

Human Rights Record of the United States in 2014

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

Foreword

On June 25 local time, the State Department of the United States released its country reports on human rights practices once again, making comments on the human rights situations in many countries while showing not a bit of regret for or intention to improve its own terrible human rights record. Plenty of facts show that, in 2014, the U.S., a self-proclaimed human rights defender, saw no improvements in its existent human rights issues, but reported numerous new problems. While its own human rights situation was increasingly grave, the U.S. violated human rights in other countries in a more brazen manner, and was given more "red cards" in the international human rights field.

The U.S. was haunted by spreading guns, frequent occurrence of violent crimes, which threatened citizens' civil rights. Statistics showed that the use of firearms in the U.S. was behind 69 percent of murders, while for robberies, the figure was 40 percent, and for aggravated assaults, 21.6 percent (edition.cnn.com). The excessive use of force by police officers led to many deaths, sparking public outcry. An unarmed 18-year-old African-American Michael Brown was shot dead by a white police officer named Darren Wilson in Ferguson, a town in Missouri. After the grand jury of both Missouri and New York decided to bring no charges against the white police officer, massive protests broke out in more than 170 cities nationwide (cn.nytimes.com, November 25, 2014).

The U.S. used cruel tortures indiscriminately, notably those carried out by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). To acquire intelligence from suspects of terrorism and extremism, the CIA used brutal methods, such as sleep deprivation, waterboarding, long-term solitary confinement, slamming prisoners against the wall, lashing, death threat and even "rectal rehydration" or rectal feeding. United Nations human rights convention institutions such as the UN Human Rights Committee and the Committee Against Torture had raised their concerns over issues in the U.S., including terrible detention conditions for convicts awaiting execution, abuse of brutal methods, secret detention, indefinite arbitrary detention, and illegal wire-tapping which infringed citizens' privacy. These institutions called on the U.S. to

conduct swift, effective and fair investigations into all brutal behaviors and abuse of forces of the police force (www.un.org).

The U.S. is a country with grim problems of racial discrimination, and institutional discrimination against ethnic minorities continued. Serious racial bias persisted in the police and justice systems. Minority groups and indigenous people are subject to unfairness in environment, election, health care, housing, education and other fields. In August 2014, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, in its concluding observation on the periodic report of the U.S. on the latter's implementation of relevant convention, slammed the U.S. for violating the rights of ethnic minorities, indigenous people, immigrants and other minority groups. It criticized the fact that members of racial and ethnic minorities continued to be disproportionately arrested, incarcerated and subjected to harsher sentences (tbinternet.ohchr.org).

Money is a deciding factor in the U.S. politics, and the U.S. citizens' political rights were not properly protected. Despite the highest midterm election spending in history, general election voter turnout for the 2014 midterms was the lowest since World War II. "Dark money" flowed into elections, and the voting rights of racial minorities and other groups were intentionally suppressed. A few interest groups with power were able to influence the government's decision-making. As a renowned scholar pointed out sharply, the U.S. democratic system was experiencing a crisis of representation. "Ordinary citizens feel that their supposedly democratic government no longer truly reflects their interests and is under the control of a variety of shadowy elites (Foreign Affairs, September/October 2014)."

Although the U.S. is the most developed country in the world, it is hard for the economic and social rights of its citizens to be soundly ensured. In the process of economic recovery, the income inequality continued to be enlarged, the basic living conditions for the homeless people deteriorated, the health care system operated terribly and the education rights of average citizens were violated. In October 2014, the United Nations Special Rapporteurs criticized the unprecedented water shut-offs in Detroit disproportionately affected the most vulnerable and poorest people, violating their right of access to drinking water and other international human rights.

American women and children's rights were not fully protected. Women were discriminated at workplaces, and domestic violence was prevalent. Each year, 2.1

million American women on average were assaulted by men. Three females were murdered by their partner each day, and four females died each day as a result of abuse. In the U.S. military, reports of female soldiers getting harassed were on the rise, and more faced repercussions for reporting assaults. Millions of American children were homeless. Three children died each day as a result of abuse. School violence and sex assaults were pervasive and gun shootings happened from time to time.

National Security Agency and other intelligence-gathering apparatus of the U.S. for a long time have spied on world leaders and civilians. The U.S. has not ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The U.S. government often takes an evasive or uncooperative attitude toward the criticism of the United Nations Human Rights Council, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of UN, the council's working groups and special rapporteurs.

I. On Civil Rights

In the U.S., problems concerning respecting and protecting civil rights are severe. The nation is haunted by spreading guns, frequent occurrence of violent crimes, the excessive use of force by police that infringed on citizens' personal rights, as well as wide criticism of illegal eavesdropping that violated citizens' right of privacy.

