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February 4, 2020

Wu Yingjie
Party Secretary
Tibet Autonomous Regional Office
No.1 Kang'angdonglu, Lhasa
850000 Tibet
People's Republic of China

Re: Mother tongue education for Tibetans

Dear Party Secretary Wu,

Human Rights Watch is an independent international organization that monitors human rights in more than 90 countries around the world. We have been reporting on and advocating solutions to human rights abuses in China for more than 30 years.

We are currently preparing a report on the lack of access to mother tongue education for Tibetans. The report focuses on Chinese government claims to provide “bilingual education,” and the extent to which the Chinese government has complied with expectations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and other international legal instruments.

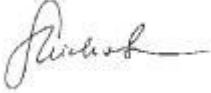
We would appreciate your response to questions raised below, as well as any additional information you wish to provide us on this issue, so that they can be reflected in our reporting. Human Rights Watch strives to ensure the accuracy of our research and looks forward to your response. In light of our publishing schedule, we would appreciate receiving your response by February 21, 2020, sent to Sophie Richardson, China Director at Human Rights Watch, by email at richars@hrw.org or by fax to 1-202-612-4333.

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HRW.org

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sophie Richardson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sophie Richardson
China Director
Human Rights Watch

Questions:

1. Qinghai Province and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region stated in their 2010 Education Plans that “bilingual” teaching for minorities should chiefly focus on Chinese-medium education. Does the Tibet Autonomous Region’s (TAR) position differ?
2. Please clarify whether there is a current or proposed policy requiring primary schools in the TAR to shift to Chinese-medium education.
3. Please clarify whether the regulations used to assess education in privately run kindergartens and primary and secondary schools in the TAR have been made publicly available, and whether these restrict or prohibit a school’s ability to choose the Tibetan language as a medium of instruction.
4. Please clarify whether teachers who are moved to teach in autonomous regions, including those enrolled in Aid Tibet programs, are provided with in-service training in the relevant and appropriate minority language, and whether minority teachers are provided with in-service training to match requirements for public school teachers.
5. Please clarify whether the introduction of compulsory preschool education in TAR deliberately exposes young children to “political education” and Chinese language.
6. Please confirm whether initiatives undertaken by individuals outside official efforts to promote Tibetan language in education and society are considered a form of “organized crime,” as suggested by official statements like the TAR Public Security Bureau Notification of February 2018.¹

¹ Human Rights Watch, “Illegal Organizations” China’s Crackdown on Tibetan Social Groups, 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/07/30/illegal-organizations/chinas-crackdown-tibetan-social-groups#d34a05>