

## CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

### *Findings*

- The Chinese Communist Party continued to increase its presence in social organizations, the PRC's term for civil society groups, preventing them from operating independently.
- This year, the Party set up central and local branches of the Central Society Work Department, created in 2023, in order to more fully penetrate all aspects of society. Local society work departments held training sessions and launched a range of projects focused on Party-building within new and priority sectors.
- As in previous years, PRC authorities have taken steps to eliminate "illegal social organizations," a category that refers to, among others, organizations engaged in activities deemed undesirable or sensitive by the government. In February 2025, the PRC Ministry of Civil Affairs issued the revised *Measures Banning Illegal Social Organizations*.
- PRC citizens continued to engage in ad hoc collective expressions of discontent and advocacy, predominantly in response to perceived injustices at the local level. According to *China Dissent Monitor*, there were 937 dissent events between July and September 2024, constituting a "27 percent year-on-year increase" over the same period in 2023. Groups engaged in protest events this past year included property owners and investors.
- PRC authorities also worked to suppress collective gatherings composed predominantly of young people, which were not explicitly political but were likely perceived as a threat. In November 2024, authorities cracked down on mass night bicycle rides by university students from Zhengzhou municipality to Kaifeng municipality in Henan province, an apparently grassroots phenomenon that peaked at between 100,000 and 200,000 students.
- Also during the 2025 reporting period, the Commission observed new efforts to leverage Chinese citizen activism outside of China to effect domestic policy change at the local level. The 611Study.ICU, led by a Milan-based Chinese activist, focused on exposing exploitative conditions at primary and secondary schools in China.
- The Chinese Communist Party and government continued to suppress independent civil society organizations and movements by isolating civil society leaders and by arbitrarily detaining religious clergy and practitioners, rights advocates, and independent organizers of civic and political activities.
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) persons living in China continued to experience ongoing state repression.

## CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

### *Introduction*

During the Commission's 2025 reporting year, the civil society landscape in China continued to deteriorate, with the Chinese Communist Party and government constraining social organizations (*shehui zuzhi*, 社会组织, the PRC's term for nongovernmental entities<sup>1</sup>) from operating independently of Party control while renewing efforts to root out illegal social organizations that survived previous campaigns. Also this year, likely in response to concerns about social instability resulting from ongoing economic uncertainty,<sup>2</sup> PRC officials reportedly sought to fend off public dissatisfaction and consolidate Party control at the grassroots level by devoting greater attention to "society work" through the Central Society Work Department. Nevertheless, social movements continued to emerge, especially at the local level, developing adaptive strategies in the face of increasing repression, demonstrating that authorities have not succeeded in fully suppressing independent association or expression. Indeed, Chinese citizens have explored new venues of association and advocacy, from university students organizing mass bike rides to foreign and domestically based Chinese citizens collaborating online to shape domestic policy responses. Even as existing or emerging independent civil society adapted to a changing environment, PRC authorities continued to repress human rights defenders, religious communities, and groups promoting labor rights, women's rights, and the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) persons.

### *Social Organizations and Social Control*

#### CENTRAL SOCIETY WORK DEPARTMENT

The Chinese Communist Party continued efforts to increase its presence in social organizations (SOs) and across community groups and organizations of all kinds.<sup>3</sup> To this end, the recently created Central Society Work Department (CSWD) set up departments in all province-level jurisdictions and continued to expand its presence downward in municipality- and county-level jurisdictions.<sup>4</sup>

The Party created the CSWD in 2023 in order to more fully penetrate all aspects of society and prevent social instability by assuming oversight of the petitioning (*xinfang*, 信访) system and taking charge of Party-building in all non-state entities, including SOs, among other functions.<sup>5</sup> In November 2024, the Party-run media outlet *People's Daily* reported on the Central Society Work Conference held early that month, featuring a read-out of "important instructions" from General Secretary Xi Jinping and a speech by Secretary of the Central Secretariat Cai Qi.<sup>6</sup> Speakers at the conference emphasized that the work of the CSWD was "related to the Party's long-term governance . . . [and] related to societal harmony and stability"; and that the CSWD must "strengthen Party-building work in new economic organizations, new social organizations, and new employment groups."<sup>7</sup>

During the Commission's 2025 reporting year, local society work departments (SWDs) held training sessions and launched a range

of projects focused on Party-building within new sectors like the gig economy, and oversight and management in priority sectors like social work, elder care, and rural revitalization. Representative examples include the following:

