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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 Zhongguancun Federation of Social Organizations, 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.

[5 February 2024]

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



Protecting Domestic Cultural Communication Rights in China: Challenges and Responses

As an integral part of human rights, cultural rights may seem less directly related to people's daily lives, but their impact is imperceptibly reflected in various aspects of life. Cultural rights, for each of us, enable that everyone can freely participate in and enjoy cultural life. From a societal perspective, it is the right for free dissemination of culture. China, with its long history and rich cultural traditions, views the free dissemination of its culture not only as a key factor in maintaining national interests and identity but also as a bridge connecting China with the world, fostering international exchange. However, with social development and technological progress, Chinese cultural transmission faces a series of new challenges, necessitating the strengthening of protection for domestic cultural transmission rights.

I. The Channels and Current Situation of Cultural Transmission:

Domestic cultural transmission channels in China are becoming increasingly diverse, encompassing traditional media, the Internet, social media and more. While traditional media such as television, radio, and newspapers still play important roles, the rise of the internet has accelerated information dissemination. Social media platforms like Weibo and WeChat have become the primary means for people to access cultural information and engage in cultural exchange.

II. Current Issues to Address of Cultural Transmission:

Despite continuous technological development and diverse communication channels, domestic Chinese culture does not seem to have become more prosperous. Whether or not content censorship exists, certain cultural circles consistently struggle to achieve effective dissemination. The reasons include:

A. Information Overload and Fragmentation: In the internet age, information spreads quickly but with the problems of overload and fragmentation. A plethora of low-quality and false information may inundate authentic cultural content, affecting the public's correct understanding of culture and hindering its effective dissemination.

B. Cultural Industry Piracy and Infringement: The ubiquity of digital media makes cultural works more susceptible to copying and dissemination, leading to issues of piracy and infringement. This severely damages the rights and interests of cultural industry practitioner and makes the dissemination of already vulnerable cultures even more challenging.

C. Insufficient Cultural Output: Despite China's abundant cultural resources, its influence in the international cultural market is relatively low. There is a need to enhance the international dissemination of local culture to increase global influence.

III. What Can the Government Do?

Protecting domestic cultural transmission rights is a key task in maintaining national cultural independence and diversity. Drawing inspiration from measures taken by other countries on related issues, here are some possible actions (although not all directly related to safeguarding cultural rights, these actions are foundational to ensuring cultural transmission):

A. Establishing and Strengthening Cultural Protection Laws and Regulations: Develop a comprehensive legal framework for cultural property rights, copyright, and other relevant regulations, and enhance protection for cultural assets. Implement more effective measures to combat and punish infringement. Additionally, further enforce regulations protecting freedom of public speech, cultural expression, intellectual property to uphold everyone's right to participate in cultural activities.

B. Increased Support for Local Cultural Industries: Provide financial and policy support to encourage and nurture local cultural industries, including film, music, literature, and art. Use methods such as tax policies and incentive mechanisms to stimulate the initiative of creators and cultural practitioners.

C. Strengthen Cultural Education: Enhance education on domestic culture through schools, communities, and other channels. Alongside fostering talent in cultural industries, raise public cultural literacy, strengthen recognition and appreciation for traditional culture, and enhance the love and awareness of the younger generation towards domestic culture.

D. Promote Cultural-Technological Innovation: Utilize technological means to drive innovation in the cultural industry. For example, apply digital technology to cultural heritage protection, cultural exhibitions, and creative industries to make cultural experiences more accessible and protect digital cultural assets from piracy and infringement.

E. Build Cultural Exchange Platforms: Government departments and NGOs can establish cultural exchange platforms to facilitate mutual cultural exchange between different regions and ethnicities. It helps shape a more diverse domestic cultural landscape and accelerates the dissemination of different cultures nationally and internationally.

F. Boost Cultural Confidence: Encourage media and artistic works to express unique Chinese cultural characteristics, strengthen domestic cultural confidence, and increase its influence internationally.

G. Enhance International Cultural Exchange: Promote Chinese culture globally and foster cultural exchange and cooperation with other countries. This helps elevate the influence of Chinese culture internationally and enhances the global competitiveness of domestic cultural communication.

IV. What Can We Do?

As mentioned, protecting cultural rights is a crucial aspect of ensuring that everyone can freely participate in and enjoy cultural life. Therefore, people can contribute from their own perspective to protect cultural rights and promote cultural transmission. Common actions include as below.

A. Promoting Cultural Diversity: Support and promote the development of various cultures, including minority cultures, local cultures, and religious cultures. Ensure equal treatment of cultural diversity and reduce the oppression and marginalization of non-mainstream cultures.

B. Advocating for Cultural Education: Initiate cultural communication activities from school to the community, helping people better understand and respect different cultures. Gradually influence awareness of promoting cultural transmission in the surrounding community and cultivate cultural inclusiveness and openness.

C. Supporting the Cultural Rights of Vulnerable Groups: Focus on vulnerable groups such as children, disabled individuals, immigrants, and protect their right to participate in cultural activities. Provide equal cultural opportunities for these groups to share and even inherit their own cultures.

D. Social Advocacy: Through civic actions and other means, advocate for and publicize cultural rights. Raise public awareness of cultural rights and promote understanding and respect for these rights in the society.

Through these measures, cultural rights can be better protected, allowing everyone to freely express, participate in, and enjoy their cultural life. This, in turn, promotes the cultural prosperity of the society and the comprehensive development of human rights.