

Submission to the United Nations Universal Periodic Review of China

## Human Rights Education in China

by Chongqing Centre for Equal Social Development

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### About the organization

Name: Chongqing Centre for Equal Social Development (CQCESD)

Address: B3-20-8 Oriental Bay, No. 300 Yujiang Village, Dashiba block, Jiangbei District, Chongqing, People's Republic of China.

Contact number: +(86) 13907863423

Email: [cqcesd@163.com](mailto:cqcesd@163.com)

Website: [www.cesd.org.cn](http://www.cesd.org.cn)

Year of establishment: 2014

Areas of activities: 1) advance equality of opportunity for people to enjoy integrated development, eliminate discrimination and inequality in all forms caused by unbalanced development; 2) forward human rights mainstreaming and fundamental human rights knowledge education among the general public and public officials; 3) strengthen rural and urban sustainable development capacity building; 4) advocate for environmental-friendly social governance system, facilitate the construction of public-engaging mechanisms; 5) enhance international collaboration, build platforms for experience and practices sharing and interaction.

CQCESD was granted Special Consultative Status with UN ECOSOC in 2022.

1. We have noted that since the UN Human Rights Council launched its third Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on China in 2018, China has extensively carried out human rights education, research, training and knowledge popularization, through the implementation of the National Human Rights Action Plan and a number of legal systems and policies. The whole society's awareness of respecting and protecting human rights has been effectively raised, and the practice of human rights education in China has shown a trend of in-depth development.

2. We notice that China's human rights education work takes the implementation and evaluation system of the National Human Rights Action Plan as its core, the national education system consisting of basic education, vocational education, higher education and continuing education as its important carrier, and the National Human Rights Education and Training Bases and Human Rights Research Centers as its support, with White Paper such as *the Situation of Human Rights in China* and Blue Paper such as *the Report on the Development of Human Rights in China* as a channel, with professional support from human rights forums, human rights think tanks, human rights teaching materials and human rights books, and supplemented by human rights practices such as the volunteer internship program of UN human rights-related organizations and the Human Rights Moot Court Training Competition, China has established a relatively standardized human rights education system and working mechanism.

3. We note that the Chinese government has adopted concrete measures and acted on Recommendation 28.81<sup>i</sup>. Since 2009, China has issued four consecutive National Human Rights Action Plans, each of which has a special chapter stipulating the content of human rights education. Among them, the National Human Rights Action Plan (2021-2025) proposes to integrate human rights education into the national education system, conduct human rights research, strengthen human rights training, popularize human rights knowledge, and enhance the awareness of the whole society to respect and protect human rights. This not only reflects the importance China attaches to human rights education, but also reflects the practical value and significance of the formation of human rights education to promote the development and progress of human rights.

4. We are concerned, regarding Recommendation 28.76<sup>ii</sup>, in the field of human rights education in schools, China has published a series of human rights textbooks for primary, secondary and university schools, including *the Story of Nannan and Kai Kai (Primary school edition)*, *the Teaching Manual on the Protection of Children's Rights (secondary school edition)*, *Human Rights Law*, *The Gateway to Human Rights*, *Principles of Human Rights Law*, *Marx and Engels on Human Rights*, *International Human Rights Law*, *Notes on International Human Rights Law*. Primary and secondary schools in China have special chapters on respecting and

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<sup>i</sup> A/HRC/40/6, 28.81: Strengthen its efforts towards the promotion of human rights education and awareness-raising programmes (Armenia)

<sup>ii</sup> A/HRC/40/6, 28.76: Accelerate human rights education for all to build a fair and just society where human rights are fully respected (Lesotho)

protecting human rights in their curriculum standards. More than 60 universities offer human rights courses such as Introduction to Human Rights and International Human Rights Law, and some universities have independently set up second-level human rights law disciplines to recruit and train undergraduate and doctoral students in human rights law, and set up a human rights research direction postdoctoral research mobile station.

5. We note that in the field of human rights research, China has set up 33 human rights research institutes, established 14 national human rights education and training bases, initiated more than 40 major research projects on human rights, and carried out special research projects such as "Survey of the Chinese public on human rights" and "Survey of human rights education in Chinese universities". It has published a number of books on human rights such as *China's Human Rights in Action*, *Human Rights Protection in Contemporary China*, *Research on Human Rights Education in China*, and *China's Plan for World Human Rights Protection*. It has published Human rights academic journals such as *Human Rights*, *Human Rights Research*, *Human Rights Law*, and *China Human Rights Review*. China has held or participated in many domestic and foreign human rights academic conferences, such as the *China-Europe Seminar on Human Rights*, to promote cooperation and exchanges between Chinese and foreign scholars in the field of human rights research and education.

6. We see that in the area of human rights knowledge training, in line with Recommendation <sup>iii</sup>, from 2005 to 2020, China held 374

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<sup>iii</sup> A/HRC/40/6, 28.76: Accelerate human rights education for all to build a fair and just society where human rights are fully respected (Lesotho)

national training courses on human rights for Party and government officials at all levels, judicial police, media personnel and employees of large enterprises, and included human rights knowledge in the curriculum of Party schools, executive leadership colleges and administrative schools at all levels. For example, human rights courses such as "Research on Hot Issues of Human Rights Protection in China" have been listed as mandatory courses for the entry and training of judges, prosecutors, police and other public officials.

7. We find that, with regard to the popularization of human rights knowledge, in accordance with recommendation 28.76<sup>iv</sup>, China has implemented eight five-year plans for the popularization of the law, carried out publicity and education on the rule of law and human rights, and popularized the concept of the rule of law in human rights. China has published *Stories on Human Rights in China in the New Era* and a series of 14 books on human rights education, including the Rights of Minors and Women's Rights. Central and local media have actively carried out reports on human rights, and non-governmental organizations such as the China Society for Human Rights Studies and the China Youth Development Foundation have actively promoted and popularized human rights knowledge through various channels.

8. We observe that China has begun to integrate human rights education into the national education system, but on the whole, the mechanism of government and the whole society's joint investment in human rights education is not perfect enough, and the mechanism of human rights education protection is not sound enough.

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<sup>iv</sup> A/HRC/40/6, 28.76: Accelerate human rights education for all to build a fair and just society where human rights are fully respected (Lesotho)

9. We notice that human rights education still lacks systematization, standardization and specialization, which affects the continuity, long-term and comprehensiveness of human rights education. On the one hand, there is a lack of systematic planning for human rights education. The provisions of the National Human Rights Action Plan on human rights education are macroscopic and general, and the supporting policies are not in place, which is not conducive to the promotion and smooth implementation of human rights education in the whole society. On the other hand, there are still shortcomings in human rights education at the stage of compulsory education and vocational education. Primary and secondary schools have not set up special human rights education courses, and human rights education is mainly interspersed in the course of Ethics and Rule of Law. The human rights discipline and curriculum system have not yet been established.