

WITHOUT A SAY: EXCLUSION FROM POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Following is an edited excerpt from the forthcoming report *Exclusion, Marginalization and Tension: Ethnic Minorities in China*, jointly produced by Human Rights in China and Minority Rights Group International.

HRIC's forthcoming report examines three interrelated human rights and development concerns for ethnic minorities living in China: limited and ineffectual political participation, inequitable and discriminatory development and inadequate protection of cultural identity. In focusing on these three primary aspects as factors contributing to tensions and conflict situations between ethnic groups and the PRC government, the report looks at three specific groups, the Uyghurs, Tibetans and Mongols, whose tensions with the central government have been most evident. By building upon the PRC's international obligations and relevant domestic laws, the report contributes to strengthening institutional human rights protections, and promoting more peaceful and effective approaches to addressing these serious challenges. The excerpted section below focuses on the limits of political participation within the existing autonomy system for ethnic minorities in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, the Tibet Autonomous Region and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

Existing governance systems inadequate in ensuring meaningful participation

One of the primary forms of exclusion for minorities is evident in their political participation. While the general principle of non-discrimination is not sufficient to fully protect the interests of a group in the political realm,¹ the PRC government has yet to provide a clear working definition of "discrimination" that would facilitate the formation of policies ensuring non-discrimination against ethnic minorities. Special measures and arrangements, such as a system of genuine autonomy arrangements, must be made to ensure that members of minorities are able to have substantial impact on legislation and governance.

Although an autonomy system is guaranteed in the PRC Constitution, the dominance of the Communist Party pre-

vents substantive implementation of such a system. As the situation currently stands, minorities are unable to make decisions or exercise any significant legislative or administrative powers that affect their communities. It must be recognized, however, that the centralization of power within the top CCP leadership ensures that only a relative few are able to influence policy, even among the ethnic Han majority. In this way, ethnic identity is an additional, but not the only, obstacle to participation in a non-democratic regime. As the evidence indicates, ethnic minorities face serious constraints in almost all forums of expression, including within the Party, in civil society and the media, and are not allowed to administer their own autonomy arrangements beyond the local level. This occurs against the backdrop of widespread violations of their civil and political rights, including the fundamental freedom of opinion and expression, which is paramount in fostering a secure environment for ethnic minorities' genuine political participation.

Gaps between law and practice

Regional autonomy under stringent review by the central government

Implementation of genuine autonomy at the regional level is further impeded by government goals such as economic development and state unity, which usually take precedence over ensuring real political participation for minorities. There is, in effect, very little devolution of authority to the autonomous region level, evident in the fact that even legislation on autonomous regions' self-governance is subject to stringent review by the central government.⁹ The governments of the five autonomous regions have yet to pass any self-governing regulations, due to the fact that endorsement of draft regulations by the Standing Committee of the NPC is still pending.¹⁰ For example, the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region has already submitted 18 drafts to the NPC Standing Committee,¹¹ each of which has then been returned to the local People's Congresses for revision, resulting in delays to the adoption process. By way of contrast, ordinary provinces are only required to "report" to the NPC, an indication that provinces actually have more legislative autonomy than autonomous regions. The long-term result is a situation in which regional

Domestic Legal Framework for Minority Rights

Within an overarching framework of stated national policies and the primacy of the central government, the major legal framework governing ethnic minority rights protection is China's Constitution and the Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy (LREA). While the Constitution sets out the basic principles and the scope of rights to which ethnic minorities are entitled, the LREA focuses on implementation for the autonomous areas, including the five provincial-level autonomous regions.² Various government organs also issue regulations stipulating special treatment or policies to protect the rights of ethnic minorities.³

Alongside the Constitution, the Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy (LREA), promulgated in May 1984 and amended in 2001, outlines the governance and political structure of the regional autonomy system. While the LREA sets forth the importance of autonomy for recognized minority groups, it also sets clear limits on the substantive power of these autonomous areas in terms of legislative authority, formation of security forces and development-related policies, which are subordinated to national policy. Under Article 24 of the LREA, autonomous self-government organs need the approval of the State Council to create local public security forces. In practice, autonomous regions are closely monitored and controlled by the central government and CCP and in some cases have less power than the provinces, contrary to official descriptions of autonomous regions as having "bigger decision-making powers than other local governments."⁴

