

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Findings

- The Outlaw Ocean Project, the *New Yorker*, and the Environmental Justice Foundation separately identified practices indicating forced labor in the Chinese seafood industry. The reporting found that International Labour Organization (ILO) indicators of forced labor were present onboard Chinese fishing vessels and that Turkic and Muslim workers from the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) and North Korea were likely subjected to forced labor in the seafood processing industry.
- Forced employment and poverty alleviation policies involving Turkic Muslims from the XUAR continued during the reporting year, and they are set to continue at least through 2025. Reports found that gold and aluminum were likely tainted by forced labor involving Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims from the XUAR, and witnesses at a Commission hearing found that audits were unreliable when investigating instances of forced labor in and from the XUAR.
- Scamming organizations in Southeast Asia, including many run by Chinese nationals, continued to force individuals from China and other countries to work in compounds carrying out online scam operations targeting people around the world.
- In a March 2024 hearing held by the Commission, witnesses expressed concern that large-scale collection of the DNA of Uyghurs and others in the XUAR could be used to match organs for forced removal. Forced organ removal is considered a form of human trafficking by the U.N.

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China's Human Trafficking and Forced Labor Obligations under International Law

The Chinese government is obligated to combat human trafficking and enact legislation criminalizing human trafficking as a State Party to the U.N. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol),¹ and has also committed to obligations to combat forced labor under the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Forced Labour Convention of 1930² and Abolition of Forced Labour Convention of 1957.³

In 2024, the ILO released an updated framework to identify forced labor of adults, specifying conditions of involuntary work and coercion.⁴ While there is no set list of indicators that guarantee the existence of either condition, according to the ILO, several practices could “signal situations” of involuntary and/or coerced work.⁵ For example, involuntary work indicators include worker recruitment of a deceptive, fraudulent, forced, or debt-linked nature, as well as employment in hazardous, abusive, and state-imposed conditions that may not allow for employment termination.⁶ Likewise, physical or sexual violence, abuse of isolation, movement restrictions, retention or restriction of worker assets, and abuse of vulnerability and state authority may indicate coercion.⁷ The revised ILO guidelines strengthen methodologies for identifying non-internment state-imposed forced labor, allowing researchers to capture more accurately the complexities of systemic coercion in regions such as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR).⁸ [For more information on how the updated ILO framework addresses Uyghur forced labor, see Chapter 10—Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.]

Recent State Department Reporting on Human Trafficking Activities in China and Macau

The U.S. Department of State, through its annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report, documented continued⁹ shortcomings in the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Macau governments' efforts to combat human trafficking in recent years. The 2022 TIP report downgraded Macau to Tier 3¹⁰ in part because the Macau government did not identify or provide services to human trafficking victims, nor did it initiate any trafficking prosecutions.¹¹ As of June 2024, the U.S. State Department asserted that the Macau government had not convicted a trafficker since 2021 and has never identified a victim of forced labor, despite years of reports of human traffickers exploiting victims in Macau.¹² China remained at Tier 3 for the 2024 TIP report.¹³ The U.S. State Department noted that despite failing to meet minimum standards for eliminating trafficking and not making significant efforts to do so, the PRC government did take some steps to address the trafficking of women and children in 2024, including combating online scam operations and human trafficking involving PRC nationals in Southeast Asia and creating a new anti-trafficking group called the National Special Action Deployment Meeting.¹⁴ However, the PRC government allocated extensive resources toward the widespread forced labor of ethnic and

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religious minority groups and foreign nationals, particularly in the XUAR and Belt and Road Initiative host countries, under the guise of “deradicalization,” as well as “poverty alleviation” and “labor dispatch programs,” respectively.¹⁵

Forced Labor in the Seafood Industry

During this year’s reporting cycle, The Outlaw Ocean Project, a Washington D.C.-based human rights non-profit journalist organization,¹⁶ the *New Yorker*, and the Environmental Justice Foundation reported the presence of forced labor in the Chinese seafood industry.¹⁷

- **Forced labor onboard Chinese distant water fishing vessels.**¹⁸ In October 2023, reports revealed practices indicating forced labor onboard Chinese distant water fishing vessels, including deception, restriction of movement, isolation, physical violence, retention of identity documents, and abusive working and living conditions.¹⁹ The reporting also found cases of sickness and death due to neglect.²⁰ Between 2018 and 2022, the PRC government gave more than US\$17 million in subsidies to companies where at least 50 ships had “engaged in fishing crimes or had deaths or injuries onboard—at least some of which were likely the result of unsafe labor conditions.”²¹ The PRC government owns a majority of the country’s distant water fishing industry, including 20 percent of China’s squid ships.²² Furthermore, an April 2024 report found that individuals onboard Chinese distant water fishing vessels in the Southwest Indian Ocean between 2017 and 2023 were subjected to practices indicating forced labor.²³ The Chinese government encouraged Chinese distant water fishing companies to invest in the region.²⁴

