FREEDOM OF RELIGION

International Standards

During the Commission’s 2014 reporting year, the Chinese government continued to restrict Chinese citizens’ freedom of religion. China’s Constitution guarantees freedom of religious beliefs but limits protection only to “normal religious activities.” This narrow protection contravenes international human rights standards. Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) recognize not only an individual’s right to adopt a religion or belief, but also the freedom to manifest one’s religion in “worship, observance, practice and teaching.” The Chinese government continued to recognize only five religions—Buddhism, Catholicism, Islam, Protestantism, and Taoism. Groups wishing to practice these religions were required to register with the government and were subject to ongoing government controls. Both registered and unregistered religious groups deemed to run afoul of state-set parameters continued to face harassment, detention, imprisonment, and other abuses, and the government continued to outlaw some religious and spiritual communities, including Falun Gong.

Regulatory and Policy Framework

During this reporting year, Chinese leaders continued to view religion as an instrument to support government and Communist Party overall policy goals. In the 2014 government work report presented during the 12th National People’s Congress, Premier Li Keqiang said that the government will “fully implement the Party’s basic policies for religious work to promote harmonious religious relations, and religious people and adherents will play an active role in the promotion of economic and social development.” Wang Zuo’an, Director of the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA), wrote in a November 2013 article that, “[o]ur Party has consistently emphasized that religious work is a key component of the Party’s united-front work, and religious people are important targets of united-front work and a key component of the Party’s patriotic United Front.” Wang stressed that ideological work must be carried out by using “guidance, enlightenment, and persuasion,” and religious adherents are to work with non-religious people to achieve the “Chinese dream—the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.” SARA’s 2014 work plan also noted that in 2014, religious work should reflect the “resolute implementation of the Communist Party Central Committee and the State Council’s strategic decisions.”

The Chinese government continued to use laws, regulations, and policy measures to control religious practices in China, rather than protect the religious freedom of all Chinese citizens. During this reporting year, SARA issued or amended a number of legal and policy measures to implement the 2005 Regulations on Religious Affairs (RRA). These measures have added more clarity to ambiguous provisions in the RRA, but also articulated more enhanced state control over religious activities. The SARA Measures on Administrative Licensing clarified RRA provisions concerning proce-
dures for issuing various administrative licenses to religious groups. The SARA Measures on Administrative Punishment provided detailed procedures for imposing administrative punishments on religious groups and government employees that violate relevant laws and regulations governing religious activities in China. SARA also issued a guideline stipulating that government personnel will be held accountable for misconduct committed during administrative enforcement. While such a guideline potentially denotes a positive development, it remains to be seen whether authorities will enforce it in practice.

Buddhism (Non-Tibetan)

This past year, the Chinese government and Communist Party continued to ensure that Buddhist doctrine and practice conformed to government and Party objectives in the non-Tibetan areas of China. [For information on Tibetan Buddhists, see Section V—Tibet.] In a speech delivered at the opening ceremony of a Chinese Buddhism scripture-reading seminar held in October 2013, Jiang Jianyong, the Deputy Director of State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA), reiterated the expectation that Chinese Buddhists “raise the banner of loving the nation and loving religion, and walk in the path of adapting to socialist society”; and that the Chinese Buddhist community must “promote correct beliefs and correct conduct, further strengthen the building of faith, [and] oppose [religious] fanaticism and various heresies . . . .” SARA’s 2014 work plan called for “intensified implementation” of the 2012 joint opinion, issued by 10 central government agencies, that regulates the management of Buddhist monasteries and Taoist temples. The 2012 joint opinion, in conjunction with the 2005 RRA, prohibits unregistered organizations and religious sites from conducting religious activities. For example, in February 2014, local authorities in the Xiang’an district of Xiamen city, Fujian province, amassed over 100 urban management officers (chengguan) to demolish an “illegally constructed” Buddhist temple, resulting in a violent clash between local residents and chengguan. In addition, on July 29, 2014, public security authorities in Zhuhai city, Guangdong province, reportedly raided Buddhist group “Huazang Famen” and criminally detained 15 people, including its founder Wu Zeheng, for “using a cult to undermine implementation of the law, to commit fraud, rape, and other criminal activities.” According to a letter to the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture sent on behalf of Wu, the crackdown on “Huazang Famen” appears to be an “extension of China’s clampdown on so-called ‘evil cults.’”