In 2001, the LREA was revised to reflect the growing emphasis placed by the government on economic development as a proposed solution to the growing inequality between the majority Han Chinese and ethnic minorities.⁵ It was seen as a response to the increasing discontent of ethnic minorities who felt marginalized from the benefits of the PRC's rapid market liberalization. The practical effect of the revisions, however, does not go beyond reasserting the central government's role in ethnic autonomous areas, especially for the purpose of development. Reflecting current CCP policy that economic development can be used to stabilize the PRC's autonomous areas,⁶ the only substantive amendments in the 2001 revisions deal with preferential economic treatment and development policies for the autonomous areas. While changes in the opening clauses of the LREA appeared to give more weight to self-government, no amendment addressed the issue of actual autonomy.⁷ Consequently, the implementation of the LREA has focused on economic prosperity in the autonomous areas, while increasing the suppression of any dissent or activity that can be labeled as separatist and undermining "national unity."⁸

autonomy provisions continue to be limited in content, scope and implementation.

Limited content and scope of autonomous government-level regulations

While it may seem that numerous regulations have been passed by autonomous areas, this fact alone does not accurately reflect the extent of self-governance in the autonomous regions. Ethnic autonomous areas had passed 679 self-governing regulations and separate regulations as of 2004—608 of which are still in effect—but most of these regulations were passed at the prefecture and county levels and not at the level of the autonomous regions, such as TAR, IMAR and XUAR.¹²

Most laws passed at the level of autonomous regions simply reflect national legislation, with superficial alterations that tailor the law to a local administrative area. An example is TAR's Alternate Regulation of the Implementation of the PRC Marriage Law, which lowers the national official marrying age from 22 to 20 for men and 20 to 18 for women in the TAR.¹³ Furthermore, regulations passed at the autonomous region level are often limited to issues that are viewed as less politically controversial. Issues that deal with civil and political rights or protection of cultural identity have not been effectively addressed in any autonomous region-level legislation to date. For instance, several articles in the Interim Measures on the Management of Religious Affairs for the TAR specifically demand a high level of state loyalty from monks, nuns and monasteries, and effectively outlaw activities and religious practices that the central government considers contrary to the aims of national unity.¹⁴

Lack of public ownership

The lack of public ownership of autonomous arrangements has also inhibited the effective implementation of the Autonomy Law and other regulations aimed at protecting and promoting minority rights. Because rights enshrined in the Autonomy Law are generally not publicized at the grassroots level, many members of minorities are unaware of the arrangements,¹⁶ or are indifferent to measures that they consider ineffective for the full protection of their rights.¹⁷ Many interviewees expressed the view that the current autonomy system does not provide genuine autonomy because minorities are not informed or involved in the policymaking process.¹⁸ The lack of ethnic minority representation at the highest level of the policymaking process in the government, therefore, sustains the perception that the current autonomy system is not an effective or legitimate avenue to articulate ethnic minority interests.¹⁹

Lack of participation in real decision-making

While the law has ample provisions for enhancing minority participation, the actual level of participation is low.²⁰ Minority cadres are often visible at the local level but their number is noticeably lower at the regional and prefecture levels. This is especially true for senior government positions, such as those at the director or bureau chief level of important government organs. For instance, the Chief of the Public Security Bureau of the TAR, IMAR and XUAR are all Han Chinese. The typical rele-

gation of minority political participation to enforcing policy further undermines genuine impact on formulating policy on substantive issues.

In particular, the inability of minorities to relay concerns about major projects has created significant discontent in the autonomous regions on which this report focuses. In the TAR, locals have had little say in major development initiatives such as the Golmud-Lhasa Railway, which drastically alter the demographic character and geographic terrain of their region.²¹ Similarly, Mongols have been excluded from major initiatives such as the Ecological Migration Project, the Livestock Grazing Ban,²² the Western Gas to the East project²³ and the Western Electricity to the East plan.²⁴ These projects not only exclude minority inhabitants from key decisions affecting their lands and traditional livelihood, but also reflect the wider trend that ethnic minorities rarely have the chance to take senior positions, particularly within the CCP leadership structure, which would give them influence over policymaking.

