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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

### **Written statement\* submitted by Chinese Association for International Understanding, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[31 May 2021]

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\* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



## **Significant Progress Has Been Made in Ensuring Employment for Ethnic Minorities in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (UAR), China**

In recent years, the international community has paid close attention to the employment of Uyghurs in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (UAR), China. CEMAFEE has always attached great importance to the protection of the legal rights and interests of ethnic minorities in China. We therefore organized investigations on the employment and labor rights protection of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang in 2021 and wrote this report.

According to the investigations, Xinjiang witnessed expanding employment and improved labor security. After over 70 years since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the number of employees in Xinjiang has increased by 5.59 times from 1,979,000 in 1949 to 13,039,700 in 2018. Xinjiang's labor security system has been developed from scratch, and gradually covered from cities and towns to rural areas, from enterprise employees to urban and rural residents, transforming from an employment welfare to a coordinated social insurance system. Xinjiang has now established a relatively sound labor security system. By the end of 2018, 5,232,700 people in Xinjiang were covered by basic pension insurance for urban employees; 4,415,900 people were covered by basic medical insurance for employees; 2,617,800 people were covered by unemployment insurance; 2,920,100 people were covered by work injury insurance, and; 2,893,600 people were covered by maternity insurance.

From 2016 to 2020 (China's 13th Five-Year Plan period), Xinjiang has created 2.33 million new jobs in urban areas and realized transfer employment of rural surplus laborers amount to 14.33 million person-time. The four deeply impoverished areas and prefectures in southern Xinjiang (Kashgar, Hotan, Aksu and Kizilsu Kirgiz Autonomous Prefecture) have overfulfilled target of the three-year plan for realizing 100,000 poor people's employment one year ahead of schedule. The social security system has been further improved. 13.11 million people were covered by the basic pension insurance, 99.71% were covered by the basic medical insurance and critical illness insurance, and 100% were covered by the personal accident insurance. The minimum living security of urban and rural residents has been guaranteed.

According to the investigations, the labor rights of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang are guaranteed in accordance with the law. Laws and regulations such as the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, the Labor Law of the People's Republic of China, the Employment Promotion Law of the People's Republic of China, and normative documents such as the Measures for the Implementation of the Employment Promotion Law of the People's Republic of China in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, clearly stipulate the basic rights enjoyed by workers and relevant safeguards to avoid job discrimination on grounds of ethnicity, region, gender, or religion, and to avoid job restriction due to urban or rural areas, industries, status, etc. Article 18 of the Measures for the Implementation of the Employment Promotion Law of the People's Republic of China in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region stipulates that "Local governments at all levels in Xinjiang shall attach importance to and take active measures to promote the employment of ethnic minority workers. Enterprises shall include local laborers, and give priority to ethnic minority workers in employment. The enterprises that have recruited local workers can enjoy supportive policies for employment in accordance with the relevant regulations of Xinjiang."

At the same time, respect has been given to the will of ethnic minority workers in Xinjiang concerning their employment choices. The Xinjiang local government organizes ethnic minority people to go out to work on a voluntary basis, and learns about their personal opinions about employment in advance, including specific needs in working areas, sectors, positions, and training, etc. Skill trainings will be provided after people's voluntary registration and based on their job choices. Full respect has been given to the job decision made by minority people out of their own free will.

According to the investigation on ethnic minority people's willingness for employment choice, the surplus labor force in southern Xinjiang shows a strong willingness to go out to work. For example, there were 1,509 laborers in Aybagh Village, Gulbagh Town, Shache (Yarkand) County, Kashgar Prefecture, of which 1,288 people were willing to work outside

their hometown, accounting for 85% of the total labor force. Three villages in Baghchi Town, Hotan County, Hotan Prefecture had a total of 1,699 laborers, of which 1,493 were willing to go out to work, accounting for 88% of the total labor force.

Some Xinjiang migrant workers said during interviews that working in the eastern and central developed provinces not only increased their income, but more importantly, broadened their horizons and enriched their lives. Zuhrajigul, a Uyghur girl from Akto County, said: “I only saw the sea on TV when I was young. After working in Huizhou, Guangdong, I can go the beach whenever I have time. No matter what we eat or use here is better than that of my hometown. I am saving money to buy a house and settle here.”

In 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the government of Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (UAR), China, introduced five campaigns to promote employment, “online employment services, improvement of job and internship skills, employment assistance for graduates in difficulties, supports for college graduates in entrepreneurship, and special recruitment of state-owned enterprises”. At the same time, the government of Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (UAR), China, continued to help people with employment difficulties find jobs on a case-by-case basis.

Based on comprehensive analysis and investigations, we believe that relevant Chinese laws, regulations and policies can guarantee the legal rights of people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang in terms of employment. The party committee and government of Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (UAR), China, regard the promotion of employment as the greatest livelihood project, and implement active labor and employment security policies and projects. The employment scale of local ethnic minorities has been continuously expanded, the quality of employment has been significantly improved, and labor security has continued to be strengthened. The investigations also showed that there was increasing employment pressure in some places as the state-owned enterprises’ reforms and economic restructuring deepened, technology advanced, and labor productivity improved. Therefore, ethnic minorities in Xinjiang should further improve themselves in terms of scientific and cultural knowledge, as well as professional skills, and actively adapt to changes in the labor market so as to get high-quality and satisfying employment.

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China Ethnic Minorities’ Association For External Exchanges (CEMAFEE), NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.