

Rules for the Implementation of the Provisions on the Administration of Religious Activities of Aliens within the Territory of the People's Republic of China

Article 1: These Rules are formulated in accordance with the Provisions on the Administration of Religious Activities of Aliens within the Territory of the People's Republic of China.

Article 2: Aliens within the territory of the People's Republic of China are referred to as those within Chinese territory without Chinese nationalities pursuant to the Nationality Law of the People's Republic of China, including long-term residing China personnel and short-term visiting China personnel.

Article 3: Religious activities of aliens within Chinese territory are referred to as the religious ceremonies that aliens conduct or participate in according to their own religious belief customs, the contacts with Chinese religious bodies, sites for religious activities and religious personnel in respect of religion, and other relevant activities.

Article 4: The People's Republic of China respects the freedom of religious belief of aliens within Chinese territory and protects and administrates the religious activities of aliens within Chinese territory in accordance with the law.

The People's Republic of China protects friendly contacts and cultural and academic exchanges of aliens within Chinese territory with Chinese religious circles in respect of religion in accordance with law.

Article 5: Aliens may participate in religious activities at Buddhist Monasteries, Taoist temples, mosques, churches lawfully registered within Chinese territory according to their own religious belief.

Article 6: At the invitation of Chinese religious bodies at or above the level of province, autonomous region or municipality directly under the central government, aliens visiting China as religious personnel may preach and expound the scripture at lawfully registered sites for religious activities.

At the invitation of Chinese religious bodies at or above the level of province, autonomous region or municipality directly under the central government, and after approval by the department of religious affairs of the people's governments at or above the provincial level, aliens entering China as other status may preach and expound the scripture at lawfully registered sites for religious activities.

Foreign religious personnel who are invited to preach and expound the scripture at the lawfully registered sites for religious activities shall abide by the administrative rules of these sites and respect the belief customs of the personnel of these sites.

Article 7: The collective religious activities of aliens within Chinese territory shall be conducted at the Buddhist monasteries, Taoist temples, mosques, churches recognized by the departments of religious affairs of the people's government at or above the county level, or at the temporary sites appointed by the departments of religious affairs of the people's governments of province, autonomous region or municipality directly under the central government.

Where aliens within Chinese territory collectively conduct religious activities at temporary sites, they shall be administrated by the departments of religious affairs of the people's governments at or above the county level.

Article 8: The friendly contacts and cultural academic exchanges of aliens with Chinese religious circles shall be conducted via Chinese religious bodies at or above the level of province, autonomous region or municipality directly under the central government.

Article 9: Foreign religious organizations that have no corresponding legitimate Chinese religious organizations within Chinese territory and their members must get consent from the departments of religious affairs of the people's governments at provincial level and approval from the State Administration for Religious Affairs before conducting contacts in the name of these organizations or as religious personnel with relevant departments of Chinese Government or Chinese religious circles.

Article 10: Following consent by Chinese religious bodies, aliens within Chinese territory may invite Chinese religious personnel to conduct such religious ceremonies as baptism, weddings, funerals, Taoist or Buddhist rites according to each religious customs. Among these ceremonies, the aliens conducting weddings must be males and females who have already set up a marriage relationship in accordance with law.

The Chinese religious personnel are referred to those who have been recognized and recorded by lawfully registered religious bodies.

Article 11: Following consent by national religious bodies or relevant religious bodies at the level of province, autonomous regions or municipality directly under the central government, and approved by the departments of religious affairs of the local people's governments at or above the provincial level, aliens entering Chinese territory may carry religious articles used in religious cultural and academic exchanges in accordance with academic exchanges.

Where the religious articles conform to the stipulations of the previous paragraph and the relevant provisions of the Chinese customs, they shall be passed by the customs based on the certificates issued by the departments of religious affairs of the people's governments of province, autonomous region and municipality directly under the central government or the State Administration for Religious Affairs.

Article 12: It is prohibited to bring the following religious printed matters, religious audio-visual products and other articles into Chinese territory:

- if the amount exceeds that for personal, rational use, and they do not belong to the category stipulated in Article 11;
- if the contents of these articles are detrimental to Chinese national security and public interests of Chinese society.

Where the religious printed matter, religious audio-visual products and other religious articles are found to be those mentioned in the previous paragraph, the case shall be dealt with by the customs in accordance with the law.

Where religious printed matters, religious audio-visual products and other religious articles, which violate the stipulations of the first paragraph have been brought into Chinese territory by other means, once being found they shall be dealt with by the departments of religious affairs or other related departments of the people's governments at or above the country level in accordance with the law.

Article 13: The enrolment to study abroad or capital provided to China by foreign organizations or individuals for the purpose of training religious personnel shall be accepted by Chinese national religious bodies on the basis of need, and the study abroad personnel shall be selected and dispatched by Chinese national religious bodies as a whole plan.

Foreign organizations or individuals may not recruit students within Chinese territory for their study and training abroad as religious personnel without permission.

Article 14: Aliens who intend to come to China to study at Chinese religious institutions must conform to the stipulations set by the Provisions on the Administration of Accepting Foreign Students by Chinese Institutions of Higher Learning, get approval from Chinese national religious bodies, and keep records at the State Administration for Religious Affairs.

Article 15: Aliens who intend to come to China to teach at Chinese religious institutions must be subject to the Methods of Engaging Foreign Professionals by Religious Institutions.

Article 16: Aliens who conduct religious activities within Chinese territory shall abide by Chinese laws and regulations.

Aliens may not intervene in the establishment and change of Chinese religious bodies or sites for religious activities, the selecting, appointing and changing of religious personnel by Chinese religious bodies, nor may they intervene in or manipulate other internal affairs of Chinese religious bodies.

Within Chinese territory, aliens may not establish religious organizations, institute religious offices, set up sites for religious activities, run religious institutions or hold religious classes in any names or forms.

Article 17: Aliens may not engage in the following missionary activities within Chinese territory:

- appointing religious personnel among Chinese citizens;
- developing religious followers among Chinese citizens;
- preaching and expounding the scripture at the sites for religious activities without permission'
- preaching and expounding the scripture or conducting religious gathering activities at the places outside the lawfully registered sites for religious activities;
- conducting religious activities with Chinese citizens at temporary sites for religious activities, except that of Chinese citizens who are Chinese religious personnel who are invited to preside over religious activities;

- producing or selling religious books and journals, religious audio-visual products, religious electronic goods or other religious articles;
- distributing religious propaganda materials;
- other missionary activities.

Article 18: Where the international religious organizations, offices and their members intend to contact or conduct other related activities with Chinese religious bodies, sites for religious affairs and religious personnel, they shall make applications to the departments of religious affairs of the people's governments at or above the provincial level in advance. The contact or other related activities may be conducted only after approval by the departments of religious affairs of the people's governments at or above the provincial level.

Article 19: Where aliens within Chinese territory conduct religious activities that violate these Rules, the departments of religious affairs and other related departments of the people's governments at or above the county level shall stop them in accordance with the law.

Where religious activities conducted by aliens within Chinese territory violate these Rules as well as the Law of the Control on Entry and Exit of Aliens of the People's Republic of China and the Regulations on Administrative Penalties for Public Security, the aliens shall be dealt with by the public organs in accordance with the law; where a crime is constituted, the aliens shall be investigated for their criminal liability by the judicial organs in accordance with the law.

Article 20: These Rules are applicable to religious activities conducted by foreign organizations within Chinese territory.

Article 21: The State Administration for Religious Affairs shall be responsible for the interpretation of these Rules.

Article 22: These Rules shall enter into force as of the date of promulgation.

(Source: *China Daily*, September 27, 2000)