Civil rights are threatened by rampant violent crimes. According to the "Crime in the United States" released by the FBI, there were an estimated 1,163,146 violent crimes reported to law enforcement in 2013, of which 14,196 are murders, 79,770 are rapes, 345,031 robberies and 724,149 aggravated assaults (<http://www.fbi.gov>.) There were an estimated 367.9 violent crimes per 100,000 inhabitants in 2013. The Market Watch announced 10 most dangerous cities in America (www.marketwatch.com, November 20, 2014)). The lowest ranking of the ten was Birmingham in Alabama, where 1,345 crimes were reported for every 100,000 residents, while in Detroit, 2,072 violent crimes were reported for 100,000 residents, the highest in the nation in 2013. In 2014, Los Angeles's overall total of violent crimes was up 7.6 percent by early October, compared with the same time in 2013 (The Los Angeles Times, October 4, 2014). There was about 1,500 violent crimes registered a month in 2014. Meanwhile, gang violence in the U.S. was at an all time high. There were currently an estimated 1.7 million gang members spread throughout the country (www.insidermonkey.com, November 1, 2014).

The rampant use of guns was not contained. Though the FBI had launched federal background checks to block groups like fugitives and felons, from buying firearms, local law enforcement authorities did not report arrest warrants to the database used to screen gun buyers (The USA Today, April 23, 2014). Consequently, tens of thousands of fugitives including those facing serious charges can pass the background checks and bought firearms. Statistics showed that the use of firearms was behind about 69 percent of the murders in the U.S., while for robberies, the figure was 40 percent, and for aggravated assaults, 21.6 percent (edition.cnn.com, September 24, 2014). A total of 2,215 people were shot in Chicago in the first 10 months of 2014 (www.insidermonkey.com, November 1, 2014,). There were 30 shooting cases reported in three days in a week in the city (projects.aljazeera.com, November 19, 2014).

Law enforcement authorities were run with a loose rein, with some even turning a blind eye to fugitives. Police officers were ignoring sex crimes on a regular basis. A report released in November by the inspector general of New Orleans found that of 1,290 sex crime calls for service assigned to five New Orleans police detectives from 2011 to 2013, 840 were designated as miscellaneous, and nothing at all was done (The New York Times, November 13, 2014). Of the 450 calls that led to the creation of an initial investigative report, no further documentation was found for 271 of them. Police and prosecutors were allowing tens of thousands of wanted felons to escape justice merely by crossing a state border (The USA Today, March 12, 2014). A confidential FBI database chronicled 186,873 of these cases, including more than 3,300 accused of sex crimes. A total of 78,878 felony suspects won't be extradited from any place but neighboring states (The USA Today, March 12, 2014). Police indicated they would not spend the time or money to retrieve the fugitive from another state.

There was excessive use of violence by police. The Wall Street Journal reported on December 3, 2014, that many of the law enforcement agencies did not submit the statistics about killings by police when enforcing laws to the FBI. The report found at least 1,800 police killings took place in 105 police departments between 2007 and 2012. The Associated Press reported on December 7, 2014 that at least 400 deaths happened every year as a result of the law enforcement activities by the U.S. police officers, most of who were not prosecuted. And some police officers had repeated killings on record, though they were investigated for every case. There were 55 police officers who were sued at least 10 times with one being sued for 28 times. Los Angeles Times reported on September 14 that since 2004 a committee reviewed 809

complaints of excessive force or misconduct at the Southwest border, but no police officers had been punished.

In July 17, 2014, African-American resident Eric Garner was choked to death when several white New York police officers were arresting him. Garner, unarmed, put his hands up during the process, saying he couldn't breathe many times, and then he was grabbed from behind in a chokehold which was banned, until he lost consciousness (edition.cnn.com, December 3, 2014). Darren Wilson, a white police officer, fatally shot Michael Brown, an unarmed 18-year-old African-American, on August 9, 2014 in Ferguson, a town in Missouri. The shootings had generated continued riots in the town (The New York Times, November 25, 2014). After the grand jury of both Missouri and New York decided to bring no charges against the white police officer, massive protests broke out in more than 170 cities (www.mirror.co.uk, November 25, 2014). The protests were cracked down by authorities, with police aggressively arresting citizens on the streets. Some residents in Ferguson were unlawfully arrested by police and were just trying to get home when they were picked up and taken to jail (www.reuters.com, December 2, 2014). Since August 2014, roughly 300 people, including local residents and activists as well as organizers and journalists who traveled to Ferguson, had been arrested amid the protests (The Chicago Tribune, December 1, 2014). "Ferguson incident" was a bitter result of the excessive use of force by police in law enforcement. New York Daily News reported on October 8, 2014, that two police officers beat a 16-year-old teenager Karhream Tribble with grips of fire arms. Several of the teenager's teeth were broken and his mouth was swollen. In another report the next day, the paper said a police officer swiped 1,300 dollars from a man during a stop-and-frisk. When the man and his sister complained and tried to get his badge number, the officer then pepper-sprayed him and his sister. What was more disturbing, the other officer was just standing around watching. On November 23, 2014, police in the U.S. city of Cleveland, Ohio, shot and killed a 12-year-old boy who was in a playground waving around what turned out to be a replica gun (www.foxnews.com, November 23, 2014).

