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Briefing Paper For The Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) and Women's NGOs

Subject: The Failure Of The UN Commission On The Status Of Women To Address China's Coercive Population Control Program And The The Violations It Inflicts Upon Women

Released: February 21, 2011

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Tibettruth is an independent research and campaigning network supporting justice, human rights and independence for the Tibetan and Uyghur peoples. It is not concerned with the issue of abortion *per-se* and is completely independent of organisations involved in that debate. It operates internationally and has a prominent internet profile through its website <http://tibettruth.com>

An important aspect of our work concerns human rights violations resulting from China's coercive population-control policies, as applying inside Tibet, East Turkestan, and China. In addition we also monitor and lobby Governments, the United Nations Populations Agencies, and the Media on this subject. We remain deeply concerned that despite the assurances and formalized agreements featured in the Beijing Declaration, that this major human rights matter is not being extended, by the Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) and women's NGOs any serious examination. Nor being given sufficient exposure in the plethora of women's human rights reports. We note that the UNCSW and many women's NGO's affirm their work in relation women's human/reproductive rights is guided by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) the ICPD. and the Beijing Platform of Action.

Yet following the years since the Beijing Conference China's coercive birth-control program remains in clear violation of both these international commitments and makes a mockery of the UN General Assembly Resolution on Violence against Women.

This paper scrutinises the background to these concerns, seeks a response from the UNCSW and Women's NGOs to a number of important questions. It also provides some detail on the existence of medical atrocities resulting from China's population policies and includes accounts of coercive birth-control in Tibet, and East Turkestan.

Introduction

Much attention was focused last year upon the 15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) an internationally agreed document on women's human, social, economic and health rights, ratified by Governments and Non-Governmental Organisations. It required states to meet agreed commitments and to implement actions and policies relating to a range of women's human rights. At the time it was asserted by a number of prominent women's organizations that Beijing Conference would enable considerable progression in a number of key areas of human rights, despite the genuine concerns of holding a conference within totalitarian state such as China, which has an appalling record on human rights in general, and also implements a population control policy which violates a woman's right to freedom of choice and control over her own body. International concern at abuses arising from such policies was reflected in the Beijing Declaration, which noted that women possess:

“the right to have control and decide freely and responsibly . . . matters related to . . . Reproductive health, free of coercion . . . and violence.”.
(Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, para 96.)

It also rightly defined violence against women as including:

“ . . . forced sterilisation, and forced abortion, coercive/forced use of contraceptives .” (Ibid-Paragraph 115).

In light of the review conducted by the Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) will regarding the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. **Tibettruth** urges the UNCSW to give all consideration to the concerns and questions featured in this statement and appended submissions and call upon it to ensure that this issue receive serious attention during the 55th Session of The CSW and at any parallel events review.

In particular we would request the UNCSW to focus on the serious lack of progress made in China concerning the elimination of coercive practices and call upon the UNCSW to challenge China, and question its violation of its commitment to the Beijing Declaration on such issues. In the months prior to the Beijing+15 meeting much debate and focus was given to a range of human rights themes, it is a matter of great concern that, largely absent from such dialogue and examination, was any examination concerning communist China's treatment of women, and in particular its coercive population-control programme. Which, sixteen years on from Beijing Declaration, continues to grossly violate the principle of freedom of choice and a woman's right to control over her own body.

We note with disappointment that once again neither the CSW or NGO events during the 55th Session features this major human rights subject. Yet in occupied Tibet, East Turkestan, Inner Mongolia, Manchuria and communist China women are denied human rights and reproductive freedoms and subject to the dictate of a male-dominated regime that inflicts a series of draconian penalties; including financial/mental/physical coercion, forced sterilisations and forced abortions.

The extent of these state-engineered abuses is staggering, yet the collective apathy which has greeted this issue is puzzling and alarming. Imagine the response if just one woman was dragged from her home in Washington DC, Paris or London, beaten, tied to a medical slab and forcibly sterilised. There would be riots on the streets and rightly so! Yet such violence is a central element in China's population program, and has traumatised countless women across the communist Chinese Empire. Sadly in the time since the Beijing Conference on Women all we have had is silence, how can anyone truly committed to the rights of women claim to be concerned about human rights, yet ignore or deny the plight of women subject to this brutality? Faced with years of in-action and evasion it seems we dealing, not with an absence of evidence, but a singular lack of integrity.

Whatever the reasoning this issue lies at the sensitive core of feminist ideology, touching, as it does, on freedom of choice and women having control over their own bodies. Such fundamental rights do not exist under communist Chinese rule, the state's needs are seen as greater than those of the individual. In the fifteen years since delegates arrived in Beijing for the UN Conference on Women, the systematic abuse against women has continued, making a mockery of the recommendations and agreements of the Platform for Action and Beijing Declaration.

We were assured by women's NGO's who attended that active engagement with the Beijing Conference would help moderate the grim excesses of China's totalitarian machine and improve the plight of women. As predicted by those organisations which boycotted the event the violations resulting from the programme remain; forced sterilisations, torture, arbitrary arrests, forced abortions and infanticide.

