



**United Nations Nations Unies**  
**Department of Economic and Social Affairs**

## **Mission Report**

**Capacity-Building for NGOs  
in China (Beijing, Shanghai 10-18 October 2002)**

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## **I. Introduction**

1. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), (Division for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, NGO Section in collaboration with the Division for Public Economics and Public Administration, UNPAN), at the invitation of the Chinese People's Association for Peace and Development (CPAPD), sent a team to China from 10 to 18 October to conduct workshops and informal consultations with the Chinese government agencies and the non-government organizations on capacity-building of the regional and national NGO institutions for the United Nations NGO Informal Regional Network.

2. The Mission was led by Mrs. Hanifa Mezoui, Chief, NGO Section, DESC/UNDESA, and included Mrs. Najet Karaborni, Senior Interregional Adviser, Project Coordinator, UN-NGO-IRENE/UNDESA, and Mrs. Haiyan Qian, Chief, Information Networking Unit, Manager, UNPAN, DPEPA/UNDESA.

3. Two workshops were jointly organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, through its NGO Section/ECOSOC, the United Nations China Association (UNA-China) in cooperation with CPAPD, the China Green Foundation and the Shanghai International Exchange Center for Social Welfare. They were conducted on 13 October 2002 in Beijing and on 17 October 2002 in Shanghai respectively.

## **II. Purpose of the Mission**

4. The purpose of the mission was to:

- ◆ conduct capacity-building workshops for the Chinese NGOs and their high-level public official counterparts in Beijing and Shanghai;
- ◆ undertake informal consultations with the Chinese Government on NGO sector development and possible partnership initiatives between the Chinese NGOs/government agencies and the United Nations;
- ◆ undertake field visits to the relevant projects undertaken by a number of Chinese NGOs;
- ◆ make recommendations that would help strengthen the capacities of the Chinese NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC and promote tri or multi-sector partnership initiatives (NGOs, governments, private sector, the United Nations and donors) to enhance their contribution to the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

## **III. Workshops (Beijing and Shanghai)**

5. The President of UNA-China, Mr. Jin Yongjian, opened the Beijing Workshop, and Mr. Jiachen Xie, Deputy Director, Shanghai International Exchange Center for Social Welfare (SIECSW), opened the Shanghai Workshop. In their opening addresses, both emphasized the strong support of the Chinese Government to civil society as well as the conducive environment to promote the NGO Sector and its contribution to development efforts.

6. Mrs. Mezoui, in her opening statement for both workshops, focused on the objectives of the capacity-building programme for China and the importance of the workshops' outcomes for preparatory meetings to launch the UN-NGO-IRENE/Asia High-Level Consultation and Capacity-Building Workshop in 2004. She also underlined the new orientation of the work of NGOs within ECOSOC and their expected role in the framework of the implementation of the MDGs.

7. Eighty participants attended the Beijing Workshop (including thirty-one NGOs, of which eight were in consultative status with ECOSOC) and twenty-one attended the Shanghai Workshop. Government officials and representatives from the Parliament, the line ministries, as well as professors, researchers and entrepreneurs from academia, universities and the business community, participated in the two Workshops.

8. The United Nations representatives, Mrs. H. Mezoui, Mrs. N. Karaborni and Mrs. H. Qian, made PowerPoint presentations respectively on key issues and challenges of the next decade and the role of NGOs in achieving the MDGs and the ECOSOC work. They explained the work of the NGO Section/ECOSOC/DESA, its outreach programme through the UN-NGO-IRENE and the capabilities of UNPAN, as partner of the UN-NGO-IRENE. In the presentation, they also emphasized the importance of strengthening and building human capacities for NGOs in developing countries and countries with economies in transition in order to meet the challenges of the coming decades, especially in poverty alleviation, economic growth and sustainable development.

9. Mrs. Huan Guoying, Vice-President of CPAPD closed the Workshop in Beijing and Mr. Xie Jiachen, Deputy Director of SIECSW closed the Workshop in Shanghai. Both of them underlined the important role of NGOs as well as the work of the United Nations in empowering the NGOs and the civil society in general. They emphasized that the workshops were very important and useful, as they contributed effectively to reinforcing the Chinese NGOs' work within ECOSOC. They all expressed thanks to DESA representatives for their clear and comprehensive presentations. (For more information, please see Annex 1).

