

CHINA'S GROWING PROMINENCE IN THE MULTILATERAL HUMAN RIGHTS SYSTEM

AN HRIC BRIEF¹

China's integration into the international system brings with it a large number of obligations through human rights treaties and agreements. How well is China fulfilling these commitments?

When China put forth its candidacy for the new Human Rights Council,² it emphasized its role in promoting international human rights, and stated that the Chinese government “respects the universality of human rights and supports the UN in playing an important role in the protection and promotion of human rights.” It pointed out its active implementation of international human rights treaties, and also that it “has given responses in a highly responsible manner” to communications from Special Procedures.³

While increasing human rights language and participation at human rights processes and conferences is important, significant gaps remain between China's stated commitments and actual implementation. This background paper presents:

- An overview of China's growing engagement with the multilateral human rights system
- A selection of key recommendations made to China by international experts

- Steps taken towards implementing those recommendations

As this brief demonstrates, China, now a member of the Human Rights Council, still lags behind in actual implementation of human rights within its borders. Implementing the specific recommendations made by various independent UN bodies would go a long way towards advancing individual and systemic protections and respect for human rights. Implementation of these recommendations should also be addressed in the review of China's human rights record by the Council's new universal periodic review system, as well as by governments engaged in bilateral dialogues with China.

Engaging international human rights: promise and concern China is increasingly adopting human rights language in international arenas, reports to UN treaty bodies, government-issued white papers and press statements. For example, in the “Voluntary Pledges and Commitments” submitted for Human Rights Council elections, China emphasizes the importance it places on human rights. China's reports to treaty bodies also demonstrate its growing sophistication in the use of international human rights language and processes.

China is increasingly active in **multilateral human rights-related conferences**, in addition to hosting its own events related to human rights.⁴ China was a particularly active partic-

China's Ratification of International Human Rights Treaties

TREATY	SIGNED	RATIFIED	LATEST REVIEW BY TREATY BODY
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)	December 12, 1986	October 4, 1988	May 2000 Upcoming review: May 2008
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)	July 17, 1980	November 4, 1980	August 2006
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	August 29, 1990	March 2, 1992	September 2005
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)	October 5, 1998	— Not yet ratified	China has stated intent to ratify on numerous occasions ¹¹
International Convention for Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)	—	29 December, 1981 (accession)	August 2001
International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)	October 27, 1997	March 27, 2001	April–May, 2005

ipant of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), which aimed to build a “people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented” foundation, premised on the principals in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), for governance and regulation of the international information society, which includes the Internet.⁵

China reiterated these themes in its own statements at the WSIS, but also emphasized that “social responsibilities and obligations” need to be built into the system, and that “the international community should fully respect the differences in social systems and cultural diversity.”⁶ These statements, like others in China’s treaty body reports, advocate applying different standards of human rights for different countries, which runs contrary to the universality of human rights norms and standards.

These statements demonstrate one aspect of the dual impact of China’s increasing participation in multilateral bodies. In addition to the positive impact of engaging the Chinese government through multilateral human rights processes, includ-

ing documenting abuse and assessing progress, there is the potential for China to influence the process and discussions in ways that undermine human rights progress internationally and domestically. The international community must continue to closely monitor and address this potential impact.

From engagement to implementation

Despite China’s increasingly active international human rights engagement as a State Party or Signatory to major human rights treaties and member of the Human Rights Council, on-the-ground implementation of human rights standards continues to face serious challenges. China has been reviewed by each of the treaty bodies to which it must report as part of its treaty obligations. Following a review of the China report, reports by NGOs and an exchange with China, each treaty body issues conclusions and recommendations on how the government can bring its actions into compliance with international law. In addition, four UN Special Procedures⁷ have visited China, each making recommendations in its area of

