

## STATUS OF WOMEN

### *Findings*

- The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID–19) outbreak imposed outsized risks and burdens on women in China due to already existing gender-based inequalities. Women played essential roles in the epidemic response, and the unequal gender distribution of labor, both paid and unpaid, associated with the epidemic and with mandated self-isolation, meant that women in China took on greater risk of infection and more of the burden for treatment and containment. UN Women warned that because of already existing gender gaps in earnings, savings, and job security, the long-term effects of the epidemic would disproportionately affect the livelihoods of women, particularly those at the margins with fewer resources to weather economic losses.
- In recent years, women in China have been facing persistent gender inequality that scholars attribute to economic liberalization and the promotion of sexist and regressive gender norms in official discourse. Women in China experience severe discrimination throughout their careers, from job recruitment and hiring to wages and promotions. National laws also mandate parental leave and other entitlements for women and not men. These laws enforce the role of women as caregivers and have led employers to avoid hiring women of child-bearing age who do not already have children.
- A grassroots feminist movement has persisted in Chinese political and cultural life in recent years despite government restrictions and censorship. Feminist activists continued working on issues including employment discrimination, gender-based violence, and the rights of single women to access services and benefits related to pregnancy and birth—as well as to acquire legal documentation for their children—for which current policies require proof of marriage. Young Chinese people outside China have also played an increasingly important role in feminist activism in China as the government intensifies restrictions within China’s borders.
- The inclusion of anti-sexual harassment provisions in the Civil Code in May 2020 was a sign that women’s rights advocacy is having an impact even as it has been severely suppressed.
- During the COVID–19 outbreak, grassroots volunteers and civil society organizations brought attention to gaps in support for women and marshaled donations, services, and volunteers to address the need for menstrual supplies for frontline workers and to provide support for domestic violence victims.
- Gender-based violence in China remains a serious issue. By December 2019, Chinese courts had issued only 5,749 protective orders in the four years since the passage of the PRC Anti-Domestic Violence Law in March 2016.
- The Commission has also observed reports of gender-based violence perpetrated by the state against ethnic minority women in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR): interviews of Uyghur and Kazakh women released from camps

## Status of Women

have indicated acts of rape, forced abortion, and forced sterilization.

- Domestic violence rose substantially during the COVID–19 epidemic due to enforced co-habitation and rising tensions in households from economic strain and fears about the virus, according to experts on gender-based violence. Accountability and redress for violence diminished as some local authorities delayed approval of protection orders and converted shelters for domestic violence victims into homeless shelters.

### *Recommendations*

Members of the U.S. Congress and Administration officials are encouraged to:

- Publicly and privately urge the Chinese government to respect the freedom of expression and assembly of all rights advocates, and in particular to refrain from harassing and intimidating the independent women’s rights advocates seeking to increase awareness about gender inequality and sexual harassment.
- Urge the Chinese government to publicly expand its commitment to gender equality through measures such as increasing the number of women at the highest levels of political leadership, instituting gender equality and anti-harassment training in government workplaces, and challenging discriminatory attitudes based on gender through public education.
- Commend the Chinese government for recent legal developments aimed at promoting the welfare of women and gender equality. These include the inclusion in the Civil Code of a provision targeting sexual harassment. Encourage the government to strengthen formal support services for implementation—for example, by increasing funding for health services or shelters for women experiencing violence, providing funding and support for attorneys for legal services, and allowing independent lawyers and advocates to assist with the promotion and implementation of laws related to gender equality through lawsuits and public campaigns.
- Support international exchanges among academics, legal advocates, non-governmental organizations, and others that focus on the implementation and enforcement of recently adopted laws promoting gender equity. In particular, facilitate and support technical assistance programs that would help all those working in law enforcement and the judiciary to implement the PRC Anti-Domestic Violence Law effectively and challenge discriminatory attitudes based on gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Train law enforcement, as the first point of contact, to address reports of violence in a way that does not undermine victims’ concerns or safety. Urge provincial-level officials to implement provincial regulations according to the PRC Anti-Domestic Violence Law.
- Encourage the collection and analysis of data on disparities in economic and social factors based on gender so as to monitor changes.