Representation in the People's Congress does not guarantee decision-making power

Ethnic minority groups are given significant representation in the People's Congresses in their respective autonomous areas, with Tibetans holding over 80 percent of representative seats at all levels of the People's Congress in the TAR. At the national level, since the first National People's Congress (NPC) was established in 1954, the proportion of minority deputies in the NPC has hovered at around 14 percent, a higher percentage in the NPC than the officially reported total minority population, which stands at 8 percent.²⁵ In addition, each ethnic group has at least one representative in the National People's Congress (NPC). In the current Tenth National People's Congress (2003–2008), 415 out of the 2,985 deputies are ethnic minorities, accounting for 13.9 percent of the total number of deputies.²⁶ In the NPC Standing Committee, three—including one woman—out of 15 vice chairmen are ethnic minority members.²⁷

While the high levels of minority local participation in People's Congresses may at first glance suggest that ethnic minorities have significant influence in policymaking, their influence in practice is negligible. This is because although the NPC is the highest state legislative authority according to the PRC Constitution, it is overshadowed by Communist Party ideology and decisions. It is, therefore, far more important for minorities to be able to participate in the Party structure, rather than in the NPC or the CPPCC, if they are to affect actual decision-making.²⁸ The history of the CCP shows that no ethnic minority individual has ever been a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CCP's Central Committee, which is the highest level of authority in the CCP structure.²⁹ Only two male ethnic minority representatives—a Mongol named Ulanhu, who served between 1977 and 1987, and Hui Liangyu, a member of the Hui minority who has been serving since 2002—have ever been members of the Central Political Bureau, which is the second highest level of CPC leadership.³⁰ The proportional disparity of ethnic minority representation between the lower and higher level of governance suggests that the central government is more eager to foster an

Interviewee: I have hope, but the future looks very uncertain. I think that gaining freedom is unlikely, since China is so strong . . . There is hope that we can have a high degree of autonomy, but it would still be within the one-China framework. We would still be subject to China's autonomy law and would have to continue to struggle for more freedom, so it would still be difficult. We've worked for so many years just to get a little bit of freedom, a few more rights.¹⁵

image of inclusiveness toward minorities than to allow them any real power.

Effects of CPC dominance limits minority representation

The dominance of the Communist Party is prominent at the local level of party leadership in the autonomous regions and further restricts genuine minority political representation. While the chief and deputy chief of the autonomous government and the People's Congress may be minority individuals, all five Party secretaries of the autonomous regions are Han Chinese men.³¹ This phenomenon is also visible at the prefecture and county level. Minority leaders are therefore typically viewed as “puppets” who, despite holding fairly high positions such as chief of a government department, are usually “assisted” by a Han deputy who, along with the local Party leadership, controls actual policy formulation.

While the central government encourages ethnic minorities to be trained and actively participate in the running of autonomous governments, Han Chinese officials are (usually) given high positions in the name of facilitation—they “transfer, help, and lead” ethnic minorities.³² Decades after this policy was put into place, the number of Han officials in ethnic minority areas, especially in the TAR, XUAR and IMAR, continues to rise.³³ Furthermore, unlike other provinces, the highest ranking minority officials in autonomous regions have all been officials in the CCP since the Cultural Revolution.³⁴ The Chinese government's continued use of these same “puppet” figures gives a further impression that it is only willing to delegate positions of leadership to minority individuals who have demonstrated their allegiance to the central government.

Minority women's political participation remains modest

Minority women's participation in politics is also limited, although autonomous governments are encouraged to train minority women for political participation. In its most recent report to CEDAW, the PRC government emphasized that one of its goals is the promotion of training for minority women cadres.³⁵ As with their male counterparts, minority women's participation in local People's Congresses has increased steadily, but gender disparity in political participation becomes more obvious at the national level. While the number of seats for ethnic minority representatives increased from 402 to 415 from the 9th to the 10th session of the NPC, the total number of seats for minority female members actually dropped from 137 to 124.³⁶ The 16th Central Committee of the Chinese



A Tibetan protests against the visit of Chinese President Hu Jintao in New Delhi, India, in November. Photo: Associated Press

Communist Party, composed of 198 members, includes only one minority woman.³⁷ The CEDAW Committee's concluding observations encouraged the PRC to take measures, including temporary special measures such as establishing numerical targets and timetables, to expedite women's full and equal representation in elected and appointed government bodies from the local to national levels.³⁸

Restrictions on domestic ethnic minorities' civil society organizations

Stringent registration process

The lack of real participation of ethnic minorities in the policymaking structure of the government corresponds with the inability of civil society organizations (CSO) to effectively reflect and advocate minorities' concerns and priorities at the grassroots level. China has imposed tight controls over the development of all CSOs, not just those advocating minority interests. CSOs, which are referred to officially as "social organizations" in Chinese, are required to affiliate themselves with a government unit and register with the Ministry of Civil Affairs in order to operate. In this context, the government can suppress civil society organizations that venture into more sen-

sitive political areas, thus hindering the essential contribution of civil society organizations towards a participatory and inclusive political dialogue.