Visits to China by Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council

PROCEDURE	VISIT TO CHINA	DETAILS OF VISIT
Completed Visits to China by Special Rapporteur		
Working Group on Arbitrary Detention	July 14–21, 1996 (preparatory mission) October 6–16, 1997 September 18–30, 2004 (follow-up visit)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Regions visited:</i> Beijing, Chengdu, Lhasa, Shanghai • <i>High-level meetings:</i> Senior judicial and prosecutorial officials, national and local government officials • <i>Visits:</i> Prisons, administrative detention centers • <i>Other meetings:</i> Detainees at multiple locations, the All China Lawyers Association, academics
Special Rapporteur on the right to education	September 10–19, 2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Invitation to the Special Rapporteur originated from the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue under the Danish EU Presidency, 2002</i> • <i>Regions visited:</i> Beijing • <i>High-level meetings:</i> Ministries of Education, Justice and Foreign Affairs, representatives of mass organizations • <i>Other meetings:</i> Academic scholars, educational institutions
Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment	November 20–December 10, 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Visit came almost 10 years after the first request for a visit by the Special Rapporteur</i> • <i>Regions visited:</i> Beijing, Lhasa, Urumqi • <i>High-level meetings:</i> national and provincial government officials, including those in the Ministries of Public Security and Justice, as well as the Procuratorate • <i>Visits:</i> Prisons and detention centers, including Beijing Prison No. 2, Drapchi Prison, and Liu Dao Wan Detention Center • <i>Other meetings:</i> prison management, detainees, the Beijing Lawyers’ Association, lawyers, human rights defenders and academics
Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief	November 19–30, 1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>First visit to China by a Special Rapporteur</i> • <i>Regions visited:</i> Beijing, Chengdu, Lhasa and Shanghai • <i>High-level meetings:</i> Government officials, including representatives of Public Security and Religious Affairs, leaders of the five recognized religions • <i>Visits:</i> Religious institutions and places of worship • <i>Other meetings:</i> a recently released Tibetan monk and other religious practitioners

Visits to China by Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, cont.

PROCEDURE	VISIT TO CHINA	DETAILS OF VISIT
Visits that the Chinese Government has agreed to in principle¹²		
Independent Expert on the question of human rights and extreme poverty	No dates set	No information available
Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, follow-up visit	No dates set	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Invitation</i>: extended by the government in 2003 • <i>Letter requesting dates</i>: Most recently sent to the government in September 2006
Requests made to visit China		
Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression	No invitation extended	• <i>Latest request</i> : 2006 (requests made since 2002)
Special Rapporteur on the adverse effects of the illicit movement and dumping of toxic and dangerous products and wastes on the enjoyment of human rights	No invitation extended	<i>Latest request</i> : 2006 (requests made since 2005)
Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health	No invitation extended	<i>Request made</i> : 2006
Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions	No invitation extended	<i>Latest request</i> : 2006 (requests made since 2005)

expertise. The recommendations suggest a range of actions for the government (see accompanying table), and cover a range of themes, including criminal justice, education and freedom of expression, independent trade unions and worker rights, and reform of administrative detention systems.

China's reporting indicates **implementation** of some recommendations. For example, recent reports by the Chinese government have shown improvement in data collection and provision following requests by treaty bodies for additional and disaggregated data.⁸ International experts continue to express concern, however, about the reliability and comprehensiveness of the data.⁹

Other recommendations have not been implemented at all, even after being repeated multiple times by the same or different bodies. China's treatment of North Korean refugees is a case in point. In spite of concern expressed by a number of treaty bodies, China maintains that North Koreans in China are not refugees but there illegally, and therefore have no rights. In other areas, gaps remain between domestic and international law, and between law and practice, along with inconsistencies within domestic law.

Implementing human rights recommendations made to China

As China prepares itself for the universal periodic review it will undergo under the new Human Rights Council, it can demonstrate that it is serious about the commitments it undertook as a new member of the Council by **revisiting outstanding recommendations by UN treaty bodies and special proce-**

dures. While the review process has not been finalized, it aims to "complement and not duplicate the work of treaty bodies."¹⁰ As such, **recommendations already made are a clear starting point for review.**

The chart following summarizes key recommendations that have been made over the years by treaty bodies and special procedures, and which remain outstanding. These recommendations, if implemented, will go a long way towards establishing an independent judiciary, ending the practice of torture and arbitrary detention, and promoting freedom of expression and access to information in China.

ABBREVIATIONS USED

CAT	Committee against Torture
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CERD	Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
CESCR	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CRC	Committee on the Rights of the Child
SR Education	Special Rapporteur on the right to education
SR Religion	Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief
SR Torture	Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
WGAD	Working Group on Arbitrary Detention

Implementing Human Rights Recommendations of the UN: A Selected Checklist for China

