly secure. The NSA developed cracking programs and tapped users' data held on the three major smart phone operating systems, including contact lists, SMS traffic, and location information about where a user has been. The NSA is able to infiltrate the computer a person uses to sync their iphone, and the script programs enable additional access to at least 38 iphone features.

The journal.ie reported on June 14, 2013, nine major international civil liberties groups issued joint declaration that the U.S. federal government's secretive scrutiny

program, PRISM, is a breach of international conventions on human rights. The joint declaration said, "Such vast and pervasive state surveillance violates two of the most fundamental human rights: the right to privacy and to freedom of expression."

The U.S. federal narcotics officers and other agents, in cooperation with American Telephone & Telegraph, can not only gain access to all the clients' phone records, but also all the phone calls made through the company's telephone exchangers (The Huffington Post, December 20, 2013). The Los Angeles Times' website, www.latimes.com, reported on September 26, 2013, the FBI has long used drone aircraft in domestic investigations, exercising clandestine surveillance over the public. The website also reported, the U.S. federal prosecutors secretly obtained records of telephone calls from more than 20 telephone lines belonging to The Associated Press and its journalists in a two-month period in early 2012 (www.latimes.com, May 13, 2013).

Inmates treated inhumanely in prisons. The use of solitary confinement is prevalent. According to news reports, in U.S. prisons, inmates in solitary confinements are enclosed in cramped cells with poor ventilation and natural lights, isolated from other prisoners, a situation that will take tolls on inmates' physical and mental health (www.bbc.com, June 12, 2013). About 80,000 U.S. prisoners are in solitary confinement, including nearly 12,000 in California. The California's Pelican Bay prison has more than 400 prisoners who have been in isolation for over a decade. In many cases, the inmates are isolated for up to 23 hours per day in cells measuring 3.5 by 2.5 meters (www.reuters.com, August 23, 2013). Some have even been held in solitary confinement for over 40 years (www.cbc.ca, October 4, 2013). In the prison system of the New York state, about 3,800 prisoners are in solitary confinement every day (online.wsj.com, Feb. 19, 2014). The then 49-year-old prisoner, William Blake, had been held in solitary confinement for 26 years, locked in a cell furnished with only one iron bed (www.dailymail.com, March 15, 2013). In 2013, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on torture Juan Mendez repeatedly urged the U.S. government to abolish the use of solitary confinement. He argued, even short-term solitary confinement can be counted as torture (www.bayview.com, October 14, 2013). In California state prisons, 30,000 inmates began hunger strikes on July 8, 2013 in protest of the use of solitary confinement. The hunger strikes lasted two months (www.latimes.com, September 15, 2013).

On January 29, 2014, the British Daily Mail's web edition published New York photographer Scott Houston's photos featuring working and living conditions of inmates in Arizona State's prisons. The images show, inmates are shackled together while working and eating, five on one chain, with just nine feet between them. Houston said, he was left with the impression that the chain gangs working together were similar to the days of slavery. "You could go back 200 years."

Election becomes the game of a few. A great number of researches showed that the American's influence on policy is proportional to their wealth. About 70 percent of the population, who are on the lower wealth and income scale, have virtually no influence on policy whatsoever. They are effectively disenfranchised. Only a tenth of one percent essentially get what they want, i.e. they effectively influence policies (www.salon.com, August 17, 2013). The U.S. citizens get less and less enthusiastic about election. The mayoral election of Los Angeles in May 2013 only had 23.3 percent of the city's registered voters cast a ballot. And the winner got 222,300 votes, just 12.4 percent of the registered voters (www.latimes.com, June 11, 2013).