Concerns and Questions

1. Reference to "Tibet" in this paper refers to the historic, political and cultural regions of Tibet comprised of U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo. Parts of these territories were forcefully absorbed and renamed by Communist China into Chinese provinces, leaving a truncated region, the so-called "Tibet Autonomous Region". Mention of East Turkestan relates to the Moslem-Uyghur territory, annexed and renamed by communist China as "Xinjiang Autonomous Region".

2. The current oppression suffered by the peoples of Tibet and East Turkestan operates through a range of human rights violations. A central, if under-exposed issue, and one which the UNCSW and Women's NGO's have disappointingly given virtually no prominence to is China's coercive population control programme.

Despite claims to the contrary from a number of multi-lateral population agencies (United Nations Fund for Population, International Planned Parenthood Federation and Marie Stopes International) by nature, ideology and application China's birth-control programme remains inherently coercive. Inflicting upon women a spectrum of abuses including forced sterilisations:

“From the beginning to the end, each village and town must give the highest priority to the tubal-ligation of women who have given birth to two girls, especially within those villages where these women have not yet had their tubes tied. We must demonstrate dogged determination and to the bodies of every cadre. Set the time and set the assignment. On multiple levels and using different channels, we should obtain information on spouses who are attempting to flee the county. By hook or crook, we must carry out contraceptive measures and every village must meet at least one of its target assignments.” (Speech made by Tian Xiangrong 31 July 2006 Tongwei County Government (Online—As Documented in the US Congressional Executive Commission on China-Annual Report 2008.)

3. Such draconian appeals expose an official tolerance of abuses inflicted by family planning officials, which appear in China’s regional family planning laws:

“ . . . Pregnancies that do not comply with the legal requirements for childbirths shall be terminated in a timely manner.” (Hunan Province Population and Family Planning Regulations, Article 22.)

4. Enforcement is also afforded state approval, a fact reflected in China’s Population and Family Planning Law 2002.

“Article 41 Citizens who give birth to babies not in compliance with the provisions of Article 18 of this Law shall pay a social maintenance fee prescribed by law. Citizens who fails to pay the full amount of the said fees payable within the specified time limit shall have to pay an additional surcharge each in accordance with relevant State regulations, counting from the date each fails to pay the fees; with regard to ones who still fail to make the payment, the administrative department for family planning that makes the decision on collection of the fees shall, in accordance with law, apply to the People’s Court for enforcement”.

“Article 43 Anyone who resists or hinders the administrative department for family planning or its staff members in their performance of their official duties in accordance with law shall be subject to criticism and be stopped by the administrative department for family planning”
(Population and Family Planning Law of the People’s Republic of China (Order of the President No 63) September 1, 2002.)

5. It is often asserted by defenders of the Chinese population program (and no doubt China as a member state will issue such a claim) that a relaxation of such coercive measures were a part of China’s 2002 National Family Planning Law. However, as indicated by the extracts above there is no sign of moderation presented nor anything about prohibiting, punishing, or avoiding coercive practices.

6. Neither does it identify or condemn specific coercive measures used across China (and occupied territories such as Tibet and East Turkestan). Significantly though it does emphasize precise acts obstructing family planning, and provision is made for their punishment.

“China’s population planning policies in both their nature and implementation constitute human rights violations according to international Standards.”
(US Congressional Executive Commission on China-Annual Report 2008.)

7. That coercion remains at the centre of China’s population policies and practice is beyond dispute, yet the UNCSW and Women’s NGOs in their decision not to give serious examination of this issue as it relates to the review of the Beijing Declaration seem to disagree. Such a deliberate omission places the UNCWS and Women’s NGOs at odds with the findings of the United States State Department’s Country Report on China:

“The government [China] continued its coercive birth limitation policy, in some cases resulting in forced abortion or forced sterilization” (US State Department 2008 Human Rights Report: China Published 26 February 2009.)

8. What is puzzling about the exclusion of any reference to this subject, is the general awareness within Women’s NGOs and UN bodies, of coercive birthcontrol abuses within Tibet, East Turkestan and China. Which have been reported and condemned by bodies such as; United States Congressional Committee on China, US State Department, Amnesty International, members of the United States Congress, Optimus, Foreign Affairs Committee, Human Rights Watch, Independent Tibet Network, Asia Watch and the British Medical Association.

9. The action therefore not to give any prominence, in preparatory meetings and reports relating to the Beijing +15 conference, to coercive birth-control and related violations; either through related websites, human rights documentation and reports, is extremely disappointing. It is difficult not to conclude that the UNCSW is indifferent to the existence of these medical atrocities, despite the findings of internationally respected human rights bodies:

“Women face forced abortion and sterilization as part of China’s enforcement of its one-child policy”. (Amnesty International USA Press Statement, 20 February 2009.)

10. Nor does it appear to regard the comments of former United States Secretary of State Colin Powell as investing the issue with sufficient importance:

“China has in place a regime of severe penalties on women who have unapproved births. This regime plainly operates to coerce pregnant women to have abortions in order to avoid the penalties and therefore amounts to a “program of coercive abortion.”(Comments issued in July 2004 after a US “fact-finding mission” into China to determine UNFPA’s complicity with China’s coercive population control programme.)