Security authorities were illegally eavesdropping, infringing on citizens' privacy. The Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board, an independent federal privacy watchdog, concluded that the National Security Agency's (NSA) program to bulk phone call records was illegal (The New York Times, January 23, 2014). The Huffington Post reported on February 27, 2014 that U.S. District Judge William Martini dismissed a

lawsuit brought by eight Muslims, affirming the New York Police Department's right to spy on Muslim communities in New Jersey, drawing fire from several human rights groups, including the American Civil Liberties Union (www.huffingtonpost.com, February 27, 2014). The Prism gate continued to reveal that American law firm was monitored by the NSA while representing a foreign government in trade disputes with the United States. On July 16, 2014, Navi Pillay, the then UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, said the mass surveillance programs and related policies by some states were not transparent, creating an interference with privacy at a press conference on the right to privacy in the digital age (www.ohchr.org, July 16, 2014). According to Pillay, coercing private providers into offering massive personal information and data about customers without their noticing or consent was against rules set in documents including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Prisons in the U.S. were crowded and violence and deaths there were increasing. According to a report titled "Prisoners in 2013" by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. state and federal correctional facilities held an estimated 1,574,700 prisoners on December 31, 2013, an increase of 4,300 prisoners from yearend 2012 (www.bjs.gov, September 16, 2014). In some places, prisons resorted to early releases because of the surge in prisoners. Across California, more than 13,500 inmates were being released early each month to relieve crowding in local jails - a 34 percent increase over the last three years. In Los Angeles County, with a quarter of California's jail population, male inmates often were released after serving as little as 10 percent of their sentences and female prisoners after 5 percent (The Los Angeles Times, August 17, 2014). Due to lax management, violence in prisons was occurring frequently. In 2012, 4,309 inmates died while in the custody of local jails or state prisons (www.bjs.gov, October 9, 2014). The number of deaths in local jails increased, from 889 in 2011 to 958 in 2012. In Rikers Island, a vast New York City jail complex, the use of force by correction officers jumped nearly 240 percent over the last decade since 2004 (The New York Times, March 19, 2014). In the Julia Tutwiler Prison in Alabama, there was a large amount of complaints about the sex abuse and harassment involving guards and supervisors. However, state investigators time and again classified the complaints as unfounded or unsubstantiated and often recommended that the matters be closed without further action (The Washington Post, October 6, 2014).

II. On Political Rights

As a renowned political scientist pointed out, the U.S. political system has decayed over time, and in an environment of sharp political polarization, this decentralized system gives excessive representation to the views of interest groups and activist

organizations (Foreign Affairs, September/October 2014). Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter said that the world sees "a democracy that's not working" (www.usatoday.com, October 11, 2013). It revealed the institutional root for the fact that the political rights of U.S. citizens had not been effectively protected.

Money is still a deciding factor for the U.S. politics. Total spending in the 2014 midterm races was projected to top 4 billion U.S. dollars nationwide, making it the most expensive midterm election in history (www.latimes.com, October 28, 2014). Outside groups with political agendas picked up a larger share of the bill. More money than ever in the midterm came from secret sources. The influence of average Americans on the election results diminished (www.usatoday.com, November 2, 2014). "K Street" in Washington, D.C. -- located between Capitol Hill and the White House and known as a metonym for the country's lobbying industry -- became the fourth power center in the U.S. after administration, legislation and justice. Behind legalized lobbying was the political manipulation by money and capital. Unfettered corporate political donations became "legalized bribery" (www.usatoday.com, October 11, 2013). According to a USA Today report on September 10, 2014, "dark money" kept flowing into elections since a landmark Supreme Court decision in 2010 opened the floodgate on political donations. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled on *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* case on January 21, 2010 that the rules to restrict election campaign expenditures by for-profit corporations was in violation of the Constitution. During the 2014 campaign season, dark money exceeded 53 million U.S. dollars, up from 16 million U.S. dollars in 2010 (www.usatoday.com, September 10, 2014). Everything wrong with campaigns for other offices - big money, special interest groups and TV attack ads - also infected judicial election. Spending by outside groups to elect judges increased eight-fold from before the 2002 elections to that leading up to 2012 (www.usatoday.com, October 28, 2014). A legal scholar points out that interest groups are able to influence members of Congress legally simply by making donations and waiting for unspecified return favors. The democratic process has been corrupted or hijacked. In the contemporary U.S., elites speak the language of liberty but are perfectly happy to settle for privilege (Foreign Affairs, September/October 2014).