The checks-and-balances system has become an impediment to actions. On October 1, 2013, the U.S. federal government, except for its core functions, entered a shutdown, after Congress failed to pass the budget bill as the Democrats and Republicans failed to agree on the "Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act." Francis Fukuyama, a senior fellow at Stanford University's Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law, wrote in an article published on October 4, 2013, on The Washington Post's website, the American system of checks and balances gradually becomes a "vetocracy". "It empowers a wide variety of political players representing minority position to block action by the majority and prevent the government from doing anything." The U.S. government shutdown is the very result of such vicious checks and balances. A new poll found "Americans entered 2014 with a profoundly negative view of their government, expressing little hope that the government can or will solve the nation's biggest problems." According to the poll conducted by the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, half respondents said American system of democracy needed either "a lot of changes" or a complete overhaul (www.huffingtonpost.com, January 2, 2014). The U.S. president, in his State of the Union Address in January 2014, also criticized the U.S. democratic system full of bickering and debates. "When that debate prevents us from carrying out even the most basic functions of our democracy -- when our differences shut

down government or threaten the full faith and credit of the United States -- then we are not doing right by the American people."

III. On Economic and Social Rights

Despite the fact that the economy is recovering, the U.S. citizens' economic and social rights are still under challenge.

Unemployment rates are high in the US. Employment rates for 25-to 54-year-olds were lower in 35 states in fiscal 2013 than in 2007. In 2007, nearly 80 of every 100 people aged 25 to 54 in the United States had a job. In the 12 months ending June 2013, only about 76 of every 100 people in that age group were working (www.pewstates.org, November 27, 2013). According to a report by the CNBC on September 16, 2013, in 2012, the average length of unemployment for U.S. workers reached 39.5 weeks, the highest level since World War II. Rates of unemployment for the lowest-income families topped 21 percent, nearly matching the rate for all workers during the 1930s Great Depression. The overall unemployment rate for U.S. veterans stood at 6.9 percent in October 2013. A total of 246,000 post-9/11 vets are looking for jobs (www.edition.cnn.com, November 11, 2013). According to the 2014 State of the Union, "even in the midst of recovery, too many Americans are working more than ever just to get by... And too many still aren't working at all."

Wealth gap in the US is widening. Statistics released by the U.S. Census Bureau in September 2013 showed more than 47 million U.S. people living in poverty in 2012, and that the poverty rate reached 15 percent. The data also indicated about 6.4 million people aged 65 and older were poor (www.reuters.com, November 6, 2013). New research using the U.S. Internal Revenue Service data from 2012 all the way back to 1913 found that the current gap between America's rich and poor is the widest in history. The richest 1 percent's share of total household income was a record 19.3 percent in 2012. The top 10 percent of U.S. households controlled 50.4 percent of total income in 2012, the highest figures seen since 1917. In the U.S., the top 1 percent saw their incomes recover by 31.4 percent during 2009 and 2012, accounting for 95 percent of the total gain recognized in the U.S., whereas the bottom 99 percent had to content themselves with growth of only 0.4 percent (www.globalpost.com, September 10, 2013). The U.S. 2014 State of the Union noted that average wages in the U.S. have barely budged, and inequality has deepened.

Labor unions see eroding leverage. According to data released by the PEW on April 15, 2013, in 2012, unions lost 400,000 members, and states like Indiana and Wisconsin have clipped the organizing rights of state employees and others. Labor leaders see the largest growth potential in the private sector, however, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data, only 6.6 percent of private-sector workers belong to a union. On July 18, 2013, the city of Detroit filed for bankruptcy, making it the largest-ever municipal bankruptcy in U.S. history. Despite the objections from unions including the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, the United Auto Workers as well as local retiree associations, a U.S. bankruptcy judge ruled that Detroit is eligible for bankruptcy protection. Representatives of the unions and retirees argued that the decision turned a blind eye to the appeals of the unions. Local citizens took to the streets to protest with anger (www.usatoday.com, December 3, 2013).