#### **IV. Meeting with the UN Resident Coordinator in China**

10. The UN delegation, upon arrival in Beijing, had a briefing meeting with Ms. Kerstin Leitner, Resident Representative of UNDP and Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System in China. Ms. Leitner was briefed on the purpose and programme of the Mission as well as on the role of the NGO section of DESA in strengthening the NGOs' capacity through the UN-NGO-Informal Regional Network (IRENE). This preparatory mission will help the launching, in 2004, of the Network in Asia to enhance the NGOs' contribution to ECOSOC work as well as to the implementation in Asia of the MDGs in partnership with governments, the private sector and the United Nations. Ms. Leitner expressed her appreciation for the delegation's visit to China, especially as the NGO sector in China is consistently growing. She indicated that there is now a second generation of NGOs, which need support and capacity building in order to play their expected role. The major fields of their intervention are poverty, environment, governance, human rights and democracy. She underlined that there is an umbrella NGO, the Chinese Association for NGO (CANGO),

which seeks to assist NGOs in building their capacity. She also stressed the role of UNICEF in involving the civil society in its projects and mentioned the specific task related to NGOs of the Ministry of Civil Affairs at the national level.

## **V. Informal Consultations with High-Level Officials of the Chinese Government and NGOs**

11. The UN delegation had several meetings with the following high-level officials from the National People's Congress (NPC) and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), namely: H.E. Mrs. He Luli, Vice-Chairperson of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, H.E. Mr. Chen Jinhua, Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), H. E. Mrs. Li Shuzheng, Member of the Standing Committee, Vice-Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs Committee of NPC, and H.E. Mr. Liu Lunxian, Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the NPC of Shanghai. All of them expressed their appreciation for the UN visit as well as their support to the UN-NGO-IRENE and its activities towards a reinforced NGO sector in China. They also reiterated their willingness to promote the NGOs' contribution to the ECOSOC work and to the MDGs in China, Asia and worldwide.

12. The UN delegation met with Mr. Wang Min, Deputy Director-General, Department of International Organizations and Conferences, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who is also in charge of the UN NGO Affairs, on 16 October 2002. Mr. Wang Min was very familiar with the work of the NGO Committee, having participated in its work earlier in his diplomatic career. He made useful comments on the evolution of the role of the NGO Committee in monitoring the contribution of NGOs to the work of ECOSOC. He expressed deep appreciation for the informal working group of the NGO Committee and its efforts to find solutions through consensus. At the same time, he called for caution in reviewing requests for status.

13. Mr. Wang Min expressed his Government's support for the NGOs in China, and was very interested in what kind of partnership with the United Nations and NGOs in China could develop and how. The concept of the UN NGO Informal Regional Network (UN-NGO-IRENE) building NGO capacity through work on the MDGs and promoting partnership initiatives was found a creative and useful reply to that question. The UN delegation was encouraged to further pursue this initiative and was invited to take the outreach programme to other provinces inside China in a follow-up mission. The establishment of the General Voluntary Trust Fund was welcomed. As soon as the modalities for its functioning are finalized and it becomes operational, proposals will be reviewed. Meanwhile, taking into consideration the size of the country and the fact that it has 1.3 billion inhabitants, Mr. Wang Min appreciated that the selection of coordinators for the network in Asia would be left to the judgment of UNA-China, CPAPD and other Chinese NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC. It was also agreed that, on the understanding that the full spectrum of ECOSOC activities will be represented, for China a number of national thematic coordinators will be designated, and one of them will serve as a national coordinator for China on a rotational basis.

14. During the Welcoming Reception on 16 October 2002, offered by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), the UN delegation was introduced to its foundation, "China Friendship Foundation for Peace and Development" by Ms. Li Xiao Lin, Executive Vice President. Created in 1996, this Foundation uses its funds to enhance non-governmental friendly exchanges between China and other countries. It sponsors activities related to the preservation of world peace and the promotion of social development. Ms. Li, being extremely interested in developing further cooperation with NGOs regionally and internationally, mentioned that she would send her own proposal defining their participation in the UN-NGO-IRENE.

15. The UN delegation undertook field visits to several relevant projects designed and implemented by the Chinese NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC and by the NGOs seeking status as well. All these NGO projects represented an illustration of the major achievements in ensuring human security for all categories of the population, especially the disadvantaged groups (women, youth, elderly, and disabled), and improving human well being as well as local eco-systems through innovative partnership initiatives with the private sector, governments and donors. (For more details on the projects visited during the mission in China and the agenda, please see Annex 2).

16. In Shanghai, the delegation also visited the Regional Cooperation Office for City Information in Asia and the Pacific, which is a regional NGO and one of the institutional members of UNPAN/DPEPA in Asia and the Pacific.

