INTRODUCTION

Domestic Violence is a serious global problem, irrespective of economic or political system. According to a survey conducted by the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF), about 25 percent of women suffered different forms of domestic violence—verbal humiliation, physical violence, economic control, sexual abuse, and deprivation of personal freedom, among other abuses. Domestic violence happens both in families living in rural areas and in families with higher education living in urban areas. The protection of the most vulnerable groups—women and children—against domestic violence lies mainly in the hands of governments. Good governance requires gender equality and elimination of discrimination against women by governments. National laws and regulations are under the influence of international norms. Both international and domestic legislations declare domestic violence against women a violation of human rights, which entails obligations by governments to protect women's rights and prevent such violations. Complying with the international women's human rights norms and realizing women's rights presents a crucial task for the Chinese government in fulfilling its human rights obligations. Apart from adopting measures, the government also plays an important role in changing the views and core values of the society.

This chapter is organized as follows: the first section focuses on the relationship between protection of women, good governance and human rights; the second section concerns the state obligations under international human rights law; the third section highlights the definition of domestic violence;

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the fourth section deals with current problems related to domestic violence against women in China; the final section is using the international standards to analyze the measures taken by the Chinese government.

1 Protection of Women, Good Governance and Duties of States to Protect Human Rights

To understand the relationship between the protection of women against domestic violence, good governance and duties of states to protect human rights, four questions should be answered: What is good governance? What is the relationship between good governance and human rights? Does good governance go hand in hand with human rights? What are the state duties in the protection of women’s human rights against domestic violence?

The term “good governance” can have a series of meanings from different perspectives. According to the Australian Agency for International Development, good governance includes both political and economic principles. The political principles include:

- a representative and accountable form of government;
- a strong and pluralistic civil society with freedom of expression and association;
- good institutions, including rules governing the actions of individuals and organizations;
- the rule of law, maintained through an impartial and effective legal system;
- A high degree of transparency and accountability in public and corporate processes.2

The United Nations Development Program defines good governance as a set of criteria: Participation, Rule of Law, Transparency, Responsiveness, Consensus Orientation, Equity, Effectiveness and Efficiency, Accountability, Strategic Vision,3 among which Rule of Law, Accountability and Equity are the representative words showing the relationship between human rights protection and good governance. Law should be fair and effective, particularly the laws of human rights. Accountability lies in the heart of good governance. Decision-makers in the government, the private sector and organizations should be held

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3 Ibid., 94–96.