Catholicism

During the Commission’s 2014 reporting year, the Chinese government and Communist Party continued to interfere with the religious activities of China’s estimated 12 million Catholics, who are split more or less evenly between the state-controlled church and an underground Catholic community. The state-controlled church continued to deny Catholics in China the freedom to accept the authority of the Holy See to select bishops, and authorities continued
to harass Catholics who practice their faith outside of state-approved parameters.20

HARASSMENT AND DETENTION OF CLERGY

This past year, two prominent members of the underground Catholic clergy who had endured decades of government harassment passed away. In October 2013, Bishop Peter Liu Guandong—the retired head of the Yixian diocese in Hebei province and the key figure in setting up a conference of Catholic bishops loyal to the Holy See—died at the age of 94.21 Bishop Liu spent years in prison for his opposition to the state-controlled Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association (CPA) and had been living in hiding since 1997.22 Liu reportedly was buried at an unknown location.23 In March 2014, Bishop Joseph Fan Zhongliang, the head of the underground conference of Catholic bishops who was appointed the bishop of the Shanghai diocese by Pope John Paul II in 2000, died at the age of 95.24 Bishop Fan spent more than two decades in prison and labor camps, and his final years reportedly under “house arrest.”25 Government officials turned down a request to hold a funeral for Fan at the city’s main cathedral, and allowed only a small service at a funeral home.26 Over 5,000 mourners and 61 priests reportedly came to bid farewell to Fan, but authorities denied some CPA bishops access to the funeral home.27

Bishop Fan’s presumed successor, Bishop Thaddeus Ma Daqin, continued to be confined at the Sheshan seminary,28 following his public resignation from the state-run CPA in July 2012.29 Authorities reportedly subjected Ma to political indoctrination three times a week for an unknown period of time.30 Overseas and underground Chinese Catholics requested that authorities allow Ma to preside over Bishop Fan’s funeral, but Bishop Ma was not present at the service.31 In addition, in early October 2013, two underground priests, Tian Dalong and an unknown priest, reportedly were detained for organizing adult catechism classes in Qinyuan county, Baoding municipality, Hebei province.32 Four lay adherents who helped the priests with their pastoral activities were fined 4,000 yuan (US$640) each.33 On May 30, 2014, authorities in Linchuan district, Fuzhou city, Jiangxi province detained underground priest John Peng Weizhao at an unknown location; Peng was appointed administrator of the Yujiang diocese by the Holy See in 2012.34

CHINA-HOLY SEE RELATIONS

The Chinese government does not maintain diplomatic relations with the Holy See, and relations between the two sides have been strained since 2011 due to papal rejection of unilateral bishop appointments made by the CPA.35 Despite the lack of formal ties, Pope Francis acknowledged in an interview that “relations exist” between China and the Holy See, and that he exchanged letters with President Xi Jinping.36 In August 2014, China permitted Pope Francis to fly over China for his visit to South Korea, marking the first time a pope has been allowed to do so since 1951.37 During flights to and from South Korea, Pope Francis sent two goodwill messages to President Xi Jinping upon entering China’s airspace.38 The Pope also openly expressed his desire to visit China soon, but
he insisted on one condition, that the Catholic Church be allowed
to operate freely. In response to Pope Francis’ comments, Hua
Chunying, a spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in-
dicated that China is willing to have a “constructive dialogue” with
the Holy See and improve bilateral ties. CPA Vice President Liu
Yuanlong, however, warned that “China will always safeguard its
sovereignty and territorial integrity and it never allows foreign
forces to interfere with religion. The Vatican should respect China
in terms of the personnel of a diocese.” In addition, Chinese au-
thorities reportedly blocked Chinese Catholics from traveling to
South Korea, and threatened those who were already in South
Korea not to participate in events during the papal visit.