## STATUS OF WOMEN

### *Introduction*

Women in China face persistent gender inequality<sup>1</sup> that scholars attribute to economic liberalization and the promotion of sexist and regressive gender norms in official discourse in recent years.<sup>2</sup> Women's participation in the labor force is declining, and gender-based violence remains a serious issue, including that perpetrated by the state against Uyghur and other ethnic minority women. At the same time, grassroots feminist activism has become a unique and dynamic force within Chinese society, mobilizing campaigns to generate changes in government policy and public attitudes even as the government is increasing its restrictions on Chinese civil society generally.<sup>3</sup> Because of existing gender gaps, women have been disproportionately impacted in the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak, and experts predict that these gender gaps will widen further with the economic and social disruption of the epidemic.

### *Participation and Discrimination in the Labor Force*

During the 2020 reporting year, Chinese women, who make up 43.7 percent of the total labor force,<sup>4</sup> faced social and economic roadblocks to advancing their careers. The labor force participation rate among Chinese women, although still fairly strong by global standards,<sup>5</sup> continued to fall, declining from 73.2 percent in 1990 to 60.5 percent in 2019.<sup>6</sup>

#### GREATER ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT VULNERABILITY

Although Chinese women work in a variety of economic sectors, a significant proportion work in several industries with weak labor protection. For example, nearly one in four working women is in the agricultural workforce,<sup>7</sup> and as of 2018 women made up the majority of workers in the traditional retail sector, where employers often deny workers entitlements such as social insurance and welfare benefits.<sup>8</sup> Also, a November 2019 report by China Labor Watch describes how female workers in toy factories are preferred because they are perceived as more “docile” and are less likely to be promoted to high-level management positions.<sup>9</sup>

#### EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION

Women in China face severe discrimination throughout their careers, from job recruitment and hiring to wages and promotions. Job recruitment listings frequently indicate a preference or requirement for men,<sup>10</sup> with 11 percent of civil servant job listings in 2020 containing such specifications despite national laws prohibiting gender discrimination in hiring, according to analysis by Human Rights Watch.<sup>11</sup> Women constituted 16.8 percent of senior and leadership roles such as legislators, senior officials, and managers, while earning on average 64.3 percent of what men earned, according to the World Economic Forum's 2020 Global Gender Gap Report.<sup>12</sup> A working paper published by the International Labour Organization in 2015 noted that such disparities have increased over the current period of economic reform that began in 1978,<sup>13</sup> accel-

## Status of Women

erating during the 2000s with the intensification of market liberalization.<sup>14</sup>

### GENDERED IMPACT OF NATIONAL PARENTAL LEAVE REQUIREMENTS

National laws mandating parental leave and other entitlements for women and not men are a major reason for discriminatory hiring and dismissal. Under these laws, male employees are not legally entitled to parental leave but employers are required to grant female employees 98 days of parental leave.<sup>15</sup> Some employers reported concerns that generous maternity leave makes women of child-bearing age too expensive to hire and promote.<sup>16</sup> Human Rights Watch reports that discrimination against women has increased since the passage of the universal two-child policy in late 2015.<sup>17</sup>

The Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region became the first provincial-level authority to require 10 days per year of child care leave for parents of children under three years old.<sup>18</sup> A woman from Zhuhai municipality, Guangdong province, won a case against her former employer for firing her because of her pregnancy.<sup>19</sup>

### POLICY REFORMS AND DEVELOPMENTS REGARDING WORKPLACE SEXUAL HARASSMENT

National-level officials announced policies to address sexual harassment and gender discrimination in employment. For the first time, the National People's Congress (NPC) legally codified a definition of sexual harassment.<sup>20</sup> The new Civil Code, approved by the NPC in May 2020, stipulates that "schools, enterprises, and government offices" must institute anti-sexual harassment policies to prevent abuses of power.<sup>21</sup>

