

Speech at Asia-Pacific Regional Forum

Thank you. I am Yang Chao from China Ethnic Minorities Association for External Exchanges. It is my great honor to participate in the discussion on the topic of **"Implementation: Institutions, Mechanisms, Policies and Programs"**. I would like to share China's relevant practices on minority rights protection from the perspectives of vision, institution and law.

Firstly, China espouses a people-centered view of human rights and upholds the rights to subsistence and development as the primary and basic human rights. Through the long-term implementation of strategic measures such as the development of the western region, the action plan to bring prosperity to border areas and their residents, special support for ethnic groups with small populations (less than 300,000 people) and paired aid partnership between developed areas and less developed ethnic autonomous areas, by the end of 2020, all 420 national-level poverty-stricken counties in China's ethnic autonomous areas have been lifted out of poverty, 31.21 million registered poor in eight ethnic provinces and autonomous regions have shaken off poverty, and extreme poverty was eliminated in all 28 of the

ethnic minority groups with a small population. China's great practice of poverty alleviation has provided other countries with experience in eliminating poverty and safeguarding the rights of minorities to subsistence and development.

Secondly, China protects the rights and interests of ethnic minorities through scientific and effective institutional arrangements. China adopts the governing structure of the system of people's congresses, and upholds and improves basic political systems such as the system of multiparty cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of the Communist Party of China as well as the system of regional ethnic autonomy. All 55 ethnic minority groups have deputies at the National People's Congress (NPC) and members in the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). The 13th NPC has 438 deputies from ethnic minority groups, accounting for 14.7 percent of the total, and the 13th CPPCC National Committee has 247 members from ethnic minority groups, making up 11.5 percent of the total. China has 155 ethnic autonomous areas. Among the five provincial-level autonomous regions in China, Xinjiang is the only region that has autonomous areas at all the three levels – region,

prefecture and county. The chair of the autonomous region, the governors of autonomous prefectures, and the heads of autonomous counties are all citizens from the local ethnic groups exercising regional autonomy.

Ultimately, China ensures that people of all ethnic groups enjoy equal rights in accordance with the law. China protects the rights of ethnic minority groups through the *Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy*, the *Electoral Law for the National People's Congress and Local People's Congresses*, the *Education Law*, the *Law on the Standard Spoken and Written Chinese Language*, the *Employment Promotion Law*, and other relevant laws and regulations. Nine-year compulsory education (elementary and junior high schools) is universal in ethnic minority areas. In Tibet Autonomous Region and south Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, students are exempt from charges for education for a total of 15 years from preschool to senior high school. With the exception of the Hui, who have used Han Chinese historically, and the Manchu and She peoples who now generally use Han Chinese, the other 52 ethnic minorities have their own spoken languages, and over 20 groups use nearly 30 written scripts. The Chinese government protects by law the legitimate use of the

spoken and written languages of ethnic minorities in the areas of administration and judicature, press and publishing, radio, film and television, and culture and education.

I hope that these successful experience of China can offer useful help and inspiration to the discussion of this forum.

That's all of my speech. Thank you.