

(27 November 2012)

Madam President,

The Chinese delegation congratulates Ms. Soyata Maiga who assumed the office of President of the Forum, deeply convinced that her great experience in the field of Human Rights will contribute to the positive achievement of the Forum.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the **Declaration on Minority Rights**, the Chinese side sincerely welcomes the present edition of the Forum, knowing that it implements the positive practice and opportunity of the **Declaration**.

As stated in the **Declaration**, the protection of national, ethnic, religious and linguistic rights and interests of minorities is an essential part of the development of the entire society. The Chinese government attaches great importance to the safeguard of all minority nationalities' rights and interests to ensure that they have equal participation to the public, social, economic, cultural and religious life.

As regards the participation in politics, according to the **Electoral law**, the 55 Chinese minority nationalities all have their own representative in the National People's Congress. In the current National People's Congress the delegates from the minority nationalities account for the 13.76% of all delegates, overcoming the percentage of the minority nationalities' population on the entire Chinese population. According to the **Law on Regional National Autonomy**, China established one hundred and fifty-five minority autonomous territories, including five autonomous regions, thirty autonomous prefectures, one hundred and twenty autonomous counties. The offices of president, governor, and head of county of the government in the minority autonomous territories are held by citizens from the ethnic groups which implement the regional autonomy.

The Chinese government conscientiously safeguards minority nationalities' right to development; it constantly adopts measures to accelerate the economic and social development of minority nationalities' regions and implements key projects for poverty alleviation. Between 2009 and 2010 the Chinese government threw 27.29 billion of Chinese Yuan of funds for the development of minority nationalities, which allowed the construction of infrastructures in the ethnic groups' regions and clearly improved the living and productive conditions of the people. As regards employment, the **Labour law** provides that each ethnic group's worker enjoys equal occupational rights and the work units that employ people should give suitable care to minority workers.

In the cultural and linguistic fields, the Chinese government highly values the particular requirement for cultural development of minority nationalities and is progressively setting up a policy system to sustain and promote the cultural development of minority nationalities. The spoken and written language of minority nationalities is extensively used in legislation, administration, in the judicial system and in education. In the whole country there are more than ten thousand schools which use twenty nine kinds of writing scripts of twenty one ethnic groups to develop education. In minority autonomous territories, the universal system of nine years of compulsory education has 100% coverage. In addition to that, the State has organized in a planned way a work of collection, collation, translation and publishing of minority nationalities' cultural heritage. As regards religion, the Chinese government treats equally and without discrimination all kinds of minority nationalities' religion, sect, religious and not religious masses, it respects and legally defends each kind of religious activity and site. In twenty years, the whole nation invested more than seven hundred million Yuan to protect and maintain more than one thousand four hundred temples, cultural relics, historical sites and religious sites.

Madam President

In June 2012, the Chinese government promulgated the **National Action Plan for Human Rights (2012-2015)** to implement the policies and the dedicated plan to promote the economic and social development of the five minority autonomous regions, namely Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, Guangxi, Ningxia, Tibet, to support the development of the other minority regions and to promote the primary target of the economic development of the minority regions, which is to accelerate at a greater speed rate than the national average level. This will also progressively promote the situation in which ethnic groups share prosperity.

Thank you Madam President.