One woman in Chengdu municipality, Sichuan province, won her sexual harassment case against Liu Meng, a social worker and her former boss, who was legally ordered to apologize for his actions.<sup>22</sup> However, the court did not accept the plaintiff's demand that her employer be held liable for the harassment that occurred in the workplace.<sup>23</sup> Despite steps towards legal reform, Chinese women continued to experience sexual harassment and assault across industries<sup>24</sup> and faced retribution from employers for reporting cases.<sup>25</sup>

### DISCRIMINATORY LAWS AND INADEQUATE ENFORCEMENT OF PROHIBITIONS ON GENDER DISCRIMINATION

International observers<sup>26</sup> reported that gender-based employment discrimination in China has not been checked by prohibitions against gender discrimination in existing laws<sup>27</sup> or by China's international commitments.<sup>28</sup> Chinese laws do not establish sufficient mechanisms for enforcing prohibitions on gender discrimination.<sup>29</sup> In addition, some laws themselves continue to discriminate against women by barring them from performing certain jobs—in some cases based on whether they are menstruating, pregnant, or breastfeeding.<sup>30</sup>

## Status of Women

### *Participation in Public Life*

#### REPRESENTATION IN GOVERNMENT

The proportion of female representatives in top levels of government and Communist Party leadership remained disproportionately low, ranging from nearly 25 percent in the National People's Congress to none out of 26 ministerial positions and 1 out of 25 in the Party's Politburo (the most powerful governing body in China).<sup>31</sup> At lower levels of governance in urban areas, women did not face the same gender gap and represented 50.4 percent of residential committee membership in 2018.<sup>32</sup> By contrast, rural women were underrepresented, making up only 24 percent of village committee members and 11.1 percent of village committee chairs.<sup>33</sup> Women constituted 27.2 percent of Party membership in 2018, which, as a common prerequisite for promotion in government, is another indicator of women's level of participation in governance.<sup>34</sup>

#### GRASSROOTS FEMINIST ACTIVISM

The grassroots feminist movement that has persisted in Chinese political and cultural life in recent years despite government restrictions and censorship has been an important form of public participation for younger women in China.<sup>35</sup> Ever since a major crackdown in 2015,<sup>36</sup> feminist activists have faced increasing censorship,<sup>37</sup> prohibitions on organizing and conducting activities,<sup>38</sup> and restrictions on personal freedom for key members.<sup>39</sup> Such restrictions have included detention: core #MeToo movement activist **Huang Xueqin** was held in October 2019 for three months,<sup>40</sup> and women's and labor rights advocate **Li Qiaochu** was held for four months after being detained in February 2020.<sup>41</sup> One leading activist stated that such repression has taken a significant toll on the movement and the well-being of individual activists,<sup>42</sup> and one researcher notes that the feminist community has adapted by becoming more decentralized and informal in its organizing and by making greater use of online mobilization.<sup>43</sup> Young Chinese people outside China have also played an increasingly important role in feminist activism in China as the government intensifies restrictions within China's borders.<sup>44</sup>

Grassroots engagement with women's issues in China has been affected by major changes shaping China's civil society environment more generally. The government's restrictions on rights advocacy have forcibly shut down non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and media platforms associated with feminist activism in recent years,<sup>45</sup> while a government policy promoting the outsourcing of social services to private parties has led to social enterprises receiving government funding to provide services like sex education.<sup>46</sup> Nonetheless, feminist activists continued their independent rights advocacy, working on issues including employment discrimination, gender-based violence, and the rights of single women to access services and benefits related to pregnancy and birth—as well as to acquire legal documentation for their children—for which current policies require proof of marriage.<sup>47</sup>