## **VI. Preparatory Work to Implement the United Nations Secretary-General's Call to NGOs for Recommendations on Peace and Development**

17. During the workshops, the working sessions and meetings with NGOs and especially with CPAPD in China, Mrs. Mezoui provided them with a copy of the Secretary-General's report on "Prevention of Armed Conflict" (June 2002) underlining the special focus of the Secretary-General on the main goal of Peace and Development for the twenty-first century. She reminded the NGOs specializing in peace of Recommendation 27 "urging NGOs with an interest in conflict prevention to organize an international conference of local, national and international NGOs on their role in conflict prevention and future interaction with the United Nations in this field". The initiative taken by the European Centre for Conflict Prevention to implement this recommendation through regional conferences was also brought to their attention. Mrs. Mezoui urged the Chinese NGO, CPAPD to undertake a similar initiative in China for Asia. They expressed their willingness to reply to the call of the Secretary-General and to contribute with concrete recommendations for their region.

## **VII. Conclusions/Recommendations**

### **A. General Recommendations**

18. The leading Chinese NGOs agreed to establish the UN-NGO-IRENE in Asia without delay, taking into account its potential impact on NGO sector development. The need to mobilize additional resources to realize the Network's potential and undertake its main activities was underlined by the participants, who expressed willingness to contribute to the

recently established General Voluntary Trust Fund to support a full functioning of the UN-NGO-IRENE. Information about sources of funding could be disseminated through the Network.

19. Based on substantial and positive discussions, the following recommendations were made:

- (a) Strengthen partnerships between the United Nations, NGOs, sub regional and regional coordinators as well as partners including the private sector;
- (b) Build needed capacity among NGOs as well as reinforce existing skills and developing human resources;
- (c) Build a sound resource base, including strengthening the networking among NGOs, notably the use of ICT;
- (d) Establish a permanent dialogue and direct contacts among NGOs, the NGO Section/DESA and the United Nations in general;
- (e) Strengthen relationships among Chinese and Asian NGOs; and
- (f) Reinforce a conducive environment for NGOs to operate.

20. Taking into account the fact that China is a very large country, it was agreed that the UNA-China, CPAPD, and other NGOs in consultative status will discuss the number of NGOs to be selected as local coordinators\* considering their field of intervention and their dynamism. One of them will be designated as the national coordinator, in a rotational manner, each year.

21. The General Voluntary Trust Fund should be operational immediately to make appropriate funding available to supplement the national resources in order to implement the MDGs in the region.

22. It was agreed that the structure of the Network should be flexible and open, and optimize the use of ICT. Much of the actual networking would be conducted through the Internet. Local radio could also be used in specific contexts. It was considered necessary to set up a web portal for the Network, which could host web sites for participating NGOs, and facilitate information sharing activities. The structure should reflect the interdependence between all levels – local, national, sub regional, regional and global – and encourage multi-directional flows of information, focused on the goals and programmes of the United Nations system.

23. UNPAN and UN-NGO-IRENE should continue to strengthen their partnership through joint projects and initiatives to better serve the governments and NGOs, especially in the establishment of the internet-based IRENE mentioned above (para. 20). This partnership would also facilitate the coordination work within the United Nations system.

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\* The following are the criteria for selection of NGOs to serve as sub regional coordinators:

- (1) Consultative status with ECOSOC, obtained or requested;
- (2) Recognized experience in one or more priority Asian issues related to the MDGs;
- (3) Established headquarters and an executive officer able to work on behalf of the Network;
- (4) Sufficient human resources/technological support to undertake activities in support of the Network;
- (5) A good record of and capacity for collaborating and communicating with NGOs in the region.

24. NGOs should organize a regional meeting in Asia on Peace, answering the call of the Secretary-General regarding Recommendation 27 of his Prevention of Conflicts report, and map out recommendations for the upcoming global meeting on peace to be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York in 2004.

## **B. General Conclusions**

25. During the visits in Beijing and Shanghai, a good number of informal consultations were conducted between the UN delegation and more than 18 heads of the Chinese government agencies and the non-government agencies at national and city levels. After intensive interactions with each of them, the UN delegation was strongly convinced that all these NGOs are extremely eager to participate in the UN-related activities, especially the areas which are related to the eight MDGs. In fact, most of them have already engaged themselves in these areas.

26. All of the NGOs which the UN delegation met have expressed their interest to participate in the UN NGOs-IRENE/UNPAN Network, and have shown their willingness to apply for the ECOSOC/NGO Consultative Status. They have taken note of the fact that, although China is the biggest developing country, there are so far only 14 NGOs in China with the ECOSOC consultative status. They firmly believe that the role of the NGOs in the national economic development should be further strengthened, and their participation in global forums on the major issues of common interest for all countries should be encouraged.