11. We would respectfully remind the UNCSW and Women's NGOs that our colleagues at Independent Tibet Network have over the years provided your offices and concerned organizations with detailed information on this issue. This material included the reports: Children of Despair and Orders of the State (ITN 1992 and 2000 respectively). The latter forming written evidence to the UK Inquiry into Relations with China Foreign Affairs Committee Report on China 2000) submitted also to the Foreign Affairs Committee (Ninth Report 2007-08). Further information was made available for that Parliamentary report, including testimony detailing forced sterilisations of Tibetan women, official Chinese birth control regulations as applying to Tibet and East Turkestan, and a critical examination of the role of UNFPA, IPPF and DFID and the baseless claim that their association with China's population programme has brought a moderation of coercive practices. Direct submissions were made to relevant United Nations offices, and also submissions to NGOs attending the Beijing Declaration. Indeed, since 1989, in cooperation with Optimus we have furnished Women's NGOs with a series of informative papers and correspondence, briefed various meetings and consistently appealed for greater exposure of this major human rights violation. It is therefore not a lack of detailed information that explains the virtual silence on this matter.

12. As campaigns of forced sterilisation are inflicted upon across China, Tibet and East Turkestan the brutalized women of those territories have witnessed nothing but state-engineered violence operating under the guise of population control. So much for progress and assurances featured in the Beijing Declaration and subsequent reviews!

13. We express our serious concern at this neglect, of what constitutes a pattern of gender-based violence that Tibetan Uyghur and Chinese women suffer as a consequence of China's population policies. This includes forced or coerced sterilizations and forced abortions. It is a matter of extreme disappointment that the UNCSW with its commitment to women's human rights has taken virtually no meaningful action on this issue.

14. We note that this issue is featured neither within the CSW 55th Session nor at NGO parallel events, while a voice was permitted for Ms. Song Xiuyan, Vice Chairman (sic) of the All China Women's Federation, an organization which is significantly responsible for the enforcement and planning of China's mass campaigns of forced sterilizations!

15.. Forced sterilisations, coerced abortions and sterilisations, in tandem with intrusive monitoring of women's reproductive cycles, constitute acts of discrimination that violate:

Articles 1 and 2 of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Article 16(e) of CEDAW specifically guarantees women the rights: "to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the . . . means to enable them to exercise these rights."

16. At the Fourth World Conference on Women, the participating governments, including China, recognized and reaffirmed:

“the right to have control and decide freely and responsibly . . . matters related to . . . Reproductive health, free of coercion . . . and violence.”.
(Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, para 96.)

To this end, governments agreed to:

“Take all appropriate measures to eliminate . . . coercive medical interventions . . .” (para 106(h).)

17. Having collectively agreed and committed China to the terms and agreements of the Platform for Action and The Beijing Declaration, which rightly defined violence against women as including:

“. . . forced sterilisation, and forced abortion, coercive/forced use of contraceptives . . .” (Ibid-Paragraph 115).

18) Why is the singular failure of the Beijing Declaration to honour and address these commitments not being given exposure at the 55th Session of the UNCSW?

19. We call upon the UNCSW to demand that China furnish independent evidence to demonstrate that such violations have been eliminated and that coercive practices no longer feature within its population program?

20. In light of the ongoing emergence of such violations what measures will the UNCSW be taking, considering that China’s population program, by its coercive nature violates the commitments it made to the Beijing Declaration?

Appendix One: Case Files On Forced Sterilizations

Increasing abuses generated by China’s coercive birth-control policies are causing unrest and anger according to a report featured in the English newspaper, The Sunday Times (February 2009) as officials maintain a widespread campaign of forced abortions and sterilizations across China and occupied territories such as Tibet and East Turkestan. As Hillary Clinton landed in Beijing for her 2009 meeting with the Chinese leadership there was some hope that the issue would feature in her keynote address, the US Secretary of State had previously condemned China’s coercive population program in 1995.

“It is a violation of human rights when women are denied the right to plan their own families, and that includes being forced to have an abortion or sterilised against their will.” (UN Conference on Women-Beijing 1995)

More recently Chinese women are speaking-out and challenging such abuses. According to the report, Ms.Zhang Linla, who has a four-year-old daughter, informed a website based in Shenzhen, close to Hong Kong, that she was coerced into a late forced abortion due to becoming pregnant again before the period officially permitted between births.

According to Ms Zhang:

“Six days before the due date, 10 strong strangers came to my house, forced me into a truck then took me to a family planning clinic, where the doctor gave me an injection the child began struggling in my womb and one of these scum even kicked me in the abdomen. Then the baby came out and they threw it into a rubbish bin. I could even see it was still moving.”

During February 2009 a Yunnan (some parts of which is formed by annexed Tibetan territory) newspaper documented another instance of forced sterilisation. It concerned a woman, named as Ms.Zhang Kecui, who was kidnapped in the street by family planning officials and forcibly taken to a clinic where she was tied onto a medical table and sterilized. She was reported as having two children, which according to China's draconian population regulations meant Ms.Zhang should have undergone 'birth-control surgery' (forced sterilisation) after the second birth.