*Gender-Based Violence*

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

During this reporting year, the Commission continued to observe domestic violence affecting large numbers of women in China. Following the passage of the PRC Anti-Domestic Violence Law<sup>48</sup> in March 2016, the Chinese government has made efforts at the national and local levels to enhance protection against domestic violence; however, by December 2019 Chinese courts had still only issued 5,749 protective orders in the four years since the passage of the PRC Anti-Domestic Violence Law.<sup>49</sup> In January 2020, the Supreme People's Procuratorate and the All-China Women's Federation jointly issued a proposal encouraging local women's federation branches to report cases of domestic violence to local prosecutors who would be required to report back upon the resolution of each case.<sup>50</sup> In Guangdong province, the provincial government drafted regulations in December 2019 to expand the definition of domestic violence to include non-physical abuse such as threats, stalking, and harassment.<sup>51</sup> In June 2020, the local government of Yiwu city in Jinhua municipality, Zhejiang province, issued suggestions for developing a domestic violence database accessible to pre-nuptial partners.<sup>52</sup>

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT

Highly publicized incidents of sexual harassment and assault continued to surface in China during the Commission's reporting year. These have included acts of sexual assault against female passengers of carpool services,<sup>53</sup> between clients of matchmaking services,<sup>54</sup> and still others implicating teachers sexually abusing students.<sup>55</sup> The Hong Kong-based NGO China Labour Bulletin has in previous years attributed widespread sexual harassment in the workplace to a lack of accountability due to vague legal definitions of sexual harassment.<sup>56</sup> Changes to China's Civil Code in 2020, however, established prohibitions on sexual harassment in the workplace.<sup>57</sup> The Ministry of Education pledged in September 2019 to further support the implementation of anti-sexual harassment mechanisms at Chinese universities.<sup>58</sup> Universities in Beijing and Shanghai municipalities fired several prominent faculty members after they sexually harassed female students.<sup>59</sup> In October 2019, a court in Shanghai municipality issued the first criminal judgment for sexual harassment on public transportation in Shanghai.<sup>60</sup>

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AGAINST ETHNIC MINORITY WOMEN AS  
GOVERNMENT POLICY

During this reporting year, the Commission has observed reports of gender-based violence against ethnic minority women in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). Women account for just over one quarter of individuals in the Xinjiang Victims Database, and many women report having been subjected to gender-based violence by state authorities.<sup>61</sup> Interviews of Uyghur and Kazakh women released from mass internment camps have indicated acts of rape, forced abortion, and forced sterilization.<sup>62</sup> In addition to such sexual violence and measures aimed at minimizing

## Status of Women

Uyghur and other ethnic minority births, the Chinese government has sought to target and control Uyghur and other ethnic minority families by removing children from their mothers' care to attend boarding schools, urging couples to have fewer children, and encouraging Uyghur women to marry outside their ethnic group.<sup>63</sup> In an effort to exercise further control over Uyghur and other ethnic minority families, in April 2020, the Standing Committee of the XUAR People's Congress incorporated domestic violence into its legal code to fight extremism, claiming to protect family members against physical and psychological extremist acts.<sup>64</sup>

### *Gendered Impacts of COVID-19*

Public health experts and international human rights groups have asserted that consideration of the disproportionate risks and burdens that epidemics pose to women is critically important to both the protection of women's equal rights and public health outcomes.<sup>65</sup> In China, even as women played essential roles in the epidemic response, they also faced outsized risks and burdens from the COVID-19 outbreak due to already existing gender-based inequalities that UN officials<sup>66</sup> predict will be further exacerbated by the economic and social impacts of the pandemic. [For further information on COVID-19, see Section II—Public Health.]