27. They highly appreciated the visit of the UN delegation which offered a great deal of useful information concerning the above-mentioned issues and made very constructive suggestions to the Chinese NGOs on their future work, as China is still in the early stage of NGO development. They also hope that this type of capacity-building mission could be repeated in the future.

## **VIII. Next Steps**

28. The follow-up actions will be undertaken as listed below:

1. The mission report will be distributed to all relevant Chinese institutions, which the UN delegation met during the mission;
2. The Chinese NGO community will proceed with the designation of NGOs as national thematic coordinators. Within the selected NGOs, one of them will be designated to serve as national coordinator of China each year on a rotational basis;
3. UN-IRENE and UNPAN will start working on the establishment of the internet-based IRENE Network Platform;
4. UNDESA will work with the partners from Asian countries, including China, to prepare the upcoming launch meeting of the UN-NGO-IRENE/Asia in 2004;

5. UNDESA will also organize another preparatory meeting to be held in October 2003 in the Republic of Korea.

It is important to mention that both China and the Republic of Korea are willing to host the 2004 UN-NGO- IRENE/Asia High-Level Consultation and Capacity-Building Workshop.

## **IX. Appreciation**

29. The UN delegation would like to express its sincere thanks to:

- (a) The Organizers – CPAPD, UNA-China, the China Green Foundation, for their assistance in organizing the UN delegation's intensive meetings and for their hospitality.
- (b) NGOs and Projects who received the UN delegation in their respective headquarters: the China Green Foundation, All China Federation of Women, China Association for International Understanding, All China Youth Federation, China Social and Economic Resource Association, The Chinese People Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, China National Committee on Ageing, China Society for Promotion of the Guangcai Programme, Beijing Gaobeidian Sewage Treatment Plant, Shanghai International Exchange Centre for Social Welfare and the China Nationalities Museum.
- (c) The Resident Representative of UNDP and Resident Coordinator of UN System in China Ms. Kerstin Leitner, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, the National People's Congress of China, China People's Political Consultative Conference, the Standing Committee of People's Congress of Shanghai, and the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations.

## ANNEX 1

### NGO Workshops in Beijing and Shanghai

1. Preparatory workshops on “Capacity-Building for the UN-NGO Informal Regional Network in China” took place in Beijing, China on 13 October 2002 and in Shanghai on 17 October 2002. The purpose was to prepare for the United Nations Informal Regional Network of Asian NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC/United Nations (UN-NGO-IRENE/Asia).
2. The Workshop was organized in Beijing by the United Nations Association of China (UNA-China), in cooperation with CPAPD, the China Green Foundation and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). Mr. Jin Yongjian, President of UNA-China, chaired the opening session. Following his welcoming address, Mrs. Huan Guoying, Vice-President of CPAPD and Mr. Fei Yong, representative of the China Green Foundation were introduced. Mrs. Hanifa Mezoui, Chief, NGO Section/DESA then made a statement focusing on the new orientation of the work of NGOs within ECOSOC and their expected role in the framework of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).
3. The Workshop was organized in Shanghai by the Shanghai International Exchange Centre of Social Welfare. Mr. Xie Jiachen, Deputy Director of the Centre, convened the Workshop and made opening and closing remarks, expressing great appreciation to the UN delegation for coming to Shanghai, meeting with the Chinese NGOs at the city level, and sharing extremely useful information and insights on the UN NGO activities and the ECOSOC procedure for the granting of consultative status. They found the Workshop to be very valuable and expressed great interest in their involvement in future IRENE/UNPAN activities.
4. Mrs. Mezoui in her presentation on “The United Nations, the Millennium Developments Goals, Peace-building and Prevention of Conflict and the Follow-up of Global Conferences,” described the work of the United Nations and the emphasis of the Secretary-General on Peace and Development drawn from his report on “Prevention of Armed Conflict” (June 2002). She explained the working mechanisms of the United Nations, including the subsidiary organs of ECOSOC. She highlighted the outcomes of the major conferences; especially the Monterrey Consensus and the Johannesburg Summit implementation plan as well as their follow-up. After recalling the important role played by NGOs during the NGOs Millennium Forum in May 2000, she focused on the MDGs, emphasizing the eight most important goals and stressing the expected role of NGOs in their implementation. She also described the present situation and distribution of the NGOs in consultative status worldwide and by region, focusing on the situation in China. She underlined the positive impact of an increased number of NGOs in consultative status and the importance of enhancing the contribution of NGOs to the work of ECOSOC, especially in China where a large number of NGOs already exist both at national and local levels. This was well received by the participants, many of whom completed their applications for ECOSOC status during the

meeting. The participants acquired the knowledge to apply for consultative status with ECOSOC, to improve the contribution of their organizations to ECOSOC work and to promote and reinforce partnership initiatives with the United Nations, the government and the private sector towards a better world.