Lack of civil society organizations focusing on minority rights

While some 300,000 civil society organizations are registered officially with the Chinese government,³⁹ little information is available on social organizations dedicated to advocating ethnic minority interests.⁴⁰ Most minority-related organizations, in fact, are cultural entities that focus on, for example, folk dancing or language study. The Nationalities Unity and Progress Association of China (NUPAC) appears to be the only social organization that focuses on the study of political issues relating to ethnic minorities.⁴¹ Supported by the Party and central government, its mission is to advocate and promote national unity of all ethnic groups in the PRC.

Most of the current programs focusing on minority rights are initiated by overseas and international NGOs, but they are often development-oriented. Very few programs examine more sensitive issues such as human rights training or political participation for ethnic minorities. NGOs advocating ethnic minority political rights work primarily outside the country; some examples include the Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP), the Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Center (SMHRIC), International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) and Students for a Free Tibet (SFT). Their presence in China is not allowed under the current government. Although both the Constitution and the Autonomy Law accord minorities the right to assembly, this right is nearly non-existent in practice due to the lack of respect for individual civil and political rights.

Violations of civil and political rights

Violations of civil and political rights form a larger pattern of abuse of human rights by the government in China.⁴² Such violations are often more extreme in the ethnic minority context, given the increased level of sensitivity that the government ascribes to matters regarding nationalism, separatism and state unity. This is exacerbated by the Party's tendency to label expression of cultural or religious identity or concerns as political issues of separatism. As a result, minorities, especially in the IMAR, TAR and XUAR, live under conditions of heightened repression and sharp restrictions on their civil and political freedoms, which further undermine their ability to participate in the political arena.

Current abuses and instances of rights violations

Ethnic minority activists in China are closely monitored by the public security and the state security bureaus, and these individuals comprise a significant portion of China's political prisoners. The Political Prisoners Database of the U.S. Congressional Executive Commission on China (CECC) includes 2,085 ethnic minority political prisoners out of a total of 2,279 cases in the database; 449 are ethnic women, mostly Tibetan nuns.⁴³ Many were sentenced to many years in prison for defending political and civil rights guaranteed by law under the PRC Constitution. For example in 1996, Hada, a Southern Mongolian human rights activist, was sentenced to

15 years in prison as a result of his involvement in the Southern Mongolian Democratic Alliance (SMDA), an organization that aimed to promote human rights, Mongolian culture and greater autonomy for China's minority peoples.

In the TAR, there have been continual reports of violence against Tibetan political prisoners, ranging from beatings to gender-based violence. Two Tibetan nuns, who were formerly imprisoned for five years at the Gutsa Detention Center⁴⁴ in Lhasa, told HRIC that they were arrested at the ages of 15 and 17 and tortured during interrogation before being imprisoned on subversion charges for shouting at a protest, "Tibetans need human rights! Human rights for Tibetans!"⁴⁵ Similarly, Uyghur activists in the XUAR have also experienced an intensified crackdown. In March 2000, a prominent Uyghur businesswoman, Rebiya Kadeer, who was active in organizing grassroots campaigns to address Uyghurs' social concerns, was sentenced to eight years in prison by the Urumqi Intermediate People's Court of the XUAR for "divulging state secrets to foreigners."⁴⁶

Freedom of opinion and expression

A fundamental hindrance to genuine political participation by ethnic minority groups is the absence of independent parties and true political pluralism in the PRC's political system.⁴⁷ The present system's tight regulation of dissemination of information and systemic ongoing violations of the fundamental freedom of opinion and expression undercut the development of robust debate and discussion necessary for more inclusive policymaking. Several former ethnic minority political prisoners interviewed by HRIC repeatedly emphasized that their freedom of opinion and expression had often been interpreted as dissent against the state. When asked if Tibetans can go to their village cadres to express their frustrations on issues relating to inequality between the Han Chinese and Tibetans, a Tibetan rural student replied, "We don't dare. If we did that, they would say we're protesting against the government."⁴⁸

