



**BROKEN  
CHALK**

Submission to the Universal Periodic Review of the United  
Nations Human Rights Council 4<sup>th</sup> Cycle – 45<sup>th</sup> Session

## **Right to Education**

### **Country Review: China**

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**Submitting Organization: BROKEN CHALK**

**July 2023**

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**Broken Chalk** is an Amsterdam-based NGO established in 2020 that monitors and minimises worldwide human rights violations in education. We aim to promote universal and equal access to education for all.

We encourage and support achieving societal peace with our international sponsors and partners by advocating for intercultural tolerance, preventing radicalism and polarisation, and tackling educational inequalities.

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## Introduction

1. Broken Chalk is a non-profit organisation with one main goal - To protect human rights in education. The organisation has a website and articles and is currently working on multiple projects, each aiming to fight human rights violations in the educational sphere. This report drafted by Broken Chalk contributes to the fourth cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) for China, focusing exclusively on China's human rights issues in education.

2. During the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle of the Universal Periodic Review for China in November 2018, China received 346 recommendations and supported 284. Twelve per cent of these supported recommendations relate to the 4<sup>th</sup> Sustainable Development Goal, Quality Education. These recommendations in the 3<sup>rd</sup> UPR Cycle will be the basis on which Broken Chalk discusses the progress of human rights issues related to education in China. This report from Broken Chalk will also suggest some recommendations for these educational issues as part of the 4<sup>th</sup> cycle of the Universal Periodic Review for China.

## Punishment of Children

3. Recommendation 28.156 (A/HRC/40/6/Add.1 - Para. 2) suggests China prohibit corporal punishment of children in all settings, including in the home (Estonia). China accepted this recommendation.

4. This promotes the support for quality education in the long term for how future generations define learning according to human rights standards. This recommendation, however, is only as impactful as how China plans to maintain this prohibition. Punishment of children in the home is more challenging to identify and report paired to other settings children are in.

## Quality education in poor and remote areas

5. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> UPR cycle, China did not accept recommendation 28.20 (A/HRC/40/6/Add.1 - Para. 2), which is to ratify the Convention against Discrimination in Education and continue its efforts to ensure access to quality education for disadvantaged children in poor and remote areas (Afghanistan).

6. The decision to un-accept the recommendation to ratify the Convention against Discrimination in Education contradicts China's commitment to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in another supported recommendation during the 3<sup>rd</sup> UPR Cycle (Recommendation 28.100). As part of the 2030 Agenda, decisions should be leaning towards ensuring that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes. This involves continuing efforts to ensure that disadvantaged children in poor and remote areas can also receive quality education.

## Political “re-education centres” in Xinjiang

**7.** The situation in Xinjiang has made its significance in various recommendations in the 3<sup>rd</sup> UPR Cycle. Recommendation 28.42 (A/HRC/40/6/Add.1 - Para. 2) suggests China cooperate with and provide access to relevant United Nations bodies to help ensure that its policies in Xinjiang, particularly regarding the so-called “vocational education and training centres”, are in line with international human rights standards (Netherlands). Recommendation 28.32 (A/HRC/40/6/Add.1 - Para. 2) urges China to ensure complete transparency on the situation for religious minorities in Xinjiang, including by allowing United Nations-mandated observers unrestricted access to places of internment in the region (Norway). Recommendation 28.35 (A/HRC/40/6/Add.1 - Para. 2) proposes the closing of all “re-education centres” in Uighur areas and facilitating the visits by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the special procedures in Xinjiang (Switzerland). Recommendation 28.325 (A/HRC/40/6/Add.1 - Para. 2) suggests that China protect and promote all human rights, especially the rights of ethnic and religious minorities, including the Xinjiang Uighurs. It urges the discontinuation of all the Government’s policies and activities, such as ethnic profiling, that do not comply with China’s international human rights obligations and allow the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief to visit the Xinjiang Autonomous Region (Finland).

**8.** China only accepted some of these four recommendations because it welcomes and provides facilitation as stipulated by law for visits to the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region by diplomats, Chinese and foreign journalists, and tourists who make the visits by the Chinese law. On the other hand, China firmly opposes interference in its sovereignty and internal affairs under any pretext.

**9.** The lack of mutual agreement to express concerns about violating fundamental human rights between the Chinese government and foreign journalists should be addressed. The common aim should be towards eradicating discrimination towards religious minorities, and claiming this situation as a “re-education centre” is a violation towards the proper use of the word education itself.

## Recommendations

**10.** Broken Chalk recognises the progress China has made to improve the quality of education for all children in China. Our recommendations below serve as an invitation for China to maintain or improve its human rights in education.

**11.** Broken Chalk recommends that China not only establishes the prohibition of corporal punishment of children in all settings, including in the home but also maintains this agreement throughout various regions.

**12.** Broken Chalk recommends that China does not use the term “education” to define a political justice system that involves the violation of human rights, such as “vocational education and training centres” or “re-education centres” that facilitate crime against humanity.

**13.** Broken Chalk recommends that China invests in efforts to eradicate discrimination in education for disadvantaged children in poor and remote areas through investing in basic school infrastructure and quality teachers.

**14.** Broken Chalk recommends that China grows in its progress in the training of quality teachers such that there is a reasonable ratio between the number of teachers and the number of students, especially in highly populated areas.

**15.** Broken Chalk recommends that China keeps investing in quality learning experiences for special needs children, supporting accessible school facilities and resources.

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