

The Right to Development: China's Philosophy, Practice and Contribution

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Preamble

Development is a universal human theme, providing for people's basic needs and giving them hope of better life. The right to development is an inalienable human right, symbolizing dignity and honor. Only through development can we address global challenges; only through development can we protect basic civil rights of the people; only through development can we promote the progress of human society.

China, with a population of over 1.3 billion, is the largest developing country in the world. Development is the top priority of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in

governance and national revitalization, and the key to resolving all other problems. Based on its prevailing conditions, China adheres to the Chinese socialist path and to the philosophy that development is of paramount importance. China integrates the principle of universal application of human rights with the country's reality. While striving to enhance the people's wellbeing through development and materialize their right to development, China endeavors to achieve higher-level development by protecting their right to development. In this regard, China has made notable progress and blazed a path in protecting human rights during the development of human civilization.

Since the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012, the CPC Central Committee with Xi Jinping as its core has highlighted the idea of people-centered development. In the course of realizing the Two Centenary Goals [Note: The two goals are to complete the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects by the centenary of the CPC (founded in 1921) and to build China into a modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, and harmonious by the centenary of the People's Republic of China (founded in 1949).] and the Chinese Dream of revitalizing the Chinese nation, it has focused on safeguarding and improving people's wellbeing, advancing all social programs, and protecting people's rights to equal participation and development. The aim is to share development benefits and achieve common prosperity among all people of the country.

On the 30th anniversary of the publication of the "Declaration on the Right to Development by the United Nations," China, dedicated to advocating, practicing and promoting the right to development, is willing to join the international community to share its philosophy and experience in this regard and to boost sound development of global human rights.

I.The Philosophy of the Right to Development Abreast with the Times

Equal access to development opportunities and development benefits are the ideals of human society wherein each and every citizen can achieve well-rounded development and enjoy full right to development.

The Chinese people are diligent, wise, innovative and progressive. In traditional Chinese culture, concepts such as "moderate prosperity" (xiao-kang), "great harmony" (datong), "having ample food and clothing" (fengyi zushi) and "living and

working in peace and contentment" (anju leye) fully reflect the Chinese people's aspiration for and pursuit of a better, happier life. In the long course of history, the Chinese people have always striven for better and shared development opportunities, conditions and benefits. In ancient times, China was for long the world leader in agriculture, and contributed to human progress with extraordinary development achievements. Studies reveal that until the mid-19th century, China's GDP and per capita GDP were the world's highest. Before the 16th century, China contributed 173 of the world's top 300 innovations and discoveries.

After the Industrial Revolution started in the 18th century, China began losing its leadership. Foreign aggression and expansion by Western colonialists completely destroyed conditions for development in China. Repeated invasions by foreign powers, particularly from the West, from 1840 to 1949, and China's corrupt ruling class and backward social system reduced China to a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society. There was constant warfare, an unstable society, economic depression, no security of livelihood, and extreme poverty. The Cambridge History of China: Republican China 1912-1949 describes China's situation in the first half of 20th century as follows: "...the great majority of Chinese merely sustained and reproduced themselves at the subsistence level ... the standard of life for many fell short even of that customary level." [Note: The Cambridge History of China (Volume 12): Republican China 1912-1949 Part I, Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 28.] "As a system, China's economy which was 'pre-modern' even in the mid-twentieth century ceased to be viable only after 1949..." [Note: Ibid. p. 29.] In these 110 years, the Chinese people struggled arduously for their right to development and equal access to development opportunity. The Chinese people are fully aware of the value of development and of their right to development.

The founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949 ushered in a new era for China's development. The PRC has provided full development opportunities and conditions to the people, and vast scope to realize that right. Through more than 60 years of effort, China's overall national strength has greatly increased; standards of living have achieved a historical leap from poverty to moderate prosperity; the people's right to development in economy, politics, culture, society and environment has been effectively protected.

China feeds more than 20 percent of the world's population with less than 10 percent of the world's arable land. Through more than 30 years of reform and

opening-up, China has lifted 700 million people out of poverty, accounting for more than 70 percent of the global reduction in poverty. China has established the world's largest social security system, and average life expectancy had grown from 35 years in 1949 to 76.34 years in 2015, ranking high among the developing countries. The level of education has soared: in 1949, more than 80 percent of the national population was illiterate, and the enrollment rate of school-age children was only 20 percent. In 2015, net enrollment rates were as follows: primary school-age children - 99.88 percent; nine-year compulsory education -- 93 percent; high school - 87 percent. The enrollment rate for higher education has reached a level approaching that of medium-developed countries. According to the "China National Human Development Report 2016" released by the United Nations, China's Human Development Index (HDI) in 2014 ranked 90th among 188 countries, already in the high human development group.

Over the years, proceeding from reality and following the trend of the times, China has maintained the people's principal position in the country and created its own path by taking the central task of economic development and upholding the Four Cardinal Principles [Note: The Four Cardinal Principles refer to the principles of adhering to the socialist path, the people's democratic dictatorship, the leadership of the CPC, and Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. The Four Cardinal Principles are the foundation of the state, and the political cornerstone for the survival and development of the Party and the state.] and the policy of reform and opening-up to serve its practice of Chinese socialism, and following the philosophy of innovative, balanced, eco-friendly, open and shared development, and thus contributed to enriching and improving the concept of right to development.

The rights to subsistence and development are the primary, basic human rights. Poverty is the biggest obstacle to human rights. Without the production and supply of material goods, it is difficult or even impossible to realize any other human right. Development is a means of eliminating poverty. It provides necessary conditions for realizing other human rights, and releases human potential. The right to development is incorporated into other human rights, while the latter create the conditions for people to facilitate development and realize the right to development. Safeguarding the right to development is the precondition for realizing economic, cultural, social and environmental rights, and obtaining civil and political rights. China appreciates the articulation in the UN's "Declaration on the Right to Development" : "The right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of

which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized."

The people hold the principal position concerning the right to development. China values the people's supremacy and regards the people as the fundamental driver of development, striving for the people, relying on the people, and sharing among the people. It takes improving popular wellbeing and well-rounded development as the starting point and ultimate goal, and fully mobilizes people's enthusiasm, initiative and creativity to participate in, contribute to and benefit from development. To build a moderately prosperous society in all respects and realize the Chinese Dream of revitalizing the Chinese nation means to provide better education, more secure employments, more satisfying income, more reliable social security, better medical services, more comfortable housing, and a better environment, so that all individuals can develop, contribute to society, and share the opportunity to pursue excellence and realize their dreams.

The right to development is a unity of individual and collective human rights. China values both individual and collective human rights as well as balance and mutual promotion between the two. "The free development of each individual is the condition for the free development of all people." Only through individual development can a collective develop; only in a collective can individuals achieve well-rounded development. The right to development is a human right owned by each individual as well as by the country, the nation and the entire population. The right to development can be maximized only in the unity of individuals and collective. China values the articulation in UN's "Declaration on the Right to Development" : "Equality of opportunity for development is a prerogative both of nations and of individuals who make up nations." They are all entitled to participate in and share the benefits of development on an equal basis.

The realization of the right to development is a historical course. There is no end either to development or to realizing the right to development. The latter is an ongoing process of improvement. China is still in the primary stage of socialism and will long remain so. The inadequacy in meeting the ever-growing material and cultural needs of the people because of backward social production will remain the principal social problem. As a major developing country, China faces challenging problems and heavy tasks in development. In pursuit of more equal participation and

development, China needs consistent efforts to fully realize the people's right to development.

The protection of the right to development must be sustainable. Sustainable development is a prerequisite for materializing the right to development, an embodiment of intergenerational equity. Imbalanced, uncoordinated and unequal development reflects unsustainable development, as does an extensive development model. China is pursuing a sustainable approach to production, utilization and consumption of natural resources. China now follows a sustainable and resilient socio-economic development path so as to meet the needs of both present and future generations. China has a development mindset of balance and sustainability, regarding the harmonious development between humanity and nature, between economy and society, as a new means of realizing and protecting the right to development.

The right to development must be enjoyed and shared by all peoples. Realizing the right to development is the responsibility of all countries and also the obligation of the international community. It requires governments of all countries to formulate development strategies and policies suited to their own realities, and it requires concerted efforts of the international community as a whole. China calls on all countries to pursue equal, open, all-round and innovative common development, promotes inclusive development, and creates conditions for all peoples to share the right to development. Global economic governance must be based on equality. It must better reflect the new world economic pattern, give an enhanced voice and representation to emerging markets and developing countries, ensure that all countries enjoy equality of rights, opportunities and rules in international economic cooperation, and ensure the right to development is shared.