The voting rights of racial minorities and other groups are under suppression. The voting rights in the U.S. are restricted by economic income, race and other factors, and many citizens were prevented from voting. Preliminary exit polls showed that voters of African origins accounted for 12 percent in the 2014 midterm election, down from 13 percent in the 2012 presidential election. Hispanic voters dropped from 10 percent in 2012 to 8 percent and the proportion of Asian voters also reduced to two percent from three percent (www.usatoday.com, November 5, 2014). In 2014, the Supreme Court said that Texas could use its controversial new voter identification law for the November election. Roughly 600,000 voters, many of them

black or Latino, could be turned away at the polls because they lacked acceptable identification (www.dailymail.co.uk, October 18, 2014). Voting rights advocates were up in arms over the socioeconomic and racial factors of these new restrictions (www.upi.com, November 3, 2014). In addition, criminal disenfranchisement removed massive swaths of society from the democratic process as a collateral consequence of conviction. A striking 5.85 million Americans could not vote because of a criminal conviction before. Many disenfranchised citizens lived in Iowa, Kentucky, or Florida -- the three states with extreme policies of disenfranchising anyone with a felony conviction for life (www.aclu.org, November 17, 2014).

The American citizens have increasingly lost confidence in electoral politics. According to most polls, Americans approached the 2014 elections in a sour mood. Two-thirds said the nation had gotten off on the wrong track (www.usatoday.com, November 2, 2014). According to a report by the Huffington Post on December 2, 2014, only nine percent of Americans approved of Congress in the weeks leading up to the midterms elections (www.huffingtonpost.com, December 2, 2014). In contrast to the high costs, general election voter turnout for the 2014 midterms was the lowest in any election cycle since the World War II. As of November 3, 2014, only 36.4 percent of the voting-eligible population cast ballots. Indiana had the lowest turnout rate, with just 28 percent of eligible voters participating (www.washingtonpost.com, November 10, 2014).

III. On Economic and Social Rights

Despite the gradual recovery of the U.S. economy in 2014, unemployment and poverty still threatened the basic right of survival for the U.S. people. The living conditions for homeless people continuously deteriorated; the income and property gaps caused by distribution inequality continued to enlarge; ordinary people's rights of health and education could not be well ensured as relative resources were more frequently used to serve the rich.

Unemployment posed threat to people's basic right of survival. According to the figures released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the unemployment rate of the U.S. in January 2015 stood at 5.7 percent, with some nine million people jobless and 2.8 million of them having been unemployed for 27 weeks or longer. The unemployment rate for teenagers (18.8 percent) increased in January (www.bls.gov). Although overall U.S. unemployment has fallen in 2014, seven million Americans could only find part-time positions. The number of people working part-time

involuntarily is more than 50 percent higher than when the recession began, and almost 30 percent of involuntary part-time workers were unemployed for at least three months in a year (money.cnn.com, November 20, 2014). The unemployment risk forced more people to work on dangerous positions. The BLS data showed that 734 contract workers were killed on the job in the U.S. in 2013, increasing by 35 percent from the 2011 number. A bill known as the Protecting America's Workers Act has been proposed in every Congress since 2004 but has never made it out of committee (www.wsws.org, October 15, 2014).

Poverty rate remained high. Research showed that over 14.5 percent of Americans (about 45 million) lived below the poverty line in 2013, of whom 27.2 percent were African Americans (about 11 million). About 42.5 percent of the African American single-mother families and 14.6 percent of people aged 65 and above (about 6.5 million) lived in poverty (www.huffingtonpost.com, September 16, 2014; seniorjournal.com, October 17, 2014). The high poverty rate left one in seven Americans relying on food pantries and meal service programs to feed themselves and their families (www.usatoday.com, August 17, 2014). Nearly one in five New Yorkers, 1.4 million people, relied on food pantries and soup kitchens across the city to eat. That represented an increase of 200,000 people in five years (The New York Daily News, March 17, 2014). An estimated 322,300 people in 17 Northeast Florida Counties turned to food pantries and meal service programs to feed themselves and their families, and 29 percent were children under age 18 (www.feedingnefl.org, August 27, 2014). On October 20, 2014, the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation and Special Rapporteur on adequate housing of the United Nations voiced their concerns on the cutting-off of water supply for the families that could not pay the water bills in Detroit City, considering it a violation to the right of access to drinking water and other international basic human rights.

