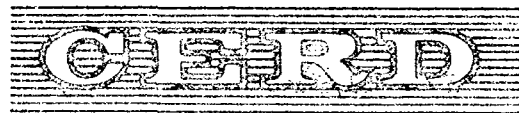


**INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION
ON THE ELIMINATION
OF ALL FORMS OF
RACIAL DISCRIMINATION**



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OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION
Twenty-eighth session

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 9 OF THE CONVENTION

Initial reports of States parties due in 1983

Addendum

CHINA 1/

[20 July 1983]

1. China had a history of suffering similar to that of other developing countries. Like them, she was the victim of colonialist and imperialist aggression and oppression as well as national oppression and discrimination over a long period. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese Government and people have unwaveringly adhered to the stand of opposing racism and racial discrimination and have supported the activities sponsored by the United Nations aimed at opposing racism and racial discrimination. In China, we have abolished all systems of national oppression and discrimination and applied effective and legally guaranteed measures to stamp out all forms of national oppression and discrimination left over from history.

2. China is a unitary multinational country with 56 nationalities, 55 of which are minorities. The area inhabited by the minorities in compact communities makes up 50 to 60 per cent of China's land area.

3. In order to eliminate national discrimination and oppression left over from history, the Common Programme adopted by the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in 1949 at the time of the birth of New China, functioning as a provisional constitution, stipulated that all nationalities within Chinese territory are equal and that discrimination against and oppression of any nationality are prohibited.

1/ The following text represents the introductory statement given by the representative of China on the occasion of the presentation of the initial report of China at the twenty-eighth session of the Committee. At that same session, the Committee decided to have the statement reproduced as additional information to the initial report of China (document CERD/C/101/Add.2)

The Common Programme further stipulated that in areas where minorities live in compact communities, regional autonomy shall be practised and that the people of all nationalities have the freedom to use and develop their own spoken and written languages, to preserve or reform their own ways and customs, and to practise religion. The Common Programme also stipulated that the government should assist all minorities in their development in the political, economic, cultural and educational spheres.

4. The stipulations mentioned above have been incorporated in the Constitution and all its revised versions. The 1982 Constitution, in particular, summing up the nationality work accomplished since the founding of the People's Republic and envisaging the need to promote the common prosperity of all nationalities, has laid down more comprehensive provisions. To ensure the effective implementation of these constitutional stipulations, the Chinese Government has made specific provisions in relevant laws and decrees and has instituted concrete measures.

5. Way back in May 1951, the Chinese Central People's Government issued a directive that all pejorative forms of address, place names, inscriptions on stone tablets and scrolls left over from the old society, that are discriminatory or humiliating to the minority nationalities shall be banned or changed and that such objects shall be sealed up and warehoused or put in the custody of the government. It is in accordance with this directive that pejorative names for some minorities used in the old society have been changed. For instance, the name of Guisui city in Inner Mongolia has been changed to Huhhot city, the name of Dihua city in Xinjiang changed to Urumqi city.

6. To enable minorities to take part in managing state and local affairs on an equal footing with all other nationalities, the 1953 Electoral Law devotes a whole chapter to election concerning the minority nationalities. Article 15 of the Electoral Law adopted at the Second Session of the Fifth National People's Congress in 1979 specifies that in the quota of deputies to the National People's Congress, at least one shall be assigned to each of the minorities with exceptionally small populations. In pursuance to the Electoral Law, at the Sixth National People's Congress held in June this year all the minority nationalities in the country were represented. The minority deputies totalled 403, comprising 13.5 per cent of all the deputies - a proportion twice that of the minority population in China. Furthermore, all the minorities are appropriately represented at all levels of the local People's Congresses.