II. The System Ensuring the People's Right to Development

China has established an integrated system of legislature, strategy development, planning, and judicial remedy to ensure its people's right to development, and makes continued efforts to improve it. The people's right to development is realized through a framework of institutions, strategies, policies and measures that are constructive, practical, efficient, and compulsory.

The Constitution and Laws

China has established a legal system with Chinese characteristics. With the Constitution at the core, it is based on laws related to the Constitution, the civil laws, the commercial laws, and other major branches of the laws, and consists of laws, administrative regulations, and local regulations, providing a legal basis for the people's right to development.

As the nation's fundamental law, the Constitution establishes and protects the people's right to development in all respects. In the Preamble, equal development is set as the fundamental guiding principle, and the nation's core task is to "promote the coordinated development of the material, political and spiritual civilizations, and to turn China into a socialist country that is prosperous, powerful, democratic and culturally advanced." The Constitution establishes such principles as the people's democracy, equal development, and stipulates that "All power in the People's Republic of China belongs to the people" ; "The people administer state affairs and manage economic and cultural undertakings and social affairs through various channels and in various ways in accordance with the provisions of law" ; "The state develops a relationship of equality, unity and mutual assistance among all of China's nationalities." Article 33 of the Constitution sets the fundamental principle that "The state respects and preserves human rights." In Chapter II, the Constitution stipulates the Chinese citizens' right to economic, political, cultural, and social development.

China has promulgated and implemented a series of laws and regulations to protect the right to development of all citizens, especially that of the ethnic minorities, women, children, senior citizens, and the disabled. The Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy stipulates that people of all ethnic minority groups shall "speed up the economic and cultural development of the ethnic autonomous areas, work towards their unity and prosperity, and strive for the common prosperity of all ethnic groups and for the transformation of China into a socialist country with a high level of culture and democracy." The Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests stipulates that "Women shall enjoy equal rights with men in all aspects of political, economic, cultural, social and family life. It is a basic state policy to realize equality between men and women. The state shall take necessary measures to gradually improve various systems for the protection of the rights and interests of women and to eliminate all kinds of discrimination against women." The Law on the Protection of Minors stipulates that "Minors shall enjoy the right to life, the right to development, the right to being protected, and the right to participation." The Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Elderly stipulates that "The state shall

protect the lawful rights and interests of the elderly. The elderly shall have the right to obtain material assistance from the state and society, the right to enjoy social services and social preferential treatment, and the right to participate in social development and share the achievements in development." The Law on the Protection of Disabled Persons stipulates that "Disabled persons shall enjoy equal rights with other citizens in political, economic, cultural, social, family life and other aspects."

National Development Strategies

The world is a colorful place, with many different development patterns. Summarizing its historical experience and based on its prevailing conditions, China has chosen a socialist path. It strives to build socialism with Chinese characteristics, create a beautiful life for the Chinese people, and realize the people's right to development.

To build socialism with Chinese characteristics, China sets its national development strategies based on the need to protect and realize its people's right to development. In the early 1980s, the CPC proposed the "three-step" development strategy: First, to double the 1981 GNP and ensure the provision of basic material needs by 1990; second, to double the 1991 GNP by the end of the 20th century and bring people's living standards to a level of "reasonable prosperity" ; and third, to quadruple that new GNP to the level of moderately developed countries by the mid-21st century, and bring the Chinese people an affluent life.

At the 15th CPC National Congress in 1997, the third step was made more specific, and a new "three-step" strategy for the first half of the 21st century was put forward. First, in the first decade of the 21st century, to double GNP compared to the 2000 level, raise levels of prosperity, and form a relatively complete socialist market economy; second, with ten more years' hard work, to further develop the economy and improve various institutions by the centenary of the founding of the CPC; and third, to achieve basic modernization and complete the building of a socialist country that is prosperous, democratic, and culturally advanced by the centenary of the founding of the People's Republic of China in the mid-21st century.

After entering the 21st century, the CPC set itself the strategic task of building a "moderately prosperous society in all respects." Since the 18th CPC National

Congress in 2012, the Party's Central Committee, with Xi Jinping as its core, has set the "people's wish for a better life" as its goal of governance, and defined the Two Centenary Goals. That is, to enable the people to live prosperous lives and complete the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects by 2020, the centenary of the CPC (founded in 1921), and to bring China's per capita GDP on par with that of moderately developed countries, and build China into a modern socialist country that is prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced, and harmonious by the centenary of the PRC (founded in 1949) in the mid-21st century.

To achieve the Two Centenary Goals, the CPC strives to promote coordinated progress in economic, political, cultural, social, and ecological areas, and to implement the Four-pronged Comprehensive Strategy, viz., building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, driving reform to a deeper-level, fully implementing the rule of law, and strengthening Party discipline. Based on economic growth, the Party will continue to build the socialist market economy, promote democracy, advanced culture, ecological progress, and a harmonious society, and ensure that the people are better-off, that the nation grows stronger and more prosperous, and that the environment is clean and beautiful, and that the people's right to development is protected and promoted in a more solid and effective manner.

Overall Development Plans

In accordance with the goal to build a modern socialist country and the associated development strategies, the Chinese government regularly makes national development plans to ensure the people's right to development. In the period between 1953 and 2001, it issued national development plans every five years addressing issues concerning the country's economy, culture, and society. After 2006 the plan has been changed to program which is less detailed, with fewer numerical targets to guide the macro-economy and social development. To date China has made 13 consecutive five-year plans (including the program starting from 2006) for the nation's economic and social development. These plans have connected the country's overall development goals to the concrete plans to implement them, and are divided into different stages to steadily promote the people's right to development, with mid- and long-term guidelines, goals and directions, basic requirements, and specific measures.

On October 29, 2015, the Fifth Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee approved the "Suggestions of the CPC Central Committee on Developing the 13th Five-Year Program for National Economic and Social Development." On March 16,

2016, the Fourth Session of the 12th National People's Congress approved by vote the "Outline of the 13th Five-Year Development Program of the People's Republic of China for National Economic and Social Development." Following the new philosophies on development and based on universal participation and benefits, China stresses equal opportunities, with an emphasis on ensuring basic living standards, improving the people's wellbeing, and realizing a moderately prosperous society for all the people. China has made breakthroughs in equal access to the fruits of development, mainly in increasing the supply of public services, carrying out poverty eradication programs, enhancing the quality of education, granting equal access to educational resources, promoting employment and entrepreneurship, bridging the income gap, establishing a fairer and more sustainable social security system, enhancing public health and fitness, and strengthening the balanced development of the people.

China ensures its people's right to development also by making national human rights action plans. It has issued the "National Human Rights Action Plan" (2009-2010), (2012-2015), and (2016-2020). In these plans, the government puts the people's right to development at the core of human rights, and strives to address the most immediate problems that are of the most concern to the public. While promoting the sound and rapid development of the economy and society, China ensures that all members of the society enjoy the rights to equal participation and equal development.

Special Action Plans

The Chinese government formulates special action plans in the fields of economy, culture, society, and environment to ensure people's right to development. It has implemented a wide array of action plans in areas such as poverty alleviation, the Internet, innovation and entrepreneurship, science and technology, trade, and regional development. Specifically, these plans have been designed to promote entrepreneurship and innovation among farmers, to send agricultural specialists to rural areas to develop agriculture, to develop rural and agricultural resources in support of rural migrant workers who return to their home villages to start businesses, to improve people's lives by developing high-tech industries in selected counties, to transform the growth model of the western areas through science and technology, and to revitalize the old industrial bases in the Northeast through science and technology. The state has effectively implemented a series of action

plans regarding educational development, health improvement, awards for high-caliber professionals, and the cultural industry, such as the action plans to revitalize education in the 21st century, to enhance teachers' status in the stage of compulsory education in rural areas, to promote special education, to help girls who have dropped out of school to return to campus, and to support the more developed cities in the eastern areas to train professionals for the western areas. China has implemented a series of action plans regarding employment, social security, food and medical care, disability prevention, and health and fitness, such as the Spring Breeze Action Plan to promote employment, and other plans to realize full coverage of social security, to eliminate malaria, to prevent and control nosocomial infection, to carry out rehabilitation programs for children with impairments and disabilities, to reduce the number of newborns with defects and disabilities, to prevent incidences of disability, and to improve the nutritional status and fitness of the Chinese. The state has issued action plans on pollution prevention and control, energy conservation, and biodiversity, such as action plans to prevent and control water pollution, to reduce high-risk pollutants, to utilize coal in a clean and efficient manner, to upgrade and renovate coal power for energy saving and emissions reduction, to build obstacle-free cities or counties for the disabled, and to protect biodiversity.