Falun Gong

This past year, the Chinese government and Communist Party
continued to carry out a campaign—initiated in 1999—of extensive,
systematic, and in some cases violent efforts to pressure Falun
Gong practitioners to renounce their belief in and practice of Falun
Gong. The government and Party refer to this process as “trans-
formation through reeducation,” or simply “transformation.”
Starting in 2013, the government and Party launched a three-year
“decisive-battle” campaign aimed at reducing Falun Gong activities
and “transforming” Falun Gong practitioners. The campaign has
been carried out at all levels of government, and authorities have
set specific “transformation” quotas to meet local goals. Words
such as “battle,” “attack,” and “resist” appeared on official govern-
ment Web sites, indicating the aggressive nature of the campaign
and the government and Party’s continued emphasis on the sup-
pression of Falun Gong. Authorities labeled Falun Gong practi-
tioners as “stubborn” and “obsessive,” needing to be “educated,
saved, and transformed” for the creation of a “harmonious and sta-
bile, peaceful environment.” Furthermore, the China Anti-Cult Asso-
ciation, an organization affiliated with the government and Party, specifically named Falun Gong as the first of “20 cults” that “en-
derge social stability and public safety.”

The Commission continued to observe reports of targeted abuse
of Falun Gong practitioners by Chinese government authorities and
the 610 Office—an extralegal, Party-run security apparatus created
in June 1999 to implement the ban against Falun Gong. According
to Minghui (aka Clear Wisdom), a U.S.-based news organization
affiliated with Falun Gong, in numerous cases authorities ab-
ducted Falun Gong practitioners from their homes and detained
them at various facilities, including public security bureau deten-
tion centers, reeducation through labor centers, prisons, and
“transformation through reeducation centers” (also known as “legal
education centers” or “brainwashing centers”). Authorities took
measures to “transform” detainees, subjecting them to sleep depriv-
ation, food deprivation, forced feeding, beatings, electric
shock, mental abuse, sexual abuse, and other cruel treatment.
For example, the Commission observed a May 2014 report
about a Falun Gong practitioner Yang Chunling, who passed away
in April 2014 due to injuries she allegedly sustained during deten-
tion. Prison authorities reportedly subjected her to sleep depriva-
tion, suffocation with a plastic bag pulled over her head, repeated
beatings, and other forms of abuse that resulted in physical injuries. Furthermore, international observers asserted that possible organ harvesting from Falun Gong practitioners continued in the past reporting year. According to a July 2014 Minghui report, since July 20, 1999, Chinese authorities’ persecution of Falun Gong practitioners has resulted in at least 3,769 deaths.

Authorities also harassed and detained persons who attempted to assist Falun Gong practitioners, including lawyers who sought to provide legal assistance to their clients. In March 2014, lawyers Tang Jitian, Jiang Tianyong, Wang Cheng, and Zhang Junjie visited the Jiansanjiang “legal education center” in Heilongjiang province, attempting to secure the release of detained Falun Gong practitioners. In local authorities reportedly abducted the four lawyers from their hotel, detained them at a local public security bureau, and accused them of “using cult activities to endanger society.” Authorities then subjected the lawyers to beatings during detention, resulting in physical injuries. Local authorities reportedly forced the lawyers to sign a statement confessing that they “disturbed public order,” and threatened Tang Jitian that he would be “buried alive.” Authorities also allegedly detained and tortured other lawyers and Chinese citizens who came to Jiansanjiang to support the detained lawyers.