- **Forced labor transfers in seafood processing.** Uyghurs and other individuals from the XUAR working in the seafood industry were subjected to forced labor transfers, surveillance, and patriotic education.²⁵ Individuals from the XUAR who resist participating in government-sponsored labor transfer programs may face reprisals from authorities.²⁶ Between 2018 and 2023, The Outlaw Ocean Project estimated that the U.S. Government spent more than US\$200 million on seafood from importers tied to Uyghur labor, for use in public schools, military bases, and federal prisons.²⁷

- **North Korean workers in Chinese seafood processing.** North Koreans dispatched to work in China-based factories producing seafood²⁸ were subjected to mistreatment including withholding of wages, excessive overtime, restriction of movement, intimidation and threats, physical and sexual violence, and abusive living and working conditions, which are practices that indicate forced labor.²⁹

U.S. law prohibits importing goods produced with forced labor.³⁰ Fishing catches by Chinese companies are difficult to trace, and companies known to subject crews to practices indicating forced labor were linked to seafood exports to the United States.³¹ Additionally, seafood produced by workers from North Korea and the XUAR were linked to companies that import seafood into the United

States.³² Under U.S. law, goods produced in the XUAR or by the labor of North Korean nationals are presumed to be tainted by forced labor.³³ Experts warned against relying on audits to certify that forced labor is not being used in seafood production, as auditors rely on government translators and rarely speak directly to workers, perhaps to avoid angering the companies that have hired them, and because of fears that workers will face reprisals for reporting abuses, among other factors.³⁴ They cited examples of victims of forced labor from North Korea and the XUAR who worked in factories that had been certified by auditing agencies.³⁵ In an October 2023 Commission hearing, Ian Urbina, director and founder of The Outlaw Ocean Project, described China as “the most opaque of settings, the most prone to illegal fishing practices, and . . . the most dependent on forced labor.”³⁶

Forced Labor in and from the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region

The forced labor of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in and from the XUAR remained³⁷ a concern during the Commission’s 2024 reporting year:

- **Forced labor transfer programs to continue.** The PRC government continued to subject Uyghurs and other individuals to forced labor under coercive “labor transfer” programs that placed them in work settings in the XUAR and throughout China.³⁸ According to an analysis of government policy documents by scholar Adrian Zenz, “coercive XUAR employment and poverty alleviation policies are to continue at least through 2025. XUAR state and media sources document that these policies continue to be implemented.”³⁹
- **Mining industry in the XUAR linked to forced labor.** According to C4ADS, a non-profit research organization, and Global Rights Compliance, an international legal practice, PRC gold mining companies in the XUAR received labor transfers of Uyghur workers, “which are at high risk of being forced labor.”⁴⁰ XUAR-based gold mining companies were listed in investment, index, and retirement funds and were accredited by major accrediting organizations.⁴¹ Gold produced by these companies may also have entered the supply chains of major Western companies.⁴² According to a February 2024 report by Human Rights Watch (HRW), major aluminum companies, as well as coal companies supplying energy to aluminum companies, participated in forced labor transfer programs.⁴³ Nine percent of global aluminum is reportedly produced in the XUAR, and the HRW report found links between aluminum produced in the XUAR and global supply chains for cars and car parts.⁴⁴ The report asserted that the PRC government threatens reprisals and exerts pressure on carmakers for investigating links to XUAR, which has contributed to poor mapping of the supply chain for aluminum parts.⁴⁵
- **Audits are unreliable for detecting forced labor in and from the XUAR.** International brands have pointed to their use of audits to prove that their supply chains are not tainted by forced labor in and from the XUAR.⁴⁶ Witnesses at an April 2024 hearing held by the Commission, however, highlighted⁴⁷

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the continued unreliability of using audits to uncover instances of the forced labor of workers in and from the XUAR.⁴⁸ Indeed, some auditors themselves conceded that audits may be ineffective tools for ascertaining whether or not Uyghurs and other individuals in and from the XUAR are subjected to forced labor.⁴⁹

