

Southern Mongolia Human Rights Information Centre

Mr. Chair, distinguished members of the Forum. My name is Enkhwat Torachuk. On behalf of the Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Center, I would like to bring to the attention of the forum some of the issues and challenges faced by the Mongolian youth in China, who have been struggling to maintain their traditional way of life and distinct identity.

Designated as one of the 55 ethnic minorities of China, the Mongolians not only have been denied their minority rights, but also have long been subjected to systematic persecution, forced assimilation, discrimination, and even denied the most basic human rights and fundamental freedom. Although Chinese laws state to guarantee the rights of the minorities to use their native language in education and public life, as well as the rights to practice their tradition and unique way of life, these rights are not respected in practice.

For example, the Chinese government has adopted a series of discriminatory policies toward the Mongolian nomadic way of life, including ecological migration, ban of livestock grazing, eliminating and reducing rural Mongolian schools. These practices are reaching a new height under the leadership of Xi Jinping, highlighted by increasing violence and crackdowns against young Mongolian activists who rallied the Mongolians over the Internet and social media to defend their rights.

Three young Mongolian women, Mrs. Baogonyang, Mrs. Yinger, and Mrs. Malnyang are still under extrajudicial detention for mobilizing their communities to defend their land from illegal occupation by Chinese companies. Another young Mongolian activist, Mr. Wen Ming, was sentenced to two years in jail a few months ago, for disseminating information over the Chinese social media about the Chinese authorities' violation of rural herders' legal rights.