Such accounts are all too familiar in China, Tibet and East Turkestan, where human and reproductive rights are brutally denied by order of the state. Another account, which appeared on a number of websites during September 2008, reported a case of infanticide in Wuhan, central China. A farmer, named as Huang Qiusheng, said his wife, who was nine months pregnant, gave birth to a live child, despite being forced to submit to an injection to induce an abortion. The infant was thrown into a toilet. The following day an elderly woman, named Liu Zhuyu, heard the infant crying, so rescued it and delivered the baby to a nearby child clinic. The reports document that family planning officials then challenged Liu, grabbed the infant and killed it by dashing the child to the ground. (Source: The Sunday Times, 02/15/2009)

Surrogate Mothers Targeted For Forced Abortions

“With China's rising affluence, increasing numbers of infertile couples have been seeking surrogate mothers to bear them babies. In recent years, officials have largely turned a blind eye to this underground womb-for-rent industry that defies the country's strict childbirth laws. Now, there are signs the authorities are starting to crack down by forcing some surrogate mothers to abort their foetuses. In the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou, three young surrogate first-time mothers were discovered by authorities hiding in a communal flat. Soon afterwards, district family planning and security officers broke into the flat, bundled them into a van and drove them to a district hospital where they were manhandled into a maternity ward, the mothers recounted to Reuters.

“I was crying ‘I don't want to do this’,” said a young woman called Xiao Hong, who was pregnant with four-month-old twins. “But they still dragged me in and injected my belly with a needle,” the 20-year-old told Reuters of her ordeal which happened in late February. The woman, who declined to give her full name for fear of reprisals, said the men had forced her thumbprint onto a consent form before carrying out the abortion.

Another of the surrogates, who said she'd come from a village in Sichuan province, recounted how officers made her take pills then surgically removed her three-month-old foetus while she was unconscious. "I was terrified," the 23-year-old said. A spokesman for the Guangdong Provincial Family Planning Commission Zhong Qingcai declined to be formally interviewed by Reuters, but said authorities were investigating. The official Guangzhou Daily newspaper quoted district family planning officials as saying the women were all unmarried and acting as "illegal" surrogates. It added the three had "agreed" to undergo "remedial measures" in accordance with the law. But the head of the surrogacy agency caring for the mothers, disputes this version of events. "It's an absolute crime," said Lu Jinfeng, the founder of the "China Surrogate Mother" . "By forcefully dragging people away like this to undergo an abortion is a savage illegal act that violates human rights."

Underground networks of surrogacy agents, hospitals, and doctors have spread in recent years as infertile Chinese couples with money hire surrogates to produce babies for them. The surrogates are often confined to secret flats for most of the duration of their pregnancy to avoid detection, while fertility, obstetrics and childbirth procedures for the mothers are often carried out discreetly by medical staff at public hospitals and health clinics with links to agents.

With around one in six couples in the U.S. now estimated to be infertile and with similar rates seen in China as modern urban lifestyles take hold, surrogacy agencies have been recruiting girls, often from poor villages, to have babies on behalf of prospective parents, in ever greater numbers. Accurate figures on the size of the industry are hard to come by, but a recent report by the respected Southern Metropolis Weekly estimated around 25,000 surrogate children have been born so far in China, citing research into surrogacy agency websites carried out by family planning authorities. Hundreds of Chinese surrogacy agencies are openly listed on Chinese search engines like Baidu, luring prospective clients with maternal imagery and popup windows offering live chats. Prospective surrogate mothers are openly recruited and paid between 50,000 to 100,000 yuan (\$14,650) per pregnancy on some sites, making it a lucrative profession for poor village girls in a country where the average annual per capital income for rural households is around \$600#. (Source: Reuters 4/30/2009)

Account of Birth Control Officer Forcibly Aborting by Injection

A report documents an account of a Communist Chinese Birth Control Officer forcibly aborting a baby, just two days before it was due. The report states that twenty-two Shandong residents, who had been subject to various forms of persecutory coercion by the Birth Control Office, are submitting a law suit to the Linyi City Intermediate People's Court in Shandong Province. One woman was given an injection by the Birth Control Officer to kill the baby just two days before it was due. The Information Center also reported that on 24th August 2006, blind Chinese human rights activist, Chen Guangcheng, was sentenced to four years and three months imprisonment. He has submitted an appeal to the Linyi intermediate court.

One hundred and thirty-seven witnesses agreed to submit testimony to the court in defence of Chen, including those twenty-two women, whose had been abused by the Birth Control Officer and had received help from the activist. The Information Center quoted one of the witnesses, Chen Xirong, of Xiajiagou Village, Fei county in Shandong Province, who said that three years ago his daughter-in-law Li Juan had nine months pregnant and just two days before the baby was due she was abducted by the Birth Control personnel and taken to a hospital where she was injected with a drug which killed the foetus. A dead baby girl was born 10 hours later. According to Li's family, the authority has not done anything as yet about this "intentional killing" and the personnel involved have not been punished. (Source: Information Center for Human Rights and Democracy, 9/27/2006)

Undercover Documentary Exposes Forced Sterilisation of Tibetan Women

The following extracts featured in the UK Channel Four TV Documentary 'Undercover in Tibet', broadcast on 30th March 2008. The film included an interview with a Tibetan woman who recounted her harrowing experiences of forced sterilisation. The program refers to a Tibetan who is investigating communist China's coercive birth-control program inside Tibet:

Narration: "Despite years of torture and imprisonment, this man is determined to continue to fight the Chinese. More recently he has been investigating the government's population control policies." The torture victim said: "There were 6 million Tibetans before Chinese rule. There are only about 5 million of them in the Tibetan region today. So there has been no population growth in this period. Yet now they are carrying out forced sterilisations in the Tibetan region. Those who refuse are punished. They are implementing this here and now. This is a violation of human rights."