- **Products made with cotton from the XUAR entered the United States.** According to separate tests commissioned by U.S. Customs and Border Protection and conducted by isotope testing firm Stratum Reservoir and DNA lab Applied DNA Sciences, some cotton products that entered the United States showed traces of cotton produced in the XUAR.⁵⁰ 57 percent of the cotton products that tested positive for Xinjiang cotton “featured labels that claimed the origin of the merchandise was U.S.-only.”⁵¹ According to reporting from the *Sourcing Journal*, some of the products containing cotton from the XUAR may also have been imported into the United States under the de minimis threshold which “subjects them to less scrutiny even though they’re not exempt from the [Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act].”⁵²

Cross-Border Trafficking

During the Commission’s 2024 reporting year, China remained⁵³ both a source and destination country for human trafficking across international borders. Examples of cross-border trafficking during this reporting year include the following:

- **Forced marriage.** This past year, the Commission observed reports that found women from North Korea and Cambodia were trafficked in China for the purpose of forced marriage.⁵⁴ Reports indicate that these women were promised improved economic circumstances before being forced into marriage.⁵⁵ Decades of government-imposed birth limits combined with a traditional preference for sons have led to a sex ratio imbalance in China.⁵⁶ This imbalance has created a demand for marriageable women that may contribute to human trafficking for the purpose of forced marriage.⁵⁷ [For more information about the trafficking of North Korean women, see Chapter 15—North Korean Refugees in China. For more information about how family planning policies affect the sex ratio imbalance in China, see Chapter 9—Population Control.]

- **Chinese nationals forced to conduct international online scams.** Reporting from the United Nations and others found that scamming organizations in Southeast Asia forced individuals from China and other countries to work in compounds carrying out online scam operations targeting people around the world.⁵⁸ Victims were subjected to practices indicating forced labor including deception, isolation and restriction of movement, retention of identity documents, physical violence, debt bondage, and intimidation and threats.⁵⁹ In many cases, the scamming organizations were run by Chinese nationals.⁶⁰ In October 2023, it was reported that regional and Chinese authorities cracked down on thousands of people participating in the scams, but local elites and criminal networks continue to evade authorities.⁶¹

Domestic Trafficking

During this reporting year, the Commission continued⁶² to observe reports concerning cases of domestic human trafficking in China:

- **In March 2024, official Chinese media announced the launch of a new nationwide operation to combat the human trafficking of women and children in China.**⁶³ Due to the definition of trafficking under Chinese law, such reporting on child trafficking likely included cases of illegal adoption.⁶⁴
- **In Hong Kong, migrant domestic workers (MDWs) remained**⁶⁵ **at risk of exploitation.** Two regulations—one requiring MDWs to live with their employers (the live-in rule)⁶⁶ and another requiring them to leave Hong Kong within two weeks of contract termination⁶⁷—contributed to MDWs' risk of exploitation.⁶⁸ Hong Kong-based news outlets reported that MDWs have been subjected to practices indicating forced labor such as deception, debt bondage, physical violence, withholding of wages, and excessive overtime.⁶⁹

CONCERN THAT DNA COLLECTED FROM UYGHURS
COULD BE USED FOR FORCED ORGAN REMOVAL

International experts continued⁷⁰ to raise concerns about the data collection of DNA samples of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslim groups in the XUAR. In a March hearing held by the Commission, witnesses expressed concern that large-scale collection of the DNA of Uyghurs and others in the XUAR could be used to match organs for forced removal.⁷¹ According to testimony from Australian National University (Canberra) doctoral candidate Matthew Robertson, an analysis of PRC Public Security Bureau records suggests that over 200,000 detainees in two XUAR counties were targeted for involuntary DNA and blood sampling.⁷² Maya Mitalipova, Director of the Human Stem Cell Laboratory at Massachusetts Institute for Technology's Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research, asserted in her testimony before the Commission that the PRC government is investing billions of dollars to sequence the DNA of large ethnic minority populations in the XUAR and the Tibet Autonomous Region, and is acquiring DNA sequencing data internationally to build the world's largest DNA database.⁷³

Notes to Chapter 10—Human Trafficking

¹United Nations Treaty Collection, Chapter XVIII, Penal Matters, Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, accessed October 2, 2024, art. 12; Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted by U.N. General Assembly resolution 55/25 of November 15, 2000, entry into force December 25, 2003, arts. 5.1, 9.1. China acceded to the Palermo Protocol on February 8, 2010. See also U.N. Human Rights Council, Report of the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, A/HRC/35/37, March 28, 2017, para. 14.