- In July 2024, Xihua University in Chengdu municipality, Sichuan province, held a cooperative exchange in Suining municipality, Sichuan, focusing on the development of charitable social work.<sup>8</sup> The event was cohosted with the Suining Municipal Organization Department, Suining Municipal SWD, Suining Bureau of Civil Affairs, and Chongqing municipality's Tongnan District SWD.<sup>9</sup> At the event, Suining Municipal Standing Committee member and Political and Legal Affairs Committee secretary Lei Gang thanked Xihua University for its support of Suining authorities' charitable social initiatives, and touted Suining's continuing prioritization of the charitable social work sector, including by issuing an opinion promoting systems for integrated, community-based social service provision.<sup>10</sup> Lei said that, as part of the next step in these efforts, Suining would further improve "Party-building-led grassroots governance" in the charitable sector.<sup>11</sup>
- In October 2024, the Qinghai Provincial SWD, together with the Qinghai Provincial Organization Department and the Qinghai Administration for Market Regulation, published *Several Measures for Strengthening Party Building Work with Provincial Online Ordering and Delivery Personnel*.<sup>12</sup> According to official reporting, the measures seek to "strengthen the Party's . . . influence in emerging fields," and specify the need for Party-building among gig workers.<sup>13</sup> [For more information on Party efforts at ideological control among food delivery workers, see Chapter 10—Worker Rights.]
- In October 2024, the Shandong Provincial SWD, together with two local-level SWDs and several other entities, held an opening ceremony in Jining municipality, Shandong province, for a service day with the theme, "Neighborhood Watch—Elderly Assistance Services Entering the Community."<sup>14</sup> The Shandong Provincial SWD reported that, in 2024 alone, over 9,200 elderly service volunteer activities had been organized with over 115,000 volunteers participating.<sup>15</sup> In an October notice promoting a similar "Neighborhood Watch" event in Linyi municipality, the Linyi Municipal SWD wrote that, "Party organizations at every level must take the lead in developing elderly assistance volunteer services."<sup>16</sup>
- In March, 2025, the Guangdong Provincial SWD launched the "Green, Beautiful, and Flourishing Countryside" special initiative.<sup>17</sup> The initiative sought to organize "village committee cadres, society workers, volunteers, as well as Party members from Party groups in new economic organizations, new social organizations, and new employment groups" for work on rural "greening" and beautification,<sup>18</sup> which have been a priority under PRC leader Xi Jinping's rural revitalization campaign.<sup>19</sup>

### ILLEGAL SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

As in previous years, PRC authorities took steps to eliminate "illegal social organizations" (ISOs), a category encompassing organiza-

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tions that have failed to register, those operating fraudulently, and those engaged in activities deemed undesirable or sensitive by the government.<sup>20</sup> In February 2025, the PRC Ministry of Civil Affairs (MCA) issued the *Measures for Banning Illegal Social Organizations* (hereafter “*Measures*”), replacing interim regulations from the year 2000 with the same purpose.<sup>21</sup> While largely devoted to preventing fraudulent groups and activities,<sup>22</sup> the *Measures* also enlist the public in monitoring, encouraging citizens to report suspected illegal groups.<sup>23</sup> One U.S.-based Protestant Christian NGO observed that the *Measures* also “expand the scope of responsible authorities,” from the previous version, assigning responsibility for bans to county-level authorities, while providing for involvement by provincial and national authorities in cases where an ISO has operated in several localities.<sup>24</sup>

An MCA policy directive on the *Measures* outlined “Six Do Nots” directed at anyone who might interact with ISOs.<sup>25</sup> The directive closely mirrored the approach of the 2021 circular *Eliminate the Breeding Grounds for Illegal Social Organizations*, which targeted the infrastructure that allowed illegal social organizations to operate, including financial institutions, vendors, registered social organizations that cooperated with unregistered groups, media organizations, and others.<sup>26</sup> The “Six Do Nots” instruct influential individuals, including Party members, cadres, and celebrities not to “lend [their] support” to ISOs; news media not to devote coverage to ISOs; enterprises and institutions not to cooperate with ISOs; internet companies not to provide a platform for ISOs; financial institutions not to provide services to ISOs, and the public not to participate in the activities of or provide any support for ISOs.<sup>27</sup>

### *Freedom of Association and Social Movements*

#### PROTEST MOVEMENTS

PRC citizens continued to engage in ad hoc collective expressions of discontent and advocacy, predominantly in response to perceived injustices at the local level.<sup>28</sup> Freedom House’s *China Dissent Monitor (CDM)*, which tracks the incidence and types of dissent in China, logged 937 dissent events between July and September 2024, constituting a “27 percent year-on-year increase” over the same period in 2023.<sup>29</sup> While the majority of protest events were worker-led, protests led by property owners made up the second largest group, amounting to 28 percent of logged protest events.<sup>30</sup> [For more information on worker-led protests, see Chapter 10—Worker Rights.] *CDM* reported that homeowners typically found little available recourse when subjected to statutory restrictions and exploitative practices by property managers and were thus more likely to engage in public protest.<sup>31</sup> In cases where they did engage in public protest, authorities and “people associated with the [property management] company” responded by surveilling, detaining, and in at least 16 cases committing acts of violence against protesters.<sup>32</sup>

Also during the Commission’s reporting year, demonstrators protested a revision to the *PRC Company Law* and the Supreme People’s Court’s interpretation of it, which were believed to unfairly affect transferors of stocks in transactions completed before the re-

vision.<sup>33</sup> During November and December 2024, social media users documented 17 protests concerning the *Company Law* revisions in 11 cities throughout China,<sup>34</sup> including major municipalities such as Chengdu in Sichuan province,<sup>35</sup> Guangzhou in Guangdong province,<sup>36</sup> and Chongqing.<sup>37</sup> In December 2024, Reuters reported that social media accounts posted videos of protesters outside and within multiple provincial high people's courts demanding to "see the chief."<sup>38</sup> Following the protests, the National People's Conference Standing Committee Legislative Affairs Commission, through its recording and review process, issued a report concluding that the law should not be applied retroactively.<sup>39</sup> Two days after the report, the Supreme People's Court reversed its interpretation.<sup>40</sup>