#### GENDERED DISTRIBUTION OF LABOR: DISPROPORTIONATE EXPOSURE AND BURDEN OF TREATMENT FOR WOMEN

The gender distribution of labor, both paid and unpaid, associated with the epidemic and mandated self-isolation meant that women in China took on greater risks of infection and a greater share of the burden for treatment and containment. During the epidemic, an estimated 100,000 women constituted the majority of doctors and 90 percent of nurses at the frontline in Hubei province.<sup>67</sup> The unpaid care work for COVID-19 patients at home likely also fell largely to women, who were therefore also more exposed—the International Labour Organization reports that women in China perform 2.5 times more unpaid care work than men.<sup>68</sup>

#### DE-PRIORITIZATION OF WOMEN IN OFFICIAL COVID-19 RESPONSE

Local anti-domestic violence organizations reported that even as domestic violence escalated, victims found that authorities had further curtailed protections and services<sup>69</sup> that even before the outbreak had often failed to properly address victims' rights and safety.<sup>70</sup> Domestic violence rose substantially during the epidemic due to enforced co-habitation and rising tensions in households from the economic strain and fears about the virus, according to experts on gender-based violence.<sup>71</sup> Accountability and redress for violence was diminished as some local authorities delayed approval of protection orders and converted shelters for domestic violence victims into homeless shelters.<sup>72</sup>

#### CIVIL SOCIETY MITIGATION OF GENDER GAPS IN OUTBREAK RESPONSE

Grassroots volunteers and civil society organizations brought attention to gaps in support for women during the epidemic and marshaled donations, services, and volunteers to address needs on the

## Status of Women

ground. A team of grassroots volunteers raised more than 2 million yuan (US\$280,000) that was used to purchase and ship menstrual products to workers in Hubei province.<sup>73</sup> Feminist activists recruited a network of volunteers to raise awareness about domestic violence and to support victims both online and in their local communities during the quarantine restrictions.<sup>74</sup> One anti-domestic violence organization in Hubei province worked with local government agencies and other civil society organizations to provide psychological counseling and legal support to more than 300 victims of domestic violence during the lockdown.<sup>75</sup>

### LONG-TERM ECONOMIC IMPACTS FOR WOMEN

UN Women warned that because of already existing gender gaps in earnings, savings, and job security, the long-term effects of the epidemic would disproportionately affect the livelihoods of women.<sup>76</sup> In China, this includes informal-sector workers who are subject to extreme job precarity in part because their employment relationships are not recognized by the PRC Labor Law, like 90 percent of the roughly 35 million domestic workers in China—almost all of whom are women.<sup>77</sup> Domestic workers have experienced severe economic setbacks; by March 2020 domestic workers faced an 85 percent drop in new contracts compared with the same period last year.<sup>78</sup>

## Notes to Section II—Status of Women

<sup>1</sup> World Economic Forum, “Global Gender Gap Report 2020,” December 17, 2019, 125.

<sup>2</sup> Rachel Connelly, Xiao-yuan Dong, Joyce Jacobsen, and Yaohui Zhao, “The Care Economy in Post-Reform China: Feminist Research on Unpaid and Paid Work and Well-Being,” *Feminist Economics* 24, no. 2 (2018): 1–30; Catalyst, “Women in the Workplace—China: Quick Take,” April 14, 2020; Fan Jialai, “Zhuanfang: Chen Yifei tan Funu Jie: nuxing yijiu xuyao quan fangmian fachu shengyin de jihui” [Exclusive interview: Chen Yifei speaks about Women’s Day: as ever, women need the opportunity to speak out in all aspects], *The Paper*, March 8, 2020; Angela Xiao Wu, “The Making of ‘Made-in-China Feminism,’” *Sixth Tone*, November 1, 2019; Shen Lu, “Thwarted at Home, Can China’s Feminists Rebuild a Movement Abroad?,” *ChinaFile*, Asia Society, August 28, 2019; Sile Chen, “Interacting with the State: The Success and Vulnerability of the Feminist Movement in China,” *Georgetown Journal of Asian Affairs*, vol. 5 (2019): 32–33.

<sup>3</sup> For more information on increasing restrictions on Chinese civil society, see Section III—Civil Society.