²International Labour Organization, “Ratifications of C029—Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29),” accessed May 7, 2024; International Labour Organization, ILO Convention (No. 29) Concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour, June 28, 1930, arts. 1, 2, 25. The Forced Labour Convention defines forced labor as “all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily.” As a signatory to the ILO Forced Labour Convention, China is required to prohibit the use of forced labor and make the use of forced labor “punishable as a penal offence.”

³International Labour Organization, “Ratifications of C105—Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105),” accessed May 7, 2024; International Labour Organization, ILO Convention (No. 105) Concerning the Abolition of Forced Labour, January 17, 1959, art. 1(a), (e). The ILO’s Abolition of Forced Labour Convention prohibits China from using forced labor “as a means of political coercion or education” or “as a means of racial, social, national or religious discrimination.”

⁴International Labour Organization, “Hard to See, Harder to Count: Handbook on Forced Labour Surveys,” February 27, 2024, ix, 4.

⁵International Labour Organization, “Hard to See, Harder to Count: Handbook on Forced Labour Surveys,” February 27, 2024, 8–18.

⁶International Labour Organization, “Hard to See, Harder to Count: Handbook on Forced Labour Surveys,” February 27, 2024, 10–14.

⁷International Labour Organization, “Hard to See, Harder to Count: Handbook on Forced Labour Surveys,” February 27, 2024, 16, 18.

⁸Adrian Zenz, “Updated ILO Forced Labor Guidelines Directly Target Uyghur Forced Labor,” *China Brief*, Jamestown Foundation, April 14, 2024.

⁹Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State, “2023 Trafficking in Persons Report: China,” June 2023; Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State, “2023 Trafficking in Persons Report: Macau,” June 2023; Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State, “2022 Trafficking in Persons Report,” July 2022, 170, 358.

¹⁰In the State Department’s tier list, the Tier 3 designation is applied to a country whose government does not “fully meet the [Trafficking Victims Protection Act]’s minimum standards and [is] not making significant efforts to do so.” Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State, “Trafficking in Persons Report,” June 2024.

¹¹Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State, “2022 Trafficking in Persons Report,” July 2022, 358.

¹²Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State, “2024 Trafficking in Persons Report: Macau,” June 2024.

¹³Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State, “2024 Trafficking in Persons Report: China,” June 2024.

¹⁴Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State, “2024 Trafficking in Persons Report: China,” June 2024.

¹⁵Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State, “2024 Trafficking in Persons Report: China,” June 2024.

¹⁶Outlaw Ocean Project, “About,” accessed May 7, 2024.

¹⁷Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes on the Boats: A Fleet Prone to Captive Labor and Plunder,” October 9, 2023; Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes along the Coast: The Uyghurs Forced to Process the World’s Fish,” October 9, 2023; Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes at the Border: The North Koreans Behind Global Seafood,” February 25, 2024; Ian Urbina, “The Uyghurs Forced to Process the World’s Fish,” *New Yorker*, October 9, 2023; Environmental Justice Foundation, “Tide of Injustice: Exploitation and Illegal Fishing on Chinese Vessels in the Southwest Indian Ocean,” April 2024.

¹⁸For previous Commission reporting on Chinese distant-water fishing vessels and forced labor, see Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2023 Annual Report* (Washington: May 2024), 186; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2022 Annual Report* (Washington: November 2022), 199. Under international law, China has jurisdiction over distant-water fishing vessels flying Chinese flags. See United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, adopted by the Third U.N. Conference on the Law of the Sea on December 10, 1982, entry into force November 16, 1994, art. 94(2)(b), (3)(b), (6); United Nations Treaty Collection, Chapter XXI, Law of the Sea, United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, accessed May 2, 2024. China signed the Convention on the Law of the Sea on December 10, 1982, and ratified it on June 7, 1996.

¹⁹Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes on the Boats: A Fleet Prone to Captive Labor and Plunder,” October 9, 2023.

²⁰Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes on the Boats: A Fleet Prone to Captive Labor and Plunder,” October 9, 2023. A young Indonesian crew member, Daniel Aritonang, died after having shown signs of being beaten and suffering from severe malnourishment while working on a Chinese squid ship.

²¹ Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes on the Boats: A Fleet Prone to Captive Labor and Plunder,” October 9, 2023. See also Mark Godfrey, “China’s Coastal Cities Competing for Distant-Water Catch with Generous Subsidies,” *SeafoodSource*, January 26, 2022.

²² Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes on the Boats: A Fleet Prone to Captive Labor and Plunder,” October 9, 2023.

