

General Assembly

**HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL** - Nineteenth session

**Agenda item 3 - Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development**

**Interactive Dialogue: Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food  
(A/HRC/19/59/Add.1)**

**Oral statement by Mr. Kai Müller on behalf of Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights**

Madame President,

We wish to thank the Special Rapporteur on the right to food for his report on his mission to China. While the Rapporteur's findings suggest that overall access to food in the People's Republic of China has improved, his reference on forced eviction of nomads suggests that improved food access does not extend to everyone in China.

The Special Rapporteur's description of the program of nomadic "resettlement" indicates that while the Chinese government is ostensibly acting in order "to preserve the land and benefit the Tibetan nomads economically," such policies have failed to meet the goals. Mr. De Schutter found that many of the resettled nomads had lost their land, were unable to keep their livestock, were relocated to areas unsuitable for agriculture, could not practice their traditional livelihoods and were thus economically dependent on State aid.

We wish to inform the Council that Tibet's nomadic lifestyle is one of the last examples in the world of sustainable pastoralism. For centuries, Tibetan nomadic herders have made a sustainable living uniquely adapted to the harsh conditions of the Tibetan plateau. An estimated 2.25 million Tibetan nomads live on the plateau, and as the Special Rapporteur noted, in 2010 between 50 and 80 percent of these nomads are being evicted from their ancestral lands.

Madame President,

As NGOs have stated to this Council, we wish to echo the Special Rapporteur's recommendation that calls for the Chinese government to:

"(a) suspend the non-voluntary resettlement of nomadic herders from their traditional lands and the non-voluntary relocation or re-housing programmes of other rural residents, in order to allow for meaningful consultations to take place with the affected communities, permitting parties to examine all available options, including recent strategies of sustainable management of marginal pastures;" and  
"(b) Improve employment opportunities, education and health services in 'new socialist' villages, in order to enable the realization of the right to adequate food in all resettled rural habitants."

Thank you.

March 6, 2012