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## Human Rights Council

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

## **Written statement\* submitted by China Soong Ching Ling Foundation, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[21 January 2025]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



## **20 Years' Commitment to Life Education for Young People by China Soong Ching Ling Foundation**

### **[Abstract]**

Founded in 1982 to commemorate Madam Soong Ching Ling, China Soong Ching Ling Foundation (CSCLF) is dedicated to international friendship and youth development. Inspired by Soong's love and caring for children, CSCLF focuses on the related pioneering and demonstrative activities. Since 2005, with the theme of "Respect Life, Care for Life, Healthy Life," CSCLF has conducted numerous events in youth life education for young people.

### **I. Background**

In early 21st century, Chinese society grew more dynamic. In the meantime, mental health issues among young people became more prominent. Surveys indicated that schools usually emphasized more on students' academic performance than their mental health. The general public were short of proper understanding on mental health issues. It was urgent for the institutions concerned to learn how to help solve young people's mental problems and carry out life education campaigns to raise public awareness. To this end, CSCLF initiated the first Youth Life Education Forum in Beijing, on December 22, 2005, followed by a series of life education events.

### **II. Major Events Over the Past 20 Years**

Life education is essential throughout one's life, particularly from childhood to adolescence. Over the past two decades, CSCLF held 19 Youth Life Education Forums, over 100 training sessions for teachers and parents and hundreds of lectures at schools, theming "Optimizing Social Environment for Youth Growth" "Interdisciplinary Dialogue on Life Education" "Caring for Left-behind Children" and "Life Education and Mental Health". More than 30,000 individuals participated in and benefited from the events.

As a non-profit organization, CSCLF applies its expertise and resources in responding to crisis. For example, in response to the Sichuan earthquake in 2008, it launched the "Rainbow of the Soul" Initiative to offer psychological assistance, fielding experts and volunteers to work in the affected areas. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it provided online psychological counseling through "Peace of Mind Lectures" and a three-year support program for healthcare workers.

### **III. Focusing on Psychological Services in an Experimental and Demonstrative Manner**

Rapid industrialization and urbanization in China led to substantial labor migration. In rural areas, many parents left their hometowns to seek better economic opportunities, often leaving their children in the care of others. This led to a significant rise in the number of "left-behind children" in rural areas, though recent rural revitalization efforts have contributed to a significant decline in the number. In 2019, CSCLF initiated the "Caring for Left-Behind Children" event, collaborating with professional institutes such as the Institute of Psychology at the Chinese Academy of Sciences. This initiative included the "Expert Forum on the Development of Psychological Health Services for Left-behind Children", the public training programs for officials responsible for children affairs in rural areas and the pilot projects in 10 schools across 8 provinces for a psychological health service framework for "left-behind children". Furthermore, collaboration with Ya'an City in Sichuan province facilitated the development of a regional psychological health service system for 50 primary and secondary schools catering to "left-behind children".

China National Program for Child Development (2021-2030) promulgated by the ‘State Council of the People’s Republic of China’ highlighted the importance of “attending to and meeting the developmental needs of left-behind children.” In accordance, the life education for young people series evolved from initial exploration and practice to systematic pilot and demonstrative programs, promoting the public’s awareness of the life education concepts, researches on related policies, and training for local service teams. The above results attracted widespread attention. A report on the Investigation of Children’s Mental Health in Rural Areas was included in the Report on Minor Protection Development in China (a blue book, First Volume, 2022) .

#### **IV. Outlook**

Thanks to the joint efforts leading by CSCLF, the concepts of life education have been promoted, mental health knowledge disseminated and psychological service skills enhanced. An increasing number of proposals have been put forward to add “life education” into school curriculum. Life education has gained significant attention from all sectors of society.

In the future, China Soong Ching Ling Foundation will continue to promote life education while exploring educational methods and models which fit the characteristics and needs of young people. CSCLF will expand the coverage of its pilot projects, particularly in the remote areas and vulnerable communities, while actively promoting the improvement and implementation of relevant national and local policies to create a more favorable policy environment for the development of life education.

Note: Life education aims to foster respect for life and understanding of its significance. People are encouraged to follow a positive and healthy life style to pursue independent growth and harmony of body, mind and spirit, thereby maximizing the value of their life.

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