<sup>4</sup> World Bank, “Labor Force, Female (% of Total Labor Force), China, 2019,” *World Bank Databank* (2019).

<sup>5</sup> “Female Labor Force Participation by Country, around the World,” *TheGlobalEconomy.com*, accessed July 30, 2020.

<sup>6</sup> Catalyst, “Women in the Workplace—China: Quick Take,” April 14, 2020; World Bank, “Labor Force Participation Rate, Female (% of Female Population Ages 15+) (Modeled ILO Estimate)—China,” *World Bank Databank* (2019); Claire Courteille-Mulder, “China Promotes Gender Equality at Work,” International Labour Organization, September 23, 2019.

<sup>7</sup> World Bank, “Employment in Agriculture, Female (% of Female Employment), China, 2019,” *World Bank Databank* (2019).

<sup>8</sup> China Labour Bulletin, “Squeezed on All Sides, China’s Retail Workers Respond with Collective Action,” November 13, 2019.

<sup>9</sup> China Labor Watch, “The Dark Side of the Glittering World: A Report on Exploitation in Toy Factories in China,” November 20, 2019, 9–10.

<sup>10</sup> Human Rights Watch, “China: Gender Discrimination in Hiring Persists,” April 29, 2020; Civil Service of the People’s Republic of China, “2020 Nian Guojia Gongwuyuan Kaoshi zhiwei biao xiazai” [2020 National Civil Service Exam job board download], October 14, 2019; Amy Qin, “A Prosperous China Says ‘Men Preferred,’ and Women Lose,” *New York Times*, July 16, 2019.

<sup>11</sup> Human Rights Watch, “China: Gender Discrimination in Hiring Persists,” April 29, 2020; *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Laodong Fa* [PRC Labor Law], passed July 5, 1994, effective January 1, 1995, arts. 12–13; *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Funu Quanyi Baozhang Fa* [PRC Law on the Protection of Women’s Rights and Interests], passed April 3, 1992, amended August 28, 2005, effective December 1, 2005, arts. 12, 21, 25; Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, *Jiuye Fuwu Yu Jiuye Guanli Guiding* [Provisions on Employment Services and Employment Management], issued November 5, 2007, amended and effective December 14, 2018, arts. 20, 58(2); *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Jiuye Cujin Fa* [PRC Employment Promotion Law], passed August 30, 2007, effective January 1, 2008, art. 27.

<sup>12</sup> World Economic Forum, “The Global Gender Gap Report 2020,” December 17, 2019, 125–6.

<sup>13</sup> Sukti Dasgupta, Makiko Matsumoto, and Cuntao Xia, International Labour Organization Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, “Women in the Labour Market in China,” ILO Asia-Pacific Working Paper Series, May 2015, iii.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>15</sup> *Nu Zhigong Laodong Baohu Tebie Guiding* [Special Provisions on the Labor Protection of Female Employees], issued and effective April 28, 2012, art. 7; *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Funu Quanyi Baozhang Fa* [PRC Law on the Protection of Women’s Rights and Interests], passed April 3, 1992, amended August 28, 2005, effective December 1, 2005, art. 27; “Expecting in China: Employee Maternity Leave and Allowances,” *China Briefing*, Shira & Associates, April 6, 2017.

<sup>16</sup> Amy Qin, “A Prosperous China Says ‘Men Preferred,’ and Women Lose,” *New York Times*, July 16, 2019; “85 Pct People Say Work-Life Balance Difficult for Working Mothers,” *Xinhua*, July 14, 2019; “Legislators Propose New Measures to End Workplace Gender Discrimination,” *Sixth Tone*, August 26, 2019.

<sup>17</sup> Human Rights Watch, “China: Gender Discrimination in Hiring Persists,” April 29, 2020.

<sup>18</sup> Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region People’s Congress Standing Committee, *Ningxia Huizu Zizhiqu Funu Quanyi Baozhang Tiaoli* [Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region Women’s Rights Protection Regulations], amended September 27, 2019, effective November 1, 2019, art. 28; “Ningxia Gives Parents of Young Children 10 Days’ Leave per Year,” *Sixth Tone*, October 31, 2019.