5. Mrs. Najet Karaborni outlined the objectives and role of the UN-NGO-IRENE in strengthening NGOs' capacities within the framework of DESA's technical cooperation programme. She highlighted the usefulness of the Informal Regional Network for NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC (UN-NGO-IRENE) that was launched worldwide by the NGO Section of DESA in 2001 in Aracaju, Brazil. Through on-line networking, information sharing and capacity-building, the Network aims to enhance partnerships between the United Nations and civil society. An outline covering the objectives, target groups, actors and stakeholders, role and content, and methods of the Network was presented during the meeting, as well as a strategic action plan developed for the UN-NGO-IRENE/Africa, which could serve as a sample for China and the Asian region. This plan focused on the main activities to be undertaken to reach the goals and objectives of the Network as well as the timetable and those responsible to achieve them.
6. Ms. Karaborni also mentioned performance indicators as a way to follow up on implementation and effectiveness. To be realistic and feasible, the strategic action plan took into account four main challenges: globalization/rationalization; new information technologies; population/urbanization, poverty and environment; and participation/partnership between governments, civil society and especially NGOs, and the private sector in the framework of good governance. Through UN-NGO-IRENE, this plan included especially a capacity-building programme and training activities (workshops and training material) for the region in leadership and negotiation skills, formulation and implementation of technical cooperation projects for NGOs, strengthening the networking in the region, and support to human resource development upon request of the countries of the region.
7. Mrs. Haiyan Qian presented the UN Online Network in Public Administration and Finance (UNPAN). This programme, funded by the UN Development Account and implemented by DPEPA/UNDESA, aims at three major goals. The short-term goal is to establish a global online network linking 14 regional institutions online for information exchange and experience sharing to promote better public policies and management. The medium-term goal is to strengthen the capacities of the UNPAN members, especially those from developing countries in e-information management. The long-term goal is to provide a global web-based portal to be managed by all UNPAN members to better serve all member countries of the UNPAN Network.
8. In order to achieve UNPAN's major goals, a series of activities were carried out as follows: a) selection of 14 UNPAN members that are regional institutes in public administration covering all continents of the world, establishment of the UNPAN legal framework, and consensus building on the UNPAN Plan of Action among all members; b) providing technical assistance to UNPAN members, building up technical facilities at their respective regional institutions, providing international

and local consultants, and providing training and help-desk services; c) building the UNPAN e-platform (search engines, online document and database management systems, online training facility, online forum, and online conferencing, etc.), developing content and establishing a performance monitoring system of the network. UNPAN is the only existing global portal in public administration in the world today to serve all Member States, including NGOs. It is unique and very popular, as it is managed not only by the United Nations, but also by all the members of the network. It relies on the use of online document and database management systems.

9. These systems allow the Network to manage information much more efficiently. Data and documentation can be entered, retrieved and edited from any place and at any time. The content for the portal was built with the view to friendly and interactive use of the information. As UNPAN service is demand-driven, it becomes highly recognized and appreciated in the public administration community worldwide. Within one year and a half, UNPAN website hits have increased from 52,000 to 950,000 per month.
10. Mrs. Qian explained to the workshop participants the relationship between UNPAN and UN-NGO-IRENE. UNPAN and UN-NGO-IRENE are partners for the following reasons: a) they are supported by the Directors of the two Divisions; b) they share one of the main target beneficiaries, namely NGOs; c) many of the UNPAN members are NGOs; and d) this partnership will improve the coordination among the agencies within the United Nations system. To be partners, UNPAN and UN-NGO-IRENE will undertake a number of actions. They will: a) establish online links between UN-NGO-IRENE and UNPAN; b) conduct joint activities to respond to the call of the Secretary-General for promoting partnerships between the governments and the civil society for development; c) share UNPAN IT facilities with UN-NGO-IRENE; and d) develop joint products to solve common problems at international, regional and national levels.
11. Following the United Nations presentations, the participants in the Workshops discussed the major challenges and opportunities faced by decision makers. This covered areas such as poverty alleviation, economic growth and environmental protection as well as the growing role of the NGO sector. Reaching the MDGs and ensuring effective implementation of the recommendations and action plans of the major global and regional conferences and events were also covered.
12. Mr. Chan Ping Chu, Executive Director of United Nations China Association, mentioned that his organization, associated with the World Federation of the United Nations Associations, is actively supporting the global Millennium Campaign through their recent report "We, The People: The Call for Action for the UN Millennium Declaration." It aims at informing civil society worldwide about the objectives of the declaration and at developing an Annual Review of Civil Society engagement in the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and its development goals.