China has also made special plans to ensure the right to development of ethnic minorities, women, children, the elderly, and the disabled. The plans include those on the development of ethnic minorities, of women, of children, of the elderly, and of the disabled persons, with clear goals and targeted policies for different groups to solve the problems hindering their development, ensuring that they can pursue self-development and enjoy the fruits of reform on an equal basis.

The Judicial Remedy Mechanism

China is making enhanced efforts to strengthen the judicial protection and remedy to ensure the people's right to development. It has built a judicial remedy mechanism in this regard to prevent and punish infringements of people's right to development.

The government is driving the reform of the judicial relief system to a deeper level to ensure the right to development of disadvantaged groups. The state provides judicial relief to victims of crimes or parties suffering from infringements of civil rights who cannot obtain effective compensation through litigation, and provides help to parties

in certain types of cases who are in dire need of relief and are entitled to such relief. Eligible parties mainly receive relief money, and help in the forms of consultation and education. Judicial relief complements legal aid and litigation relief, and is linked with other forms of social relief and aid. The government is conducting research on opening first-aid fast track at hospitals for those injured in criminal cases, providing psychotherapy for victims with severe PTSD cases, and sending social workers to help immobilized victims, so as to further enhance judicial relief. In 2014 the state issued the "Opinions on Establishing and Improving the National Judicial Relief System (trial)," which was followed by a marked expansion in the scale and increases in the number of judicial relief cases. In 2014 and 2015, the central government and local governments allocated a total of RMB2.47 billion and RMB2.95 billion for judicial relief funds, benefiting over 80,000 parties concerned in 2014. In 2013-2015 people's courts at all levels reduced or exempted a total of RMB625 million for litigation parties, ensuring the right to litigation of the poor.

The government strives to strengthen the effectiveness of legal aid, and ensures the right of impoverished people to judicial relief. In 1994, China began to form a legal aid system, providing free consultation, agency, criminal defense, and other legal services to people in need. In 2003, the State Council issued the Regulations on Legal Aid to define the scale of legal aid, delegating the power to the people's governments of provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities directly under the central government to supplement the issues to be covered by legal aid, and set the standards for receiving legal aid in light of the local conditions. Currently there are 23 provinces that have expanded the scope of issues covered by legal aid, and 19 provinces have adjusted the standards for receiving legal aid. The Criminal Procedural Law (revised in 2012) included suspects as recipients of legal aid, alongside defendants. Over the past five years, the number of legal aid cases has been growing by 11.4 percent annually, and women, children, the elderly, the disabled, and rural migrant workers have received timely and higher quality legal aid services. In May 2015, at its 12th meeting, the CPC Central Leading Group for Overall and Further Reforms reviewed and approved the "Opinions on Improving the Legal Aid System," with measures to further enlarge the coverage of legal aid for civil and administrative lawsuits, reduce the thresholds for receiving legal aid, and gradually make legal aid available to low-income groups to benefit people in need.

The government strengthens judicial remedy to protect the right to development of disadvantaged groups. China has always attached importance to the judicial

protection of the right to development and other basic human rights in criminal cases. The state punishes crimes targeted at women, children, the elderly, the disabled, and rural migrant workers, and strengthens the protection of special groups' rights to healthy physical and psychological development and their economic and social rights. The government strives to prevent or severely punish the abduction and trafficking of women and children, and such crimes have been effectively curbed. The state has issued the "Opinions on Punishing Sex Crimes Against Minors" and the "Opinions on Handling the Infringements of Minors' Rights and Interests by Guardians," so as to enhance the judicial protection of minors' rights and interests. The state has promulgated the "Opinions on Safeguarding the Legitimate Rights and Interests of Disabled Persons in Procuratorial Work," mandating severe punishment for crimes that infringe upon the rights and interests of disabled people in accordance with the law.

The government attaches importance to the role of arbitration, and protects the equal right to development of certain groups. By ending disputes through arbitration and punishing infringements according to law, China endeavors to strengthen procedure-based protection of the people's rights. By the end of 2015, 80 percent of township- and community-level employment and social security centers had set up organizations to mediate labor disputes, up by 14 percent from the 2014 figure. A total of 2,919 administrative divisions at or above county level (about 91 percent of the total) had arbitration offices for labor disputes, up by 208 percent compared with the figure of 946 at the end of the 11th Five-Year Plan period (2006-2010). In 2010-2015, China's mediation and arbitration organizations handled a total of 7.57 million cases, bringing 90 percent to a conclusion.

III. Effectively Realizing Economic Development

China always considers economic development as the central task, laying a solid foundation for safeguarding the right to development. At the same time economic development is strengthened by safeguarding the people's right to development. Since the reform and opening-up policy was launched in 1978, China has witnessed rapid economic growth, and has become the world's second largest economy. There have been two historic leaps in living standards, from living in poverty to having access to basic material needs, and then to moderate prosperity.

The right to subsistence of the poor is effectively guaranteed. The poverty reduction campaign in China is the most significant sign of China's progress in human rights.

Since the end of 1978, China has realized "the most rapid large-scale poverty reduction in human history over the last 25 years." [Note: "Reducing Poverty on a Global Scale: Learning and Innovating for Development Findings from the Shanghai Global Learning Initiative," a World Bank document on Nov. 14, 2016.] According to the existing rural poverty standards, it has reduced the number of those living in poverty by more than 700 million, which is more than the total population of the United States, Russia, Japan and Germany, and cut the rate of poverty to 5.7 percent, becoming the first country to complete the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. By the end of 2015, the number of rural people living in poverty had fallen to 55.75 million. In the five autonomous regions of Inner Mongolia, Guangxi, Tibet, Ningxia and Xinjiang, and in the provinces of Guizhou, Yunnan, and Qinghai, where ethnic minorities are concentrated, the number of rural people living in poverty had fallen to 18.13 million. China's poverty reduction campaign has effectively contributed to granting its disadvantaged people the right to development, laying a solid foundation for the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects. In November 2015, the CPC Central Committee and the State Council issued the "Decision on Winning the Tough Battle Against Poverty," making comprehensive arrangements for poverty eradication work in the following five years. In March 2016, the "Outline of the 13th Five-Year Program for the National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China" was published, in which the Chinese government made strategic plans for the full implementation of the overall goal of poverty eradication. In order to realize the ambitious goal of relieving the rural poor population of poverty by 2020, China is carrying out a basic strategy of targeted poverty alleviation and targeted poverty eradication.

The right to work is fully realized. Economic development creates more jobs. Urban and rural employment continued to increase from 761 million in 2010 to 775 million in 2015. Within these figures, urban employment increased from 347 million to 404 million, representing an average annual increase of more than 11 million. In 2015 urban employment increased by 13.12 million, and the registered urban unemployment rate by the end of the year was 4.05 percent, showing steady progress in this work. From 2008 to 2015, the central government assigned a total of RMB305.51 billion as subsidies to be used in employment. Since 2009, the Chinese government has implemented a policy of financial discount for small-sum guaranteed loans to women. By June 2016, a total of RMB279.4 billion in loans had been provided to 5.38 million women, supporting more than 10 million, including women classified as poor, to start their own businesses or find work. The number of