Working conditions and pay are declining. On April 18, 2013, a deadly blast at a fertilizer plant in Texas killed 14 people, left 200 others with injuries and caused some toxic gas concern. It was reported that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, being chronically underfunded, has never inspected the plant since 1985 (www.huffingtonpost.com, June 4, 2013; www.salon.com, May 17, 2013). A report titled "Farm Worker Conditions Likened to Modern Slavery" and carried by the Huffington Post on February 1, 2013 quoted a migrant worker as saying that the piece rate has not changed in over 30 years. The report also said that one farm worker dies on the job every day and hundreds more are injured, noting that relevant authorities have failed to exercise effective monitoring and law enforcement regarding the working conditions for farm workers. The USA Today reported on December 5, 2013 that fast-food workers planned one-day labor walkouts at fast-food restaurants in 100 cities, claiming that they cannot survive on a minimum wage of 7.25 dollars per hour, or about 15,000 dollars a year. The campaign was called "Fight for 15"-- pressing for a minimum wage of 15 dollars per hour (www.usatoday.com, December 5, 2013).

Homeless population is growing. A report by the Los Angeles Times on November 22, 2013 said the homeless population in the U.S. had climbed 16 percent from 2011 to 2013. Los Angeles County's homeless population rose 15 percent from 2011 to 2013, to 57,737 people. According to data released by the U.S. Coalition for the Homeless in November 2013, the number of homeless New Yorkers in shelters had risen by

more than 71 percent since 2002, and each night more than 60,000 people, including over 22,000 children, experience homelessness.

Social security in the US is problematic. A U.S. Census Bureau report released on September 17, 2013 said that in 2012, a total of 15.4 percent, or some 48 million people in the U.S. were uninsured. The share of people relying on the government for health insurance edged up slightly to 32.6 percent, from 32.2 percent a year ago. Whether they have insurance or not, people spent more on health care in 2012 than in 2011 (www.edition.cnn.com, September 17, 2013). According to the U.S. Federal Funds Information for States, some major programs, including most K-12 educational-support programs; the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program for the poor; the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children; Funds to administer the Unemployment Insurance program; Child nutrition programs and other programs starting on or after October 1 could be affected by the federal government shutdown in 2013 (www.pewstates.org, September 26, 2013). When the funds run out on December 28, 2013 for a program created during the recession to supplement the federal emergency benefits for jobless people and efforts to renew the benefits stalled in the U.S. Senate, about 1.3 million jobless Americans who were receiving the benefits averaging about 300 dollars a week had been affected (www.usatoday.com, December 27, 2013).

IV. On Racial Discrimination

Racial discrimination systematically exists in the U.S society. The situation of ethnic minorities' human rights is grim.

Racial discrimination is prevalent in the field of law enforcement and justice. According to a survey carried out in 2012, at least 136 unarmed African-Americans were killed by policemen or security guards in the year (www.un.org, September 3, 2013). Unarmed black youth Jonathan Ferrell, 24, sought help after a car accident, but was shot multiple times and killed by police (New York Daily News, September 16, 2013). Black lady Diggles, 25, was handcuffed and brutally beaten by two white cops for an unpaid fine (www.dailymail.co.uk, June 4, 2013). Racially biased stops and interrogations often occur at streets. The U.S. district judge declared that at least 200,000 stops were made by New York police without reasonable suspicion (www.usatoday.com, August 18, 2013). A latest report released by the American Civil Liberties Union revealed that despite the fact that marijuana use was about the

same for both black and white Americans, blacks were four times as likely as whites to be arrested for marijuana possession. One primary reason is that racial bias prevalently exists in the field of justice (www.usatoday.com, June 24, 2013). Similarly, even though data collected have shown that white women use drugs at roughly the same rate as minority women, two-thirds of women in state prisons incarcerated for drug offenses are Hispanic or black (www.humaneexposures.com, December 12, 2013).

In July 2013, protests took place in several cities in the U.S. after a white neighborhood watch volunteer George Zimmerman was not found guilty of murdering black youth Trayvon Martin by gun shot (www.abc.net.au, July 15, 2013). The U.S. civil rights leader Jesse Jackson said that "the American legal system has once again failed justice" (www.bbc.co.uk, July 14, 2013). On September 3, 2013, the Working Group of Experts on Peoples of African Descent with the United Nations Human Rights Council and Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism lodged a joint appeal, asking the American government to reinvestigate into the Martin case as soon as possible and review the laws that may lead to racial discrimination against African-Americans (www.un.org, September 3, 2013).

