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**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

Written statement* submitted by China Society for Human Rights Studies (CSHRS), 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]

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



Investigation Report on the Situation of Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, China Outbound Young Migrant Worker of all Ethnic Groups

Recently, some persons in the world community claimed that there is a large-scale systematic phenomenon of "forced labor" in Xinjiang, China, and even in relevant enterprises all over the country. Think tanks in the United States of America and Australia have released reports saying that China, under the disguise of poverty reduction program, has forced Uyghur, Kazakh and other ethnic minorities in Xinjiang to participate in labor. According to reports in China's official media, in recent years, through the implementation of the policy of poverty alleviation through employment in Xinjiang, the living standards of the people of all ethnic groups have been improved, and the people's sense of wealth and happiness has been enhanced. Human rights protection has reached at a new historical height.

In view of the two entirely different statements mentioned above, the Human Rights Institute of Southwest University of Political Science and Law, not presupposing its own position, on the basis of respecting all parties, strides over moral accusation and lets the facts and the parties speak for themselves. On the basis of sorting out the current situation of Xinjiang's poverty problem, the investigation and research team (hereinafter referred as I&R Team) analyzes the role of Xinjiang's industrial development in solving the employment problem of the poor population, and adopts a combination of field investigation, questionnaire survey and in-depth interviewing to deeply understand the real situation of outbound Xinjiang migrant workers and their real attitude towards outbound migrant working.

The I&R Team found that:

First, due to the poor natural conditions, unbalanced industrial structure, serious shortage of regional employment opportunities, the decreasing proportion of added value of agricultural industry, the surplus of rural agricultural labor force, and the large poverty gap between rural and urban residents, the poverty problem in Xinjiang is prominent, and it is urgent to alleviate poverty. In 2014, the disposable income of rural residents was 8724 yuan, and that of urban residents was 23214 yuan; in 2018, the disposable income of urban residents was 32764 yuan, and that of rural residents was 11975 yuan. The disposable income of rural residents only increased by 3251 yuan from 2014 to 2018, far lower than the increase of 9550 yuan of urban residents. Therefore, compared with urban workers, rural residents have a greater risk of poverty.

Second, the rapid development of the secondary and tertiary industries in Xinjiang has provided more employment opportunities for Xinjiang residents. The increase of disposable income of urban residents in Xinjiang mainly comes from the wage income of the secondary and tertiary industries. The development of the secondary and tertiary industries further promotes the prosperity and development of the regional economy. This is consistent with the world's experience in poverty reduction. During this period, the protection of the rights of impoverished women in Xinjiang has also been improved.

Third, Xinjiang employees are all voluntary outbound migrant workers on their own initiative. According to the questionnaire survey and statistics, most of Xinjiang outbound migrant workers were originally engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry. Because the agricultural income is much lower than that of working in factories outside Xinjiang, they actively join the ranks of outbound migrant workers in order to make more money, and no one is forced to go out to work. There are also people who worked in Xinjiang before, so they took the initiative to go out to work because of higher wages in other places. In order to find out whether the willingness of Xinjiang outbound migrant workers to improve their income has been met, the I&R Team made a statistical comparison of their personal and family income before and after they went out to work. It was found that the monthly income and annual family income of Xinjiang outbound migrant workers increased significantly after they went out to work, their economic situation and their quality of life were greatly improved which enable them to enjoy more development opportunities. Nearly

70% of Xinjiang outbound migrant workers made a living from agriculture before they go out to work. Most of them had a monthly income of no more than 1500 yuan, some even less than 500 yuan, and 38% of Xinjiang outbound migrant workers' annual family income was less than 10000 yuan. After going out to work, 84% of Xinjiang outbound migrant workers' monthly income has reached 3501-5000 yuan, 4% of them have monthly income of more than 5001 yuan, and 92% of their families' annual income has reached more than 30000 yuan. As far as the satisfaction degree of Xinjiang employees to their current working environment, accommodation and catering conditions after going out to work, 64% of Xinjiang employees are very satisfied, 33% of Xinjiang employees are satisfied, 3% of Xinjiang employees say that the working environment is acceptable, and no one is dissatisfied. When the I&R Team asked the employees whether it was more difficult to work and whether they were satisfied with the working and accommodation environment, many Xinjiang workers said that compared with the previous farming and herding in Xinjiang, working in enterprise factories was a more relaxed way of work. After working outside, they not only broadened their horizons, but also made more friends.

Fourth, China has established basic principles of protecting the rights and interests of workers in accordance with the law, promoting employment, equal employment and "two-way choice" (graduates and potential employers directly negotiating employment), and taking care of the employment of special groups. It has formulated and implemented supporting policies to protect the rights and interests of workers, and strictly forbids "forcing others to work" in law. The survey results show that Xinjiang outbound migrant workers not only have the freedom to choose to go out to work, but also are generally satisfied with their own income, working, accommodation and food conditions after going out to work. Enterprises or factories also provide special couple rooms for migrant couples. The person in charge of an enterprise or factory said that there are strict regulations in Chinese laws, which they must abide by and dare not violate. At the same time, they said that it is not only their obligation but also their wish to treat all employees equally according to law and protect their legitimate labor rights and interests.

Based on the survey results, we believe that the so-called think tank report is not true or even defamatory. The policy of poverty reduction through employment of the Chinese government is an important measure to implement the relevant requirements of the United Nations, and meets the requirements of international conventions. The policy to alleviate poverty in Xinjiang generally adapts to the particular situation and the needs of the poor population. The policy to alleviate poverty through employment has played an important role in eliminating poverty in Xinjiang, while outbound migrant workers enhance national unity. At the same time, The policy to alleviate poverty through employment of the Chinese government still needs to keep pace with the times in the aspects of working mechanism, industrial transformation and upgrading, blocking the inter-generational transmission of poverty, and improving social, ecological, cultural and public services, so as to further ensure the equal participation and development of all ethnic groups, share the fruits of national economic development, and jointly pursue a happy and prosperous life.