The basic living conditions for homeless people deteriorated. Statistics showed that the homeless population reached to over 610,000 in the U.S. in 2014, including high levels of child, youth and veteran homelessness (america.aljazeera.com, May 28, 2014). In recent years, homelessness in New York City has reached the highest levels since the Great Depression of the 1930s. The Basic facts about homelessness: New York City, released by the Coalition for the Homeless in November 2014 showed that in September 2014, there were an all-time record 58,056 homeless people, including 24,631 homeless children (www.coalitionforhethomeless.org). An estimated 850 families in Washington D.C. were projected to be homeless in the winter of 2014, a

16 percent increase from the year before (The Washington Post, October 14, 2014). However, the number of cities that prohibit sleeping in vehicles jumped from 37 in 2011 to 81 in 2014. The number that prohibit sitting or lying in public spaces increased from 70 in 2011 to 100 in 2014 (www.usatoday.com, July 16, 2014). In the U.S., 21 cities have managed to pass legislation banning or restricting organizations from sharing food with homeless populations in public places since January 2013 alone, according to a report by the National Coalition for the Homeless (www.theguardian.com, November 30, 2014). The city of San Jose in California is known as one of the world's most opulent locations, however, San Jose and the surrounding Santa Clara County estimated almost 7,600 homeless people in 2013. In early December 2014, city officials planned to begin shutting down the encampments built by the homeless people along a creek bed. The majority of the people have said they don't know what they're going to do (The Los Angeles Times, December 4, 2014).

The income inequality has been continuously growing. Over the past decade, the incomes of the richest Americans have grown by 86 percent, while the incomes of everyone else have grown at just a little over six percent, according to media report (www.aljazeera.com, January 8, 2014). A Pew Research Center study showed that the percentage of people who classified themselves as middle class has shrunk to 44 percent in 2014 from 53 percent in 2008. At the same time, the study showed, those who classified themselves as lower- or lower-middle class has risen to 40 percent in 2014 vs. 25 percent in 2008 (www.usatoday.com, September 25, 2014). In 2013, the difference in income between the country's rich and poor was the highest in almost 80 years (www.washingtonpost.com, September 2, 2014). In 2014, 65 percent of all Americans believed inequality was growing (www.pewtrusts.org, June 11, 2014).

The health care system was not able to widely protect citizens' right of health. According to Commonwealth Fund's latest findings, the U.S. health care system has the least efficient, least fair and worst health outcomes among the 11 peer nations surveyed. Americans have the highest death rate, the highest infant death rate and worst health at age 60. Yet Americans pay more than double what people in these other nations pay (edition.cnn.com, June 24, 2014).

Statistics revealed that every year, about 42.5 million American adults (or 18.2 percent of the total adult population in the U.S.) suffer from some mental illness, enduring conditions such as depression, bipolar disorder or schizophrenia (www.newsweek.com, February 28, 2014). About 3.7 million Americans with serious

mental illness, psychological distress or a substance abuse disorder are not covered by health insurance (www.pewtrusts.org, April 8, 2014). There's a suicide in the U.S. every 13 minutes. The nearly 40,000 American lives lost each year make suicide the second-leading killer for those aged 15-34 (The USA Today, October 10, 2014). Despite of the insufficient health care, since the beginning of 2010, 43 rural hospitals have closed, each serving about 10,000 people, who are the most vulnerable in the society (The USA Today, November 14, 2014).

The right to education of average people was not effectively protected. A study by the New America Foundation found that 69 percent of private colleges asked students whose families earned \$30,000 or less to turn over half that income for tuition in 2012. College access opportunities were limited only to those who are rich enough to afford it due to high tuition fees (www.businessweek.com, September 18, 2014). Statistics showed that currently 29 percent of the young Americans have less education than their parents. Across the O.E.C.D, an average of 70 percent of three-year-olds are enrolled in education programs, while in the U.S., it's 38 percent (cn.nytimes.com, October 29, 2014).

IV. On Racial Discrimination

Racial discrimination has been a chronic problem in the U.S. human rights record. Facing discrimination in employment and payment, the ethnic minorities are trapped in graver poverty. In 2014, multiple cases of arbitrary police killing of African-Americans have sparked huge waves of protests, casting doubts on the racial "equality" in the U.S. and giving rise to racial hatred factors.

Racial bias in law enforcement and judicial system is very distinct. Compared with other ethnic groups, African-Americans are more likely to become victims of police shooting. Police killings of African-Americans during law enforcement have practically become "normal" in the U.S. According to an analysis of federally collected data, young black males in recent years were at a far greater risk of being shot dead by police than their white counterparts -- 21 times greater. The 1,217 deadly police shootings from 2010 to 2012 captured in the federal data show that African-Americans, age 15 to 19, were killed at a rate of 31.17 per million, while just 1.47 per million white males in that age range died at the hands of police (www.propublica.org, October 10, 2014). Victims of the high-profile deaths caused by police enforcement in 2014 were all African-Americans. The above-mentioned

Ferguson case exposed the feature, gravity and complexity of human rights problems in the U.S. caused by the country's institutional racial discrimination, highlighting the racial discrimination problem in the law enforcement and judicial system. The protests staged around the U.S. were directed against violent law enforcement and injustice, as well as the underlying problem of racial discrimination. When commenting on the cases in Ferguson and other places, a former senior American official said the U.S. criminal justice system was "out of balance" (www.washingtonpost.com, December 4, 2014). Amid sweeping protests against judicial injustice in relevant case, another fatal shooting of an African-American man Romain Brisbon by a white police officer took place in Phoenix, Arizona. "It gives the impression that it's open season for killing black men," some comments said (www.usatoday.com, December 4, 2014).