13. Mrs. Huan Guoying, Vice-President of CPAPD, closed the Workshop by underlining the major role of NGOs as well as the important role of the United Nations in empowering the NGOs and the civil society in general. She emphasized that the Workshop was very important as it contributed effectively to reinforcing the Chinese NGOs' work within ECOSOC. Several NGOs were willing to request consultative status and to be part of the UN-NGO-IRENE. She considered this outcome a positive result. Enhancing and building the NGOs capacity was an agreed priority. She expressed her thanks to the DESA representatives for their clear and comprehensive presentations related to the development of the NGO sector. On behalf of the organizers, Mr. Niu Qiang, Secretary-General of CPAPD, thanked the speakers and the participants for their important contribution to the success of the Workshop.
  
14. In Shanghai, Mr. Xie Jiachen, Deputy Director of Shanghai International Exchange Center of Social Affairs, convened the Workshop. He also made opening and closing remarks by expressing, on behalf of the participants, great appreciation to the UN delegation for coming to Shanghai and meeting with the NGOs at the city level to share the insights of the UN ECOSOC NGO work and the procedure for granting consultative status with ECOSOC. He found the Workshop very informative and necessary, and confirmed their interest in engaging themselves in the future activities of the IRENE/UNPAN.
  
15. Participants in Beijing and Shanghai included a number of government officials and representatives of Chinese academics and universities (scholars, professors and researchers) as well as several former ambassadors, who took part in the meeting as observers.

In Beijing:

- 80 representatives of 31 Chinese NGOs, including NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC;

In Shanghai:

- 20 representatives of 13 Chinese NGOs;

In Beijing and Shanghai:

- Three officials from the United Nations Secretariat, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, NGO Section/Division for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, and the Division for Public Economics and Public Administration (DPEPA): Mrs. Hanifa Mezoui, Chief, NGO Section, Mrs. Najet Karaborni, Senior Interregional Adviser, UN-NGO-IRENE Project Coordinator and Mrs. Haiyan Qian, Chief, Information Networking Unit, UNPAN, DPEPA.

## ANNEX 2

### **Informal Consultations and Visits with NGOs**

#### **China People's Association for Peace and Development (CPAPD)**

Meeting with Vice President Zhu Shanqing and Secretary-General Niu Qiang to discuss the activities of the Association, its work plan and programmes. CPAPD is expanding their cooperation with counterpart organizations in Africa and the NGO Section DESA will provide them with some recommendations of NGO focal points in Africa, working in Peace and Development issues. CPAPD obtained consultative status in July 2002 and was briefed on the rights and responsibilities of such status. The UN Delegation explained the aims and the role of the UN-NGO- Informal Regional Network (UN-NGO-IRENE) and the eventual partnership between the two institutions. CPAPD was also informed of the initiative taken by the "European Centre for Conflict Prevention", to implement Recommendation 27 of the report of the Secretary General, on "Prevention of Armed Conflict" (June 2001). It may be envisaged that CPAPD would play a leading role in following up on such an initiative for the Asia Region.

#### **China Green Foundation**

This organization just completed its application and will be reviewed by the NGO Committee at its resumed session in January 2003. We were invited by Mr. Dong Qichang, Deputy Secretary-General, Mr. Wang Jiuyuan, Deputy Office Director, Fei Yong, Engineer and the Mayor of the locality, to visit a project in the field and plant commemorative trees. The China Green Foundation supports ecological and forestry development in China. It is also involved in environmental protection, desertification, wild life conservation and sustainable development. It is worth noting that the Foundation attended "The World Summit on Sustainable Development" held in Johannesburg (August – September 2002) and made a presentation on forestry and sustainable development in China. The fundamental goal of the Foundation is the achievement of sustainable development. Major activities undertaken by the China Green Foundation include, among others, establishment of "World Women Friendship Forest" (1995), "Afforesting our Rivers" (1999), "Forest in Memory of Macao's Return" (1999) and "Afforesting Our Motherland – Concern for Environment and Nature" (2000).

#### **China Society for Promotion of the Guangcai Programme**

This organization obtained consultative status in July 2002 and was briefed on the rights and responsibilities of such status. Mr. Hu Deping, Vice President, Mr. Xie Boyang, Vice President, Mr. Zhang Li, Division Chief and Mr. Shian Lung, Principal Adviser, guided us through one of their Guangcai Programmes that promotes balanced education for Chinese students. The Guangcai Programme promotes poverty alleviation in poverty stricken areas with the view to achieving common prosperity among people of all ethnic backgrounds. The representative of the Guangcai Programme Society conveyed to us their hope to enhance communication with countries all over the world, as well as to enhance the

connection with other NGOs and to learn from other countries through participating in various activities organized by the United Nations. One of the other goals of the programme is to attract business people from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan to engage in various forms of economic, technological and trade cooperation in frontier and ethnic minority areas as well as central and western China. In relation to that goal, we advised them to inform those companies about the principles of the Global Compact, as it advocates a corporate vision, which includes the social dimension as well as implementing responsible management policies and practices.