7. With regard to State organs, members of minority nationalities are represented both on the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), the supreme organ of power, and on the State Council, the highest administrative organ. Under the NPC Standing Committee there is a nationalities committee whose task is to study, examine or draft relevant resolutions and carry out legislative work having a bearing on the nationalities. This important specialized body is chaired by a Tibetan with three of the five vice-chairmen also of minority nationality, that is, a Manchu, a Tibetan and a Miao, and with 14 members being of the Hui and six other minorities. Moreover, the State Commission for Nationalities Affairs under the State Council in charge of nationalities affairs in the country has a leadership composed chiefly of minority people as indicated by the fact that its minister is a Hui and four of the six vice ministers are minority people. Similar patterns are found in the standing committees of the local People Congress and local governments of the provinces, municipalities, autonomous regions and countries where minority people live in compact or mixed communities.

8. Implementation of regional autonomy in areas with minority concentrations is China's fundamental policy in her effort to solve problems among nationalities. Regional autonomy in China means the establishment in the motherland as a unified whole and under the unitary directory of the state of autonomous areas at three levels, namely, the autonomous region (equal in status to a province), the autonomous prefecture (smaller than a province but bigger than a county) and the autonomous county. Up to now, China has established five autonomous regions, 30 autonomous prefectures and 74 autonomous counties. The government organs of the autonomous areas exercise the power of autonomy as prescribed in the Constitution and other laws - a power which enables them to manage the administrative, financial, economic, cultural, educational and scientific affairs in their respective areas. They also have legislative power which enables them to enact, in the light of the political, economic and cultural characteristics of the nationality or nationalities in the areas concerned, autonomy regulations and specific regulations, which are subject to approval by the next higher authorities before taking effect. The administrative head or the chairman of standing committee of the people's congress in an autonomous region, prefecture or county is a citizen of the nationality, or one of the nationalities, exercising regional autonomy in the area concerned. The autonomous government organ is staffed by a considerable number of cadres of the nationality or nationalities exercising regional autonomy in the area concerned. In performing its functions, it employs the spoken and written language in common use in the locality. It is also in such a written language that all its bulletins, documents and credentials are printed and issued. The minorities use their own languages in their everyday life, at work, in their correspondence and communication and social intercourse. Their schools teach in their own languages. Their books, periodicals and broadcasts are in their own languages as well.
9. In the court system of China, citizens of all nationalities are entitled to conduct lawsuits in their own languages. For those parties who do not know the language in common use in the locality, the court provides translation service. Court judgements are also written in the local language.
10. The Chinese Government has always respected the customs and ways of the minority nationalities while educating all nationalities to respect each other's ways and customs. The customs and ways of the minorities in marriage, funerals, festivals, diet, dwelling, dress, etiquette and manners, cultural and recreational activities are respected. Any illegal interference by government functionaries in minority customs and manners that gives rise to serious consequences shall be punished as a criminal offence (carrying a maximum sentence of two years in prison or of detention as prescribed in Article 147 of China's Criminal Law).
11. The State makes energetic efforts to help the minorities promote their economic and cultural development. To this end, the central government has adopted special policies and measures in the areas of finance, economic development, commerce, culture, education, science and public health. State investments in the infrastructure in the minority areas have seen annual increases. In matters of taxation the State grants them the right to make flexible arrangements. It earmarks funds to subsidize their educational and medical establishments.
12. Thanks to government assistance and hard work by the people, the minority areas have made remarkable progress in their economic and cultural development. For instance, the gross industrial and agricultural output in these areas in 1982

was 11.1 times that of 1949, the year new China was established. A breakdown shows that industrial output increased 44 times and agricultural output more than trebled. Retail sales of commodities rose 24 times over the same period. In education, school enrolment registered impressive growth in 1982 as compared with 1951: the number of primary school children increased ten times; middle school students, over 50 times; college students, over 30 times. During the same period the number of medical establishments went up more than 70 times, that of medical personnel more than 90 times.

13. To sum up, China has, since the founding of the People's Republic, abolished all systems of national oppression and discrimination. Genuine political equality has been realized among all nationalities, big or small. Relations characterized by equality, unity and mutual assistance among nationalities have taken shape. The Chinese Government will make further efforts to radically change the economic and cultural backwardness of the minority nationalities left over from history. It will, in the light of the country's general task of socialist modernization for the new historical period and taking into account the specific conditions of the various minorities, take further measures to promote the economic and cultural development in the minority areas and promote the common prosperity of all nationalities.