women in employment has increased continuously and their positions have improved. In 2014, employed women accounted for 45 percent of the total workforce in China, and female professional and technical personnel accounted for 46.5 percent of the national total. The government strengthens skill training to promote more equitable sharing of job opportunities through capacity-building. By the end of 2015, the total number of skilled workers in the country had reached 167 million, of whom 45.01 million were highly skilled. The government actively promotes transfer of the rural labor force to employment in local or nearby places, ensuring that 65 percent can find employment within the local county economy. The government vigorously develops the service industry, creating jobs for rural migrant workers, and setting up farmers' markets and food stalls with reduced or zero fees. As a result, more than 80 percent of rural migrant workers have found jobs in small and micro businesses. The government also encourages rural migrant workers to return home and start businesses. By the end of 2015, 4.5 million rural migrant workers had returned home to start businesses, and rural small and micro businesses amounted to 6.99 million. By the end of 2014, China had 15.46 million private enterprises, and nearly 50 million self-employed businesses, representing increases of 83 percent and 44 percent over 2010; these businesses employed 250 million people. Internet entrepreneurship has helped nearly 10 million people find employment, and "Internet+" is an important channel for creating jobs. The government takes measures to guide graduates to find employment through multiple channels, encourage entrepreneurship, and offer better employment services to graduates and give more assistance to those experiencing difficulties in finding jobs. In recent years, the employment rate of new college graduates has been above 70 percent every year, and the overall employment rate at the end of the year has exceeded 90 percent. By aiding enterprises, and offering employment support and assistance, the government helps unemployed persons and people having difficulty in securing jobs to find employment, and devotes particular attention to zero-employment families. From 2011 to 2015, more than 5.5 million unemployed urban people found jobs every year, while an annual average of almost 1.8 million people having difficulty in securing jobs found employment. Steady progress has been made in the employment of people with disabilities. During the 12th Five-Year Program period (2011-2015), the government helped 1.52 million urban residents with disabilities to find jobs. In 2015, 21,596,300 disabled people of working age across the country found jobs.

The people's basic living standards have greatly improved. In 1978, the Engel coefficient of urban households was 57.5 percent and that of rural households was 67.7 percent; in 2015, the figures dropped to 29.7 percent and 33.0 percent respectively. From 1978 to 2015, urban residents saw an increase in their residential area from 6.7 square meters per capita to more than 33 square meters; the corresponding figures for rural residents were 8.1 square meters to more than 37 square meters. A housing security system with government-supported low-rent housing and economically affordable housing as the main forms is in place. In 2015, the national investment in residential buildings reached RMB8,024.77 billion. Within this program, 7.72 million units of government-subsidized urban housing were completed, and construction on another 7.83 million units already started. The central government provided RMB36.5 billion to subsidize the renovation of sub-standard houses for 4.32 million poor rural households around China. From 2011 to 2015, under the government-subsidized urban housing project, China built a total of 40.13 million new units, renovated 21.91 million households in shantytowns, and moved a large number of people with housing difficulties into apartments, realizing "livable" residences. From 2011 to 2015, public finance at all levels subsidized barrier-free reconstruction for 675,000 families with disabled members, improving their quality of life.

Travel conditions have greatly improved. From 1978 to 2015, highways in service rose from 890,000 km to 4.58 million km, and the civil aviation passenger throughput grew from 2.32 million to 915 million. In 2015, the total mileage of expressways open to traffic in China reached 123,500 km, the operating mileage of high-speed railways reached 19,000 km. 94.5 percent of villages had paved road access, and 94.3 percent of villages had access to bus services.

The people's living standards have significantly improved. From 1978 to 2015, the annual GDP increased from RMB367.9 billion to RMB68,550.6 billion, and per capita GDP grew from more than US\$200 to above US\$8,000. In 1978, per capita disposable income of urban households was only RMB343.4, and per capita net income of rural households was only RMB133.6. In 2015, per capita disposable income of all residents reached RMB21,966; the figures were RMB31,195 for urban residents and RMB11,422 for rural residents. By the end of 2015, the total number of phone users nationwide reached 1,536.73 million, and 1,305.74 million of them were mobile phone users, with a penetration rate of 95.5 per 100 people. There were 213.37 million households with fixed broadband Internet access, and 785.33 million mobile

broadband users. The number of Internet users was 688 million, and the household penetration rate of fixed broadband reached 50.3 percent. In 2015, Chinese residents made 127.86 million outbound trips, including 121.72 million private trips. Civilian car ownership was 95.08 million, of which 87.93 million were private cars.

IV. Enhancing Political Development

China continues to enrich and improve a political system suited to its own development by advancing Chinese socialist democracy and rule of law in an all-round way, ensuring effective protection of civil and political rights, and raising the levels of participation in and promotion of the political development process and allowing people to partake in the benefits of political development.

The people's congress system is the fundamental institutional guarantee of political development for the people. According to the Constitution, all power in the PRC belongs to the people, and the National People's Congress (NPC) and the local people's congresses at various levels are the organs through which the people exercise state power. The people's congress system guarantees citizens' rights to participate in development and share the resulting benefits in five ways:

(1) Generating and supervising state organs involved in the implementation of the right to development. Paragraph 3 of Article 3 of the Constitution states that all administrative, judicial and procuratorial organs of the state are created by the people's congresses to which they are responsible and under whose supervision they operate.

(2) Formulating laws and regulations to foster development. By September 2016, the NPC and its Standing Committee had formulated the Constitution and 252 laws in effect. By July 2016, local people's congresses and their standing committees with legislative power had formulated 9,915 local regulations in effect.

(3) Examining and approving development policy initiatives. Article 62 of the Constitution stipulates that the NPC exercises the functions and powers to examine and approve the plan for national economic and social development and the report on its implementation, and to examine and approve the state budget and the report on its implementation, among others.

(4) Providing an open mechanism for the expression of public opinion. People express and claim their reasonable development interests by means such as the exercise of their rights to raise opinions, suggestions and criticism, to file appeals and complaints, and to supervise.

(5) Properly defining the relationship between public power and development interests.

In recent years China has introduced three major systems that are of relevance - the power list, negative list, and responsibility list. Since 2013 the State Council has published lists enumerating all matters subject to administrative approval by its departments, and prohibited the addition of any unlisted matters, with 618 matters canceled or delegated to lower authorities. In this way, the State Council endeavors to eliminate opportunities for exploiting public posts for profit, and to enhance the procedures for the exercise of power.

Democratic election is an important element of citizens' political rights. Since the policy of reform and opening up was introduced in 1978, great progress has been made toward establishing people's democracy and an equal right to vote. In 2010, the NPC adopted an amendment to the Electoral Law providing wider equality of voting rights. Among other measures it requires that deputies be elected to the people's congresses based on the same population ratio in urban and rural areas.

Between 2011 and 2012, the election of deputies to county-level people's congresses saw more than 981 million registered voters and a turnout rate of 90.24 percent; the election of deputies to township-level people's congresses recorded more than 723 million registered voters and a turnout rate of 90.55 percent. In these elections, measures were taken based on the conditions in each constituency to ensure the right to vote of the 200 million floating population, and to facilitate their voting. The basic principle was that voters cast their votes in the constituencies where their registered permanent residences are, while they may vote by proxy with a letter of entrustment, and voters who have their voter qualification certificates in the constituencies where their registered permanent residences are may vote in the constituencies where they currently live.

The 2,987 deputies elected in 2013 to the Third Session of the 12th NPC included 401 workers and farmers accounting for 13.42 percent, 699 women accounting for 23.4 percent, and 409 deputies from all the 55 ethnic minority groups of China

accounting for 13.69 percent.

Consultative democracy is an important channel for orderly participation in the political process. An extensive, multi-layered, institutionalized system of consultative democracy inclusive of multiple parties, people's congresses, governments, people's organizations, the grassroots, and non-governmental organizations has been created to expand orderly participation in the political process and ensure the citizen's right to development.

The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) is an essential organ for implementing consultative democracy, involving the participation of nine political parties including the CPC, eight people's organizations, 56 ethnic groups, five major religions and 34 sectors of society. The CPPCC has more than 3,000 committees and over 600,000 members at all levels. In 2015, the CPPCC organized 41 major consultation events, and 107 inspection and survey tours, forming a political consultation framework employing a range of options such as plenary sessions, standing committees' thematic discussions on administrative affairs and thematic consultative seminars, and biweekly consultative seminars.

In the Third Session of the 12th CPPCC convened in 2015, 87.5 percent or 1,948 of the CPPCC members submitted 5,857 proposals, of which 85.1 percent or 4,984 were taken up for consideration. Since the First Session of the 12th CPPCC held in 2013, the rates of proposal handling and response have reached 99.5 percent or above.