Narration: "Tash had made contact with a woman who claimed to have had personal experience of enforced sterilisation. She asked the team to arrive in the early hours of the morning, terrified of the consequences of foreigners being seen coming to her house."

Tibetan Interviewer: "She's very nervous..."

Narration: "She said she had a child out of quota under the terms of China's one child policy. As a result, she was given the choice of a fine she couldn't pay or sterilisation."

Tibetan Lady: "Those who can't pay the fine have to have a sterilisation. If you have good connections you can buy a sterilisation certificate for around 1000 Yuan. But those who don't have any money have to have the sterilisation whether they like it or not. I was forcibly taken away against my will."

Tibetan Interviewer: "Did you cry?"

Tibetan Lady: "I cried when I was lying on the bed after the sterilisation. I cried thinking that I'd been forced to have a sterilisation when there was nothing wrong with me."

I was feeling sick and giddy and couldn't look up. It was so painful. Apparently they cut the fallopian tubes and stitch them up. When they opened me up they pulled them out by the roots. It was agonising. They didn't use anaesthetic. They just smeared something on my stomach and carried out the sterilisation. Apart from aspirin for the pain there were no other drugs. And then from the day after the operation I had to look after myself. If I needed a drip I had to pay for it myself."

Tibetan Interviewer: "Can you show me the scars from the sterilisation?"

Narration: The woman shows Tash her scars.

Tibetan Lady: "I was so frightened. I can't even remember how I felt. I wasn't the only one. About half a dozen women in our village had to undergo sterilisation."

Tibetan Interviewer: "Forcibly?"

Tibetan Lady: "Yes, forcibly. No one would have done it willingly. They come to the door to fetch you by force. They threaten to confiscate stoves and anything valuable from the house. So people get frightened and go for the sterilisation. Some people were physically damaged by the operation. They have limps and have to drag their hips. Since then people are too scared to have many children."

Narration: "The Chinese government says that the one child policy does not apply to Tibetans. But this woman's experience is far from unique. In 2002 a UN special rapporteur said women in Tibet are subjected to forced sterilisation, forced abortion, coercive birth control policies and the monitoring of menstrual cycles."

Former Tibetan Doctor Criticises US Population Research as a Whitewash

(Note: This press statement was in response to a misleading and fact-free article by UK journalist, Mr John Gittings (Guardian February 25th 2002) which seems to have been based upon the dubious conclusions of 'anthropologist' and Sinophile Prof. Melvyn Goldstein.

Having conducted a geographically minute and superficial 'survey' (under the keen guidance of the communist Chinese authorities) the Professor concludes coercion, within birth-control, was non-existent in Tibet. His 'findings' are a shameful attempt to conceal the brutal reality of communist China's coercive population control program).

"Recently, I have seen an online report in a UK newspaper about a US research team visiting some areas of so-called Tibet Autonomous Region for doing research, without escorts of Chinese Govt. The report concluded that the Chinese policy of birth-control and implementation on Tibetan women is not a forced! I am very much surprised to see it. I am a Tibetan refugee woman from Amdo, North-Eastern Tibet having reached Dharamsala (northern India) recently.

In my country, I completed a course from Medical School of Tsholho in 1993 and from then, up to July 2001, I have been working in family planning at a health centre for women and child. My job known as 'white dress' or doctor provided me with direct experience of birthcontrol and mother and child care.

We have to propagate the Chinese policy of birth-control among the farmers and nomads in villages and remote areas. It claims 'less family member will face no economic problems', however the farmers and nomads are not opting for birth-control willingly or because of economic pressure. If it is so, why it is made mandatory target of birth control? The common practice and methods of birth control includes sterilization, ligature, 'birth-control surgery', inter-uterinedevice of the woman have a miscarriage, induce labour etc.

There is no proper system of transportation in the remote rural regions of my country, besides high hills and long routes for women and have to come several times to hospital which is either in Shang or Zong level. These arduous journeys are made because of the reality of coercion (fines and force), so nobody comes willingly! In addition all medical and surgery charges are paid for by the women herself. This became a burden not economic development for a family.

For example, in the district where I worked, carried out planned birth-control operations. After taking women age group of 18 to 35 in villages and district level, forced birth-control operations were carried out. The number of birthcontrol surgery to be done in a place per year is fixed and we have to carry out these 'surgeries' to fulfil the given duties. In many places a forced 'lottery system' is applied to complete the number of women to be operated upon against the will of respective women.

People called it 'human murdering tax' rather than willingly. For example, in year 1989 to 1995, six hundred women were given birth-control surgery. This is a case of a small district where the population is about fifty thousand. Most operations are done in the hospital of village (Shang) level where the medical equipment, living places and other facilities are backward, besides there is no health guarantee for our Tibetan sisters in these cold climates of Tibet. Birth-control operation is implemented as per fixed number in a place, applying various methods for birth-control. In 1997 two hundred and forty women were subject to 'birth-control surgery' which resulted in the women having a 'miscarriage', a further four hundred and six women suffered induced labour surgery in 1999.