Racial discrimination is rampant in public places. The Los Angeles Times reported on December 2, 2013, racial and sex discrimination exists in the employment and daily workplaces of the Los Angeles Fire Department. From 2006 to 2010, payouts in Los Angeles Fire Department discrimination and harassment cases cost more than 17 million U.S. dollars. New York Daily News reported on October 26, 2013, black star Rob Brown bought his mom a 1,350 U.S. dollars watch at Macy's, but was suspected of using a fake credit card after being racially profiled by the store. The police handcuffed and detained him for an hour. According to a report by huffingtonpost.com on October 23, 2013, black college student Trayon Christian was buying a 350 U.S. dollars belt at Barneys, but a Barneys sales clerk believed the transaction was fraudulent and called police. Despite showing the officers the receipt for the belt and his ID, he was still handcuffed and taken to a local precinct. Christian's attorney said that "His only crime was being a young black man."

Some mainstream media, social organizations and politicians publicize racist comments. On October 16, 2013, American Broadcasting Company's Jimmy Kimmel Show aired a segment saying "kill everyone in China" and promoted racial hatred. It aroused unease and protests from Asian Americans especially Chinese Americans

(www.washingtonpost.com, November 8, 2013). The American Family Association, one of the leading religious right groups, claimed that "Latino voters are greedy and lazy socialist, and that's why they don't vote for Republicans" (www.voiceofrussia.com, March 30, 2013). A white women Colorado lawmaker insinuated, via mentioning barbecue and chicken, poor habits and diets should be considered factors to the life expectancy and diseases of blacks. Her remarks were regarded as having a tendency to racism (www.usatoday.com, August 22, 2013).

Encroachment on indigenous peoples' rights prevalently exists. On February 13, 2013, Anaya, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples highlighted high rates of violence against American indigenous women by non-indigenous men. On September 10, Anaya reiterated the obstacles to implementing the law on ensuring Indian children's wellbeing and called on the U.S. government to take all necessary measures to safeguard the human rights of Indian children (www.unsr.jamesanaya.org, February 13, 2013). On September 10, 2013, the Minority Rights Group International accused the U.S. Capital Energy Belize, Ltd of oil exploration in Belize's Maya communities without consent of indigenous peoples (www.minorityrights.org, September 10, 2013).

V. On Women and Children's Rights

Sex discrimination is still serious, and children's rights are not well protected in the United States.

Women are facing serious employment discrimination. According to a report carried by the Los Angeles Times on December 2, 2013, the ratio of women firefighters in the uniformed ranks remains at just under 3 percent -- the same as in 1995. Women's salary is far lower than men's. On average in 2012, women made about 81 percent of the median earnings of male full-time wage and salary workers, according to figures released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics on March 20, 2013 (www.bls.gov, October 2013). Women's average annual income is 11,500 U.S. dollars less than that of men's. African American women are paid 69 cents for every dollar paid to all men, and Latinas are paid just 58 cents for every dollar paid to all men, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's annual survey (www.nationalpartnershipforwomen&families.org, September 17, 2013).

Women and children experienced frequent violent attacks and sexual assaults. In 2013, lawsuits on female suspects being strip-searched were frequently reported. According to a report from the Chicago Tribune on October 10, 2013, several bones were shattered in a woman's face after she was arrested for drunk-driving. She was shoved, beaten and strip-searched by police. Domestic violence is still serious in the U.S.. According to a report by the National Network to End Domestic Violence in 2013, a survey conducted in September 2012 showed in just one 24-hour period, local domestic violence programs across the country provided help and safety to 64,324 domestic violence victims. Sadly, 10,471 requests of domestic violence victims went unmet on that same day due to lack of funds (www.nnedv.org).