<sup>19</sup> Yuan Ye, “Woman Fired for Getting Pregnant Wins Case against Former Employer,” *Sixth Tone*, November 1, 2019.

<sup>20</sup> Luo Sha and Cao Dian, “Minfa Dian renge quan biao cao’an jiang wanshan youguan xing saorao de guiding” [Civil Code personality rights edited draft refined relevant sexual harassment provisions], *Xinhua*, August 21, 2019; Lin Ping, “Quanguo Renda Changweihui Fagongwei fayanren: Zhichang xing saorao ni bu xianyu gongzuo changhe” [NPC Standing Committee Legal Working Committee spokesperson: Workplace sexual harassment draft is not limited to workplace settings], *The Paper*, August 21, 2019.

<sup>21</sup> *Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Minfa Dian* [PRC Civil Code], passed May 28, 2020, effective January 1, 2021, art. 1010; Jiayun Feng, “More Babies, Fewer Divorces, and Sexual Harassment: Takeaways from China’s New Civil Code,” *SupChina*, May 29, 2020.

<sup>22</sup> Lily Kuo, “It Is Not Hopeless’: China’s #MeToo Movement Finally Sees Legal Victories,” *Guardian*, November 3, 2019; Huang Xueqin, “Zhongguo #MeToo chu shouli shengsu, women

## Status of Women

juli zhenzheng de shengli haiyou duo yuan? [China's #MeToo produced its first legal victory, how far until our genuine victory?], *Matters* (blog), July 11, 2019.

<sup>23</sup>China Labour Bulletin, "Employer Let Off the Hook in Chengdu Sexual Harassment Case," July 17, 2019.

<sup>24</sup>Yangyang Cheng on How China Sees Science and Gender Inequality in Academia," *SupChina*, January 28, 2020.

<sup>25</sup>Sui-Lee Wee and Li Yuan, "They Said #MeToo. Now They Are Being Sued.," *New York Times*, December 26, 2019; FreeChineseFeminists (@FeministChina), "The Shanghai branch of Aldi, a German giant retailer, dismissed a woman after she sent evidence of sexual harassment . . .," Twitter, April 2, 2020, 2:31 a.m.; Zhang Wanqing, "Shanghai Woman Sues Aldi over Boss's Alleged Misconduct," *Sixth Tone*, April 7, 2020.

<sup>26</sup>China Labour Bulletin, "Workplace Discrimination," accessed April 29, 2019; Human Rights Watch, "China: Gender Discrimination in Hiring Persists," April 29, 2020.

<sup>27</sup>*Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Laodong Fa* [PRC Labor Law], passed July 5, 1994, effective January 1, 1995, amended December 29, 2018, arts. 12–13. Gender-based discrimination against employees or applicants for employment is prohibited in most circumstances under Articles 12 and 13 of the PRC Labor Law. See also Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, *Jiuye Fuwu Yu Jiuye Guanli Guiding* [Provisions on Employment Services and Employment Management], issued November 5, 2007, amended and effective December 14, 2018, arts. 20, 58(2); *PRC Constitution*, passed and effective December 4, 1982 (amended March 11, 2018), art. 48.

<sup>28</sup>Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 34/180 of December 18, 1979, entry into force September 3, 1981, art. 11.1; United Nations Treaty Collection, Chapter IV, Human Rights, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, accessed July 15, 2020. China signed CEDAW on July 17, 1980, and ratified it on November 4, 1980. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) of December 16, 1966, entry into force January 3, 1976, art. 7; United Nations Treaty Collection, Chapter IV, Human Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, accessed July 15, 2020. China signed the ICESCR on October 27, 1997, and ratified it on March 27, 2001.

<sup>29</sup>Human Rights Watch, "China: Gender Discrimination in Hiring Persists," April 29, 2020.