A woman from Chhusang, Sengdeng village, Tsholho Tsigor District of Tshongon (Amdo) died due to this type of birth-control surgery in July 2000. Every sentient being have their value of birth and death, and is a deep and important call of people. In this new era Chinese never care about the life of a private person. In my view the findings of a place by the researchers team cannot represent six million Tibetans living in Tibet which is divided by Chinese into one autonomous region, ten autonomous prefectures and two autonomous districts etc.

Any researchers (team or a person) who visits Tibet under the knowledge of Chinese Government are allowed only after well prepared, educated to answer and terrified them [sic] in advance, Hence to say that they visited villages without official escorts and had complete freedom of movement can't portray freedom (in Tibet). For example, the places, the villages and the houses where to visit are fixed in advance, besides the village head and regional secretary of communist party used to monitor them. If any person answers against their instructions will face penalty or punishment as per severity of talk.

Therefore, Tibetans in Tibet can be asked question under the protection of UNO, otherwise they (Tibetan) can't express their feelings. I am praying for such day to come. Being a doctor of women and child I had experienced, saw, heard and am proud to prove it to the world, hence made this fact appeal to correct the untruth, also sure people will understand a genuine matter.”
(Source: Losar Kyi 03/06/2002-English translation of Chinese and Tibetan version)

Planned Birth Officer Enforced One Child Policy Abuses in China

The following statement by a former family planning official was featured in a conference by the Laogai Research Center USA.

“For fourteen years, I served as a planned birth officer in the Fujian province of China. With this identification card, I enforced the one child policy with whatever means necessary. A wife and mother myself, I worked in an office lined with files on women, detailing the most personal nature of their health from their menstrual patterns to records of contraception insertions. This is a photograph of my office's exterior. Slogans line the front wall instructing that giving birth is only permissible to married couples that have received government permission.

This photograph of my office shows the cage where family members of women who became pregnant illegally were detained. Aside from detainment, my office, under my leadership, dismantled homes, sterilized women, and aborted infants to enforce the planned birth policy. I am not a doctor, and yet I controlled the reproductive health care for all women in my town. During this fourteen-year tenure as a planned birth official, I witnessed great suffering of those who violated the population policy. Many of them were crippled for life, while others were victims of mental disorders resulting from their abortions. Families were ruined or destroyed. I myself did so many brutal things, yet at the time, I thought I was implementing the policy of the Communist party, and that I was an exemplary citizen, a good cadre.

Once I watched a woman nine months pregnant undergo an abortion. She had no other children, but had not yet received her certificate allowing her to give birth. According to policy, this too warrants an abortion. After this experience, I could no longer bear seeing mothers grief-stricken by induced delivery and sterilization. I could not live with this on my conscience. After all, I am a mother as well.

To be a planned birth officer is to take on a role of great pressure. Should an officer allow mothers to exceed the birth quotas of a town, the legal consequences would befall the officer. The Chinese government is far more concerned with the results than the methods a local officer may take to achieve them. In that sense, a birth control officer's job is somewhat open-ended. While detainment of family members and dismantling of homes may not be included in official doctrine, there is very little to prevent local officers from resorting to those practices to save their own jobs.

I know very little about the UNFPA, but I do know that any organization that is contributing to China's population control policy is encouraging these officials to implement forced abortion, sterilization, and punishments ranging from detainment to house destruction as means of enforcement. I learned that this is an unacceptable way to live as a human being, and I can only hope that China soon realizes this as well."

(Source: Statement of Gao Xiaoduan, 1/24/2002)

Campaign of Forced Abortions and Sterilizations in China

According to a report (March 2005) officials in China have unleashed another campaign of forced abortions and sterilizations, it documents the case of 23 year-old, Li Juan who, just two days before her child was expected to be born, was pinned down by birth control officers, who injected her with some form of poison. The atrocity is reported to have occurred at a local 'clinic' in Linyi region, in Communist China's eastern Shandong province. She reported that the needle was driven into her abdomen until it entered the 9-month-old fetus.

"At first, I could feel my child kicking a lot," says the 23-year-old. "Then, after a while, I couldn't feel her moving anymore." Ten hours later, Li delivered the girl she had intended to name Shuang (Bright). The baby was dead. To be absolutely sure, says Li, the officials submerged the infant's body for several minutes in a bucket of water beside the bed.

All she could think about on that day last spring, recalls Li, was how she would hire a gang of thugs to take revenge on the people who killed her baby because the birth, they said, would have violated China's family-planning scheme.

In March 2005, family-planning officials in Linyi's nine counties and three districts invaded villages, looking to force pregnant women to abort and/or be sterilized. Many women refused to undergo the procedures, others went into hiding, often in family members' homes. The crackdown intensified. Relatives of women who resisted sterilization or abortion were detained and forced to pay for "study sessions" in which they had to admit their "wrong thinking," says Teng Biao, an instructor at the China University of Political Science and Law in Beijing, who visited Linyi last month to investigate the coercive campaign. In the Linyi county of Yinan alone, at least 7,000 people were forced to undergo sterilization between March and July, according to lawyers who spoke with local family-planning officials.

Several villagers, the lawyers allege, were beaten to death while under detention for trying to help family members avoid sterilization. Officials in Linyi deny that anything improper has happened.