Regional ethnic autonomy is an important channel for ethnic minorities to exercise their political rights. China has created the system of regional ethnic autonomy under the unitary system of government to effectively protect the democratic rights of ethnic minorities. Of the 55 ethnic minority groups in China, 44 have established ethnic autonomous areas. 71 percent of the ethnic minorities exercise regional autonomy, and the land area under ethnic autonomous areas accounts for 64 percent of the national territory. By the end of July 2016 ethnic autonomous areas had formulated and amended 967 autonomous regulations and separate regulations in effect, solidifying the legal foundation for ethnic minorities' exercise of their right to development.

Heads of governments of the five autonomous regions, 30 autonomous prefectures and 120 autonomous counties are citizens from ethnic groups exercising regional autonomy. Leaderships and functional departments of CPC committees, people's

congresses, governments, CPPCC committees at all levels in ethnic autonomous areas contain ethnic minorities, whose proportions are generally close to or higher than the percentages of ethnic minorities in the local population. By the end of 2015 ethnic minority civil servants numbered 765,000 - nearly four times the figure in 1978 - and 10.7 percent of the total number of civil servants across the country. 8.3 percent of civil servants at or above county level were ethnic minorities.

Grassroots democracy is an effective way for people to safeguard and realize equal right to development. China has established a system of grassroots self-governance implemented by rural villagers' committees and urban neighborhood committees. Approximately 98 percent of the 581,000 villagers' committees across the country practice direct election and have formulated village regulations and rules for villagers' self-governance. The turnout rates of direct elections average 95 percent among 600 million eligible voters. The 100,000 urban neighborhood committees in China utilize the services of 512,000 staff and 5.4 million volunteers. Urban residents' participation in democracy has been remarkably broadened and their self-governance capabilities and levels have been improved, through multiple channels, including direct elections, gridded management platforms, volunteer services, hearings, coordination meetings, appraisal meetings, community liaison, communities' online forums, and community public concern stations, all contributing to China's system of grassroots self-governance. The workers' congress system has been widely applied in enterprises and public institutions. 4.64 million or 88.6 percent of enterprises and public institutions with trade unions have established separate systems for publicizing enterprise affairs. There are 2.75 million grassroots trade unions across the country, with 280 million members, including 109 million migrant workers from rural areas.

By June 2016, non-governmental organizations that had registered at offices of civil affairs numbered 670,000, including 329,000 mass organizations, 5,028 foundations, and 336,000 private non-profit units. These non-governmental organizations' services and influence extend to education, science and technology, culture, health, sports, communities, environmental protection, public welfare, charity, rural economy and other fields of public life.

Public participation provides citizens with ready access to decision-making processes. China has furthered democratic legislation and improved the channels and forms of public participation in legislation. Efforts have also been made to establish a system of commissioning third parties to draft legislation and evaluate the drafts, and improve the mechanisms for soliciting public opinion on drafts of laws and regulations and giving feedback on responses. Some local authorities have adopted

regulations on administrative decision-making procedures for major issues, which list public participation as an important legal procedure and define the forms and methods of public participation in administrative decision-making. Open solicitation of public opinion, hearings, seminars and questionnaires are widely applied for this purpose.

In 2007 the State Council enacted Regulations on Open Government Information, emphasizing open information concerning administrative approval, financial budgets and final accounts, government-subsidized housing for the poor, food and drug safety, land appropriation, and household demolition and resettlement. The Regulations provide for prompt and accurate disclosure of government information to the public and protection of their right to know, and ensure effective scrutiny over government work while enhancing transparency in government information and efficiency in law-enforcement.

Channels of public participation in judicial processes have been steadily broadened. The number of people's assessors has now surpassed 220,000. From 2003 when China piloted the people's supervisor mechanism to April 2016, there were more than 48,000 people's supervisors, who had exercised supervision over 49,000 cases of job-related crimes. By the end of 2015, there had been nearly 800,000 people's mediation committees with more than 3.9 million people's mediators, who had, in recent eight years, investigated and resolved more than 67 million cases of disputes.

Public complaint filing has taken on more diversified forms, further broadening the channels for public political participation. The national complaint filing system has opened to the public for online complaint filing, resolution, and result appraisal through computers, mobile phones and the social-media app WeChat's public accounts platform. A total of 1.41 million cases were filed online in 2015, of which 140,000 were aimed at offering suggestions.

V. Promoting Cultural Progress

The Chinese government endeavors to restructure China's cultural system, free and develop cultural productivity, so as to create equal opportunity for all citizens to enjoy benefits of cultural development and to have access to cultural development opportunities, and ensure realization of their right to cultural development.

The building of a public cultural service system has been accelerated. In 2015, the Chinese government issued "Opinions on Accelerating the Building of a Modernized Public Cultural Service System" and "Guidance for National Basic Public Cultural Services (2015-2020)," presenting an all-round plan for accelerating the building of a modernized public cultural service system, promoting standard basic public cultural services and equal access, and protecting the people's basic cultural rights and interests. China has accelerated public digital cultural programs, such as the National Public Culture Digital Platform, and the National Digital Culture Network (<http://www.ndcnc.gov.cn/>). By the end of 2015, the National Cultural Information Resources Sharing Project had completed 1 national center, 33 provincial centers, 2,843 municipal and county centers, 35,719 township and town (sub-district) stations, and 700,000 village (community) stations. China has improved the public cultural infrastructure network and increased the capacity of community-level cultural services. By the end of 2015, China had 2,037 art performance troupes, 3,139 public libraries, 3,315 cultural centers, 2,981 museums, 40 provincial digital libraries, and 479 municipal and prefectural digital libraries. Continuous efforts were made to open public cultural facilities to the public for free, including public art museums at all levels, and basic public cultural services in libraries and cultural centers (stations) at all levels. By promoting projects such as Radio and TV Programs for Each Village and Each Rural Household, Town and Township Comprehensive Cultural Centers, Rural Cinema, Rural Libraries, and Rural Digital Culture, China has greatly enhanced rural cultural service capacity.

Literature, arts, news, publishing, radio, film, television and sports are thriving. In 2015, China published more than 43 billion copies of newspapers, 2.9 billion copies of periodicals, and 8.7 billion copies of books. The number of books published per capita reached 6.32. A total of 236 million households subscribed to cable TV, including 198 million subscribers to digital cable TV. At the end of the year, the radio coverage rate was 98.2 percent of the total population, and TV coverage was 98.8 percent of the total population. In 2015, China produced 395 TV serials totaling 16,560 episodes, 134,000 minutes of TV animation, 686 feature films, and 202 popular science films, documentaries, animation and special films. China has adopted value-added tax exemption for revenues from rural cinemas. It has also given support to small and micro cultural businesses, and implemented policies offering construction subsidies, financial support and differentiated land designation for county cinemas in central and western regions. China has launched an "All People Reading" campaign nationwide. The 2016 "Literary China" series of activities has

benefitted over 800 million participants, forming a congenial social atmosphere for reading. China has accelerated the development of the sports industry under a policy that has the combined support of government, society and enterprises. China has launched a nationwide fitness campaign, basically established a corresponding organizational network, and greatly increased the number of sports venues and facilities. In 2015 China allocated RMB870 million in subsidies to support large sports venues and facilities to open to the public for free or at low cost. In 2014 the sales of the National Sports Lottery reached RMB174.6 billion, and the funds raised for the public totaled RMB45.5 billion.

Cultural programs in ethnic minority areas are developing. China has vigorously supported cultural development in ethnic minority areas. Through such programs as the Frontier Cultural Corridor Project and National Cultural Information Resources Sharing Project, China has improved the public cultural service system in ethnic minority areas. By the end of 2015, nine natural and cultural sites scattered in China's ethnic minority areas, including the Potala Palace in Tibet, were added to UNESCO's World Heritage List. Fourteen ethnic minority arts including Uygur Muqam of Xinjiang were added to UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, and another four, including the Qiang ethnic group's New Year Festival, were added to the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding. Ten experimental zones for cultural protection in ethnic minority areas have been established. A total of 479 ethnic minority heritage items have been included in the four lists of national representative intangible cultural heritage, and 524 trustees from ethnic minority groups have been put on the four lists of national representative trustees of intangible cultural heritage. The book series of explanatory notes on ancient books of ethnic minority groups, titled Synopsis of the General Catalogue of Ancient Books of Ethnic Minority Groups of China, was published in 2014. China has promoted the regulation, standardization and computerized processing of languages and scripts of ethnic minority groups. Projects have been initiated for the research and formulation of regulations on the transliteration of personal names into standard Chinese from Mongolian, Tibetan, Uygur, Kazakh, Yi and other ethnic minority languages. China has set up databanks for ethnic minority languages on the brink of extinction, and initiated and implemented the Project for the Protection of Chinese Language Resources. By the end of 2015 a total of 54 ethnic minority groups were using more than 80 spoken languages of their own ethnic groups, and 21 ethnic minority groups were using 28 scripts of their own ethnic groups. Now nearly 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, using 17 ethnic minority languages and 37 ethnic minority dialects, finished the dubbing of movies, amounting to over 3,000 versions from 2012 to 2015. In 2015, China produced many publications in ethnic minority languages, including 69.12 million copies of 9,192

book titles, 196.09 million copies of newspapers and 12.45 million copies of periodicals.