U.S. female soldiers experienced frequent sexual harassment and assault. According to the website of the Military Times, 6.1 percent of active duty women say they experienced unwanted sexual contact in 2012 (www.militarytimes.com, May 7, 2013). From 2010 to 2012, there was a 35 percent increase in sexual assault and harassment cases in the military. Fourteen percent of military victims report their assaults and 64 percent of convicted sexual perpetrators were discharged from the military (www.airforcetimes.com, July 23, 2013). Cases of children sexual abuse and exploitation occurred frequently. According to a report on the website of Los Angeles Times on July 29, 2013, the Federal Bureau of Investigation launched a three-day sex-trafficking sweep in 76 cities in July 2013. Some 105 sexually exploited teenagers, some as young as 13, were rescued during the nationwide campaign. Nearly all of them are girls.

Children's security can not be effectively protected. Children's security in family is a prominent problem. According to a report carried by the Chicago Tribune on November 16, 2013, 111 children lost their lives from abuse or neglect in Illinois in 2012, a year of record child deaths from abuse and neglect. The majority died before they were one year old. Nationally, the number of child deaths from abuse and neglect was 1,545. According to a report from the Los Angeles Times on December 18, 2013, child abuse is serious under California's privatized foster care system. The system is so poorly monitored that foster care agencies with a history of abuse can continue caring for children for years. In Los Angeles County, at least four children died as a result of abuse or neglect over the last five years in homes overseen by private agencies. Children have become frequent victims of violent crimes. According to a report carried by the Chicago Tribune on September 15, 2013, all summer long,

wounded little children arrived in Chicago's emergency rooms at a pace of about one a week. Victims' parents had this revelation: "We're not safe anywhere!"

Large amount of child labors in agriculture. According to the 2012 childhood agricultural injury survey conducted by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 41,310 youth under the age of 16 were hired on farms. But a representative from the Children in the Fields Campaign believed there were about 400,000 to 500,000 kids who were working in the fields in 2012. Some types of chores, such as agricultural machine operation and pesticide spraying, have directly threatened children's health, security, or even life (www.usatoday.com, October 25, 2013). Statistics released by the National Children's Center For Rural And Agricultural Health and Safety in December 2013 showed that 38 children were injured in agriculture-related accidents each day in the U.S.. In March, 2013, the National Public Radio and the Public Broadcasting System broadcast in-depth stories about a 14-year-old child who was engulfed by grain and killed while working in a silo in Illinois. And 20 percent of the victims of grain engulfment are young workers (stopchildlabor.org, March 29, 2013).

VI. On Violations of Human Rights against Other Nations

The United States is the world's biggest violator of human rights of non-American persons and has been strongly denounced by the international community in cases of the PRISM program, drone strikes, Guantanamo Bay Detention Camp and prisoner torture around the globe.

A large number of overseas surveillance projects conducted by the U.S. violated other countries' sovereignty and the civil rights of their people. State heads and other leaders, diplomatic agencies and citizens of other countries have long been under surveillance of the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA). According to a classified document provided by whistleblower Edward Snowden, the NSA monitored the phone conversations of 35 leaders of other countries and collected five billion pieces of information every day through tracking cell phone movements around the world (www.theguardian.com, October 25, 2013; swampland.time.com, December 4, 2013). In April 2013, the United Nations special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the rights to freedom of opinion and expression Frank La Rue noted in a report that "the United States renewed the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Amendment Act of 2008 extending the Government's power to conduct

surveillance of non-American persons located outside the United States, including any foreign individual whose communications are hosted by cloud services located in the United States" (UN document A/HRC/23/40). On September 9, 2013, the UN Human Rights Chief Navi Pillay expressed concern about the impact of the U.S. surveillance on the individuals' right to privacy and other human rights during the opening of the 24th session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva (www.ohchr.org, September 9, 2013). The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution of protecting the right to privacy in the digital age at its 68th session on December 19, 2013, stressing that unlawful, arbitrary surveillance, interception, and data collection are a breach of the right to privacy and freedom of expression. Some countries condemned the U.S. as a violator of human rights, as well as the UN Charter principles of respect for national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs (www.un.org, December 19, 2013).