AREA OF CONCERN	RECOMMENDATION	SOURCE MAKING RECOMMENDATION	IMPLEMENTATION CONCERNS
Reporting issues	Provide more disaggregated information and statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CERD 2001,¹³ para. 250 • CESCR 2005,¹⁴ para. 40 • CRC 2005,¹⁵ para. 23 • CEDAW 2006,¹⁶ para. 14 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite some improvements in later reports, data available continues to fall short of what treaty bodies request • Concerns expressed on reliability and comprehensiveness of information
Ratification of international treaties and conventions, and removal of reservations	<p>Ratify International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)</p> <p>Ratify ILO Convention No. 29 on Forced or Compulsory Labor</p> <p>Ratify ILO Convention No. 2 on unemployment</p> <p>Ensure that workers enjoy just and favorable conditions of work including by ratifying ILO Convention No. 81 on labor inspection</p> <p>Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture</p> <p>Remove declaration and allow the Committee Against Torture to receive individual complaints</p> <p>Allow independent trade unions: amend the Trade Union Act and withdraw declaration under article 8, para. 1 of the ICESCR</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEDAW 2006, para. 58 • WGAD 1998,¹⁷ para. 103 • WGAD 2004,¹⁸ para. 77 • CESCR 2005, para. 51 • CESCR 2005, para. 50 • CESCR 2005, para. 53 • SR Torture 2005, para. 82 (d)²⁰ • CAT 2000,²¹ para. 124 • CESCR 2005, para. 55 • SR Torture 2005, para. 82 (a) • CAT 2000, para. 142 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No ratification despite numerous statements of intent, most recently in “Voluntary Pledges and Commitments,” ahead of Human Rights Council elections¹⁹ • Not ratified • Not ratified • Not ratified • Not ratified • Declaration not removed • Declaration not removed; Trade Union Act has not been amended
Legal definitions	<p>“Discrimination” in accordance with international standards</p> <p>“Disability,” revise and clarify</p> <p>Crime of “endangering national security”</p> <p>Crime of torture in accordance with article 1 of the Convention against Torture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CERD 2001, para. 241 • CEDAW 2006, para. 10 • CRC 2005, para. 61 • CESCR 2005, para. 47 • SR Education 2003,²² para. 30 • WGAD 1997, para. 109 • WGAD 2004, para. 73 • SR Torture 2005, para. 82 (a) • CAT 2000, para. 142 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No definition as to racial or gender definition, though non-discrimination is required under domestic law • No changes made • No definition clarifying scope • No changes made
Human rights education, monitoring and awareness	<p>Establish a national commission on human rights</p> <p>Establish human rights trainings and awareness-raising programs to prevent abuses against children, detainees and others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CESCR 2005, para. 42 • CRC 2005, para. 17 • SR Religion,²³ sec. E • CRC 2005, para. 25 • CAT 2000, para. 144 • CEDAW 2006, para. 12 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No commission has been established • Training programs have been established on a range of areas, including human trafficking, standards for applying the death penalty, and gender and HIV-related discrimination²⁴ • However, national and provincial trainings on comprehensive human rights issues have not been undertaken

Implementing Human Rights Recommendations of the UN:
A Selected Checklist for China, *cont.*

AREA OF CONCERN	RECOMMENDATION	SOURCE MAKING RECOMMENDATION	IMPLEMENTATION CONCERNS
Administrative detention, including RTL	Abolish reeducation through labor and similar forms of forced reeducation in detention facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SR Torture 2005, para. 82 (u) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although comprehensive reforms have been announced on a number of occasions, most recently in February 2007,²⁵ the system remains in place
	Establish judicial control over Reeducation Through Labor proceedings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WGAD 1997, para. 109 • WGAD 2004, para. 73, 78 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No such reforms enacted
	Provide due process rights in administrative proceedings, including right to counsel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WGAD 2004, para. 78 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No such reforms enacted
Criminal and Criminal Procedure Laws	Amend the Criminal Procedure law to ensure that a person is presumed innocent until proven guilty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WGAD 1997, para. 109 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although there has been discussion for several years about revisions to the Criminal and Criminal Procedure Laws, none addressing these areas have yet been enacted
	Incorporate into the Criminal Law an exception to the effect that the law will not regard as criminal any peaceful activity in the exercise of rights under the UDHR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WGAD 1997, para. 109 • WGAD 2004, para. 73 • SR Torture 2005, para. 82 (s) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No such exemption enacted
	Enact reforms to the Criminal Procedure Law to conform with fair trial provisions under the ICCPR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SR Torture 2005, para. 82 (j) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No such reforms enacted
	Abolish section 306 of the Criminal Law, under which lawyers can be prosecuted for, e.g., counseling clients to repudiate a forced confession	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SR Torture 2005, para. 82 (l) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 306 remains in effect
	Reduce the scope of the death penalty , e.g., by abolishing it for economic and non-violent crimes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SR Torture 2005, para. 82 (r) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2006 and 2007 a number of reforms were enacted regarding application of the death penalty, but the scope of its application has not been reduced²⁶
	Release all persons sentenced on the basis of vaguely defined political crimes both before and after the 1997 reform of the Criminal Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SR Torture 2005, para. 82 (t) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These persons remain in detention. For example, Hu Shigen, convicted for counter-revolutionary propaganda and organizing a counterrevolutionary group (crimes that no longer exist in the Criminal Law), was sentenced to 20 years in prison in 1994. His release date remains at May 26, 2012.
Rights of refugees	Provide full protection to refugees and asylum-seekers and grant access to them by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and humanitarian organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CERD 2001, para. 246 • CESC 2005, para. 45 • CAT 2000, para. 145 • CRC 2005, para. 82 • CEDAW 2006, para. 24 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite these statements from numerous treaty bodies, China maintains that "DPRK nationals having entered China illegally are not refugees," and that their rights in China are therefore not violated²⁷
Education	Ensure that education for all children is adaptable to ethnic minority languages and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CERD 2001, para. 245 • SR Education 2003, para. 36 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bilingual education is enacted in law, but gaps remain between law and practice. In particular, access to minority ethnic education is strictly limited, especially in the border regions²⁸