### COLLECTIVE RECREATION SUPPRESSED

PRC authorities also worked to suppress collective gatherings, composed predominantly of young people, that were not explicitly political but were likely perceived as a particular threat following the White Paper protests of late 2022, in which Chinese citizens gathered across multiple cities and universities, prompted by grievances against harsh zero-COVID policy measures.<sup>41</sup> In November 2024, authorities cracked down on mass nighttime bicycle rides by university students from Zhengzhou municipality to Kaifeng municipality in Henan province, an apparently grassroots phenomenon that began with four students in June 2024 and peaked in November with between 100,000 and 200,000 students, according to one estimate.<sup>42</sup> While the students' night rides were planned around eating a well-known Kaifeng dumpling dish and visiting tourist sites, some participants also carried banners reading "freedom" and were filmed singing the national anthem,<sup>43</sup> a practice that has been associated with previous protest movements in China.<sup>44</sup> As the rides received national attention, students began to travel to join the rides in Zhengzhou and to replicate them in other cities, using social media and online tools to organize the events.<sup>45</sup> One report said that a group of veterans also traveled to Zhengzhou to join the rides.<sup>46</sup> According to *Voice of America*, China-based netizens discussing the communal rides online described them as "a new surge of mass student gatherings," and "even rising to a spontaneous exploration of 'freedom of association.'" <sup>47</sup> On November 9, 2024, authorities across multiple locations in the PRC moved to end the rides, either by restricting students to their campuses or blocking streets to bicycle traffic, among other measures.<sup>48</sup> [For more information on the "Henan night rides" discussed above and official suppression of recreational gatherings predominantly organized by young adults, see Chapter 1—Freedom of Expression.]

**611Study.ICU: A Diaspora-Led Initiative**

Also during the 2025 reporting period, the Commission observed an effort to leverage diaspora-led activism to effect domestic policy change at the local level. This past year, the Milan-based PRC activist Li Ying (pseudonym Teacher Li), known for his X account that receives and shares content considered sensitive by Chinese authorities,<sup>49</sup> launched the 611Study.ICU project.<sup>50</sup> The initiative focused on exposing exploitative and harmful practices at many Chinese primary and secondary schools, where students are made to spend long hours on campus through early start times, late study hours, and in some cases requiring students to return early from school vacation.<sup>51</sup> According to the New York-based NGO Human Rights in China, schools are motivated in part by “financial incentives . . . to keep students on campus as long as possible,” referring to the revenue generated by fees, purchases, and vendor contracts associated with students’ presence on campus.<sup>52</sup> The initiative, which posted data suggesting a correlation between requiring extended hours on campus and cases of student suicides, reportedly led to local government action, including in Zhongshan municipality, Guangdong province, where authorities banned schools from requiring that students return to school early.<sup>53</sup>

*Suppression of Civil Society*

The Chinese Communist Party and government continued to suppress independent civil society organizations and movements by isolating civil society leaders and by arbitrarily detaining religious clergy and practitioners, rights advocates, and independent organizers of civic and political activities.<sup>54</sup> The Commission observed PRC authorities targeting individuals, groups, and activities it deemed threatening, including the following:

- **Founder of Beijing-based school for disabled children Zhu Bin.** In September 2024, public security officials in Haidian district, Beijing municipality, took into custody **Zhu Bin**, founder of the Deep Breath Learning Center for special needs children, criminally detaining him on suspicion of “picking quarrels and provoking trouble.”<sup>55</sup> According to one U.S.-based NGO that advocates on behalf of Chinese Christians, authorities detained Zhu in connection with his work for “justice and mercy,”<sup>56</sup> likely referring to his longtime advocacy on behalf of individuals and issues deemed politically threatening, including COVID-19 patients, victims of human trafficking, and citizen journalist Zhang Zhan, among others.<sup>57</sup> He was later released on bail.<sup>58</sup>
- **Protestant “house church” preacher Ma Yan.** In August 2024, public security officials in Jinfeng district, Yinchuan municipality, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, raided a gathering of Christians and took into custody preacher **Ma Yan**, along with three other participants, administratively detaining them for “disturbing social order.”<sup>59</sup> Authorities then criminally detained Ma for “organizing an illegal gathering,” trying him in February 2025 and sentencing him to nine months in prison.<sup>60</sup>



• **Individuals associated with a non-CCP political party.**

According to the NGO Rights Defense Network, in December 2024, the Sichuan High People's Court affirmed the sentencing of six individuals who had been convicted of "subversion of state power" earlier the same year, namely **Tang Gaofeng, Wang Wei, Wang Yifei, Zhou Dan, Liu Zhengang, and Dai Lu.**<sup>61</sup>

The six were convicted for their participation in the China Democratic Victory Party, which Tang helped to found in 2008.<sup>62</sup>

• **Dinner gathering participants.** In July 2024, authorities in Yubei district, Chongqing municipality, took into custody several of the participants in a May 2024 dinner gathering of rights defenders<sup>63</sup> celebrating the inauguration of Taiwanese president William Lai Ching-te, including rights defender **Chen Mingyu.**<sup>64</sup> Yubei police criminally detained Chen on suspicion of "picking quarrels and provoking trouble."<sup>65</sup> The Yubei District People's Court convicted her on the same charge in March 2025, sentencing her to two years and six months in prison.<sup>66</sup>

