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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 China Foundation for Human Rights Development, 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.

[19 May 2026]

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



For Every Child: The Original Aspiration and Achievements of Boarding Education in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations Human Rights Council. Over the past two decades, the Human Rights Council, as a core platform for global human rights governance, has witnessed profound changes in the international human rights cause, as well as China's remarkable progress in ensuring human rights in areas such as poverty alleviation, education, and health. Over these twenty years, China has earnestly fulfilled its international human rights obligations and comprehensively advanced the development of human rights. The right to education, as a fundamental human right, has been fully and effectively guaranteed on Chinese soil.

From 2006 to 2026, China has built the world's largest education system. By 2025, the gross enrollment ratio in pre-primary education reached 92%, the retention rate in nine-year compulsory education remained stable at over 95%, and basic compulsory education had become generally balanced across all counties nationwide. China's basic education level has reached the average level of high-income countries worldwide. The gross enrollment ratio in higher education jumped from about 20% in 2006 to 60.8% in 2025, entering the universally recognized stage of universalization. Educational equity has been continuously advanced, education quality steadily improved, and the capacity of education to serve economic and social development has significantly increased. All this has created unprecedented opportunities for all Chinese people, including the people of all ethnic groups in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China.

Turning our gaze to the snowy plateau, the history of educational development in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China, itself is a vivid textbook of human rights progress. Before peaceful liberation, there was not a single modern school in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China, the enrollment rate for school-age children was less than 2%, the illiteracy rate was over 95%, and the right to education was virtually nonexistent. After decades of development, education in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China, has undergone tremendous changes. The white paper Human Rights in Xizang in the New Era, released in March 2025, clearly states that Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China, has fully established a 15-year publicly funded education system, and a complete modern education system covering pre-school to higher education has taken shape. From the former "tent schools" and "horseback schools" to today's standardized campuses and smart classrooms, from an illiteracy rate of over 95% to the near elimination of illiteracy—this represents a historic leap in the protection of the right to education in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China.

As a scholar who has been engaged in Tibetan studies for two decades, I have consistently conducted field research in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China, every year, measuring the plateau with my footsteps and witnessing changes with my own eyes. I have visited boarding schools in remote rural areas many times, and have witnessed firsthand their spacious, bright buildings and advanced teaching equipment, where children of all ethnic groups learn and grow together under the same blue sky. Over the years, I have made many Tibetan friends who are graduates of boarding schools and are now excelling in various professions. They have told me personally: "Without boarding schools, we would never have had the opportunity to receive an education." Boarding schools have enabled countless children from remote pastoral areas to leave the mountains and step onto a broader stage of life. The true picture of boarding education in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China, is voluntary, human-centered, culturally respectful, and genuinely "people-centered" in every sense.

Let me explain why boarding education in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China, came into being. Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China, is a vast region with a sparse population and an average altitude exceeding 4,000 meters. Many farming and pastoral families live dozens or even hundreds of kilometers from school, making the journey to school extremely difficult for children. If the region adopted a purely day-school model like densely populated areas, countless children in remote areas would be completely unable to receive an education.

For this reason, Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China, began implementing boarding schooling in the 1980s. This is not “forced assimilation” as claimed by some Western media, but a clear trajectory from “having access to school” to “having access to quality education.” Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China, implements a “three guarantees” policy (covering food, accommodation, and basic learning expenses) for children of farming and pastoral families. Over the past 40-plus years, the subsidy standard has been raised 22 times, and from the fall semester of 2025, the annual average per student reached 4,700 yuan, with region-specific differential subsidies—reaching 6,000 yuan for students with special needs. In 2025, the region implemented a cumulative student financial aid of 5.273 billion yuan, benefiting 2.1355 million person-times.

I want to share a few real-life stories. My closest Tibetan friend, Drolma, a beneficiary of boarding education. When we talk about her educational experience, she clearly tells me that without boarding school, she would have had no chance to receive an education at all—because her home was too far from school, requiring hours of trekking over mountains, making daily commutes impossible. It was boarding school that enabled her to leave the mountains, enter university, and become the capable professional she is today. Now, her own child is also studying at a boarding school. Her story is just one example of millions of Tibetan children. Generation after generation of Tibetan children have gained the opportunity to change their fate precisely through boarding schools. My colleague, Tibetan scholar Sonam Drolma, attended boarding school and later went on to complete a postdoctoral fellowship. Today, as a researcher at the China Tibetology Research Center, she has spoken from the podium of the UN Human Rights Council, sharing her own growth experience: “I am an example of boarding education.” These vivid facts are the most powerful refutation of those lies.

What is the real situation of boarding schools in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China? Through multiple field visits, I have found that school buildings are in excellent condition and student accommodation is well-appointed. Students of different ethnic groups live and study together, fostering interaction and understanding. One Tibetan student told me that seven students share a dormitory room—four Tibetan and three Han—and they study, sing, and dance together. In the school curriculum, courses in the national common spoken and written language and the Tibetan language are advanced simultaneously. Tibetan-language radio, television, internet, newspapers, and teaching materials are fully covered. Schools also promote the integration of intangible cultural heritage into campus life, allowing children to learn modern scientific knowledge while preserving their own ethnic culture. Certain Western media and politicians, ignoring these facts, slander China’s Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China, under the pretext of “human rights.” Their double standards are a grave violation of human rights.

Over the past 20 years, I have observed Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China, with my own eyes, measured Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China, with my own steps, and experienced Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China, with my own heart. I have witnessed countless Tibetan children gaining the opportunity to change their fate through boarding schools, and witnessed the earth-shaking changes in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China’s education. This is the real Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) of China. I hope the international community will view China’s educational achievements in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China objectively, based on facts.
