



Nonviolent Radical Party Transnational and Transparty

NGO in general consultative status with ECOSOC of the UN

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Oral Statement on Item 4 (“Human Rights situations that require the Council’s attention”) at the 17th Session of the UN Human Rights Council

Thanks for giving me the floor, Mr. President.

On 5 July 2009, Uyghurs in Urumqi, the regional capital of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR, China), staged a peaceful protest which was brutally suppressed by Chinese security forces and subsequently led to ethnic unrest in the city that left hundreds of people dead. Approaching the second anniversary of these events, and despite international calls, no independent investigation into the incident has been allowed by the Chinese authorities and the number of people killed, detained, imprisoned, executed and disappeared remains unclear. The Nonviolent Radical Party (NRP) condemns the Chinese authorities’ inaction and refusal to reveal the real circumstances of these tragic events and calls upon the Human Rights Council to press the Chinese government to support an independent investigation into the events.

In addition, the root causes of the protests, namely, the crackdown on Uyghur culture, identity, freedom of expression and religion, as well as the ongoing economic discrimination, have not yet been addressed. While the Chinese government intends to prevent social and ethnic tensions in the region through vast but wrongly implemented economic development programs and increased security measures, the self-imposed goal of achieving “long-term stability” in Xinjiang is far from being reached. However, as long as the Chinese government keeps hiding behind a false rhetoric of social harmony and ignoring the real problems and challenges in the country, the situation in China will remain tense and unavoidably lead to new social tensions, as seen recently in Inner Mongolia.

In addition, the NRP is extremely worried about the deepening collaboration between Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states whose dismal domestic human rights record and disregard for the rights of refugees represent a blow against human rights in the region.

On 30 May 2011, the Uyghur refugee Ershidin Israel was extradited from Kazakhstan to China. Only 10 days later, on 9 June 2011, Kazakhstan again violated its international human rights obligations by extraditing at least 28 ethnic Uzbeks to Uzbekistan. Both China and Uzbekistan are notorious for torture and other forms of ill-treatment and Kazakhstan has therefore violated two of its most binding commitments under international law, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture which both prohibit the return of an individual to a country where he or she faces a credible risk of torture. Since their extradition, the whereabouts, legal status and well-being of these people are unknown.

The NRP condemns these forcible returns in the strongest terms and demands immediate access to the extradited people. The Human Rights Council must take legal action against Kazakhstan and demand that the SCO account for the human rights impact of its practices such as, but not limited to, denials of asylum and forcible return of asylum seekers.

I thank you Mr. President.