²³ Environmental Justice Foundation, “Tide of Injustice: Exploitation and Illegal Fishing on Chinese Vessels in the Southwest Indian Ocean,” April 2024, 25, 31–34, 36, 38–39. The indicators included deception, isolation, physical violence, intimidation and threats, retention of identity documents, abusive working and living conditions, and excessive overtime. International Labour Organization, “Hard to See, Harder to Count: Handbook on Forced Labour Surveys,” 2024, 8–18.

²⁴ Environmental Justice Foundation, “Tide of Injustice: Exploitation and Illegal Fishing on Chinese Vessels in the Southwest Indian Ocean,” April 2024, 21–23.

²⁵ Workers are placed in regimented environments under the watch of security personnel, with one advertisement aimed at factory owners stating that workers will be kept under “semi-military-style management.” The Outlaw Ocean Project asserts that many workers are subject to patriotic education; for example, minority workers from the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region have been photographed by a municipal agency at Yantai Sanko Fisheries studying a speech by Xi Jinping and learning about “the Party’s ethnic policy.” Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes along the Coast: The Uyghurs Forced to Process the World’s Fish,” October 9, 2023; Ian Urbina, “The Uyghurs Forced to Process the World’s Fish,” *New Yorker*, October 9, 2023.

²⁶ Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes along the Coast: The Uyghurs Forced to Process the World’s Fish,” October 9, 2023; Ian Urbina, “The Uyghurs Forced to Process the World’s Fish,” *New Yorker*, October 9, 2023. See also Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, OHCHR Assessment of Human Rights Concerns in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, People’s Republic of China, August 31, 2022, paras. 124–28.

²⁷ Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes along the Coast: The Uyghurs Forced to Process the World’s Fish,” October 9, 2023; Ian Urbina, “The Uyghurs Forced to Process the World’s Fish,” *New Yorker*, October 9, 2023.

²⁸ Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes at the Border: The North Koreans Behind Global Seafood,” February 25, 2024.

²⁹ Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes at the Border: The North Koreans Behind Global Seafood,” February 25, 2024. For an additional example of North Korean workers subjected to practices indicating forced labor, see Pete Pattison, Ifang Bremer, and Annie Kelly, “UK Sourced PPE from Factories Secretly Using North Korean Slave Labour,” *Guardian*, November 20, 2020.

³⁰ Tariff Act of 1930, 19 U.S.C. § 1307.

³¹ Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes on the Boats: A Fleet Prone to Captive Labor and Plunder,” October 9, 2023; Environmental Justice Foundation, “Tide of Injustice: Exploitation and Illegal Fishing on Chinese Vessels in the Southwest Indian Ocean,” April 2024, 46–47.

³² Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes on the Boats: A Fleet Prone to Captive Labor and Plunder,” October 9, 2023; Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes along the Coast: The Uyghurs Forced to Process the World’s Fish,” October 9, 2023; Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes at the Border: The North Koreans Behind Global Seafood,” February 25, 2024.

³³ Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (Public Law 117-78); Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (Public Law 115-44) Section 302A. See also U.S. Customs and Border Protection, “CBP Issues Region-Wide Withhold Release Order on Products Made by Slave Labor in Xinjiang,” January 13, 2021; U.S. Customs and Border Protection, “CBP Enforces Countering America’s Adversaries Through Sanctions Act,” December 27, 2022.

³⁴ Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes at the Border: The North Koreans Behind Global Seafood,” February 25, 2024; Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes along the Coast: The Uyghurs Forced to Process the World’s Fish,” October 9, 2023.

³⁵ Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes along the Coast: The Uyghurs Forced to Process the World’s Fish,” October 9, 2023; Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes at the Border: The North Koreans Behind Global Seafood,” February 25, 2024.

³⁶ *From Bait to Plate—How Forced Labor in China Taints America’s Seafood Supply*, Hearing of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, 118th Cong. (2024) (testimony of Ian Urbina, Director and Founder of The Outlaw Ocean Project).

³⁷ Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2023 Annual Report* (Washington: May 2024), 188–89; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2022 Annual Report* (Washington: November 2022), 201–3.

³⁸ See e.g., Shohret Hoshur and Mary Zhao, “Facing Abuse, Teenage Uyghur Girls are Forced to Work in a Xinjiang Garment Factory,” *Radio Free Asia*, July 15, 2023; Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes along the Coast: The Uyghurs Forced to Process the World’s Fish,” October 9, 2023; Adrian Zenz, “Forced Labor in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region: Assessing the Continuation of Coercive Labor Transfers in 2023 and Early 2024,” *China Brief*, Jamestown Foundation, February 14, 2024; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2023 Annual Report* (Washington: May 2024), 247–48; 308–9.