Islam

This past year, the Chinese government and Communist Party maintained tight controls over the affairs of Muslim communities in China. The state-controlled Islamic Association of China (IAC) continued to regulate the confirmation of religious leaders, the content of sermons, and overseas pilgrimages to accord with government and Party objectives. In January 2014, Zhu Weiqun, Director of the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, and Zhang Yijiong, Deputy Head of the Communist Party’s United Front Work Department (UFWD), visited the IAC on two separate occasions. During their visits, Zhu and Zhang stressed their expectation that the IAC will “implement the spirit of the 18th Party Congress and its Third Plenum, to further assist the government in implementing the Party’s policy of religious freedom, maintain social stability, and guide Islam to adapt to socialist society.” IAC Director Chen Guangyuan also said in November 2013 that the IAC will “actively serve as a bridge to unite and mobilize Muslim masses of every ethnicity . . . actively promote the basic Islamic spirit of peace, modерateness, and tolerance . . . to create a united, stable and harmonious social environment . . . rally closely around the Party Central Committee with Xi Jinping as the general secretary . . . work hard in order to achieve the Chinese dream—the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.”

Chinese authorities continued to regulate the confirmation of religious leaders and overseas pilgrimages. Under the 2006 Measures for Accrediting Islamic Clergy, the first requirement listed for government recognition of imams is that they must “love the motherland, support the socialist system and the leadership of the Communist Party of China, comply with national laws, [and] safeguard national unity, ethnic unity, and social stability.” Chinese au-
thorities continued to guide the training of imams at 10 state-run Islamic colleges. Provincial and local UFWD agencies, religious bureaus, and Islamic associations regularly conduct training classes for clerics and mosque managers. The 2005 Regulations on Religious Affairs (RRA) stipulated that overseas pilgrimages must be organized by a national Islamic organization. In April 2014, Zhang Lebin, Deputy Director of the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA) said at the “2014 Hajj Pilgrimage Work Meeting” in Qinghai province, that in accordance with “the directives of the central government leaders, a comprehensive mechanism must be established for the work of Hajj pilgrimage . . . [that is] standardized and normalized.” The IAC reported that in November 2013, 11,800 people completed the 2013 Hajj pilgrimage organized by the IAC. In February 2014, the government sent an official delegation from SARA and the IAC to Saudi Arabia to discuss matters related to the Hajj pilgrimage with their Saudi counterparts.

Authorities continued to control the content of sermons and interpretation of Islamic scripture. In a speech given at the China Islamic Affairs Steering Committee meeting in December 2013, SARA Deputy Director Zhang Lebin stressed the importance of “correct interpretation, correct knowledge, [and] correct faith” for achieving government objectives. Authorities also carried out control of scripture interpretation at the provincial and local levels. For example, in December 2013, SARA, IAC, the Guizhou provincial religious bureau, and the Guizhou Islamic Association jointly organized a scripture interpretation training class for more than 80 people, including 56 imams and 12 mosque managers.

This past year, authorities in locations throughout the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) banned Uyghur Muslim students, civil servants, and hospital employees from observing Ramadan. In contrast, Chinese authorities reportedly afforded Hui Muslims greater freedom of religion, allowing them to observe Ramadan and to make overseas pilgrimages in growing numbers. [For information on state controls over Islam in the XUAR, see Section IV—Xinjiang.]

Protestantism

During the Commission’s 2014 reporting year, the Chinese government and Communist Party continued to restrict the freedom of religion for Protestants in China. The Three-Self Patriotic Movement of the Protestant Churches in China (TSPM) and the China Christian Council (CCC)—commonly known together as the “Two Associations”—are state-controlled organizations that manage registered Protestants. The Party continued to emphasize the role of the Two Associations in carrying out Party and state objectives. During his visit to the Two Associations on December 23, 2013, Zhang Yijiong, Deputy Head of the United Front Work Department, stressed that the Two Associations must “continue to guide believers on the path of loving the nation and loving religion, effectively assisting in the implementation of Party and state policies . . . to contribute to the building of a socialist nation with Chinese characteristics.” Protestants who choose not to affiliate with the TSPM worship with unregistered “house churches,” which are often
subject to interference, harassment, and abuse during peaceful religious activities.