Status of LGBTQ Persons
Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) persons living in China continued to experience ongoing state repression. A May 2024 report on social attitudes toward LGBTQ people in the PRC by the Williams Institute, a research center focused on law and policy related to sexual orientation and gender identity, <sup>67</sup> found that, while the past decade had been characterized by setbacks in government policy for the LGBTQ community in China, the majority of survey respondents supported "LGBTQ equal rights and protections on a societal and institutional level," and about half of them believed that same-sex marriage should be accepted. <sup>68</sup> While the PRC Constitution states that all citizens are equal before the law, it does not recognize LGBTQ persons as a distinct identity or class. <sup>69</sup> Also, PRC law does not enumerate protections against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, nor does it allow persons of the same sex to marry. <sup>70</sup>

Status of LGBTQ Persons—Continued

*PRC Response to Universal Periodic Review*

In May 2024, the PRC responded to non-binding recommendations<sup>71</sup> made at its January 2024 U.N. Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Chinese government’s human rights record.<sup>72</sup> In one analysis, a group of human rights NGOs found that China had “accepted and implemented” one recommendation relating to the status of LGBTQ persons, noted seven, and rejected three outright.<sup>73</sup> The PRC rejected Iceland’s recommendation that it remove restrictions on freedom of expression pertaining to sexual orientation and gender identity and allow LGBTQ-focused civil society organizations to operate legally, claiming that it was “based on false information.”<sup>74</sup> China dismissed a similar recommendation from Sweden that it “take urgent steps” to protect the free expression of those belonging to “LGBTQ communities,” claiming that, as it always protects citizens’ rights, there was no need for urgency.<sup>75</sup> Likewise, PRC representatives rejected the United States’ recommendation that it end “repressive measures against . . . LGBTQI+ persons,” again asserting it was “based on false information.”<sup>76</sup> In a shared statement, the New York-based NGO Human Rights in China, along with three Chinese advocacy groups focused on LGBTQ issues, described significant PRC violations of the rights of LGBTQ persons and concluded that China’s rejection of recommendations intended to protect LGBTQ persons “reflects China’s false commitment to human rights and deliberate violation of these rights.”<sup>77</sup> [For more on the PRC’s response to the UPR, see Chapter 17—Human Rights Violations in the U.S. and Globally.]

*Surveillance and Harassment*

This past year, PRC authorities reportedly surveilled and harassed LGBTQ rights activists and groups. In October 2024, an international LGBTQ rights NGO published a report based on interviews with 16 Chinese LGBTQ activists who had been “actively involved in Chinese LGBTQ movements during the past five years,” all of whom reported monitoring, surveillance, and even threats.<sup>78</sup> In one instance, an interviewee recounted that authorities had “relentlessly contacted” her parents, informing them of the “problematic and dangerous nature of the activities [she was] involved in,” connecting LGBTQ advocacy with endangering national security.<sup>79</sup>



**Status of LGBTQ Persons—Continued**

*Other Developments*

Efforts by members of the LGBTQ community to pursue legal redress for perceived harms based on sexual orientation and gender identity yielded mixed results. In one prominent case, a transgender woman won a settlement from Qinhuangdao No. 5 Hospital in Qinhuangdao municipality, Hebei province, where she was forcibly held and subjected to conversion therapy, including electroshock treatment,<sup>80</sup> though her gender identity may not have been addressed in the settlement.<sup>81</sup> In another case, the Fengtai District People's Court in Beijing municipality awarded the former spouse in a U.S.-registered lesbian marriage visitation rights to the daughter she carried, but not to the son that her former spouse carried (the former spouse's eggs were used in both cases), in what one reporter claimed was the "first time that a court in China has recognized that a child can have two legal mothers."<sup>82</sup> Also in 2024, the Hong Kong Court of Final Appeal ruled in a review of three cases that the government could not exclude same-sex couples from rental or home ownership programs and that same-sex spouses have the same inheritance rights as opposite-sex spouses.<sup>83</sup>

The Chinese government continued to suppress LGBTQ representation and expression in entertainment.<sup>84</sup> In October 2024, the Municipal Bureau of Culture, Radio, Television, and Tourism in Guangzhou municipality, Guangdong province, canceled a performance by transgender dancer and television personality Jin Xing, possibly in connection with her displaying a rainbow flag during a show earlier in the year.<sup>85</sup> After she protested the cancellation on social media, at least three other localities also canceled her scheduled performances without explanation.<sup>86</sup>

## Notes to Chapter 2—Civil Society and Social Movements

<sup>1</sup>International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, “Nonprofit Law in China,” *Council on Foundations*, updated January 2024, accessed June 27, 2025, 2–3.

<sup>2</sup>Joe Leahy, Kai Waluszewski, and Sun Yu, “Can Xi Keep a Lid on China’s Mounting Social Strains?” *Financial Times*, July 14, 2024; “China Suffers Eruptions from Its Simmering Discontents,” *Economist*, November 28, 2024.

<sup>3</sup>For more information on efforts to increase control over social organizations in previous reporting years, see, e.g., Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “Annual Report 2024,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, December 2024, 66; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “Annual Report 2023,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, May 2024, 72–73; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “Annual Report 2022,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, November 2022, 79–81.

<sup>4</sup>Weinan Wang and Qi Congpeng, “All Change in China’s Voluntary Service System? Policy Implications of the Latest Institutional Reform,” *Chinese Law and Government*, vol. 52, nos. 1–3, August 9, 2024, 11.