³⁹ Adrian Zenz, “Forced Labor in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region: Assessing the Continuation of Coercive Labor Transfers in 2023 and Early 2024,” *China Brief*, Jamestown Foundation, February 14, 2024.

⁴⁰ C4ADS, “Fractured Veins: The World’s Reliance on Minerals from the Uyghur Region,” October 11, 2023, 17, 25, 33; C4ADS, “C4ADS & GRC Share New Update to Our 2023 Fractured Veins Investigation,” April 11, 2024; Global Rights Compliance, “About Us.”

⁴¹ C4ADS, “Fractured Veins: The World’s Reliance on Minerals from the Uyghur Region,” October 11, 2023, 30, 32.

⁴² C4ADS, “Fractured Veins: The World’s Reliance on Minerals from the Uyghur Region,” October 11, 2023, 25–26.

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⁴³Human Rights Watch, “Asleep at the Wheel: Car Companies’ Complicity in Forced Labor in China,” February 2024, 3, 43, 49–50.

⁴⁴Human Rights Watch, “Asleep at the Wheel: Car Companies’ Complicity in Forced Labor in China,” February 2024, 26, 51. See also Laura T. Murphy et al., Helena Kennedy Centre for International Justice, Sheffield Hallam University, “Driving Force: Automotive Supply Chains and Forced Labor in the Uyghur Region,” December 2022.

⁴⁵Human Rights Watch, “Asleep at the Wheel: Car Companies’ Complicity in Forced Labor in China,” February 2024, 1.

⁴⁶Ian Urbina, Outlaw Ocean Project, “Crimes along the Coast: The Uyghurs Forced to Process the World’s Fish,” October 9, 2023; “Volkswagen-Commissioned Audit Finds No Signs of Forced Labor at Plant in China’s Xinjiang Region,” *Associated Press*, December 6, 2023.

⁴⁷*Factories and Fraud in the PRC: How Human Rights Violations Make Reliable Audits Impossible, Hearing of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China*, 118th Cong. (2024) (testimony of Thea M. Lee, Deputy Undersecretary of Labor for International Affairs, U.S. Department of Labor); *Factories and Fraud in the PRC: How Human Rights Violations Make Reliable Audits Impossible, Hearing of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China*, 118th Cong. (2024) (testimony of Scott Nova, Executive Director, Worker Rights Consortium); *Factories and Fraud in the PRC: How Human Rights Violations Make Reliable Audits Impossible, Hearing of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China*, 118th Cong. (2024) (testimony of Dr. Adrian Zenz, Senior Fellow and Director in China Studies, Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation); *Factories and Fraud in the PRC: How Human Rights Violations Make Reliable Audits Impossible, Hearing of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China*, 118th Cong. (2024) (testimony of Jim Wormington, Senior Researcher and Advocate on Corporate Accountability, Human Rights Watch).

⁴⁸*Factories and Fraud in the PRC: How Human Rights Violations Make Reliable Audits Impossible, Hearing of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China*, 118th Cong. (2024); Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2022 Annual Report* (Washington: November 2022), 260; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2021 Annual Report* (Washington: March 2022), 215.

⁴⁹Outlaw Ocean Project, “Supplier Ethical Data Exchange (Sedex),” July 20, 2023; Finbarr Bermingham, “Staff of Firm That Cleared Volkswagen on Xinjiang Labour Faults Audit Process,” *South China Morning Post*, December 15, 2023; Human Rights Watch, “Asleep at the Wheel: Car Companies’ Complicity in Forced Labor in China,” February 2024, 7.

⁵⁰Arriana McLymore, “Banned Chinese Cotton Found in 19% of US and Global Retailers’ Merchandise, Study Shows,” *Reuters*, May 7, 2024; Katherine Masters, “Exclusive: US Customs Finds Garments Made with Banned Chinese Cotton,” *Reuters*, September 1, 2023.

⁵¹Arriana McLymore, “Banned Chinese Cotton Found in 19% of US and Global Retailers’ Merchandise, Study Shows,” *Reuters*, May 7, 2024.

