Provisions on the Administration of Travel by Foreigners in China

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Formulated by the Ministry of Public Security, the General Staff Department and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; approved and forwarded by the State Council and the Central Military Commission on October 9, 1982.

Article 1 — In order to meet the needs of China's opening-up policy, simplify the approval procedures for foreigners traveling to various places, and, in the spirit of both safeguarding national security and protecting state secrets and of appropriately relaxing travel restrictions on foreigners step by step, the following provisions are specially formulated.

Article 2 — The conditions for open areas are as follows:

(1) having places of scenic interest, historic sites and tourist attractions, or scenic areas, or large and medium-sized cities with foreign trade, cultural or scientific and technological exchange, that are of value for opening and can attract foreigners;

(2) stable public security and good traffic conditions;

(3) having reception conditions (including interpreters, guides, accommodation, vehicles and non-staple food supplies); and

(4) not being a military restricted zone.

Article 3 — The approval procedures for open areas are as follows:

Any area that meets the conditions for opening shall, after the people's government of the province, autonomous region or municipality directly under the Central Government has consulted and obtained the consent of the relevant major military region, be submitted to the State Council for approval as a nationwide open area. Where certain open cities or areas need to be closed due to natural disasters, major military operations or other reasons, the matter shall be submitted by the people's government of the province, autonomous region or municipality directly under the Central Government and the major military region to the State Council and the Central Military Commission for examination and approval.

The examination and approval of the opening or closing of areas shall be undertaken and publicly announced by the Ministry of Public Security in a consolidated manner.

Article 4 — Areas for foreigners to travel to are divided into the following categories:

(1) Category A areas: foreigners traveling to such areas do not need a travel permit and do not need to notify in advance. The following 29 cities and counties are currently designated as Category A areas: Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, Qinhuangdao; Taiyuan, Shenyang, Changchun, Harbin; Nanjing, Suzhou, Wuxi, Hangzhou; Jinan, Qingdao, Zhengzhou, Kaifeng; Luoyang, Wuhan, Changsha, Guangzhou; Foshan, Zhaoqing, Nanning, Guilin; Xi'an, Chengdu, Chongqing, Kunming; and Lunan County (the Stone Forest).

(2) Category B areas (see the appended table): areas other than Category A areas that are already open, open under control, or newly opened. Foreigners traveling to such areas still need a travel permit, which may generally be approved.

(3) Category C areas: general non-open areas where foreigners often go for official activities such as inspection, scientific and technological exchange, and on-site construction. Relevant foreigners may be permitted to go to such areas, but a travel permit is required. The list of such areas shall be examined and approved by the relevant major military regions and notified in a consolidated manner by the Ministry of

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Public Security to the relevant departments and local public security organs.

(4) Category D areas: non-open areas other than Category A, B and C areas. Where foreigners need to go to such areas due to special circumstances, the receiving unit shall first obtain the consent of the people's government of the province or autonomous region of the destination and the major military region, and then apply to the public security organ for a travel permit before proceeding.

Article 5 — Where there are important military facilities within Category A or B areas, such facilities shall be designated as non-open areas.

Article 6 — The travel of personnel of foreign diplomatic missions and offices of international organizations in China shall generally be handled in accordance with these Provisions. Where necessary, reciprocal measures may be taken in light of whether the relevant countries restrict the travel of Chinese personnel stationed abroad.

Article 7 — Foreigners traveling in China shall not use self-provided means of transport, except that they are permitted to use self-provided vehicles between Beijing and Tianjin.

Article 8 — The activities of foreigners in non-open areas shall be arranged by the receiving unit or the relevant personnel in accordance with the routes and scope determined in advance, and shall not be changed at will.

Article 9 — Where a joint-venture, cooperative or inspection project with foreigners is selected in a non-open area involving several provinces, autonomous regions or municipalities directly under the Central Government, the opinion of the Ministry of Public Security shall be solicited in advance; where the project is within the scope of one major military region, the consent of the relevant major military region shall be obtained; where the project extends beyond the scope of one major military region, the opinion of the General Staff Department shall also be solicited, and the matter shall then be submitted for approval in accordance with the provisions.

Article 10 — Foreign nationals of Chinese origin traveling to non-open areas to visit relatives or travel shall be handled in accordance with the provisions of the request approved by the State Council and the Central Military Commission in 1980 concerning the removal of travel restrictions on overseas Chinese and compatriots from Hong Kong and Macao.

Article 11 — Areas and units involving national security shall properly carry out confidentiality work. Where photography or video recording is not permitted at sections and locations involving national security and at precious cultural relics listed for key protection by the state, the matter shall be announced to the accompanying personnel and foreigners in advance.

Article 12 — These Provisions shall take effect on the date of approval. Where previous provisions conflict with these Provisions, these Provisions shall prevail.

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