GOVERNMENT AND PARTY CONTROL OF PROTESTANT DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE

The government and Party continued to control and influence the interpretation of Protestant doctrine and theology in an effort to conform the Christian faith to Party goals and ideology. The government and Party refer to this process as “theological reconstruction,” initiated in 1998 by former TSPM Chairman and CCC Director Ding Guangxun. On August 5, 2014, speaking at an event in Shanghai municipality celebrating the 60th anniversary of the TSPM National Committee, Wang Zuo’an, Director of the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA), emphasized that “[t]he construction of [Christian] theology with Chinese characteristics . . . should also adapt to China’s national condition and integrate with Chinese culture.”

HARASSMENT, DETENTION, AND INTERFERENCE WITH PLACES OF WORSHIP

Chinese authorities continued to harass, detain, imprison, and interfere with the religious activities of members of both registered and unregistered Protestant communities who ran afoul of government or Party policy. Authorities throughout China interrupted house church gatherings and proselytizing activities, took participants into custody, and blocked access to sites of worship. This past year, the Commission also observed a trend of increasing government harassment against officially sanctioned TSPM churches. In particular, the Zhejiang provincial government launched a three-year (2013–2015) “Three Rectifications and One Demolition” campaign to “rectify” and demolish “illegal structures.” While the campaign’s stated aim was to address “illegal structures,” official rhetoric at meetings and in government work plans appeared to demonstrate a negative view of the growth of Christianity in Zhejiang and an intention to target religious sites, especially Christian sites, for demolition. According to a May 2014 New York Times report, an internal Zhejiang government document named Christianity and crosses as the intended targets of its campaign against “excessive religious sites” and “overly popular religious activities.” The U.S.-based non-governmental organization ChinaAid reported that, as of August 7, 2014, the campaign has affected at least 231 churches in Zhejiang province. Examples of official persecution of Protestant churches include:

- On April 3, 2014, authorities in Yongjia county, Wenzhou municipality, Zhejiang, reportedly notified the Sanjiang TSPM Church that its new church building was deemed an “illegal structure” with “safety hazards” and needed to be demolished. Over the next few days, nearly 5,000 Christians reportedly stood guard in and around the church. On April 7, Sanjiang Church members reached a compromise with local authorities, in which authorities agreed not to demolish the church or remove the cross atop the building, and the church agreed to remove parts of the church-owned nursing home.
On April 21, however, authorities arrived with demolition machinery, and deployed paramilitary and riot police to block access to the church. From April 22 to April 26, thousands of Christians stood guard at the church. Authorities began expelling Christians from the church on April 26, and demolished it on April 28.

• On November 16, 2013, public security officials in Nanle county, Henan province detained Nanle county TSPM Christian Church pastor Zhang Shaojie and over 20 church members, after they petitioned in Beijing municipality over a land dispute with the local government. Authorities charged Zhang with “fraud” and “gathering a crowd to disturb social order.” They repeatedly denied lawyers’ requests to meet with Zhang, and “unidentified people” reportedly assaulted the lawyers and foreign journalists at the county prosecutor’s office. In November and December 2013, Nanle authorities harassed and threatened church members, blocked access to the church, and forbade Christians from attending regular worship services. After two months in detention, authorities permitted Zhang to meet with his lawyer Liu Weiguo for the first time on January 15, 2014. The Nanle County People’s Court also repeatedly changed Zhang’s trial dates, and at one point had the trial date “indefinitely postponed.” The court tried Zhang in April 2014, and sentenced him to 12 years in prison on July 4.