Implementing Human Rights Recommendations of the UN: A Selected Checklist for China, *cont.*

AREA OF CONCERN	RECOMMENDATION	SOURCE MAKING RECOMMENDATION	IMPLEMENTATION CONCERNS
Education, cont.	Eliminate school fees to provide universal primary education to all children, including ethnic minorities and migrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SR Education 2003, para. 10, 13 • CESCR 2005, para. 66 • CRC 2005, para. 77 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite legal requirements that localities abolish fees for primary education, in practice, they are still used; because of national budgetary cutbacks for education, provinces charge families for shortfalls²⁹
Housing and standards of living	Implement the decision to dismantle the hukou system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CESCR 2005, para. 46 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite announcements of reforms, the <i>hukou</i> system remains in place, preventing migrants from equal access to housing, education and health-care³⁰
	Enact laws and regulations prohibiting forced evictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CESCR 2005, para. 61 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forced evictions remain widespread, with at least 300,000 evictions carried out for Olympics construction³¹
	Increase budgetary allocations in health and education, especially for vulnerable groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRC 2005, para. 20 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National budgetary allocations remain less than the internationally-suggested 6 percent. • Moreover, rural areas, where 70 percent of the population lives, receive only 23 percent of national funds³²
Freedom of expression	Remove restrictions on freedom of information and expression, including on the Internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CESCR 2005, para. 39, 68 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrictions on the Internet remain in place through technical controls on content filtration and Web site blocking, and personnel monitoring Internet use.³³
	Ensure the right to freedom of expression for children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CRC 2005, para. 39 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The right to freedom of expression remains seriously curtailed in China. Because media are state-controlled, children are not exposed to a range of opinions and ideas.³⁴
Freedom of religion	Provide legal protections for the right to practice one's religion , in addition to the freedom of belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CERD 2001, para. 244 • SR Religion, sec. E 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite new Regulations on Religious Affairs that came into force in 2005, religious expression remains subject to numerous restrictions, and individuals continue to be harassed and detained³⁵
	Take steps to guarantee the right of children for freedom of belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SR Religion, sec. E • CRC 2005, para. 45 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes have not increased the rights of children to religious belief; religious education in particular remains curtailed³⁶

NOTES

1. The primary researching and drafting of this brief was carried out by Elisabeth Wickeri.
2. Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the UN, *Aide Memoire*, April 13, 2006.
3. Ibid.
4. From November 17 to 26, 2006, China held a "Human Rights Exhibition" in Beijing, showcasing China's achievements in human rights.

People's Daily Online, "Human Rights in China exhibition to open in Beijing," November 15, 2006.