<sup>5</sup>Jane Cai, “China Seeks to Tighten Grip with New Social Work Department,” *South China Morning Post*, March 17, 2023; William Zheng, “China Names Wu Hangsheng to Head New Social Work Department Tasked with Handling Public Grievances,” *South China Morning Post*, July 8, 2023.

<sup>6</sup>“习近平对社会工作作出重要指示强调坚定不移走中国特色社会主义社会治理之路 推动新时代社会工作高质量发展蔡奇出席中央社会工作会议并讲话” [Xi Jinping issued important instructions regarding society work emphasizing unwaveringly walking the road of social governance with Chinese characteristics and promote the high-quality development of society work in the new era. Cai Qi attended the Central Society Work Conference and gave a speech], *People’s Daily*, November 7, 2024.

<sup>7</sup>“习近平对社会工作作出重要指示强调坚定不移走中国特色社会主义社会治理之路 推动新时代社会工作高质量发展蔡奇出席中央社会工作会议并讲话” [Xi Jinping issued important instructions regarding society work emphasizing unwaveringly walking the road of social governance with Chinese characteristics and promote the high-quality development of society work in the new era. Cai Qi attended the Central Society Work Conference and gave a speech], *People’s Daily*, November 7, 2024; “深入学习贯彻习近平总书记关于社会工作的重要论述” [Deeply study and carry out General Secretary Xi Jinping’s important expositions on society work], *People’s Daily*, reprinted in *Chinese Communist Party News*, November 7, 2024.

<sup>8</sup>“慈善社工融合发展校地合作主题交流活动圆满举行” [A cooperative exchange was successfully held between the school and local [governments] focused on the theme of the integration and development of charity and social work], *Xihua University*, July 22, 2024.

<sup>9</sup>“慈善社工融合发展校地合作主题交流活动圆满举行” [A cooperative exchange was successfully held between the school and local [governments] focused on the theme of the integration and development of charity and social work], *Xihua University*, July 22, 2024.

<sup>10</sup>“慈善社工融合发展校地合作主题交流活动圆满举行” [A cooperative exchange was successfully held between the school and local [governments] focused on the theme of the integration and development of charity and social work], *Xihua University*, July 22, 2024.

<sup>11</sup>“慈善社工融合发展校地合作主题交流活动圆满举行” [A cooperative exchange was successfully held between the school and local [governments] focused on the theme of the integration and development of charity and social work], *Xihua University*, July 22, 2024.

<sup>12</sup>“青海16项措施加强网约配送员群体党建工作” [Qinghai takes 16 measures to strengthen Party-building work among the online delivery worker community], *Qinghai Society Work*, reprinted in *Central Society Work Department*, October 11, 2024.

<sup>13</sup>“青海16项措施加强网约配送员群体党建工作” [Qinghai takes 16 measures to strengthen Party-building work among the online delivery worker community], *Qinghai Society Work*, reprinted in *Central Society Work Department*, October 11, 2024.

<sup>14</sup>“山东省‘邻里守望·助老服务进社区’主题志愿服务活动启动” [Shandong province “Neighborhood Watch—Elderly Assistance Services Entering the Community”-themed volunteer service activity launches], *Shandong Society Work*, reprinted in *Central Society Work Department*, October 11, 2024.

<sup>15</sup>“山东省‘邻里守望·助老服务进社区’主题志愿服务活动启动” [Shandong province “Neighborhood Watch—Elderly Assistance Services Entering the Community”-themed volunteer service activity launches], *Shandong Society Work*, reprinted in *Central Society Work Department*, October 11, 2024.

<sup>16</sup>Linyi Municipal Society Work Department and Linyi Municipal Volunteer Services Federation, “迎接重阳节，临沂发出倡议！” [Welcome the Double Ninth festival—Linyi announces an initiative!], *Linyi App*, reprinted in *Jinri Toutiao*, October 10, 2024.

<sup>17</sup>“广东省委社会工作部部署开展‘绿美兴村’专项行动” [Guangdong Provincial Party Committee Society Work Department Deploys the “Green, Beautiful, and Flourishing Countryside” special operation], *Guangdong Society Work Publishing*, reprinted in *Central Society Work Department*, March 5, 2025.

<sup>18</sup>“广东省委社会工作部部署开展‘绿美兴村’专项行动” [Guangdong Provincial Party Committee Society Work Department Deploys the “Green, Beautiful, and Flourishing Countryside” special initiative], *Guangdong Society Work Publishing*, reprinted in *Central Society Work Department*, March 5, 2025.

<sup>19</sup>Chinese Communist Party Central Committee and State Council, “中共中央 国务院印发‘乡村全面振兴规划（2024—2027年）’” [Chinese Communist Party Central Committee and State Council publish “Comprehensive Rural Revitalization Plan (2024–2027)”, *Xinhua*, January 22, 2025, art. 23. The most recent rural revitalization plan emphasizes improving the quality of life for rural residents, including through “greening” and beautification efforts.

<sup>20</sup> Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “Annual Report 2021,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, March 2022, 231–32; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “Annual Report 2023,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, May 2024, 73; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “Annual Report 2024,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, December 2024, 66–67.