### **All China Federation of Women**

This organization obtained consultative status with ECOSOC in July 1995 while being a member of the China Organizing Committee for the preparation of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. Ms. Zou Xiaoqiao, Deputy Director-General, Ms. Huang Shu, Deputy Director, Division of International Organizations and Conferences, and Ms. Cai Sheng, Deputy Director-General International Liaison Department, All-China Women's Federation, informed the UN delegation that since then the All China Federation of Women has been very active in following up the action plan of the Conference. Their international outreach is very impressive since they have affiliates and relationships with women's organizations in 140 countries. Currently they are committed to actively participating in and promoting the implementation of 2001/2010 Programmes for the Development of Chinese Women and Children. As one of their tasks is to improve the technical and professional skills of their members, the organization will be ready to review projects related to its aims, under the UN-NGO-IRENE trust fund.

### **China National Committee on Ageing**

This organization is applying for consultative status. Mr. Xiao Hongyan presented to us one of the projects his organization is involved in: The China Railway University of the 3rd Age. It advocates 3rd Age sustained education through major courses, including calligraphy, painting, literature, computer training, music, painting, photography, etc. The China National Committee on Ageing represents and safeguards the rights of the elderly and their welfare, and bases its philosophy on humanitarianism. They also have an outreach exchange programme with similar organizations in 30 countries. Representatives of the organization traveled to Madrid to the World Assembly on Ageing in March 2002. They were briefed on the Madrid international plan of action on Ageing 2002 and received some suggestions on future activities related to that plan.

### **China Association for International Understanding**

This organization completed its application and will be considered by the NGO Committee at its resumed session in January 2003. The representatives of the association who hosted the meeting, Mr. Zhu Dacheng, Council Member (CAFIU), Mr. Jiang Shixian, Secretary-General, Mr. Kong Genhong, Director of the Research Centre, Mr. Yan Xiaolu, Director of the Executive Office, and Mr. Zheng Yao, Deputy Director of the Executive Office, explained to us that the association aims at promoting mutual understanding and friendly

cooperation between Chinese people and peoples of other countries in the world to safeguard world peace. The China Association for International Understanding sponsors several projects related to social development, and while we were in Beijing we visited two of them: The Beijing Children's Hospital and a Youth Service Centre, run by the All-China Youth Federation (an affiliate of the China Association for International Understanding). At the Beijing Children's Hospital, we were welcomed by Dr. Hu Yamei, an expert on Hematology. During the visit, she explained to us the evolution of the hospital from its establishment in 1955 to today, moving from clinical services to sophisticated new specialties such as adolescent development, pediatric psychology, sleep lab, etc. Dr. Hu Yamei's concept of medicine is not only treating and saving children, but also making children happy. At the Youth Service Centre, guided by Mr. Dong Xia, Deputy Director, we visited the library, the medical facilities, and the elderly compound, all run by young volunteers. Currently, the association focuses its attention on issues concerning sustainable development and the dialogue among different civilizations. They were also advised to follow the global agenda and the programme of action that came out of the "United Nations Year of Dialogue among Civilizations" which promotes and strengthens the culture of dialogue among civilizations.

### **Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries**

This is an NGO in special consultative status since 2001. The aim and activities of this association are to work for mutual understanding, solidarity and friendship, exchange and cooperation between Chinese and other peoples, and promote world progress, peace and development. The United Nations delegation was welcomed by the representatives of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, Mr. Li Xiao Lin, Vice President, Mr. Xia Guozhu, Vice Secretary-General, Mr. Li Jianping, Deputy Director-General, Department of American and Oceania Affairs, and Mr. Duan Jun, Assistant Director. Since it was granted the status, the association focuses its attention on environmental protection, improvement of human conditions, and raising the quality of people's lives. Since 1986, the association has conducted activities based upon the recommendations of the "International Year of Peace". The Vice President, Mr. Li Xiaolin, briefed us on Sino-French diplomatic relations that have existed for more than 38 years between the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and France. The representatives of this association were very pleased to mention that France was the first country that recognized the new China, and opened for China an Arch of Triumph to the World. The delegation requested us to follow up on their membership of CONGO and their affiliation with DPI.