Ethnic minorities are targeted in law enforcement sting operations. The U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives overwhelmingly targeted racial and ethnic minorities as it expanded its use of controversial drug sting operations. At least 91 percent of the people agents have locked up using those stings were racial or ethnic minorities, and nearly all were either black or Hispanic (www.usatoday.com, July, 20, 2014). Just under a quarter of Boston's population is black, but black residents are 63 percent of those stopped-and-frisked by the Boston Police Department (www.washingtonpost.com, October 8, 2014). African-Americans are far more likely to be arrested than any other racial group in the U.S. More than 1,581 police departments across the U.S. arrest African-American people at rates over three times higher than people of other races. At least 70 departments arrested African-Americans at a rate 10 times higher than people who are not black. According to reports submitted by Dearborn police, the arrest rate for African-Americans, compared with the city's population, was 26 times higher than for people of other races (www.usatoday.com, November 18, 2014). According to a study by the Vera Institute of Justice, in Manhattan, race is a statistically significant factor in most of the discretion points in criminal justice procedures, from bail through plea bargaining and sentencing. A law professor with the Harvard University has criticized that "blacks are not yet full citizens" and that deep rooted prejudices have "made black people, particularly young black men, presumptive felons outside the boundaries of full citizenship" (www.ft.com, August 17, 2014). UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, has urged the US authorities "to conduct in-depth examinations into how race-related issues are affecting law enforcement and the administration of justice, both at the federal and state levels" (www.un.org, November 25, 2014).

Ethnic minorities are facing with discrimination in employment and payment. Figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics revealed that in October 2014, unemployment

rate with white Americans was 4.6 percent whereas the rate with African-Americans was 10.7 percent (Bureau of Labor Statistics report USDL-15-0158 www.bls.gov, February 6, 2015). In Texas, African-Americans, aged 18 to 34, have an unemployment rate of 18 percent, while the rate of young white adults stands at 7 percent (www.houstonchronicle.com, January 6, 2015). Religious discrimination in employment is also serious. Muslims were least likely to be contacted by employers, and atheists and pagans were also unpopular (www.washingtonpost.com, June 18, 2014). Black workers are concentrated in low-prestige and low-wage occupations (www.msnbc.com, August 6, 2014). Major tech companies have begun owning up to the fact that blacks and Hispanics are vastly underrepresented in their ranks. African-Americans and Hispanics are missing on the management teams of major technology companies. A survey found that of the 307 top executives at 22 companies, six are black and three are Hispanic. That's less than 3 percent (www.usatoday.com, November 13, 2014). Only 1 percent of the Google's tech workforce is black (www.washingtonpost.com, May 29, 2014). Hispanic, Asian and African-Americans are also subject to prevalent discrimination in salaries. A report from the American Institute for Economic Research revealed that Hispanics earn \$16,353 a year less on average than their colleagues who are not Hispanic. In the same high-skilled positions such as computer programmers and software developers, Asians make \$8,146 less than whites and blacks \$3,656 less than whites. "At every point in the hiring process hidden bias trickles in" (www.usatoday.com, October 10, 2014).

Poverty of minority groups is worsening. Overall 17 percent of all Americans are Hispanic, but Hispanics are over represented among the poor, making up 28.1 percent of the more than 45 million poor Americans and 37 percent of the 14.5 million children in poverty. In the old age group (65 years or older), Hispanics have the highest poverty rate of any racial or ethnic group. A total of 20 percent of Hispanics in this age group are poor, compared with about 10 percent nationwide (www.pewresearch.org, September 19, 2014). Nearly 60 percent of shelter residents are minorities with African Americans three times more likely to be homeless compared to the overall U.S. population. Black children under age 5 are 29 times more likely to end up in an emergency shelter than their white counterparts (www.christianpost.com, November 27, 2014).

Racial discrimination sows the seeds for race-related hate crimes. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, the number of domestic hate groups rose from 602 in 2000 to 939 in 2013. An annual Justice Department survey of crime victims found

that more than 293,000 hate crimes were committed in 2012. That's 800 a day. Nearly 20 percent of the hate-crime perpetrators were 17 and younger (www.usatoday.com, April 16, 2014). On April 13, 2014, Frazier Glenn Cross, a 73-year-old white supremacist, shot and killed three people at two Jewish sites of Greater Kansas City (edition.cnn.com, April 14, 2014).