Cultural development for the elderly, the disabled and rural migrant workers has received high attention. Relying on public libraries, cultural centers and other cultural facilities, China has opened a group of demonstration universities for the elderly to meet their multi-level cultural demands. China has also improved the environment for the disabled, encouraging them to participate in cultural and sports activities. By the end of 2015, China had more than 300,000 liaison stations for volunteers helping the disabled, with 8.5 million registered volunteers, providing 100 million interventions on behalf of the disabled. China has issued the "Outline for the National IT Application Development Strategy," enhanced information accessibility of government websites, and encouraged non-governmental organizations to provide individualized information services to the disabled. The official website of the State Council (<http://www.gov.cn/>) has opened a special column for services for the disabled. The China Braille Library and China Digital Library for the visually impaired went online. By the end of 2014, China had set up 1,515 reading rooms for the visually impaired in public libraries at all levels nationwide. By the end of 2015, China had set up 65,918 public e-libraries, mainly to serve the elderly and rural migrant workers.

VI. Promoting Social Development

China pursues shared development and common prosperity for all people as its development goals.

Over the years, China has been committed to developing various social undertakings, establishing and improving various types of social security and social service systems, and continuously improving the provision of social security. It has striven to provide effective social resources and promote equal access to education so that all share the fruits of development.

Protection of the right to health has significantly increased. The infant mortality rate has dropped from 20 percent in 1949, when the PRC was founded, to 0.81 percent in 2015, and the maternal mortality rate has dropped from 1,500 per 100,000 to 20.1 per 100,000. From 1978 to 2015, total national expenditure on health increased from RMB11.02 billion to RMB4.10 trillion, of which government expenditure on health increased from RMB3.54 billion to RMB1.25 trillion. Per capita health

expenditure increased from RMB11.5 to RMB2,980.8, the number of medical and health institutions grew from 169,732 to 983,528, and the total number of health workers increased from 7,883,000 to 10,693,900. In 2015, the number of community medical and health service centers reached 361,000, with the coverage of 52.9 percent. The number of beds in social service institutions with accommodation increased from 828,000 in 1991 to 7,329,000 in 2015, of which beds for the elderly increased from 783,000 to 6,727,000, and those for children increased from 7,000 to 100,000. From 1988 to 2015 the government carried out a key state rehabilitation campaign, offering rehabilitation services for 27.98 million people with disabilities. By the end of 2015 there were 7,111 rehabilitation institutions for disabled persons, which employed 192,000 professionals, and 6,352 nursing agencies offering services to persons with learning, mental and physical disabilities, 2,323 more than the figure in 2010. In October 2016 China published the "Outline of Healthy China 2030" program, advocating that all people make fitness activities part of their life.

A security system covering the whole of society has taken shape. China has established a unified basic old-age insurance system for urban and rural residents throughout the country, and formulated policies to allow workers, and especially rural migrant workers, to participate in basic pension insurance for urban workers and for urban and rural residents. In 2015, 858 million people were covered by the basic pension insurance scheme, and 148 million urban and rural residents were receiving pensions. By the end of 2015 China had established a medical insurance system covering all citizens. The basic medical insurance for urban workers, basic medical insurance for urban residents, and the new rural cooperative medical insurance cover a total of 1,336 million people, keeping the insured rate above 95 percent. The reimbursement rate of hospitalization expenses for workers within the scope of the basic medical insurance exceeded 80 percent, with an increased maximum payment of six times the average annual salary of local workers, and the rate for urban residents within the coverage of the basic medical insurance was around 70 percent, an increase to six times the per capita disposable income of local residents. The reimbursement rates of hospitalization expenses for rural residents within the scope of the new rural cooperative insurance was above 75 percent. From 1994 to 2015, the number of people covered by unemployment insurance increased from 79.68 million to 176.09 million. In 2015, the revenues of the unemployment insurance fund reached RMB136.46 billion, and the expenditure was RMB73.65 billion, and the average monthly payment to the unemployed was increased to RMB968.4. The framework of a work-related injury insurance system involving work injury prevention, compensation, and rehabilitation has been established, which has

seen the number of insured growing from 18.22 million in 1994 to 214.32 million in 2015. The number of women covered by the maternity insurance program increased from 9.16 million to 177.71 million.

Social assistance efforts continue to increase. In 1997, the Chinese government began to establish a nationwide system of basic living allowances. It promulgated the Regulations on Guaranteeing Basic Living Allowances for Urban Residents in 1999 and the Interim Measures for Social Assistance in 2014, to ensure all citizens have equal access to social assistance. From 1996 to 2015, the number of urban residents covered by the system of basic living allowances increased from 849,000 to 17.01 million, and, from 1999 to 2015, coverage of rural residents grew from 2.66 million to 49.04 million. The government continues to raise the basic living allowances. In 2011, it formally established a dynamic adjustment mechanism for basic living allowances. In 2015, the average basic living allowance line for urban residents was RMB451 per person per month, and the average monthly subsidy each person received from the government was RMB317. The average basic living allowance line for rural residents was RMB265 per person per month, and the average per capita monthly subsidy provided by the government was RMB147.

China has formulated a series of disaster prevention and relief plans and regulations, gradually strengthening and standardizing disaster relief work. From 2009 to 2015, the central government allocated RMB69.46 billion as natural disaster relief funds, averagely RMB9.9 billion for each year. In 2015, China provided medical assistance to 95.24 million people at a cost of RMB29.85 billion. The government also provides temporary relief to people who suffer sudden, urgent or temporary difficulties when other social assistance systems cannot cover them at the time, or people who still lack basic necessities after receiving assistance. In 2015, 6.67 million households received temporary relief. The industrial safety and emergency rescue system has been continuously improved. Altogether 32 provincial and 316 municipal emergency rescue centers, and 964 emergency rescue bases and teams have been established nationwide, covering coal, non-coal mines, chemicals, and other key industries. In 2015, they took part in 12,438 missions and rescued 44,344 people.

Equal access to education has improved. The gap between urban and rural education has been further narrowed. The Chinese government further promotes the balanced development of compulsory education, carries forward unified reform and development of compulsory education in urban and rural areas of counties,

implements such projects as renovation of unsatisfactory compulsory education schools in poor areas, and works to improve conditions for compulsory education schools and teaching venues in rural areas.

The Chinese government strictly follows laws and regulations about compulsory education whereby school-age children should be enrolled in nearby schools without the need to sit exams. It also promotes the school district system and the nine-year compulsory system, under which an elementary school pupil will automatically move on to study in the junior high school in the same school district irrespective of his grades in the elementary school. In 2015, the State Council promulgated the "Notice on Further Improving the Mechanism Guaranteeing Funds for Compulsory Education in Urban and Rural Areas." With this notice, China established a mechanism for the first time that applies common funding standards to both urban and rural areas, with the focus on the latter. The mechanism benefits 140 million students, including more than 13 million children of rural migrant workers, more than 30 million boarding students, about 12 million private school students, and about 5 million small-scale school students and students receiving special education. From the fall semester of 2011, the government started to carry out a nutrition improvement program for rural students receiving compulsory education. The program benefits over 30 million students every year. Efforts have been made to increase the number of rural student enrollments in key universities. Since 2012, the government has implemented special national programs on targeted enrollment in rural and poor areas. In 2015, 75,000 students were enrolled, an increase of 10.5 percent over 2014.

Regional gap in education has further narrowed. The government has increased the college and university enrollment rate of the students from central and western provinces and expanded the scope of the Collaboration Program on Supporting Enrollment in Central and Western Regions. In 2015, the province with the lowest enrollment rate saw the gap with the national average narrowed from 15.3 percentage points in 2010 to less than 5 percentage points. The government has also established the Program on Rejuvenating Higher Education in Central and Western Regions. The central government has provided more funds to strengthen the basic facilities and performance of colleges and universities in these regions.