### **China Social and Economic Research Association**

The China Social and Economic Research Association was established in July 2001. It is worth noting that they have joined the International Association of Economic and Social and Similar Institutions (AICESIS) that obtained observer status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations since October 2002. A long debate took place on the issue of their status, as it seems that the China Social and Economic Research Association could apply for its own NGO status apart from its association with AICESIS. The President of the Council, Mr. Chen Jinhua, received the UN delegation, together with Mr. Bao

Daochong, Executive Deputy Secretary-General, and explained to us that the objective of the economic and social council was to support China's reform and opening up to economic and social development. The ambiguity of their name 'China Social and Economic Research Association' versus 'China Economic and Social Council' has to be clarified before some advice is given.

### **China Nationalities Museum**

The UN delegation visited the China Nationalities Museum under the guidance of Ms. Wang Ping, Director. The Museum includes 56 nationalities blending traditional buildings, cultural relics, shows, costumes, singing and dancing performances, arts and crafts. The Director explained to us how through private efforts and Government assistance she gathered 56 ethnic groups of China for the world to understand China better. She is making remarkable efforts to have the Museum ready when Beijing holds the Olympic games in 2008.

### **United Nations Association of China**

The UN delegation had a meeting with President Jin Yongjian, Vice President Chen Pingchu, Secretary-General Zhao Wanhai, and Director Zhang Yunfei mainly to clarify several issues and reach a consensus on a number of follow-up actions, particularly in the establishment of national coordinators in China, for the preparation of the launching of IRENE-Asia in 2004 and the modalities of facilitating the participation of the Chinese NGOs in various forthcoming international undertakings.

## ANNEX 3

### **History of the United Nations Informal Regional Network**

In April 2001, a meeting in Aracaju, Brazil, formally launched the UN Informal Regional Network of NGOs (UN-NGO-IRENE). This initiative, spearheaded by the NGO Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, was designed to address the issue of access to and exchange of information and communication as well as to use new technologies to develop and better network the NGO sector.

As a result of the Economic and Social Council's emphasis on the importance of a representative and inclusive NGO relationship, consultative status is being granted to a steadily increasing number of organizations from countries and regions that provide geographical diversity but are often economically distressed. A significant number of organizations, therefore, find themselves subject to financial and logistical constraints that effectively limit their ability to make full use of their consultative status with ECOSOC, particularly in regard to participation in the international arena.

One underlying problem has been the difficulty of establishing and maintaining regular contact between the NGO Section in New York and the large number of NGOs with limited communication systems. These organizations are therefore deprived of current information on UN activities in the economic and social fields and access to the electronic systems of communication that mark the more influential NGOs.

To address this problem, the UN Informal NGO Regional Network was designed as a means of drawing even the smallest, most isolated organizations into a system that provides information and support and the opportunity for sharing expertise and resources of every description to support joint NGO activities within and among regions, thereby enhancing their significance and strengthening their impact. One of the most important aims of the network is the possibility of providing national and regional organizations with the practical tools to make a tangible contribution to the work of ECOSOC both operationally and by adding a broad-based NGO perspective to the deliberations of that body, particularly the discussions of the High-Level Segment. It is intended that the networking capacity will be exploited to the fullest in following up the outcome of the major international meetings, particularly the Millennium Summit and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

UN-NGO-IRENE is supported through the intermediary activities of designated regional and sub regional coordinator organizations. During the Aracaju meeting, such organizations had already been identified for Asia and the Pacific, Eastern Europe, and Latin America. The Tunisia Meeting agreed on five African NGOs to serve as sub regional coordinators and one of them as regional coordinator (The Women's Association Tunisia 21). For the remaining regions, the network is being expanded similarly to cover the whole sector of NGOs.

Additionally, the interest sparked by the concept of UN-NGO-IRENE has attracted a number of UN and other intergovernmental and international bodies to seek synergy and

mutually supportive action for the NGO Section/DESA, as informal partners in its implementation.

The priority accorded by the international community to addressing the special development needs of Africa, made it the foremost choice for the inauguration of the regional informal network activities. The concern of the President of the Economic and Social Council, His Excellency Mr. Belinga Eboutou, for the full mobilization of Africa's NGO community ensured that the meeting to launch the African UN-NGO-IRENE received support from the highest level and brought together an inclusive representation of Africa's most able non-governmental organizations.

A necessary first step in launching the UN-NGO-IRENE/Asia is to convene a capacity-building meeting in China to strengthen the capacity of China's NGOs and reinforce their involvement in ECOSOC work as well as their contribution to the implementation of the MDGs.