<sup>30</sup>*Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo Laodong Fa* [PRC Labor Law], passed July 5, 1994, effective January 1, 1995, amended December 29, 2018, arts. 59–61, 63; State Council, *Nu Zhigong Laodong Baohu Tebie Guiding* [Special Provisions for the Protection of Female Employees' Labor], issued and effective April 28, 2012, Appendix, para. 1 (labor restrictions for all women), para. 2 (labor restrictions during menstruation), para. 3 (labor restrictions during pregnancy), para. 4 (labor restrictions while breastfeeding).

<sup>31</sup>"Zhongguo zhengyao" [China political leaders], *Chinese Communist Party News, People's Daily*, accessed June 25, 2020; "China Focus: New Era for China's Female Deputies," *Xinhua*, March 7, 2018.

<sup>32</sup>Jiang Huizi, "Quanguo nu Renda daibiao he nu Zhengxie weiyuan zhanbi dadao lishi gaoshuiping" [Proportion of female deputies in National People's Congress and female CPPCC members reaches historic high], *Beijing News*, December 6, 2019.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Juhua Yang, "Women in China Moving Forward: Progress, Challenges and Reflections," *Social Inclusion* 8, no. 2 (April 28, 2020): 23–35, 5.1.

<sup>35</sup>Shen Lu, "Thwarted at Home, Can China's Feminists Rebuild a Movement Abroad?," *ChinaFile*, Asia Society, August 28, 2019.

<sup>36</sup>CECC, *2015 Annual Report*, October 8, 2015, 173.

<sup>37</sup>Global Voices Advocacy, "Censored on WeChat: #MeToo in China," March 26, 2019; Shen Lu, "Thwarted at Home, Can China's Feminists Rebuild a Movement Abroad?," *ChinaFile*, Asia Society, August 28, 2019.

<sup>38</sup>Shen Lu, "Thwarted at Home, Can China's Feminists Rebuild a Movement Abroad?," *ChinaFile*, Asia Society, August 28, 2019.

<sup>39</sup>Young Activists Alliance, *Annual Report on Chinese Young Activists (2019)*, January 2020, 18–19.

<sup>40</sup>Javier C. Hernández, "China Releases #MeToo Activist Who Covered Hong Kong Protests," *New York Times*, January 18, 2020.

<sup>41</sup>Chinese Human Rights Defenders, "Li Qiaochu," accessed June 5, 2020.

<sup>42</sup>Young Activists Alliance, *Annual Report on Chinese Young Activists (2019)*, January 2020, 19.

<sup>43</sup>Young Activists Alliance, *Annual Report on Chinese Young Activists (2019)*, January 2020, 16–18; Jing Zeng, "#MeToo as Connective Action: A Study of the Anti-Sexual Violence and Anti-Sexual Harassment Campaign on Chinese Social Media in 2018," *Journalism Practice* 14, no. 2 (January 4, 2020): 171–90.

<sup>44</sup>Shen Lu, "Thwarted at Home, Can China's Feminists Rebuild a Movement Abroad?," *ChinaFile*, Asia Society, August 28, 2019; Young Activists Alliance, *Annual Report on Chinese Young Activists (2019)*, January 2020, 18; Jing Zeng, "#MeToo as Connective Action: A Study of the Anti-Sexual Violence and Anti-Sexual Harassment Campaign on Chinese Social Media in 2018," *Journalism Practice* 14, no. 2 (January 4, 2020): 171–90.

<sup>45</sup>CECC, *2018 Annual Report*, October 10, 2018, 169; Karen Yeung, "How Women's Rights Crusaders Find Both Government Support and Suppression of #MeToo in China," *South China Morning Post*, October 11, 2019.

<sup>46</sup>Karen Yeung, "How Women's Rights Crusaders Find Both Government Support and Suppression of #MeToo in China," *South China Morning Post*, October 11, 2019.

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## Status of Women

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## Status of Women

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