Educational gap between different groups has further narrowed. Female education has made remarkable progress. In 2013, the number of illiterate females aged 15 and above was 6.7 percent, 17.4 percentage points lower than that in 1995, and the

illiterate female population had decreased by more than 70 million compared with 1995. The growth in the number of educated women and the decline in female illiteracy are both greater than those of males.

The government is striving to ensure equal access to compulsory education for children of rural migrant workers. In 2015, compulsory education schools in urban areas of China admitted a total of 13.67 million children of rural migrant workers, with around 80 percent studying at public schools and nearly 6 percent at private schools through a government-funded scheme. In 2016, the State Council promulgated the "Opinions on Strengthening Care and Protection of Left-behind Children in Rural Areas" and "Opinions on Strengthening Protection of Children in Difficult Situation" to safeguard the lawful rights and interests of minors. The Chinese government also works hard to offer greater education opportunities to persons with disabilities. There is one independent special education school in every county with a population of more than 300,000 people and a high population of disabled children. The government also supports the establishment of special education resource centers, encourages regular schools to enroll children with special needs, provides convenience for disabled students to take part in college entrance examinations, and promotes integrated education. Almost 90 percent of blind, deaf-mute, and mentally handicapped children have access to compulsory education. It works to improve the system for subsidizing students with financial difficulties, which offers full coverage from pre-school education to graduate education. In 2015, the government subsidized more than 84.33 million students throughout China, an increase of 29.36 percent compared with 2009, and spent more than RMB156.03 billion, 2.25 times the level of 2009.

The quality of education for ethnic minorities has been continuously improved. China has already created an ethnic education system including ethnic minority primary schools, middle schools, vocational colleges and higher education institutions. Before the PRC was founded in 1949, the illiteracy rate of ethnic minorities in China was above 95 percent, and there was only one higher education institution for ethnic minorities. In the early days of the PRC, there were only 1,300 ethnic minority students in institutions of higher learning across the country, accounting for only 1.4 percent of all students. By 2015 the education level of ethnic minority groups and ethnic minority areas had grown comprehensively. There were 25,955,700 ethnic minority students at that time. There were 32 different types of ethnic minority colleges and universities, and 2,142,900 junior college and college students from ethnic minority groups, accounting for 8.16 percent of the national total. Ethnic minority peoples have expanding access to a broader scope of higher education. Full coverage from undergraduate education to graduate education has been realized for all ethnic minority groups. All of China's 55 ethnic minority groups

have graduate students. From 2012 to 2015, under the Program for Training High Caliber Core Personnel for Ethnic Minority Groups, China enrolled and trained 16,000 master's degree candidates and 4,000 doctoral candidates.

VII. Accelerating Environment-Friendly Development

China is committed to the concept of environment-friendly development and strives to expedite the country's ecological progress to deliver a more livable and beautiful environment for the people. It aims to make a good eco-environment a focal point for improving people's living standards, and create sustainable development that benefits all the people.

The basic state policy of environmental protection underpins environment-friendly development. In 1973 China convened its first national work conference on environmental protection, and adopted its first Law on Environmental Protection in 1979. In 1983 China made environmental protection a basic state policy. China became the first country in the world to formulate and implement a national sustainable development strategy when it released China's Agenda 21 in 1994. The year 2000 first saw protection of the eco-environment being incorporated into the national economic and social development program. Since 2013 China has been accelerating ecological progress in an all-round way; the CPC Central Committee and the State Council jointly issued "Opinions on Accelerating Ecological Progress" in 2015. A legal system pivoting on energy conservation and environmental protection has been formed, comprising 32 laws, 48 administrative regulations, and 85 departmental rules of the State Council. Currently, there are 14,257 government agencies involved in environmental protection at all levels.

By the end of 2015 national forestry coverage had reached 208 million ha, representing about 22 percent of China's total land area; the vegetation coverage rate of grasslands had reached 54 percent, and the greenery coverage rate of urban built-up areas was 40.1 percent. Nature reserves have been developing in a unified way. Today China has 2,740 nature reserves, covering a total area of 147.03 million ha.

Environmental governance enhances environment-friendly development. A national integrated decision-making mechanism and regional coordination mechanisms have been established for the protection of the eco-environment, forming an environmental governance system jointly implemented by the government,

enterprises and the public. Research and development in the technology for environmental protection is improving, and there has been continuous reinforcement of environmental monitoring efforts and pollution control capability.

Air pollution control is making steady progress. The proportion of coal consumption in total energy provision is decreasing year by year, while the contribution of hydropower, wind power, nuclear power, natural gas and other types of clean energy is increasing. Since the beginning of the 11th Five-Year Program (2006-2010), China's energy consumption per RMB10,000 GDP has decreased by 34 percent, saving 1.57 billion tons of coal equivalent, more than half of the energy saved by the whole world in this period. In 2015 the urban wastewater treatment rate reached 91.9 percent, and the pollution-free disposal rate of urban domestic solid waste was 94.1 percent. Urban park green space per capita reached 13.35 square meters.

Ecological economics fosters environment-friendly development. China has completed a system of working centers for agricultural environmental protection, consisting of two at national level, 33 at provincial level, more than 300 at prefectural level, and more than 1,700 at county level. In the drainage basins of Taihu Lake, Chaohu Lake, Erhai Lake, the Three Gorges reservoir region, and other major drainage basins requiring pollution prevention and control, model areas of diffuse agricultural pollution prevention and control have been established, and 106 national model areas of eco-friendly prevention and control of plant diseases and pests have been set up, covering more than 33 million ha of farmland. More than 100 counties in two batches have been built into national models of ecological farming, prompting the development of over 500 provincial-level model counties. More than 2,000 model sites of ecological farming have been completed.

The agricultural hi-tech industry places its emphasis on long-term development. Field water application efficiency in agricultural irrigation has been raised to 0.536. Investments in technological upgrading have been reinforced, and efforts have been made to promote the new industrial development. Between January and September 2016, investments in industrial technological upgrading amounted to RMB6.6 trillion, an increase of 13.4 percent over the same period of 2015 and accounting for 40 percent of all industrial investments. The tertiary sector has been encouraged and supported to develop faster and generate more green GDP. The expanding Internet economy recorded a turnover of RMB3.88 trillion in the online retail industry in 2015, an increase of 33.3 percent over 2014.

Policy support bolsters environment-friendly development. The state has made active efforts to protect the sustainable development of ecologically fragile areas through integrated planning, targeted treatment, and the ecological compensation mechanism, creating a virtuous cycle for regional eco-environments. Ecological areas of medium fragility make up 55 percent of China's land area, with two thirds concentrated in the western regions. In 2005 the State Council prescribed restrictive development in ecologically fragile areas. The "Outline for the Conservation of Ecologically Fragile Areas in China (2009-2020)" was promulgated in 2008. By 2015 environmental impact assessment had been implemented in all ecologically fragile areas, a 30 percent increase of targeted areas had been brought under the strategy, and models of the ecological industry have been promoted in ecologically fragile areas.

Commitments to international conventions propel environmentally-friendly development. China was among the first countries to formulate and implement a national climate change plan, and pledged to achieve its 2020 goals laid out in the "National Plan on Climate Change (2014-2020)" and 2030 goals set out in the "Enhanced Actions on Climate Change: China's Intended Nationally Determined Contributions" released in 2015. Over the years, China has taken effective policy actions to honor its commitments. Moving along the path toward low-carbon development, China enacted the "National Plan for Reducing Ozone-depleting Substances" and achieved ahead of schedule its first-stage hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) phase-out goal as part of its commitment to the "Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer." China's reduction of ozone-depleting substances accounts for approximately half of the total reduction by developing countries. China has eliminated the production, use, and import and export of 17 of the 26 types of persistent organic pollutants listed in the "Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants," and reduced the dioxin emissions of three industries that are major emitters of dioxins by more than 15 percent. Furthermore, the state has established the National Committee for Biodiversity Conservation, enacted the "China Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2011-2030)" and signed the Minamata Convention on Mercury. China is an active and constructive participant in international talks on climate change, and makes robust efforts to bolster the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. China has made significant efforts in moving the Paris Agreement on greenhouse gas emissions mitigation toward adoption and taking effect, making it one of the fastest major

international agreements ever to enter into force and further contributing to the world's sustainable development.