2014 marks the 50th anniversary of the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. According to a survey by the Pew Research Center, only 45 percent of Americans said the U.S. had made substantial progress toward racial equality since the event. A CBS News poll found that 46 percent of Americans said there would always be a lot of prejudice and discrimination (www.pewresearch.org, April 9, 2014).

V. On Women and Children's Rights

The U.S. disregarded the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In the U.S., women's susceptibility to poverty, workplace discrimination, domestic violence and sex harassment was worrying. The children's rights to life and health were threatened under the pall of school violence, sex molestation, gun violence, and hazardous work environment.

A large number of women and children lived in poverty. According to statistics, about 42 million women (about one in three American women) and 28 million children lived in poverty or were right on the brink of it (www.time.com, January 13, 2014). One in 30 American children were homeless, and child homelessness increased in 31 states and the District of Columbia, according to a report released by the National Center on Family Homelessness (www.theguardian.com, November 17, 2014).

Women were faced with wage discrimination. Nearly two-thirds of minimum wage workers were women, and these workers often got zero paid sick days. The average woman was paid 77 cents for every dollar a man makes, and that figure was much lower for African American and Latino women; African American women earned only 64 cents and Hispanic women only 55 cents for every dollar made by a white man (www.time.com, January 13, 2014). In virtually every job category, the average woman earned less than the average man. Even in those low-paid jobs that tend to be dominated by women, such as nurses, men earned more (www.thinkprogress.org, April 8, 2014).

Reports of female soldiers getting harassed were on the rise. In an average day in the U.S. military, at least 16 sexual assaults were reported. According to a RAND survey, 13,000 incidents of "unwanted sexual contact," went unreported during the 12 months ending September 30, 2014 (www.usatoday.com, November 7, 2014). According to a report released by the U.S. Department of Defense, there were a total of 5,983 incidents of sexual assaults in the fiscal year ending in September of 2014, up by over 8 percent from the fiscal year ending in 2013 (www.america.aljazeera.com, December 4, 2014). Some 62% of female victims said they faced repercussions for reporting assaults (www.bbc.com, December 5, 2014).

Domestic violence was prevalent. According to data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice, the estimated number of domestic violence incidents per year was about 960,000. Women constituted 85 percent of victims of domestic violence. On average, 3 females were murdered by their partner each day, and 4 females and 3 children died each day as a result of abuse. Each year, 2.1 million American women were assaulted by men (www.statisticbrain.com, September 5, 2014). Since 2014, over 1,000 complaints concerning children in foster care being mistreated in California languished past the deadline for completing the investigations (*The Los Angeles Times*, September 13, 2014).

Issues of school gun violence and sexual harassment were grave. In the first six weeks of 2014 alone, there were 13 school shootings including one eight-day period in which there were four shootings in K-12 schools (www.everytown.org, February 5, 2014). On the afternoon of January 17, 2014, a boy and a girl, both aged 15, were shot in two school shootings in Philadelphia (*Washington Daily News*, January 18, 2014). Sex violence in American high schools was astonishing. According to a survey by the American Association of University Women, in a given school year, 58 percent of 7th-12th graders experienced sexual harassment. One in 5 high school girls said they had been sexually assaulted at school, and 1 in 8 high school girls said she had been raped. One expert said the survey had revealed the astounding pervasiveness of this problem (www.america.aljazeera.com, November 14, 2014). A culture of sex violence was casting a pall over American campus, but failed to be dealt with properly by any American higher learning institutions (*The Wall Street Journal*, September 30, 2014).

Child laborers were engaged in dangerous works. American Labor Law allows juniors to work, as long as his or her parents consent and the work does not directly conflict with school hours. That means, it is perfectly legal for a 12-year-old to work 50 or 60 hours a week in tobacco fields. Based on interviews with 141 child tobacco workers, aged 7 to 17, in the country's four largest tobacco-producing states: North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia, nearly three-quarters of children interviewed reported feeling sick - with nausea, vomiting, headaches, dizziness, difficulty in breathing, or other serious symptoms while working in tobacco fields. Many of these symptoms were consistent with acute nicotine poisoning (www.politico.com, September 16, 2014).

VI. On Violations of Human Rights in Other Countries

In the field of international human rights, the U.S. has long refused to approve some core human rights conventions of the United Nations and voted against some important UN human rights resolutions. More than that, the U.S. continued to go even further to violate human rights in other countries, including infringing on the privacy of citizens of other countries with the overseas monitoring project, killing large number of innocent civilians of other countries in drone strikes, and raping and killing locals by U.S. soldiers garrisoned overseas.