Web sites and online discussion forums serving ethnic minorities are constantly closed down by the central government, often for allegedly hosting "separatist" content or content that carries messages that harm ethnic relations. On September 26, 2005, two websites based in the IMAR, <<http://www.ehoron.com>> and <<http://www.monhgal.com>>, were reportedly closed down by the authorities after being accused of providing a platform for discussing political issues and posting "separatist" materials.⁴⁹ These closures are not isolated incidents, but the tip of the iceberg, demonstrating the extent of Internet and information censorship in China, especially in ethnic autonomous regions such as the TAR, IMAR and XUAR. The suppression of freedom of opinion and expression has also extended to cultural identity. For example, in 1992, a 74-year-old former researcher at XUAR Academy of Social Sciences in Urumqi was placed under house arrest after publishing a history book on the XUAR.⁵⁰

Political exclusion and growing tensions and suspicions

Efforts to suppress the expression of opinions by ethnic minorities not only discourage their political participation and create an intimidating and repressive environment, but also

fuel increasing tensions between ethnic minorities and the central government. The central government's military expansion has also exacerbated tensions. Many interviewees expressed the opinion that if desperation increases over the lack of real political participation under the current system of governance, tensions and the level of violence will increase dramatically.⁵¹ The current system of political exclusion has also fostered a sense of division between ethnic minorities and the Han Chinese. A recurring theme in HRIC's interviews centered on the issue of trust and, conversely, growing suspicion, often framed the conversation as "us and them."⁵² A Tibetan researcher explained the disparity between ethnic minorities' political representation as compared to their Han counterparts as mainly an issue of distrust of ethnic minorities on the part of the central government, even though the interviewee noted, at the same time, that the disparity may be in part related to other reasons, such as disparities in level of education, skills and Chinese language proficiency.⁵³

It is important to note that suspicions about the "other" and being excluded due to ethnic differences can take on a self-fulfilling dynamic and lead to fewer minority members actually participating in the autonomous governance structure to reflect their political, economic or cultural concerns. One interviewee noted that it is "useless" to participate in the autonomy system.⁵⁴ The absence of representation in the decision-making process, coupled with structural and implementation flaws in the autonomy system, reinforce perceptions and biases that can carry serious consequences.

While the current situation in the IMAR, TAR and XUAR fits the characteristics of an "unstable peace" in terms of tensions, mutual suspicions and government's repression of dissent, it is important to note that conflict and peace are dynamic and connected processes that evolve over time. When ethnic minority groups become increasingly reluctant to participate in a top-down governance structure in which they have little actual influence, the possibilities for different groups to explore peaceful alternatives for mediation, participation and power-sharing can be seriously undermined, which increases the intensity and duration of societal tension and conflict. Where issues in dispute become more numerous and complicated over time, possibilities for successful mediation decrease, especially when there are lengthy, protracted conflicts resulting in a high number of fatalities.⁵⁵ It therefore remains to be seen how the current situation of an unstable peace marked by government repression, tension and mutual suspicion, with regards to ethnic minorities in China will develop.⁵⁶

Linking political exclusion and inequitable development

Reasonable and fair treatment of a country's minority groups is not only vital to social order and stability, but is often a strong indicator of how a government views and implements human rights for all individuals under its jurisdiction.⁵⁷ Alongside the civil and political rights discussed earlier, these human rights include economic, social and cultural rights. The importance of positive protections for the progressive fulfillment of economic, social and cultural rights is highlighted by the fact that the political participation of ethnic minorities cannot be fully

realized unless the minority group has sufficient ability and resources.⁵⁸

Individuals HRIC interviewed indicated overwhelmingly that as ethnic minorities they felt alienated from the formulation and implementation of public policy, and as a result felt powerless to influence outcomes that directly affect their livelihood. In an authoritarian system in which the general population—whether as members of majority or minority groups—has severely limited impact on the decisions of its government, enhancing participation for ethnic minorities is only one of many steps that are needed on the road to ensuring that the voices of the people are heard.