• Authorities continued to interfere with worship gatherings of the Beijing Shouwang Church which has persisted in meeting outdoors in public spaces in Beijing municipality for more than three years. Beijing authorities continued to hold Shouwang pastor Jin Tianming under “soft detention” (ruanjin) and prohibit some members of the church from leaving their homes for worship. Starting in May 2014, authorities regularly detained members of the Shouwang Church during worship services, including holding some members in administrative detention for “disrupting public order.” According to ChinaAid, these administrative detentions were the first of their kind during the church’s three-year history of worshipping outdoors, which signal an escalation of persecution against the Shouwang Church.

BANNED PROTESTANT GROUPS AND DESIGNATION OF GROUPS AS “CULTS”

The Chinese government and Party continued to designate and criminalize some Protestant groups as “cult organizations” (xiejiao zuzhi). On June 3, 2014, several Chinese news media organizations republished a list of “14 cults”—previously identified by the General Office of the Chinese Communist Party, General Office of the State Council, and the Ministry of Public Security—after Chinese state media reported that six members of the “Church of Almighty God” (quannengshen)—also known as “Eastern Lightning”—killed a woman at a McDonald’s in Zhaoyuan city, Shandong province on May 28. Also on June 3, the China Anti-Cult Association (CACA), an organization affiliated with the Chinese government and Party, published a list of “20 cults” that “endanger social
stability and public safety.” The list included Protestant groups such as the South China Church, the Full Scope Church (quan fanweijiaohui), and the Local Church, which CACA placed under the name of “the Shouters” in its list. Authorities also appeared to target mainstream underground Protestant groups in the anti-cult effort. In June 2014, a commentator at the state-controlled Global Times wrote that, “underground churches and cults are spreading extremely fast . . . the situation is very serious . . . [local authorities] should try their best to suppress the underground churches and cults.” From June 2014 to August 2014, ChinaAid reported that authorities in Guangdong, Guizhou, Hunan, Shandong, and Sichuan provinces harassed and in some cases detained members of several house churches over alleged “cult” activities.

Taoism

The Chinese government and Communist Party continued to exercise control over Taoist doctrine, clergy appointments, sites of worship, and religious activities during the Commission’s 2014 reporting year. The Chinese Taoist Association (CTA) continued to work with the Chinese government to ensure that Taoist religious groups “uphold the leadership of the Communist Party and the socialist system,” “play an active role in the building of a harmonious society and in the promotion of economic and social development,” and “contribute to the protection of religious harmony, ethnic unity, social harmony, unity of the motherland, and world peace.” In a speech delivered at a CTA conference held in March 2014, SARA official Tang Aihua called for “intensified implementation” of the 2012 joint opinion issued by 10 central government and Party agencies, which regulates the management of Buddhist monasteries and Taoist temples. In preparation for the Third International Taoist Forum to be held in Jiangxi province in October–November 2014, SARA Deputy Director Jiang Jianyong said that SARA will “seriously implement the spirit of President Xi Jinping’s important talks on the promotion of traditional Chinese culture,” and “push forward the healthy development of Chinese Taoism,” in order to “contribute to the realization of the Chinese dream—the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.”

Other Religious Communities

The Chinese government continued to maintain the framework of recognizing only five official religions for limited government protection, and did not recognize additional groups during this reporting year. Legal regulations allowed foreign religious communities, including communities not recognized as domestic religions by the government, to hold religious services for expatriates, but forbade Chinese citizens from participating. Despite lacking formal central government recognition, some religious communities have been able to operate inside China. For example, there are reportedly approximately 15,000 Orthodox Christians in China, and the Chi-
nese government has allowed four churches to be used for Orthodox religious services. The Russian Orthodox Church has expressed its desire for the Chinese government to grant recognition to the Chinese Orthodox Church, but it is not clear whether the government will do so in the near future. The Chinese government continued to refuse to grant official recognition to Judaism, Seventh-Day Adventism, Mormonism, the Baha'i faith, and folk religions, among others.

