**Prison ‘Slavery’ in China**

Main Article 1 (Interview)

Committees covered: ECOSOC

News Agency: Al Jazeera

Delegate Name: Emreen Aishah

**China’s use of Prisoners For Labour**

Prisoners in China have been used for labour for several years, with arising concerns by other country representatives on whether the rights of these prisoners are not exploited, it is principal to look into China’s stance on this issue.

**Interview with Delegate of China**

An exclusive interview was conducted with the delegate of China. The delegate stated that prison slavery is not being combatted in China like other country representatives, as China believes it “encourages labour because of their cultural beliefs”. However, prison slavery is mostly associated with economic and political factors.

One of the major concerns considered by the international community is minimum wage violations. The delegate of China claims “There is no minimum wage system in prisons because all their necessities are paid for, education is covered as well.” Furthermore, prisoners are allowed to work to earn money for ‘extra’ snacks.

When asked about how China is implementing laws to ensure there are no labour violations taking place in their prison system, it was claimed that “China has ratified the International Labor Organization (ILO)’s Convention 29 and Convention 105.” *Convention 29 of the International Labour Organization states that the illegal exaction of forced or compulsory labour shall be punishable as a penal offence, and it shall be an obligation on any Member ratifying this Convention to ensure that the penalties imposed by law are adequate and are strictly enforced.* *Convention 105 builds on Convention 29, which sets up stricter principles regarding the exemptions from forced labour.*

Balancing economic growth and the fair treatment of incarcerated individuals is also one of the major concerns brought up by other representatives. The delegate of China provided statistics from the years 1990 and 1997. “In 1990, the amount of the economy with the collaborated labour from prisoners was 0.08% and in 1997, it was less than 1/5th of 1%”- No recent statistics.

One case that occurred in China addressed the affirmative action taken if any person of authority acts in a way that is unlawful administering of corporal punishment. The delegate claimed that “In 1990 and 1991, 24 wards and prison guards were detained for coercing prisoners into forced labour”. This case was extremely famous in China, highlighting that there are strict rules that are implemented to assure that the rights of these prisoners are prioritized and that there are mechanisms in place to address unlawful practices.

In conclusion, the statements from the delegate of China assert that prisoners in the country are not subjected to forced labour and are adequately protected, with no violations of international labour laws. However, ongoing international scrutiny and a need for transparent reporting are crucial to validate these claims and ensure the effective implementation of safeguards for incarcerated individuals in China.