The Central Intelligence Agency abused torture. As of December 2014, 136 prisoners remained locked up in the Guantanamo Bay military prison (www.latimes.com, December 8, 2014). As disclosed in the Senate Intelligence Committee report released on December 9, the CIA paid a contractor 80 million U.S. dollars to come up with ways to torture people. To acquire intelligence from suspects of terrorism and extremism, the CIA used brutal methods, such as sleep deprivation, waterboarding, long-term solitary confinement, slamming prisoners' head against the wall, lashing, death threat and even the appalling "rectal rehydration" (www.intelligence.senate.gov, December 3, 2014). Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, a prisoner held by the CIA in Afghanistan, was tortured with water-boarding for 183 times (www.foxnews.com, April 1, 2014). According to CIA records, many agents implementing waterboarding felt sick, wanted to vomit, and some wanted to cry and felt suffocated (www.intelligence.senate.gov, December 3, 2014). Some detainees also underwent sexual assault. Mohamedou Ould Slahi, held in Guantanamo for 12 years without evidence and court trial, published a diary he wrote in prison. According to the diary, published by German weekly Der Spiegel, Slahi suffered from a variety of tortures, including savage beating, starvation, prohibition of prayer and sexual abuse (www.spiegel.de, January 20, 2015). The Los Angeles Times said in an editorial that the report showed American post-9/11 shame, as well as stomach-

turning details of torture. On April 9, 2014, the U.S. executed Mexican citizen Ramiro Hernandez Llanas without granting him access to consular assistance, a flagrant violation of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations. On April 11, 2014, the spokesperson for the UN high commission for human rights slammed the U.S. saying that its execution of foreign nationals while depriving them of the rights of obtaining consular assistance constituted an act of arbitrary deprivation of life, which violated the international law, including the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights approved by the U.S.

Massive overseas surveillance program violated other countries' sovereignty and civil rights. Ever since Edward Snowden blew the whistle on the PRISM data mining program of the National Security Agency (NSA) in June 2013, more surveillance programs of the U.S. authorities were revealed, and in larger scales. The NSA intercepted phone conversations of 35 world leaders, including Secretary-General of the United Nations, German chancellor and Brazilian president (www.theguardian.com, October 25, 2013). According to a Washington Post report on January 2, 2014, the NSA had a quantum computer development project, coded as "Penetrating Hard Targets," for the purpose of cracking common passwords on the Internet, and stealing encrypted information of government organs, enterprises and banks around the world (www.washingtonpost.com, January 2, 2014). In another project, code-named "Quantum," the NSA installed micro circuit boards or USB storage cards in nearly 100,000 computers around the world, through the channels of "spies, computer makes and unwitting users," obtained data from the computers via receiving radio waves emitted from these devices, and launched cyber attacks on target computers (www.washingtonpost.com, January 14, 2014 and www.huffingtonpost.com, January 14, 2014). Another program, codenamed "Dishfire," collected up to 200 million mobile phone text messages each day from around the globe, while program "Prefer" conducted automated analysis on these messages to acquire users' locations, networks and credit card transaction details (www.theguardian.com, January 6, 2014).

Frequent use of drones producing massive civilian casualties in other countries. Statistics showed that as of November 24, 2014, U.S. drones claimed the lives of 1,147 people in attacks against 41 persons, which meant the death of 28 civilians including women and children to kill every 'bad guy' the U.S. went after (www.theguardian.com, November 14, 2014). In Yemen, U.S. drone bombing and air strikes killed estimated 753 to 965 people, including at least 81 civilians, from the beginning of 2014 to mid April. (www.washingtonpost.com, September 11, 2014).

Frequent violation of human rights by U.S. troops overseas. On July 25, 2014, two American soldiers based near the northern Italian town Vicenza, Gray Lamarcus and Ides McCough, were accused of raping and beating a six month pregnant Romanian woman (www.thedailybeast.com, July 25, 2014). On October 15, 2014, the Philippine police accused American marine Joseph Scott Pemberton of murdering a transgender (www.cbsnews.com, October 15, 2014).

Take its own way on international human rights law. To date, the U.S. still denies that the right of development is a human right. In September 2014, when a draft resolution on the right of development was tabled for a vote at the 27th session of the Human Rights Council, the U.S. once again was the only nation to vote against it (www.ohchr.org, adopted resolution A/HRC/RES/27/2). Though the U.S. signed the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1977, it has not ratified it so far. Though the U.S. claimed it valued the rights of women and children, yet 34 years after it signed the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, it has not ratified the treaty. It has neither ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child 19 years after signing it. Besides, the U.S. remained inactive on foreign debts and human rights to evade its responsibility. It voted against the draft resolution of "the effects of foreign debt on the enjoyment of all human rights" at meetings of the UN Human Rights Council in March and September in 2014 respectively (UN document A/HRC/RES/25/16).