⁵²Jasmin Malik Chua, “‘Significant’ Volume of Xinjiang Cotton Mislabeled as US or Brazilian,” *Sourcing Journal*, May 10, 2024. The de minimis threshold allows vendors to send shipments without having to report basic data if the value is under US\$800. Tariff Act of 1930, 19 U.S.C. § 1321. See also Richard Vanderford, “Imports Under Closely Watched U.S. Trade ‘Loophole’ Surge,” *Wall Street Journal*, March 1, 2024.

⁵³For information on cross-border trafficking to and from China in previous reporting years, see Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2023 Annual Report* (Washington: May 2024), 185; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2022 Annual Report* (Washington: November 2022), 199; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2021 Annual Report* (Washington: March 2022), 164–5.

⁵⁴Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State, “2024 Trafficking in Persons Report: China,” June 2024; Kim Yutharo, “Cambodian Teenage Bride Victim of Human Trafficking to China on Way Home,” *Phnom Penh Post*, reprinted in *Asia News Network*, March 12, 2024. See also Jesse Yeung and Yoonjung Seo, “She Fled North Korea but Was Sold to a Man in China. Her Second Escape Came Nearly 20 Years Later,” CNN, March 8, 2024; Visalaakshi Annamalai, “China’s Demand for Brides Draws Women from Across Southeast Asia—Sometimes by Force,” *Migration Policy Institute*, January 30, 2024; Seo Hye Jun, “He Told Me That If I Ran Away He Would Report Me to the Chinese Police,” *Radio Free Asia*, August 4, 2023; William Gallo, “Activists Slam China After Alleged Forced Repatriation of North Koreans,” *Voice of America*, October 13, 2023.

⁵⁵Kim Yutharo, “Cambodian Teenage Bride Victim of Human Trafficking to China on Way Home,” *Phnom Penh Post*, March 12, 2024, reprinted in *Asia News Network*, May 1, 2024. See also Jesse Yeung and Yoonjung Seo, “She Fled North Korea but Was Sold to a Man in China. Her Second Escape Came Nearly 20 Years Later,” CNN, March 8, 2024; Seo Hye Jun, “He Told Me That If I Ran Away He Would Report Me to the Chinese Police,” *Radio Free Asia*, August 4, 2023.

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⁶⁰Huizhong Wu, “China Crackdown on Cyber Scams in Southeast Asia Nets Thousands but Leaves Networks Intact,” *Associated Press*, October 23, 2023. For reports linking scamming to the influx of Chinese state-sponsored investment to Southeast Asia through the Belt and Road Initiative see, e.g., Lewis Sanders IV et al., “How Chinese Mafia Are Running a Scam Factory in Myanmar,” *Deutsche Welle*, January 30, 2024; China Labor Watch, “The Aftermath of the Belt and Road Initiative: Human Trafficking in Cambodia,” August 19, 2022; USIP Senior Study Group on Transnational Organized Crime in Southeast Asia, “Transnational Crime in Southeast Asia: A Growing Threat to Global Peace and Security,” *United States Institute of Peace*, May 13, 2024.

⁶¹Huizhong Wu, “China Crackdown on Cyber Scams in Southeast Asia Nets Thousands but Leaves Networks Intact,” *Associated Press*, October 23, 2023.

⁶²Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2023 Annual Report* (Washington: May 2024), 186–87; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2022 Annual Report* (Washington: November 2022), 199–201.

⁶³“China Launches Nationwide Crackdown on Trafficking of Women, Children,” *Xinhua*, March 19, 2024; Yang Zekun, “Crackdown Targets Women, Child Trafficking,” *China Daily*, March 20, 2024. See also “Chinese Railway Police Rescue More Than 300 Abducted Women and Minors in 2023,” *Global Times*, reprinted in *People’s Daily*, January 4, 2024.

⁶⁴The PRC Criminal Law defines trafficking as “abducting, kidnapping, buying, trafficking in, fetching, sending, or transferring a woman or child, for the purpose of selling [the victim].” The illegal sale of children for adoption thus can be considered trafficking under Chinese law. In contrast, under the Palermo Protocol, illegal adoptions constitute trafficking only if the purpose is exploitation. 中华人民共和国刑法 [PRC Criminal Law], passed July 1, 1979, revised March 14, 1997, amended December 29, 2023, effective March 1, 2024, art. 240; Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted by U.N. General Assembly resolution 55/25 of November 15, 2000, entry into force December 25, 2003, art. 3(a). See also U.N. General Assembly, Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of a Convention against Transnational Organized Crime on the Work of Its First to Eleventh Sessions, Addendum, Interpretive Notes for the Official Records (*Travaux Préparatoires*) of the Negotiation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto, A/55/383/Add.1, November 3, 2000, para. 66.