The plight of Linyi's women was publicized by a most unlikely man. Chen Guangcheng was blinded at a young age in Linyi and learned massage in Beijing, one of the few subjects those without sight in China are allowed to study. In March, a stream of distraught peasants complained to him of forced sterilizations and the detentions of family members. Chen, 34, had heard about the campaign; many people in his village, he told Time, had been imprisoned at one time or another for defying the sterilization order. Women like Hu Bingmei. When family-planning officials came to fetch her in May for a forced sterilization, Hu escaped with her two daughters to her parents' home in another village.

Several days later, seven officials showed up, she says, grabbed her younger child and shoved the girl into a car. Afraid that her daughter would be abducted, Hu jumped into the vehicle with them. Women like Hu Bingmei. When family-planning officials came to fetch her in May for a forced sterilization, Hu escaped with her two daughters to her parents' home in another village. Several days later, seven officials showed up, she says, grabbed her younger child and shoved the girl into a car. Afraid that her daughter would be abducted, Hu jumped into the vehicle with them. The car drove to the local family-planning clinic, where, Hu says, nurses threw her onto an operating table. "Other people were fine after their operations, but it hurt me so much, I could barely stand up," says Hu. Two weeks later, doctors operated again and promised things would heal better. But even today, Hu doubles over in pain after just a few steps. "They told me they were doing this for my own good," says Hu. "But they have ruined my life." (Source: Time Magazine-10/30/2005)

Appendix 2: The Failure of ICPD To Protect Women's Reproductive/Human Rights

It may well be that once again China assures the UNCSW and Women's NGOs that its population program conforms to the requirements of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly) and the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) 1994. However both of these documents raise some concern relating to the protection of women's reproductive/human rights.

Addressing the UN Commission on Population and Development April 3 2009
Purnima Mane (above) Deputy Executive Director of UNFPA, speaking on behalf of Executive Director Thoraya Obaid informed delegates that:
"We will work to ensure the right of women to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health free of coercion, discrimination and violence."

These principles were ratified in two major international covenants, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly and the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) 1994

In particular the ICPD is presented as the authoritative global instrument protecting women's human rights as they apply to reproductive freedoms and rights. The agreements and commitments the document formalises are held up as demonstrable proof that women's rights are recognised, and more importantly protected. Governments and multi lateral agencies such as UNFPA, IPPF and Marie Stopes International celebrate it as an international consensus affirming consent over coercion.

Indeed there are a number of elements in the ICPD which emphasise such rights, however all is not what it seems, and the assertion that the International Conference on Population and Development champions and guarantees such freedoms is betrayed when examining the document in detail

So what does it state concerning reproductive rights?

5.5. Governments should take effective action to eliminate all forms of coercion and discrimination in policies and practices....

Notice that 'coercion' is not formally defined nor are forced sterilizations proscribed here, no definition of what action should be applied, nor formal requirement of governments to commence such action within an agreed time, no reference to any monitoring system to ensure accountability or compliance.

7.3. Bearing in mind the above definition, reproductive rights embrace certain human rights that are already recognized in national laws, international human rights documents and other consensus documents. These rights rest on the recognition of the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, and the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health. It also includes their right to make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence, as expressed in human rights documents. In the exercise of this right, they should take into account the needs of their living and future children and their responsibilities towards the community.

While this key section again asserts reproductive freedoms, without coercion or violence, which significantly it chooses not to define, it concludes with a puzzling qualification, that notes such rights must be exercised with due responsibility towards the community. Within a liberal democratic society that would not raise too many objections perhaps, however within a draconian and totalitarian regime such as communist China it endorses the rights of the state over the individual. Since China imposes a coercive birth-control program references here to freedom from coercion and violence are worthless gestures.

7.24. Governments should take appropriate steps to help women avoid abortion, which in no case should be promoted as a method of family planning, and in all cases provide for the humane treatment and counselling of women who have had recourse to abortion.

Yet Communist China's family planning laws at a national and regional level not only do not forbid abortion as a means of family planning but actually incorporate it within a range of coercive measures aimed at compliance.

" . . . Pregnancies that do not comply with the legal requirements for childbirths shall be terminated in a timely manner." (Hunan Province Population and Family Planning Regulations, Article 22)

"Article 41 Citizens who give birth to babies not in compliance with the provisions of Article 18 of this Law shall pay a social maintenance fee prescribed by law. Citizens who fails to pay the full amount of the said fees payable within the specified time limit shall have to pay an additional surcharge each in accordance with relevant State regulations, counting from the date each fails to pay the fees; with regard to ones who still fail to make the payment, the administrative department for family planning that makes the decision on collection of the fees shall, in accordance with law, apply to the People's Court for enforcement". (China's Population and Family Planning Law 2002)

7.14. The objectives are: (a) To help couples and individuals meet their reproductive goals in a framework that promotes optimum health, responsibility and family well-being, and respects the dignity of all persons and their right to choose the number, spacing and timing of the birth of their children

Respecting dignity and freedom are not principles which feature within China's population program, and receive little tolerance within national family planning law, which prefers coercive enforcement over free and informed choice:

"Article 43 Anyone who resists or hinders the administrative department for family planning or its staff members in their performance of their official duties in accordance with law shall be subject to criticism and be stopped by the administrative department for family planning...." (China's Population and Family Planning Law 2002)

7.22. Governments are encouraged to focus most of their efforts towards meeting their population and development objectives through education and voluntary measures rather than schemes involving incentives and disincentives.