<sup>21</sup> Ministry of Civil Affairs, “取缔非法社会组织办法” [Measures for Banning Illegal Social Organizations], passed January 16, 2025, effective May 1, 2025; Li Yumei, “民政部出台办法 明确对这三类非法社会组织‘露头就打’” [Ministry of Civil Affairs issued measures to clearly expose and attack these three kinds of illegal social organizations], *CCTV News*, February 20, 2025.

<sup>22</sup> Li Yumei, “民政部出台办法 明确对这三类非法社会组织‘露头就打’” [Ministry of Civil Affairs issued measures to clearly expose and attack these three kinds of illegal social organizations], *CCTV News*, February 20, 2025.

<sup>23</sup> Ministry of Civil Affairs, “取缔非法社会组织办法” [Measures for Banning Illegal Social Organizations], passed January 16, 2025, effective May 1, 2025; Li Yumei, “民政部出台办法 明确对这三类非法社会组织‘露头就打’” [Ministry of Civil Affairs issued measures to clearly expose and attack these three kinds of illegal social organizations], *CCTV News*, February 20, 2025.

<sup>24</sup> “China’s Unregistered Churches Face New Constraints as CCP Authorities Introduce New Measures to Ban Illegal Social Organizations,” *ChinaAid Association*, March 13, 2025; Ministry of Civil Affairs, “取缔非法社会组织办法” [Measures for Banning Illegal Social Organizations], passed January 16, 2025, effective May 1, 2025; Li Yumei, “民政部出台办法 明确对这三类非法社会组织‘露头就打’” [Ministry of Civil Affairs issued measures to clearly expose and attack these three kinds of illegal social organizations], *CCTV News*, February 20, 2025.

<sup>25</sup> “民政部发布‘取缔非法社会组织办法’” [The Ministry of Civil Affairs issued “Measures for Banning Illegal Social Organizations”], *Guangdong Provincial Department of Civil Affairs*, February 20, 2025; Li Yumei, “民政部出台办法 明确对这三类非法社会组织‘露头就打’” [Ministry of Civil Affairs issued measures to clearly expose and attack these three kinds of illegal social organizations], *CCTV News*, February 20, 2025.

<sup>26</sup> Ministry of Civil Affairs, Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, Central Organization Department, et al., “关于铲除非法社会组织滋生土壤 净化社会组织生态空间的通知” [Circular on Eliminating the Breeding Grounds for Illegal Social Organizations and Cleansing the Ecological Space for Social Organizations], March 20, 2021. See also Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “Annual Report 2021,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, March 2022, 231–32; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “Annual Report 2023,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, May 2024, 73; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “Annual Report 2024,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, December 2024, 66–67.

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<sup>28</sup> Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “Annual Report 2024,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, December 2024, 68; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “Annual Report 2023,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, May 2023, 75.

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<sup>30</sup> Freedom House, “China Dissent Monitor 2023,” Issue 9 (July–September 2024), November 21, 2024.

<sup>31</sup> Freedom House, “China Dissent Monitor 2023,” Issue 9 (July–September 2024), November 21, 2024.

<sup>32</sup> Freedom House, “China Dissent Monitor 2023,” Issue 9 (July–September 2024), November 21, 2024.

<sup>33</sup> “中华人民共和国公司法” [PRC Company Law], passed December 29, 1993, amended December 29, 2023, effective July 1, 2024; Supreme People’s Court, “最高人民法院关于适用‘中华人民共和国公司法’时间效力的若干规定” [Several provisions on the temporal effect of the Company Law], June 29, 2024; James Pomfret and Engen Tham, “After Protests, China Reverses Course on Law That Hurt Shareholders,” *Reuters*, December 24, 2024.

<sup>34</sup> James Pomfret and Engen Tham, “After Protests, China Reverses Course on Law That Hurt Shareholders,” *Reuters*, December 24, 2024.

<sup>35</sup> 昨天 (@YesterdayBigcat), “‘四川成都：数百‘历史股东’在高原抗议新‘公司法’（11月20日）由于担心被‘连坐’而承担公司债务，四川省的数百名‘历史股东’周三前往位于成都金牛区的四川省高院集会，抗议新‘公司法’88条...” [“Chengdu, Sichuan: hundreds of ‘historical shareholders’ protest against the new Company Law at the High People’s Court (November 20)”: Worried that they will be held responsible for company debts because of “guilt by association,” hundreds of Sichuan province “historical shareholders” rallied at the Jinniu County, Chengdu municipality, Sichuan province High People’s Court on Wednesday to protest Article 88 of the new “Company Law”...], X, November 23, 2024.

<sup>36</sup> 昨天 (@YesterdayBigcat), “‘中国集体抗争行动汇总第22期（2024年11月）’ 在本期汇总中，我们共收录了30起集体抗争事件，涵盖了工人、业主、农民、摊贩等多个群体...” [“Summary of Collective Resistance Actions in China, Issue 22 (November 2024)”: In the current data, we have included a total of 30 resistance events, comprised of workers, homeowners, farmers, and vendors...], X, December 10, 2024.

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<sup>40</sup>Supreme People's Court, “关于‘中华人民共和国公司法’第八十八条第一款不溯及适用的批复” [Instruction in reply regarding the non-retroactive application of Article 88(1) of the “PRC Company Law”], December 24, 2024.

<sup>41</sup>For the Commission's reporting on the White Paper protests, see Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “Annual Report 2023,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, May 2023, 3–4, 74–75, 135–36, 219–20, 274.