NOTES

1. See for example, Yash Ghai, *Public Participation and Minorities*, Report by Minority Rights Group International, July 2003.
2. The five autonomous regions are the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region (established on May 1, 1947); the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (established on October 1, 1955); the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region (established on March 15, 1958); the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region (established on October 25, 1958); the Tibet Autonomous Region (established on September 1, 1965).
3. For example, in 1993, the State Ethnic Affairs Commission issued two regulations, Regulations on Administration Work for Ethnic Townships and Regulations on Urban Nationalities Work, to protect the rights and the interest of ethnic minorities scattered in urban areas and small township level communities. PRC State Ethnic Affairs Commission, Regulations on Urban Nationalities Work (Chengshi minzu gongzuo tiaoli), promulgated on August 29, 1993, http://www.nh.gov.cn/public/info/node_news/node@nhgov5674.html; PRC State Ethnic Affairs Commission, Regulations on Administration Work for Ethnic Townships (Minzu xianghangzheng gongzuo tiaoli), promulgated on September 15, 1993, <http://politics.people.com.cn/GB/8198/58705/59794/4187131.html>.
4. 'Ethnic Groups: Self-Government', no date, China Internet Information Center Web, retrieved on 10 May 2004, <http://www.china.org.cn/e-groups/shaoshu/self.htm>.
5. The revised LREA comprises seven chapters with 74 articles and a pre-ambule. It expanded the original 1984 Law by seven articles. For a full text of the 1984 Law, see <http://fxylib.znufe.edu.cn/new/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=1248>.
6. Liu X.Y., *Frontier Passages: Ethnopolitics and the Rise of Chinese Communism, 1921–1945*, (Washington, D.C: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2004), p. 167.
7. Moneyhon, M., 'Recent Development: Controlling Xinjiang: Autonomy on China's "New Frontier,"' *Asian-Pacific Law & Policy Journal* vol. 3, issue 1 (2002), p. 7.
8. In reference to the Constitution, the LREA stipulates that the ethnic regional autonomy system is still subordinate to the following four basic principles: safeguarding national unity; preserving national interests; ensuring equality and unity of all national groups; and mandating the central government to assure strict compliance.
9. Minorities in the southwest, such as the Dai Lues, have had more freedom to exercise autonomy. The central government seems to impose fewer controls on minorities that do not have what they consider political agendas. Other minorities have experienced high levels of integration with Han society, and they are perceived to be business-oriented, which earn them greater trust from the central government. See Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC), *CECC Annual Report 2005*, p. 16–17.
10. Including the five Autonomous Regions, there are altogether 21 autonomous areas which do not have self-governing regulations.
11. Dai, Xiaoming, and Wang, Mu, "Lun minzu zizhi difang lifa (A Discussion on Local Legislation of Ethnic Autonomous Areas)," in Tomur Dawamat (eds), *Min Zu Zheng Ce Yan Jiu Wen Cong* (Part III), pp. 321–351, 332.
12. Dr. Lobsang Sangay, "China's National Autonomy Law and Tibet: A Paradox Between Autonomy and Unity," *Harvard South Asia Journal*, vol. 4, issue 1, 2006, <http://www.tibet.net/en/tibbul/2006/0506/focus.html>.
13. Jiang, Caixun, "Difang lifa ji xiangmu suliang (Local Legislations and its Quantity)," *Ren dai yan jiu*, no. 11, 2005, <http://www.rdyj.com.cn/2005/rdqk-11-9.html>.
14. Alternate Regulation of the Implementation of the PRC Marriage Law in the TAR, passed at Standing Committee of the TAR People's Congress on April 18, 1981, amendments passed by the Standing Committee of the TAR People's Congress on June 9, 2004. <http://tibet.chinacourt.org/public/detail.php?id=353>.
15. See Article 18, 25, 26 and 27, Interim Measures on the Management of Religious Affairs for the TAR, adopted by the Standing Committee of the TAR People's Congress on December 9, 1991, and promulgated on the same day.
16. Interview with interviewee designated as T06M, Dharamsala, India, April 23, 2006.
17. Interviews with T03F, T04F, T05M, T12M and T16M, Dharamsala, India, April 22–25 2006.
18. Interviews with T05M, T06M, T12M and T20M, Dharamsala, India, April 23–26, 2006; and with U02M, U03M, Washington, D.C., June 27–28, 2006.
19. Interviews with T03F, T04F, T20M, 22, 26 April 2006; and with U02M, U03M Washington, D.C., 27–28 June 2006.
20. Interviews with T01M, T02M, T03F, T04F, and T07M, Dharamsala, India, April 22–24, 2006.
21. Different groups have disparate levels of participation, dependent on a variety of factors including level of trust by the central government.
22. International Campaign for Tibet (ICT), *Crossing the Line: China's Railway to Lhasa, Tibet*, (Washington, D.C.: ICT, 2003).
23. Under the Livestock Grazing Ban, it is illegal to graze livestock on the grasslands of Southern Mongolia, subject to fines and punishment. This drastically alters the traditional ways of nomadic life in the areas.
24. The Western Gas to the East project was launched in the late 1990s, when Changqing Oil Field, a branch of PetroChina (the listed arm of China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC)), entered the area in 1999 to explore and open up the gas field. Currently, the gas is transported to the Beijing-Tianjin area and to Hohhot city.
25. The Western Electricity to the East project calls for the transfer of hydropower from the upper Yellow River and thermal power from coalmines in Shanxi and western Inner Mongolia to Beijing, Tianjin and Tangshan.
26. "Zhengzhishang de zizhiquan (Right to Self-governance in Politics)," China Internet Information Center (n.d.), retrieved March 3, 2006, <http://www.china.org.cn/chinese/zhuanti/xz05/1133179.htm>.
27. According to the Constitution and the Electoral Law, at least 12 percent of the total of NPC deputies shall be assigned to ethnic minority. See "Quanguo renda daibiao ming'e she zenyang fenpei di?(How Does the NPC Set the Quota of Representation?)," *Xinhuanet*, August 1, 2004, http://big5.xinhuanet.com/gate/big5/news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2004-08/01/content_1689314.htm.
28. State Council, White Paper on Regional Autonomy for Ethnic Minorities in China, February 2005, Beijing. Available at <http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/20050301/index.htm>.
29. 'List of members of the NPC Standing Committee, 10th NPC', National People's Congress Website, http://www.npc.gov.cn/zgrdw/jgszjry/lm_qgrdcwh.jsp?lmid=1105&dm=110502&pdm=110502.

