Poverty Alleviation: Common Responsibility for Political Parties in Asia

ICAPP Conference on Poverty Alleviation

Concept Paper

Asia, as the most dynamic continent of the world, boasts phenomenal economic growth, bright future and great development potential. Meanwhile, Asia is the most populous continent (with its population accounting for 60% of the world total), and also home to the highest number of poor population. It faces severe challenges of long-term poverty and backwardness. According to the poverty line of living on $1 a day stipulated by the World Bank in 1990, there remains over 600 million people living in poverty in Asia, approximately one sixth of the total population in the area. Some 1.9 billion people in Asia still live on less than $2 per day, accounting for three quarters of the world's poor. The Millennium Development Goals (hereinafter referred to as MDGs) adopted by the UN in 2000 set the target to halve the world poverty by 2015. What we do in Asia in poverty reduction is vital to meeting the target on a global scale. Although the people living in poverty in Asia went down by over 200 million at present,

the number will go up according to the revised poverty lines of $1.25 or $1.35 per day set by the World Bank and Asian Development Bank respectively. It is predicted that at the current economic growth rates, people living in poverty in Asia can only be reduced by 150-300 million by 2015, and 1.2-1.5 billion people will still live on less than $2 per day by then. In the wake of the recent world financial and economic crises, Asia will be confronted with a more arduous task in terms of poverty alleviation.

Only six years are left before the deadline of implementation of MDGs. Compared with the world financial and economic crises in the spotlight on the international agenda, much less attention has been paid to global poverty reduction, especially poverty alleviation in Asia. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon is pushing state leaders to attend the Millennium Summit to be held in September before the 65th session of the General Assembly, and has launched a report “Keeping the Promise”, urging the state leaders to be “ready to act, ready to deliver and ready to make 2010 a year of results for people”. We believe that political parties play a key role in political, economic and social arenas in Asia. The political parties in Asia, whether ruling or in opposition, always take the well-being of the people as their top priority. Poverty

alleviation has a close bearing on safeguarding welfare of the people and promoting development, and is an important responsibility commonly shouldered by Asian political parties. Many Asian political parties have accumulated good experiences in this regard, and enhancing their exchanges and cooperation is beneficial to all. Accomplishments in poverty relief in Asia will be an important contribution to the implementation of MDGs.

Against this backdrop, the Communist Party of China plans to host “ICAPP Conference on Poverty Alleviation” in mid-July 2010 in line with the request of the Standing Committee of the ICAPP on implementing the priority projects. The conference aims to expand the sharing of experience in poverty-alleviation, promote practical cooperation among political parties in Asia, and heighten international attention to the global development agenda. The theme of the conference is “Poverty Alleviation: the Common Responsibility for Political Parties in Asia”, and two sub-themes are “Significance of Poverty Relief in Asia to the Implementation of MDGs” and “Searching for Asian Approaches to Poverty Alleviation”. It is proposed that UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and Chinese state leaders convey messages to the opening of the conference and that a summary will be adopted at the end of the conference. The document, which is to be submitted to the UN

General Assembly through a proper channel, will reflect the concerns of Asian political parities for poverty alleviation and development issues. With a view to conducting in-depth exchanges and yielding positive results, the conference and related programs will take place in both Yunnan province and Beijing. It is tentatively planed that a field trip to study China's implementation of development-oriented poverty alleviation measures in Yunnan province would come first before the conference officially opens in Kunming, capital city of Yunnan province. Following the conference, delegates are invited to Beijing for a meeting with senior Chinese leaders.

Political parties eligible to the Charter of the ICAPP are welcome to apply for participation in the conference. Your comments and suggestions are most appreciated. We will flesh out related programs and arrangements for speech delivery based on opinions and suggestions from various parties. The invitation list and formal programs will be finalized in mid-May and official invitation letters distributed accordingly thereafter.

We would like to avail ourselves of this opportunity to renew our firm support to the cooperation with the ICAPP. It is with a strong sense of responsibility, passion, wisdom, and experience that we will work closely with other Asian political parties in our

endeavor to make the conference a complete success.

Appendix:

Tentative Program of ICAPP Conference on Poverty Alleviation

DATE	PROGRAM	CITY
July 13	Arrival of the delegates Registration	Kunming
July 14-15	Field trips	To be specified
July 16	13th ICAPP Standing Committee Meeting	Kunming
July 17-18	ICAPP Conference on Poverty Alleviation	Kunming
July 19	Political meetings	Beijing
July 20	Departure of the foreign delegates	Beijing