

## NGO - World Uyghur Congress on Item IX

Thank you Madam Chair, Madam Independent Expert,

The introduction of the draft recommendations stated that there are many cases of misguided efforts to increase the economic participation of minorities, including the pursuit of forced migration or displacement and re-settlement of dominant groups to develop minority regions. The World Uyghur Congress wishes to highlight some of the problems of these particular types of initiatives and why governments should abandon them as strategies to increase economic participation of minorities.

With regards to government programs that re-settle dominant groups to minority regions the bottom line is that members of the minority group often end up being left out of the development of the regions. And the settlers from the dominant group became the almost exclusive beneficiaries of that development. This scenario is actually pre-determined when the government offers incentives to the dominant group to re-settle to the minority region; and therefore sets a stage for the settlers to disproportionately benefit as compared to the local people from the development that occurs there. An example of such incentives is seen in the case of East Turkestan, also known as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous region of China. The Chinese government offers economic and social benefits to Han Chinese to encourage them to re-settle to that region. National legal provisions implemented in 2005 provide Han Chinese settlers and their dependants with quote on quote “preferential working and living conditions” and quote on quote special treatment in employment and schooling.

Minority groups are also economically disadvantaged by the mass migration of dominant groups to their areas because this re-settlement often results in the marginalisation of the minority groups languages, the minority groups language is replaced with the dominant groups language as the area’s lingua franca and as the primary language for the employment in the region. An example of this phenomenon is shown in the mountain yard Degar regions of Vietnam. As the majority kin heavily re-settled to these areas over the past several decades the kin languages has become the dominant language for development and employment in these areas and Degar Mountain yard who do not speak kin or not native speakers of kin are poorly placed to gain employment and benefit from the development. Furthermore with the massive re-settlement of Han Chinese to East Turkestan, Mandarin has become the primary language of employment in the region. Uyghurs who do not speak Mandarin have become almost entirely ineligible for state employment and all Uyghur even those who speak Mandarin are disadvantaged for virtually all jobs compared to the settlers or native speakers of Mandarin.

Besides the minority facing linguistic barriers they are disadvantaged just by being who they are, as often times the employers from the dominant group would prefer just to hire their own. Governments force migration of members of minority groups away from their areas into other parts of the country for jobs are inherently abuse because they are forced. In addition, these programs alienate the minority group members from their communities, families and cultures and often place in abusive and discriminatory working conditions. We see these problems very clearly with the forcible transfer of young Uyghur women and girls to work in factories in eastern China. Governments should abandon the aforementioned development strategies instead governments should design programs in minority areas in close consultation with and in

partnership with the local peoples and how to expand industries and trades in which the local peoples traditionally have been engaged. Thank you madam Chair.