Yet targets and quotas continue to feature within family-planning inside China, and were being applied a year after the introduction of the 2002 Population and Birth Control Law, which according some defenders of China's population program introduced moderation.

Document Number 43 implemented by Jieshi Township in Guangdong Province (released on August 26, 2003) ordered:

“The fall 2003 family planning assignment should begin on August 26, and within 35 days (ending on September 30), certain goals must be achieved: to sterilize 1,369, fit 818 with an IUD, induce labor for 108, and carry out 163 abortions. During this period, each five days there should be a count and each ten days there should be an evaluation, and there must be a 100 percent success rate. Party secretaries and village heads who failed to fulfill this task would have their salaries cut by half, and other responsible cadres would suffer the withholding of their entire salary.”

The commitments and human rights principles contained in the International Conference on Population and Development, which at times are vague and lacking any significant substance, in terms of definition, are consistently violated by the policy, implementation and nature of communist China's population program. A fact that does not appear to trouble governments, multi-lateral population agencies, or a number of women's organisations and environmental groups, who continue to claim that the agreements of the ICPD are a forceful defense of women's human rights. They prefer to uncritically accept as fact the deceits of communist China, which disingenuously claims any abuse within its program is due to overzealous and uninformed local officials.

“A few grass-roots family planning workers are still possessed by the old views and concepts which prevailed before the adoption of the National Population and Family Planning Law, namely that as long as it is for the implementation of the family planning policy which is a fundamental state policy occasional violation of people's rights should not be considered as a serious mistake. With such ideas still in the minds of the few family planning workers, incidents in violation of peoples' reproductive rights do occur from time to time in some remote, bordering and economically underdeveloped areas” (Chinese Family Planning Association-2009)

That the international women's movement chooses to believe, defend and promote such propaganda, while fully cognisant of the extent and nature of violations resulting from China's population policies is a breath-taking display of its craven bias towards communist China.

Meanwhile the clock is ticking away, since the objectives featured in the ICPD Programme of Action, must reach a target date of 2015 in order to accomplish the agreement made in 1994. Yet, through a merciless process of denial that such violations exist within the program, and a callous sacrifice of the facts, no doubt UNFPA its neo-Malthusian supporters will convince themselves, on that date, that the goals of the ICPD have been realized. As they congratulate themselves in the air-conditioned comforts of New York's United Nations Plaza, the traumatized women of China, Tibet and East Turkestan, whose lives have been forever blighted by the brutalities of forced sterilization will have little to celebrate.

They also cite the claims of progress offered by UNFPA, in its extremely limited county program in China, as evidence of the application of the principles of the ICPD, yet as prominent Chinese dissident Harry Wu notes: “The UNFPA states that birth targets and quotas were lifted in the 32 Chinese counties supported by its programs. It also notes a “shift from an administrative family planning approach to an integrated, client-oriented reproductive health approach in the project counties.” We have heard charges that the UNFPA has provided computers and vehicles to the Chinese government to enforce China’s family-planning policy. Regardless of what has taken place in the 32 counties the UNFPA operates in, they constitute only about one percent of China’s more than 3,000 counties.

There is no major change taking place in China, and these 32 counties are being used as a showcase by the Chinese government.” (Laogai Research-2004)

Recall too that the reproductive principles featured in the ICPD are themselves lacking detail and conviction, moreover they are sufficiently vague as to permit a disturbing tolerance of China’s coercive birth-control policies. Rather than guaranteeing “principles of free and informed choice” the ICPD serves as a smokescreen, employed by Governments and supporters of the Chinese program, to justify the continued presence of UNFPA in China, on the basis of its apparent commitment to reproductive freedoms and individual rights.

Yet significantly ICPD

- 1) Failed to specify practices NOT complying with the principles of reproductive freedom.
- 2) Does not condemn forced abortion/forced sterilisation.
- 3) Fails to endorse the right to reproductive freedom as absolute.
- 4) In exercising the right of reproductive freedom it proposes the “responsibility” of the individual “towards the community”, what does that signify in communist China?

Within the corridors of the United Nations we have international gatherings, where women’s organisations convene to affirm their commitment to the principles of women’s human and reproductive freedoms enshrined, albeit vaguely and tentatively, by the ICPD. Yet the continuing silence on this subject, and its virtual absence from the agenda at the NGO Beijing+15 meeting or the UNCSW Beijing+15 conference suggests that the guardians of women’s human rights are callously uncaring with respect to women’s human rights in China and occupied regions such as Tibet and East Turkestan, where women are brutally denied freedom-of-choice and must comply to the totalitarian dictates of a highly coercive population program.

So psychologically and emotionally attached are they to the cause of population-control, that human rights abuses arising from China’s population policies are seen as some form of inconvenience, to be concealed behind the deliberately obscure terminology of instruments such as the ICPD, which promise so much yet lack any genuine substance.

The last words on this must go to the late Doctor John S Aird, a China specialist and authority on the Chinese population program, who once noted: "They exemplify the venality, the self deception, the profound corruption of mind and spirit that has pervaded the family-planning community ever since it rushed into bed with the Chinese program and allied itself with the Chinese government against its people. I doubt it will ever find the moral strength to climb out again"