

Progress made by the Chinese Government in Implementation of the “Beijing Declaration” and Program of Action” as well as the “Outcome Document” of the United Nations General Assembly at its Twenty-Third Special Session

Part One: Overview

The Chinese Government attaches great importance to the development of women and is committed to protecting the rights of women. China has not only made gender equality one of its basic national policies but has also incorporated the development of women into the overall plan for national economic development. As a result, the principle of fairness and justice, including the concept of gender equality, has become an important element in the efforts to build a harmonious society. At the same time, the Chinese Government has been actively implementing the United Nations’ Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, while making great efforts to protect women’s rights and interests and to promote women’s all-round development, by implementing various economic, legal and administrative measures as well as through various public media.

1. The legal system for protecting women’s rights and interests and for promoting women’s development has now taken shape. In the current process of economic and social development and deepening reforms, the Chinese government has consistently stepped up its efforts in building up the legal system for safe-guarding the rights and interests of women and in reflecting this basic national policy on gender equality in various fields of law and policy formulation, and in their actual implementation and monitoring. Since 1995, China has gradually set up a wholesome legal and regulatory system for protecting the rights and interest of women, based on its Constitution and the Law on the Protection of Women’s Rights, including a number of other related laws and regulations aimed at pursuing the development of women.

2. The operational system for implementing “the National Program for the Development of Women” has now been established basically. The Chinese government has successively formulated “the National Program for the Development of Women” for the period of 1995-2000 and the period of 2001-2010, whereby the major objectives and tasks for the development of Chinese women are clearly defined. Various local governments and departments concerned as well as those social organizations and groups have also formulated development plans and implementation programs accordingly, so as to break down and assign the responsibilities for implementing the women’s development goals to the official functions of the relevant government departments, social organizations and groups, provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities, and to ensure the timely delivery on the major objectives of the Program. The Central Government and local governments at various levels will gradually increase their financial inputs on a yearly basis, so as to guarantee the funding for the achievement of these goals. The Government will carry out scientific and objective assessments on the implementation status by using various quantitative indicators adopted for this purpose. As of now, the operational system for implementing “the National Program for the Development of Women” has been set up basically, with the core functions of formulating, delivering on, and assessing the progress made during this implementation process.

3. An institutional system to promote women's development and protect women's rights and interests has basically been established. In 1990, the State Council set up the Working Committee for Women and Children, a national body to promote gender equality. At present,

“The National Program for the Development of Women” is a program of action promoting women's development at the state-level. Since the enactment of the Program, local governments and departments concerned formulated regional and sectoral plans and implementation programs in accordance with the requirements of the program of the region. To implement “the National Program for the Development of Women”, governments and departments concerned at various levels took concrete measures to intensify their efforts in promoting women’s participation in decision-making, protecting women’s equal access to economic resources and employment, developing women’s education, safeguarding the rights and interests of women workers and their community health service network, raising the level of women’s health to improve women’s living environment, and firmly cracking down on the illegal and criminal activities against women’s personal rights, thus achieving a remarkable success in the advancement of women.

(A) The Participation of Women in Administration and Decision-Making

Chinese women participate in the administration of state affairs mainly through the following channels: participating in the consideration and formulation of state laws by gaining access to legislative institutions; participating in the administration of State and social affairs by assuming leading posts of government at all levels; participating in representative government through the CPPCC; voicing their views and defending their rights through women's federations and trade unions for women workers at various levels; expressing their views and suggestions directly to the relevant governments and departments.

The Chinese Government has always attached importance to women’s participation in political activities. It is clearly provided in China’s “Constitution”, and “the Law on the Protection of Women’s Rights” that women and men enjoy equal political rights. In order to further promote women’s participation in state and social affairs administration and decision-making, China formulated the major objectives and initiatives of specific strategies, for women’s participation in decision-making and administration, enhancing the training of women cadres, giving full play to the role of non-governmental organizations, understanding women’s views and demands, expanding channels for democratic recommendation, democratic participation, democratic administration and democratic supervision. With the advancement of women, Chinese women have become increasingly involved in the State political activities and the administration with the following characteristics: firstly, the ratio of women is increasing in the leadership of governments at all levels; secondly, the number of women cadres is on the increase; thirdly, women are having an ever greater say in the building of grass-root democratic administration.

(B) Poverty Alleviation and Economic Empowerment of Women

The Chinese Government has actively promoted the employment and entrepreneurship of

technology demonstration centers for women have been established. Women have been assisted in their participation in cooperatives, which have been developed into economic entities that share information, technologies and risks. Women who are laid off or unemployed are given access to free consultations and information on policy matters, job vacancies, career advice and

(E) Protection of Women's Human Rights and Elimination of Violence against

All governments above the county level in China have established relevant working committees on women and children, forming an organizational system for protecting the rights and interests of women and promoting the development of women, providing the necessary organizational guarantee for promoting the implementation of “the Law on the Protection of Women’s Rights and Interests” and “the Program for the Development of Women”. NWCCW coordinates and facilitates the government departments concerned in carrying out the basic functions of “the Law on the Protection of Women’s Rights and Interests”, building a working platform of coordination and supervision for promoting the implementation of the laws on women.

Part Four: Dealing with Challenges

Due to the constraints of historical factors and the current level of social development, women’s development in China is still faced with challenges. The Chinese government and various circles are working together to further promote the participation of women in the administration of state and social affairs, safeguard the equal rights of women in employment, labor protection and equal pay for equal work, eliminate the impacts of the traditional concept that men are superior to women and the obstacles to equal right of education, and the imbalance of opportunity between urban and rural areas.

“The Eleventh Five-Year Plan Outline for National Economic and Social Development” of China dwells upon, among other things, the issue of the protection of the rights and interests of women and children, calling for the protection of women’s rights of equal access to education, employment, social security, marital property and the equal participation in social affairs, and enhancing the efforts to promote women’s health care, poverty reduction, labor protection, economic assistance to women. The upcoming “National Human Rights Action Plan”, which will be promulgated soon, devotes special chapters to promoting the protection of women’s human rights. The Chinese government will adhere to the basic national policy of equality between men and women, develop and implement the new program for the development of women effectively, protect women's rights and interests, promote the cause for women, promote greater progress in women’s participation in economic, political and social life, in accordance with the requirements of the outline of the national economy and social development.