Notes to Section II—Freedom of Religion

1 PRC Constitution, issued 4 December 82, amended 12 April 88, 29 March 83, 15 March 99, 14 March 04, art. 36.
2 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted and proclaimed by UN General Assembly resolution 217A (III) on 10 December 48, art. 18; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) on 16 December 66, entry into force 23 March 76, art. 18.
3 State Administration for Religious Affairs, Regulations on Religious Affairs (Zongjiao shiwu tiaozi), issued 30 November 04, effective 1 March 05, arts. 6, 12.
6 Ibid.
8 State Administration for Religious Affairs, Implementation Measures on Administrative Licensing (Guojia zongjiao shiwu xingzheng xuke shishi banfa), issued 31 December 13, effective 8 January 14; State Administration for Religious Affairs, Implementation Measures on Administrative Punishment (Guojia zongjiao shiwu xingzheng chufa shishi banfa), issued 31 December 13, effective 8 January 14; State Administration for Religious Affairs, Administrative Enforcement Misconduct Accountability System (Guojia zongjiao shiwu xingzheng chufa shishi banfa), issued 31 December 13, effective 8 January 14.
9 The Regulations on Religious Affairs (RRA) provide that religious matters requiring administrative licenses include: the establishment of religious academic institutions (arts. 8–9); the establishment and registration of sites for religious activities (arts. 13–16); large-scale religious activities held in multiple provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities (art. 22); the building of large outdoor religious statues (art. 24); and the succession of “living Buddhas” in Tibetan Buddhism (art. 27). The RRA, however, does not provide specific procedures for obtaining the required administrative licenses. See State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA); Regulations on Religious Affairs (Zongjiao shiwu tiaozi), issued 30 November 04, effective 1 March 05, arts. 8–9, 13–16, 22, 24, 27. The new SARA measure on administrative licensing provides details specifying SARA’s Operations Division shall be in charge of handling applications for administrative licenses (art. 5); the circumstances under which an application can be rejected or when supplemental materials are required for further processing (art. 6); SARA’s Politics and Law Division shall be in charge of examining the application and the SARA leadership shall approve the application (art. 8); and approval or rejection of an application shall be communicated to the applicant via written notification, and in the case of rejection, the applicant shall be notified of the right to administrative reconsideration (art. 9). State Administration for Religious Affairs, Implementation Measures on Administrative Licensing (Guojia zongjiao shiwu xingzheng xuke shishi banfa), issued 31 December 13, effective 8 January 14, arts. 5–6, 8–9.
10 The Regulations on Religious Affairs (RRA) provide conditions under which religious groups and government employees can be punished. The RRA, however, does not provide procedures for imposing administrative punishments. State Administration for Religious Affairs, Regulations on Religious Affairs (RRA) (Zongjiao shiwu tiaozi), issued 30 November 04, effective 1 March 05, arts. 38–46. The new SARA measure on administrative punishments provides details specifying that SARA’s Operations Division shall be in charge of implementing administrative punishments (arts. 5–6); SARA’s Operations Division offers suggestions for administrative punishments based on different circumstances (art. 7); SARA’s Politics and Law Division should examine the suggestion and report to SARA’s leadership for approval, and the Division should review appeals (art. 8); the party involved is entitled to a hearing in the event a suggestion for administrative punishment has been made (art. 9); a written decision containing relevant details shall be given to the party involved (arts. 10–11); SARA personnel who violate relevant laws and regulations during the process of implementing administrative punishment shall be disciplined or punished by the SARA Disciplinary Committee and Human Resources Division, and when circumstances are serious enough to constitute a crime, SARA personnel shall be transferred to judicial authorities (art. 14). State Administration for Religious Affairs, Implementation Measures on Administrative Punishment (Guojia zongjiao shiwu xingzheng chufa shishi banfa), issued 31 December 13, effective 8 January 14, arts. 5–11, 14.
11 State Administration for Religious Affairs, Administrative Enforcement Misconduct Accountability System (Guojia zongjiao shiwu xingzheng chufa shishi banfa), issued 31 December 13, effective 8 January 14.