<sup>42</sup>Helen Davidson, “100,000 Chinese Students Join 50km Night-Time Bike Ride in Search of Good Soup Dumplings,” *Guardian*, November 10, 2024; Qian Lang, “郑州大学生‘夜奔’开封 掀全国效仿潮 当局封校严控” [Zhengzhou University students’ “night ride” to Kaifeng has propelled a nationwide tidal wave of imitations; authorities are sealing the school to tighten control], *Radio Free Asia*, November 11, 2024.

<sup>43</sup>Isabelle Qian and Yan Zhuang, “Chinese Students Went on Mass Night Bike Rides. Officials Shut Them Down,” *New York Times*, November 11, 2024; “郑州大学生夜骑单车赴开封传20万人参与 中共下禁令、多校不准外出” [200,000 Zhengzhou University students reportedly participated in night bicycle rides to Kaifeng; the CCP issued a ban, and many schools prohibited them from leaving], *CNA*, November 12, 2024; “Bike Trek by Thousands of Chinese Students Sparks Tough Response,” *Voice of America*, November 13, 2024.

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<sup>47</sup>Song Ren, “数万大学生‘夜骑开封’触动当局敏感神经，警方封路学校闭门不让学生外出” [Tens of thousands of university students’ “Kaifeng night rides” rattled authorities’ sensitive nerves, police close down roads and schools close gates, preventing students from leaving], *Voice of America*, November 11, 2024.

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<sup>49</sup>Amy Hawkins, “Chinese Activist Teacher Li’s Memecon Launch Divides Dissident Community,” *Guardian*, January 17, 2025; 李老师不是你老师 (@whyoutouzehe), X, accessed August 8, 2025; For more information on Li Ying (“Teacher Li”), see Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “Annual Report 2024,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, December 2024, 54.

<sup>50</sup>611Study.ICU (website), accessed April 11, 2025; “Overseas Activism Forces China to Tackle Student Overwork Crisis,” *Human Rights in China*, February 18, 2025. The project’s name refers to the fact that schools in China often expect students to study from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m.—an experience commonly referred to as “611.” The “ICU” domain extension refers to the full phrase from which “611” is taken: “study from 6 AM to 11 PM, and end up in ICU [intensive care unit].”

<sup>51</sup>611Study.ICU (website), accessed April 11, 2025; “Overseas Activism Forces China to Tackle Student Overwork Crisis,” *Human Rights in China*, February 18, 2025.

<sup>52</sup>“Overseas Activism Forces China to Tackle Student Overwork Crisis,” *Human Rights in China*, February 18, 2025.

<sup>53</sup>611Study.ICU (website), accessed April 11, 2025; “Overseas Activism Forces China to Tackle Student Overwork Crisis,” *Human Rights in China*, February 18, 2025.

<sup>54</sup>Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “Annual Report 2024,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, December 2024, 69.

<sup>55</sup>“遭刑事拘留的北京市特殊儿童学校‘深呼吸学习中心’创办人、基督徒朱斌日前取保获释” [Zhu Bin, a Christian and founder of the Beijing school for children with special needs, “Deep Breath Learning Center,” who had been criminally detained, was recently released on bail], *Rights Defense Network*, October 30, 2024; Ning Meng, “中国长期从事慈善活动、为公义发声的基督徒朱斌被控‘寻衅滋事’刑拘” [Christian Zhu Bin, who has long engaged in charitable activities and spoken up for righteousness, was accused of “picking quarrels and provoking trouble” and criminally detained], *ChinaAid Association*, October 4, 2024; “CECC Record Number: 2025-00106, Zhu Bin,” *CECC Political Prisoner Database*, accessed August 13, 2025.

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<sup>59</sup> Ning Meng, “宁夏银川家庭教会传道人马彦被控‘组织非法聚集罪’获刑9个月” [Ningxia Yinchuan house church preacher Ma Yan accused of “organizing an illegal gathering” and sentenced to nine months], *ChinaAid Association*, March 25, 2025; “CECC Record Number: 2024-00171, Ma Yan,” *CECC Political Prisoner Database*, accessed August 13, 2025.

<sup>60</sup> Ning Meng, “宁夏银川家庭教会传道人马彦被控‘组织非法聚集罪’获刑9个月” [Ningxia Yinchuan house church preacher Ma Yan accused of “organizing an illegal gathering” and sentenced to nine months], *ChinaAid Association*, March 25, 2025.

<sup>61</sup> “Prisoner Updates 2025 #2,” *Dui Hua Foundation*, February 13, 2025, accessed April 11, 2025; “因组建‘中国民主胜利党’而被以‘颠覆国家政权罪’判刑的唐高峰（12年）、王威（8年）、王一飞（7年6个月）、周丹（6年）、刘振刚（5年6个月）、代露（3年）等6位人士的情况通报” [Situation update on the six people sentenced for the crime of “subversion of state power” for organizing the “China Democratic Victory Party”: Tang Gaofeng (12 years), Wang Wei (8 years), Wang Yifei (7 years, 6 months), Zhou Dan (6 years), Liu Zhengang (5 years, 6 months), and Dai Lu (3 years)], *Rights Defense Network*, February 1, 2025; “CECC Record Number: 2025-00009, Tang Gaofeng,” *CECC Political Prisoner Database*, accessed August 13, 2025; “CECC Record Number: 2025-00010, Wang Wei,” *CECC Political Prisoner Database*, accessed August 13, 2025; “CECC Record Number: 2025-00011, Wang Yifei,” *CECC Political Prisoner Database*, accessed August 13, 2025; “CECC Record Number: 2025-00012, Zhou Dan,” *CECC Political Prisoner Database*, accessed August 13, 2025; “CECC Record Number: 2025-00013, Liu Zhengang,” *CECC Political Prisoner Database*, accessed August 13, 2025; “CECC Record Number: 2025-00014, Dai Lu,” *CECC Political Prisoner Database*, accessed August 13, 2025.