30. As of the end of 2005, 4.5 million ethnic minorities are party members, accounting for 6.4% of the total party members in China. "Zhonggong jiaodong 85 zhounian dongyuan renshu yu 7qianwan (CPC Members Over 70 million as CPC Celebrates its 85th Anniversary)," BBC, 1 July 2006, http://news.bbc.co.uk/chinese/trad/hi/newsid_5130000/newsid_5135800/5135896.stm.
31. "List of members of the NPC Standing Committee, 10th NPC," National People's Congress Web, retrieved 12 February 2006, http://www.npc.gov.cn/zgrdw/jgszjry/lm_qgrdcwh.jsp?lmid=1105&dm=110502&pdmc=110502.
32. Saifuding Aizezi was an alternate member of the Central Political Bureau for two terms (1973–1983), but was never elected a member.
33. Zhou, P., *Zhongguo shaosu minzu zhengzhi fenxi* (Political Analysis of China's Ethnic Minorities), Kunming, Yunnan University Press, 2000. pp. 63–64, and pp. 75–77. See also "Autonomy is Not What It Was," China Development Brief, January 1, 2000, <http://www.chinadevelopmentbrief.com/node/242>.
34. "Ge sheng, shi, zizhiq dangwei banzi chengyuan (Members of Party Leadership in All Provinces, Municipal Cities and Autonomous Region)," People.com, (n.d.), <http://zg.people.com.cn/GB/33834/2590409.html>.
35. Wang, H.M., *Xin Zhongguo minzu zhengce gailun* (An Overview of Ethnic Policy of the New China), Beijing, Central University for Nationalities Press, 2000. pp. 127–30.
36. State Council, White Paper on Regional Autonomy for Ethnic Minorities in China, February 2005, <http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/20050301/index.htm>.
37. For example, Ragdi (Chinese: Raidi), who is currently serving as a member of the 16th CPC Central Committee, Vice-Chairman of the 10th NPC Standing Committee, and Chairman of Standing Committee of 7th Tibet Autonomous Regional People's Congress, is an official who joined the CPC in 1961 and has served in the CPC since that time. Other examples include Jampa Puntsok (Chinese: Qiangba Puncog), and Lekchok (Chinese: Legqog).
38. PRC, Combined Fifth and Sixth Periodic Report Submitted to CEDAW, 10 June 2004, CEDAW/C/CHN5-6.
39. "Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo di shijie quanguo renmin daibiao dahui daibiao mingdan (List of Representatives of the 10th NPC)", Xinhuanet, August 27, 2006, <http://www.people.com.cn/BIG5/shizheng/252/9667/9685/20030315/944408.html>; "Di Jiujie quanguo renmin daibiao dahui daibiao mingdan (List of Representatives of the 10th NPC)", NPC News, <http://www.wsjk.com.cn/big5/paper12/1/class001200040/hwz95663.htm>
40. 'Who's Who in China's Leadership', China Internet Information Center Web, no date, retrieved March 3, 2006, <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/leadership/86673.htm>.
41. UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, *Concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: China, Thirty-sixth session, 7–25 August 2006*, CEDAW/C/CHN/CO/6.
42. See China Development Brief, *250 Chinese NGOs: Civil Society in the Making: A special report from China Development Brief*, August 2001, p. 14.
43. As at the end of March 2005, there had been 279,973 registered NGOs throughout China, among which 147,957 and 131,322 were social organizations and non-governmental and non-commercial organizations respectively. See "2005 diyi jidu minzheng shiwu tongji suju (Statistics on Civic Affairs, First Quarter 2005" in Ministry of Civil Affairs of the People's Republic of China Web, April 22, 2005, July 3, 2005, <http://www.mca.gov.cn/news/content/recent/2005422110746.html>.
44. For a list of existing civil society organizations that work on ethnic minorities, see China Development Brief, CSO Directory, <http://www.chinadevelopmentbrief.com/dingo/Sector/Ethnic-Minorities/2-13-0.html>.