Frequent drone strikes by the U.S. have caused a large amount of non-American civilian casualties. According to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, an independent not-for-profit organization in the UK, the U.S. has carried out 376 drone strikes in Pakistan since 2004, and up to 926 civilians were reported dead (www.reuters.com, October 22, 2013). On May 9, 2013, the Peshawar High Court in Pakistan ruled that the U.S. drone strikes on targets in Pakistan illegally breached national sovereignty and were in "blatant violation of Basic Human Rights" and provisions of the Geneva Conventions, according to the New York-based Open Society Foundations (www.opensocietyfoundations.org, May 28, 2013). On December 12, 2013, a U.S. drone mistakenly targeted a wedding convoy in Yemen's al-Baitha province after intelligence reports identified the vehicles as carrying al Qaeda militants, with 14 people killed and 22 others injured, two Yemeni national security officials told CNN (www.edition.cnn.com, December 13, 2013). In October, the UN special rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism Ben Emmerson, urged the U.S. to disclose more information about its drone programs (www.un.org, October 31, 2013). The UN special rapporteurs on extrajudicial executions and on the protection of human rights while countering terrorism focused on the issue of civilian casualties caused by drone strikes in their reports to the third committee of the UN General Assembly. The U.S. refused to account for those strikes and take measures to reduce civilian casualties as requested by the UN or other government organizations (www.un.org, October 31, 2013).

The U.S. tortures prisoners in other countries and regions. In March 2013, the special rapporteur Ben Emmerson noted in a report that on September 17, 2001, the former U.S. President Bush authorized the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to operate a secret detention program which involved the establishment of clandestine detention facilities known as "black sites" on the territory of other states, and allegedly authorized the CIA to carry out "extraordinary renditions." Despite wide criticism against the CIA's illegal action, no American official has so far been brought to justice (UN document A/HRC/22/52). The program saw terror suspects spirited to secret prisons around the globe without legal process, interrogated and sometimes tortured (www.independent.co.uk, February 18, 2013). The Open Society Foundation said at least 136 individuals were reportedly extraordinarily rendered or secretly detained by the CIA (www.opensocietyfoundations.org, February 5, 2013). Guantanamo Bay detainees' human rights were severely damaged with many of them held there indefinitely without trial. On October 3 2013, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights said on its official website the continuing indefinite incarceration of the detainees amounts to arbitrary detention and is in clear breach of international law (www.un.org, October 3, 2013). A total of 92 Guantanamo military prisoners joined in the hunger strike that began in February 2013, to protest indefinite incarceration and bad treatment (www.ohchr.org, October 3, 2013). Force feedings were carried out. Inmates were chained to chairs by Army guards, tubes were inserted through their noses by Navy medical workers (www.upi.com, April 24, 2013). The UN human rights office announced that the force feedings of prisoners at the Guantanamo Bay Detention facility is a breach of international law (www.commondreams.org, May 1, 2013). On October 3, 2013, the special rapporteur on torture noted indefinite incarceration, solitary confinement, force feeding are a breach of international law (www.ohchr.org, October 3, 2013). The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights said in May 2013 that the Guantanamo Bay camp is a typical case of violating human rights while countering terrorism (www.ohchr.org, October 3, 2013).

The U.S. denies the right to subsistence and development of people in developing countries. On October 29, 2013, the 68th session of the UN General Assembly adopted its twenty-second consecutive resolution calling for an end to the U.S. decades-long economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, with a recorded vote of 188 in favor to 2 (the U.S. and Israel) against with 3 abstentions. The General Assembly criticized the U.S. for violating the Cubans' right to subsistence and development (www.ohchr.org, October 29, 2013). The U.S. is

indifferent to the right of development of people in developing countries. In September 2013, the twenty-fourth session of the UN Human Rights Council adopted the resolution reaffirming the declaration on the right to development, with a recorded vote of 46 to 1 (the U.S.), with no abstentions (UN document A/68/53/Add.1).