14. Ibid.


22. Ibid.


27. Five Thousand Catholics Bid Farewell to Bishop Fan Zhongliang, Memorial Service Held for the Bishop in Shanghai” [Wuqian jiaoyou songbie fan zhongliang shanghai jiaoyou zhongliang zhujiao], Radio Free Asia, 22 March 14.


29. Ibid.


32. Ibid.


50 World Organization To Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong, “Investigative Report (7) Regarding the Participation of the China Anti-Cult Association in the Persecution of Falun Gong” [Zhuchu guoji baogao (shiqi): guanzhu “zhongguo fan xiejiao xiehui” canyu pohai falan gong de diannao baogao], reprinted in Epoch Times, 26 March 04.

51 China Anti-Cult Association, “China Anti-Cult Association: Be Highly Vigilant About Various Cults That Harm the Public” [Zhongguo fan xiejiao xiehui: yao gaodu jingti weihai gongzhong de gexzhong xiehui], 3 June 14.


53 “Over Ten Fujian Falun Gong Practitioners Abducted During the Past Two Weeks” [Fujian shiji ming falan gong xueyuan jin banyue zao banggja], Clear Wisdom, 10 March 14; “Ms. Wu Shuyuan of Guanyun County, Jiangsu Province Tortured in Detention Center” [Jiangsu guanyun xian wu shuyuan nushi zai kanshousuo zao xingqin zhemo], Clear Wisdom, 24 March 14.

54 “Over Ten Fujian Falun Gong Practitioners Abducted During the Past Two Weeks” [Fujian shiji ming falan gong xueyuan jin banyue zao banggja], Clear Wisdom, 30 April 14.

55 Falun Dafa Information Center, “Overview of Persecution,” 4 May 08.


58 “Ms. Wu Shuyuan of Guanyun County, Jiangsu Province Tortured in Detention Center” [Jiangsu guanyun xian wu shuyuan nushi zai kanshousuo zao xingqin zhemo], Clear Wisdom, 24 March 14.

59 “Ms. Wu Shuyuan of Guanyun County, Jiangsu Province Tortured in Detention Center” [Jiangsu guanyun xian wu shuyuan nushi zai kanshousuo zao xingqin zhemo], Clear Wisdom, 24 March 14.


62 “Ms. Wu Shuyuan of Guanyun County, Jiangsu Province Tortured in Detention Center” [Jiangsu guanyun xian wu shuyuan nushi zai kanshousuo zao xingqin zhemo], Clear Wisdom, 24 March 14.

63 “Liang Bo Released From Prison, Says She Was Sexually Assaulted and Mentally Abused in Prison” [Liang bo chuyu sushuo zai yuzhong bei xingqin ji jingshen nuedai], Radio Free Asia, 6 November 13.

64 Ibid.

65 “Deaths Due to Persecution of Falun Gong Practitioners, Details of Cases Need Further Confirmation” [Yin xueyuan falan gong er bei pohai zhi zi he xiangqin xuyao juxiao queren anli], Clear Wisdom, last visited 14 July 14.


67 Ibid.


69 “Deaths Due to Persecution of Falun Gong Practitioners, Details of Cases Need Further Confirmation” [Yin xueyuan falan gong er bei pohai zhi zi he xiangqin xuyao juxiao queren anli], Clear Wisdom, last visited 14 July 14.


72 Ibid.

73 Verna Yu, “Four Rights Lawyers Detained After Questioning Falun Gong Detention,” South China Morning Post, 24 March 14. For more information on the four lawyers and their detentions, see the following records in the Commission’s Political Prisoner Database: 2011-00179 on Jiang Tianyong; 2014-00122 on Wang Cheng; and 2014-00139 on Zhang Junjie.

74 Lu Chen, “Lawyers Expose Torture After Attempt To Rescue Falun Gong,” Epoch Times, 7 April 14; World Organization To Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong (WOIPFG), “WOIPFG Investigative Announcement on the Kidnapping of Rights Lawyers and Falun Gong


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