VIII. Promoting Common Development

China upholds the principles of mutual respect, equality of treatment, win-win cooperation, and common development, and promotes the interests of its own people and the common interests of other peoples. China supports the developing countries, especially the least developed countries (LDCs), in reducing poverty, improving people's wellbeing and the development environment, in order to build a human community of shared future.

Defending the right to development. As an original member state of the United Nations, China participated in drafting the Charter of the United Nations and signed it, facilitated the publication of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," upheld the principles prescribed in the "International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights" and the "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights," and facilitated the passing of the resolution on the new concepts of human rights and the resolution on the right to development. China participated in all the previous meetings of the Group of Governmental Experts of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) for drafting the "Declaration on the Right to Development," and made an important contribution to the formal adoption of the Declaration in 1986. China has always been a co-sponsor of UNCHR resolutions on the right to development, supporting the UNCHR's global debate on realizing the right to development, and consenting to the deliberation of the right to development by the UNCHR as a separate issue. Since the UNHRC was established in 2006, China has been elected as a member four times, and has contributed its wisdom and strength to making the right to development a mainstream issue.

Participating in the formulation of the development agenda. China was the first to voice support for the sustainable development strategy. It has supported and implemented the "United Nations Millennium Declaration," and achieved 13 of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. While effectively improving the protection of its own people's right to development, China has also promoted the common development of the world. It has helped the international community to pass and implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and issued "China's Position Paper on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" and "China's National Plan on Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for

Sustainable Development." At the G20 Hangzhou Summit, China joined other countries in formulating the "G20 Action Plan on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" and the "G20 Initiative on Supporting Industrialization in Africa and Least Developed Countries," adding impetus to the overall development of all countries and developing countries in particular. In September 2015 China and UN Women co-organized the Global Summit of Women, and implemented the goals related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Expanding the path to development. Over the years, based on the principle that all countries are entitled to choose their own social systems and development paths, China has expanded its development mindset and philosophy, and joined other countries in seeking equitable, open, all-round and innovation-driven development. China strives for equitable development for all countries and for developing countries in particular, so that all countries can become participants in and contributors to global development and equitably share the interests of development. China calls on all countries, which share the same development goals yet are at different development levels, to take on common but differentiated responsibilities. China has advocated the developing countries' right to a greater voice in formulating the rules of the global governance system. China keeps the open-door policy while pursuing development. It joins other countries in upholding the multilateral trade regime and promotes the free flow of production factors around the world so that the achievements of development will benefit all parties and people in all countries. China pursues all-round development, to achieve balanced development between economy, society and environment, and to realize harmony between humanity and society, and between humanity and nature. China promotes innovation-driven development, addresses problems arising in development by means of development, and fosters new core competitiveness. China places great value on the leadership of the United Nations, encourages regional economic integration, and improves its competitive development by integrating the strengths and advantages of various parties, so as to fully release its development potential.

Furthering cooperation for development. China adheres to the principle of maintaining integrity and pursuing interests while giving priority to integrity, strives to improve the development capacity of all countries and the international development environment, partnership and coordination mechanisms for international development cooperation to realize the rights of all people to

development. China propels inclusive and mutually-beneficial development, while participating in global economic governance. Regarding North-South economic cooperation as the main focus, China continues to expand South-South, tripartite, regional economic cooperation, and cooperation with emerging economies and, at the same time, explore more effective means of win-win cooperation. To realize common development the Chinese government endeavors to involve more countries and regions in the Belt and Road Initiative, relying on existing bilateral and multilateral mechanisms such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, ASEAN Plus China (10+1) Summit, ASEAN Plus China, Japan and the ROK (10+3) Summit, East Asia Summit, China-Japan-ROK Cooperation, APEC, Asia-Europe Meeting, Asia Cooperation Dialogue, Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia, China-Arab States Cooperation Forum, China-Gulf Cooperation Council Strategic Dialogue, Greater Mekong Subregion Economic Cooperation Program, and Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation. China has established the Silk Road Fund, initiated the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and set up the Lancang-Mekong River cooperation mechanism, in order to provide financing support for the Belt and Road countries to coordinate programs on infrastructure, resource development, and industrial and financial cooperation.

Increasing development aid. Over the past 60 years China has provided approximately RMB400 billion in aid to 166 countries and international organizations. It has trained more than 12 million personnel from developing countries, and dispatched over 600,000 people to aid development in other countries. Seven hundred people have given their lives in the course of these programs. Since 2008, China has been the largest export market of the LDCs, and absorbed about 23 percent of their exports. To improve economic growth and standards of living in the developing countries, China will set up a South-South Cooperation Fund, increase its investment in the LDCs, write off certain countries' debts, establish an International Development Knowledge Center and further the Belt and Road Initiative. In the coming five years China will implement six "One Hundred Programs" targeting developing countries - 100 poverty reduction programs, 100 agricultural cooperation programs, 100 trade aid programs, 100 eco-protection and climate change programs, 100 hospitals and clinics, and 100 schools and vocational training centers. One hundred and twenty thousand training opportunities and 150,000 scholarships will be made available to developing countries in China, and 500,000 vocational technical personnel will be trained. China will set up a South-South Cooperation and Development Academy, and give the World Health Organization US\$2 million in cash aid.

Providing special treatment. China, as a developing country, is an advocate for a number of trade rights based on the principle of "Special and differential treatment," but not be obliged to provide the same treatment. However, in recent years, China has begun to provide "Special and differential treatment" to other developing countries, focusing on protecting the right to development of the LDCs. In 2002, China and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) signed the Framework Agreement on China-ASEAN Comprehensive Economic Cooperation, offering special and differential treatment with flexibility to new ASEAN member states such as Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Viet Nam. In 2006, China joined the Amendment to the First Agreement on Trade Negotiations Among Developing Member Countries of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. China's General Administration of Customs has issued three documents which have extended the range of countries enjoying its special preferential tariff from African countries to 40 LDCs recognized by the United Nations.

Improving the development environment. China joins other countries in safeguarding international peace, opposes all forms of terrorism, and supports international and regional cooperation in fighting terrorism, in order to create an environment of peace and harmony that promotes development and thereby consolidates peace. In recent years, China has offered solutions to regional flashpoints: involving itself in the Iran nuclear talks; mediating for national reconciliation in South Sudan; proposing a four-step framework for political settlement of the Syrian issue; facilitating the peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban; promoting consensus on resuming the six-party talks on the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula. To date, China has sent 33,000 military, police and civilian personnel to join UN peacekeeping missions. Currently there are 2,600-plus Chinese peacekeeping personnel involved in 10 UN peacekeeping operations, making China the most active permanent member of the UN Security Council in terms of supplying peacekeeping personnel. In order to support and improve peacekeeping operations, China will join the new UN peacekeeping standby mechanism, take the lead in establishing regular peacekeeping police force units, and organize peacekeeping standby forces. In the coming five years China will train 2,000 peacekeeping personnel for other countries, launch 10 demining aid programs, provide US\$100 million of non-reimbursable military aid to the African Union, and allocate part of the China-UN Peace and Development Fund to support UN peacekeeping operations.

Conclusion

In the pursuit of development and their right to development, the Chinese people have made strenuous efforts and significant achievements. To promote common

development and to build a community with shared future, China has made unremitting efforts and played an important role. It will always be a defender of humanity's right to development, and a force to propel development and progress throughout the world.

There will always be room for improvement in human rights, and the quest to improve people's right to development is always underway. As the world's largest developing country China faces daunting challenges, characterized by pressing problems such as unbalanced, uncoordinated, and unsustainable development. To achieve a higher level of development and better protect the people's right to development, China needs to maintain its efforts. Meeting the people's growing material and cultural needs and giving everyone access to sound development are still the primary tasks of the CPC in its governance of the country.

The Chinese people are working hard to achieve the Two Centenary Goals and the Chinese Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. With the realization of these goals, China will make a historic and unprecedented leap, and the Chinese people's right to development will be further protected.

At the UN Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015, Chinese President Xi Jinping called upon all nations to mark a new starting point with the adoption of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and unite to chart a path of development that is fair, open, comprehensive, and innovative. China will continue to work with the international community, strengthen cooperation, promote exchanges of experience, and make its due contribution to further increase the level of development of all peoples of the world and build a community with shared future for mankind.