5. World Summit on the Information Society, "Declaration of Principles," Doc. WSIS-03/GENEVA/DOC/4-E, December 12, 2003.
6. H.E. Mr. Wang Xudong, Ministry of Information Industry, PRC, "Strengthening Cooperation, Promoting Development and Moving Towards the Information Society Together," Statement before the WSIS,

- December 10, 2003, <http://www.itu.int/wsis/geneva/coverage/statements/china/cn.html>.
7. For a description of Special Procedures, see the "Take Action" section of this issue of CRF.
 8. See, e.g., Committee on the Rights of the Child, "Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: China," UN Doc. CRC/C/15/Add.56, June 7, 1996, para. 28.
 9. See, e.g., Committee on the Rights of the Child, "Concluding observations: China," UN Doc. CRC/C/CHN/CO/2, November 24, 2005, para. 22.
 10. See Human Rights Council, G.A. Res. 60/251, U.N. Doc. A/RES/60/251 (March 15, 2006).
 11. See, e.g., Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the UN, *Aide Memoire*, April 13, 2006.
 12. These visits have been agreed in principle and/or are under consideration. See http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/chr/special/country_visits-a-htm#china.
 13. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, "Concluding observations: China," UN Doc. A/56/18, September 8, 2001.
 14. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, "Concluding Observations: China," UN Doc. E/C.12/1/Add.107, May 13, 2005.
 15. Committee on the Rights of the Child, "Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: China," op. cit.
 16. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, "Concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women," UN Doc. CEDAW/C/CHN/CO/6, August 25, 2006.
 17. Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, "Report: Visit to the People's Republic of China," UN Doc. E/CN.4/1998/44/Add.2, December 22, 1997.
 18. *Ibid.*
 19. Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the UN, *Aide Memoire*, April 13, 2006.
 20. Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, "Mission to China," UN Doc. E/CN.4/2006/6/Add.6, March 10, 2006.
 21. Committee against Torture, "Conclusions and Recommendations: China," UN Doc. A/55/44, September 5, 2000.
 22. Report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, UN Doc. E/CN.4/2004/45/Add.1, November 21, 2003.
 23. Report of the Special Rapporteur on Religion, UN Doc. E/CN.4/1995/91, December 22, 1994.
 24. See, e.g., People's Daily Online, "China, Australia Share Bid to Curb Trafficking in Women, Children," May 3, 2002.
 25. China Daily, "End Legal Black Hole," March 1, 2007.
 26. See, e.g., People's Daily, "China's Highest Court to Order Provinces to Retry Death Sentences," February 28, 2007.
 27. Replies by the Government of the People's Republic of China, to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights," UN Doc. HR/CESCR/NONE/2004/10, p. 30.
 28. Human Rights in China and Minority Rights Group International, *China: Minority Exclusion, Marginalization and Rising Tensions*, March 2007, www.hrichina.org.
 29. See, e.g., Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, "Concluding Observations: China," UN Doc. E/C.12/1/Add.107, May 13, 2005.
 30. See, e.g., "Shutting Out the Poorest: Discrimination against Migrant Children in City Schools," *China Rights Forum*, No. 2, (2002), 4, 11.
 31. Reuters, February 18, 2005.
 32. "Education Void Expands Wealth Gap," China Daily, March 10, 2005.
 33. See, e.g., Human Rights in China, "Trends Bulletin: Media Censorship Intensifies with continued crackdowns," Updated February 2007, www.hrichina.org.
 34. *Ibid.*
 35. See, e.g., Human Rights Watch, "China: A Year After New Regulations, Religious Rights Still Restricted," March 1, 2006.
 36. *Ibid.*

Of Mixed Race

BY WOESER

It's fading, this dreamshadow . . .
 The offspring of those poor and secret tribes,
 In aching atmosphere among the peaks and swift waters,
 Draws from her meager stock of adjectives
 And lifts her voice, opens her lovely throat (much envied),
 In songs that ring like gleaming golden coins.
 More precious than gold coins, her sacrifice;
 But in return at least she wins a little joy.
 Her noble brow is exalted with passion
 Though her plumes are burnt by the setting sun
 And one by one they fall away.
 See how gnarled her bones!
 And yet the joy outweighs all else.

Please grant whatever world of soil and stream
 Will let her sing—not purposefully,

She really improvised it, once—
 Let her sing a poignant song about that night of rebellion
 At the close of her youth; the hot tears of despair
 Made her lovely, annulled the stance she had first taken.
 It shall be a matchless crown;
 This closest symbol
 Transcends what might have made her fearful of this world
 Because her mission is to be, in shining form, a priestess.
 But over what sacrificial rite must she preside alone,
 That she may ask, "Is it this?
 Shall this one, too, be borne away?"

Rendered into English by A. E. Clark

The original Chinese poem is currently posted on the "Buda" blog on tibetcul.com, <http://buda.tibetcul.com/archives/2005/5783.html>.