⁶⁵For information on human trafficking in Hong Kong from previous reporting years see, e.g., Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2023 Annual Report* (Washington: May 2024), 187; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2021 Annual Report* (Washington: March 2022), 168.

⁶⁶Immigration Department, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, “Employment Contract for a Domestic Helper Recruited from Outside Hong Kong,” accessed September 30, 2024, item 3.

⁶⁷Immigration Department, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government, “從外國受聘來港家庭傭工簽證 / 延長逗留期限申請表” [Visa/Extension of stay application form for domestic helpers coming to Hong Kong from abroad], May 2023, sec. 6(vi).

⁶⁸Stop Trafficking of People, Branches of Hope, “A Pathway to Justice or a Road to Nowhere: Trafficked Migrants’ Experience of Seeking Justice in Hong Kong,” May 2023; Peter Yeung, “Tools More than Humans: HK Domestic Workers Fight for Rights,” *Al Jazeera*, May 1, 2013; U.N. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Concluding Observations on the Third Periodic Report of China, Including Hong Kong, China, and Macao, China, adopted by the Committee at its 30th Meeting (March 3, 2023), E/C.12/CHN/CO/3, March 22, 2023, art. 111. In March 2023, the U.N. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recommended that the Hong Kong government “amend the two-weeks rule and the live-in requirement” to enable migrant domestic workers to enjoy their full rights. See also U.N. Human Rights Committee, Concluding Observations on the Fourth Periodic Report of Hong Kong, China, adopted by the Committee at its 3912th Session (July 22, 2022), CCPR/C/CHN-HKG/CO/4, November 11, 2022, art. 31.

⁶⁹Connor Mycroft, “No One to Help: Sri Lankan Migrant Workers in Hong Kong Lack Support, Face Exploitation and Abuse, NGOs Say,” *South China Morning Post*, January 28, 2024; Candice Chau, “Excessive Agency Fees Costing Some Hong Kong Migrant Domestic Workers Over HK\$19,000, Union Says,” *Hong Kong Free Press*, July 19, 2023; Trevor Tang, “Domestic Workers Slam Lack of Action on Abuse, Exploitation,” *Standard*, July 17, 2023; International Labour Organization, “Hard to See, Harder to Count: Handbook on Forced Labour Surveys,” 2024, 8–18.

⁷⁰Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2023 Annual Report* (Washington: May 2024), 250, 310; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2022 Annual Report* (Washington: November 2022), 231; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2018 Annual Report* (Washington: October 2018), 249, 278.

⁷¹*Stopping the Crime of Organ Harvesting—What More Must Be Done?*, Hearing of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, 118th Cong. (2024) (testimony of Maya Mitalipova, Director of the Human Stem Cell Laboratory at the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research, Massachusetts Institute of Technology); *Stopping the Crime of Organ Harvesting—What More*

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Must Be Done?, *Hearing of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China*, 118th Cong. (2024) (testimony of Matthew Robertson, Doctoral candidate, Australian National University (Canberra) and co-author, “Execution by Organ Procurement: Breaching the Dead Donor Rule in China,” *American Journal of Transplantation*); Alex Willemyns, “Experts: China Is Sequencing Uyghur DNA for Organ Harvesting,” *Radio Free Asia*, March 21, 2024. Under the Palermo Protocol, the “abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability” to achieve consent in the removal of organs is a form of human trafficking. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, adopted by U.N. General Assembly resolution 55/25 of November 15, 2000, entry into force December 25, 2003, art. 3. See also Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2023 Annual Report* (Washington: May 2024), 188; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2022 Annual Report* (Washington: November 2022), 200; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2021 Annual Report* (Washington: March 2022), 165–66.

⁷²*Stopping the Crime of Organ Harvesting—What More Must Be Done?*, *Hearing of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China*, 118th Cong. (2024) (testimony of Matthew Robertson, Doctoral candidate, Australian National University (Canberra) and co-author, “Execution by Organ Procurement: Breaching the Dead Donor Rule in China,” *American Journal of Transplantation*).

⁷³*Stopping the Crime of Organ Harvesting—What More Must Be Done?*, *Hearing of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China*, 118th Cong. (2024) (testimony of Maya Mitalipova: Director of the Human Stem Cell Laboratory at the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research, Massachusetts Institute of Technology). See also Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2023 Annual Report* (Washington: May 2024), 289; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2018 Annual Report* (Washington: October 2018), 8, 108, 199, 230, 249, 278.