

De Kerk Van Almachtige God

(The Church of Almighty God)

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Working Session 7: Fundamental freedoms I, **Chinese Religious Refugees in Germany**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you! I feel honored to take the floor today on behalf of The Church of Almighty God (CAG) asylum seekers in Germany.

Since the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) took power, its persecution of Christianity has never stopped and even peaked in recent years, especially targeting The Church of Almighty God. In order to eliminate the CAG, the CCP has launched multiple special operations. They utilize many tactics to probe the information of the CAG Christians for arrests, including high-tech surveillance, monetary rewards for report, 5 household joint defense program, etc. At least half a million Christians are displaced, hundreds of thousands of families have been torn apart. Some CAG Christians have to flee abroad to seek asylum. So far there are 310 CAG asylum seekers in Germany. 80% percent of their asylum applications were rejected, and 14 received the departure orders.

The below are the main reasons for rejection.

1. BAMF (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge) does not give enough time for CAG applicants to give full statements of their persecution experience. This results in the incompleteness of their experience in the hearing records. When they testify their full experience before the appellate court, which is in due process and lawful, the courts do not assess the risk based on the applicants' true and complete experience, but reject their appeals with the explanation that their statements are not in accordance with their hearing records, which is very confusing.

2. One of the reasons given for most of the rejections is that since the applicants were able to safely pass China's customs with valid documents, they do not run any risks when returning to China. Although the applicants provided much evidence, the court didn't recognize the possibility that they would be arrested after returning to China and dismissed their appeals.

The fact is, according to the human rights organizations and *Bitter Winter* magazine, that the Chinese government has issued many secret documents in recent years, requiring of intensifying the investigation of the CAG members who have gone abroad. Until now, there are 22 well-

documented cases of the CAG Christians being arrested and persecuted when they were back to China. This brutal fact has well indicated that once the CAG Christians are repatriated, they will possibly face the imprisonment, torture and even death.

In August 2018, CAG Christian Zhao Xuiliang who was deported from Germany to China was transferred to Chinese police and her whereabouts are still unknown. This June, a CAG Christian was escorted to the airport for repatriation by 6 police officers who broke into her apartment. And this happened even before she received the formal rejection letter from the court. She was only granted a stay of removal, temporarily stalling her deportation after the appeals of lawyers and NGOs. What is worth noting is a similar case where Germany government indefinitely suspended repatriation of Uyghurs and reexamined their cases after a deported Uyghur asylum applicant went missing in China. So here we urge the German government to pay attention to CAG asylum seekers who have suffered the same severe persecution as Uyghurs have and give consideration to the risk they will face when returning to China and give their proper protection. Thank you!