45. See the website of Nationalities Unity and Progress Association of China, <http://www.seac.gov.cn/homepage/homepage.jsp?refsubportal=ptredb36efa883d7>.
46. For more information, see Human Rights in China's casework, research and press releases at www.hrichina.org and www.ir200.org.
47. For more details of the database, see Political Prisoners' Database (PPD), CECC, <http://cecc.gov/pages/victims/databasefaq.php?PHPSESSID=38247b755632b311eb551e040ba4b59c>.
48. He and the SMDA published an underground journal, *The Voice of Southern Mongolia*, and wrote a book, *The Way Out of Southern Mongolia*, which revealed facts of the CCP's abuse of Mongols. He and the SMDA organized several peaceful protests in 1995 to demand the rights guaranteed in the Constitution of both the PRC and that of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. On August 19, 1996, the Hohhot City People's Procuratorate brought charges of 'conspiracy crime to subvert the government and divide the country, the crime of stealing and revealing information, and the crime of organizing and leading the counterrevolutionary organization by defendant.' See Hohhot Municipal Intermediate People's Court Criminal Verdict on Hada, Tegexi's Trial, November 11, 1996.
49. Gutsa is the common name for the public security bureau detention center for the Lhasa prefecture, and often houses Tibetan political prisoners and has a reputation for brutality, based on reports by former prisoners of torture, including beatings, shock treatments, aerial suspension and sexual assaults. Tibet Justice Center, 'A Generation in Peril: The Lives of Tibetan Children Under Chinese Rule,' <http://www.tibetjustice.org/reports/children/detention/b.html>.
50. HRIC interview with T03F and T04F, Dharamsala, India, 22 April 2006.
51. CECC, CECC 2002 Annual Report, <http://www.cecc.gov/pages/virtualAcad/Uyghur/xinannrept02.php?PHPSESSID=ac365cb8434829d1578c419493bce9b1>.
52. Although China has a few other political parties, their presence is no more than an artificial construction, since these parties do not oppose the CPC's policies.
53. Interview with T16M, Dharamsala, India, April 25, 2006.
54. Reporters Without Borders, 'Two Inner Mongolian websites closed because of "separatist" content,' 3 October 2005, http://www.rsf.org/article.php?id_article=15189.
55. Bhattacharya, A., 'Conceptualising Uyghur Separatism in Chinese Nationalism', *Strategic Analysis*, vol. 27, no. 3, July–September 2003, pp. 357–381.
56. Interviews with U02M and U03M, Washington, D.C., June 27–28, 2006; and with T01M, T02M, T03F, T05M, T06M, T07M, T08M, T10M, T12M, T13M, T14M, T15F, T18M and T20M, Dharamsala, India, 22–26 April 2006.
57. Interviews with T03F, T04F, T06M, T10M, T12M, T14M, T16M, T17M, T18M and T19M, Dharamsala, India, 22–26 April 2006.
58. Interview with T06M, Dharamsala, India, April 25, 2006.
59. Interview with T04F, Dharamsala, India, April 22, 2006: "It's just a name, it's an autonomous region, but has no rights that are supposed with the name."
60. Bercovitch, J. and Langley, J., 'The Nature of the Dispute and the Effectiveness of International Mediation', *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 37, no. 4, December 1993, pp. 670–691.
61. For more details, see: Lund, Michael S., *Preventing Violent Conflicts: A Strategy for Preventive Diplomacy*, Washington, D.C., United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996, p. 39.
62. Ghai, Yash, *Public Participation and Minorities*, Report by Minority Rights Group International, July 2003, p. 5.
63. Ghai, Yash, *Public Participation and Minorities*, Report by Minority Rights Group International, July 2003, pp. 10–11.