<sup>62</sup> “Prisoner Updates 2025 #2,” *Dui Hua Foundation*, February 13, 2025, accessed April 11, 2025. “因组建‘中国民主胜利党’而被以‘颠覆国家政权罪’判刑的唐高峰（12年）、王威（8年）、王一飞（7年6个月）、周丹（6年）、刘振刚（5年6个月）、代露（3年）等6位人士的情况通报” [Situation update on the six people sentenced for the crime of “subversion of state power” for organizing the “China Democratic Victory Party”: Tang Gaofeng (12 years), Wang Wei (8 years), Wang Yifei (7 years, 6 months), Zhou Dan (6 years), Liu Zhengang (5 years, 6 months), and Dai Lu (3 years)], *Rights Defense Network*, February 1, 2025.

<sup>63</sup> In recent years, rights defenders and advocates of civic participation have organized and participated in informal dinner gatherings to discuss civil society. PRC authorities have subsequently moved to suppress such gatherings, detaining and sentencing China Citizens Movement leaders Xu Zhiyong and Ding Jiayi and Guangdong civil society activists Wang Jianbing and Huang Xueqin (Sophia), all of whom had been involved with organizing or had participated in these events. For more on these four individuals and their cases, see “CECC Record Number: 2013-00307, Ding Jiayi,” *CECC Political Prisoner Database*, accessed August 13, 2025; “CECC Record Number: 2005-00199, Xu Zhiyong,” *CECC Political Prisoner Database*, accessed August 13, 2025; “CECC Record Number: 2021-00517, Wang Jianbing,” *CECC Political Prisoner Database*, accessed August 13, 2025; “CECC Record Number: 2019-00454, Huang Xueqin,” *CECC Political Prisoner Database*, accessed August 13, 2025. For more on the use of dinner gatherings to discuss independent civil society and evade authorities, see, e.g., Kexin Zhao, “On the Unbalanced Coverage of the XueBing Case,” *Made in China Journal*, July 23, 2024.

<sup>64</sup> “获刑2年6个月的重庆维权公民陈明玉的案情及简历” [The case and background of Chongqing rights defender, who was sentenced to two years and six months in prison], *Rights Defense Network*, April 3, 2025; “因参加庆祝赖清德总统就职聚餐活动 重庆维权人士陈明玉获刑2年6个月” [Chongqing rights defender Chen Mingyu was sentenced to two years and six months in prison for participating in dinner party activities to celebrate President Lai Ching-te’s inauguration], *Rights Defense Network*, April 1, 2025; “CECC Record Number: 2025-00105, Chen Mingyu,” *CECC Political Prisoner Database*, accessed August 13, 2025.

<sup>65</sup> “获刑2年6个月的重庆维权公民陈明玉的案情及简历” [The case and background of Chongqing rights defender Chen Mingyu, who was sentenced to two years and six months in prison], *Rights Defense Network*, April 3, 2025.

<sup>66</sup> “获刑2年6个月的重庆维权公民陈明玉的案情及简历” [The case and background of Chongqing rights defender Chen Mingyu, who was sentenced to two years and six months in prison], *Rights Defense Network*, April 3, 2025; “因参加庆祝赖清德总统就职聚餐活动 重庆维权人士陈明玉获刑2年6个月” [Chongqing rights defender Chen Mingyu was sentenced to two years and six months in prison for participating in dinner party activities to celebrate President Lai Ching-te’s inauguration], *Rights Defense Network*, April 1, 2025.

<sup>67</sup> “About,” *Williams Institute, University of California Los Angeles School of Law*, accessed June 5, 2025.

<sup>68</sup> Ilan Meyer, Haoran Li, Lauren Bouton, Chenglin Hong, and John Pachankis, “Positive Attitudes toward LGBTQ People in Mainland China,” *Williams Institute, University of California Los Angeles School of Law*, May 2024.

<sup>69</sup> “中华人民共和国宪法” [PRC Constitution], passed December 4, 1982, amended March 11, 2018, art. 33; “China Review—5th Meeting, 73rd Session, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR),” *U.N. Web TV*, February 15, 2023, 1:06:17–1:06:40, 1:17:29–1:18:29; Nathan Wei, “China’s UN Statements about LGBTQ Issues Don’t Match the Government’s Policies at Home,” *China Project*, March 1, 2023.

<sup>70</sup> Jessie Lau, “It’s Difficult to Survive: China’s LGBTQ+ Advocates Face Jail and Forced Confession,” *Guardian*, January 15, 2024; Darius Longarino, “Precarious Progress: Advocacy for

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the Human Rights of LGBT People in China,” *Outright International*, January 12, 2021, 7, 23. Despite the lack of legal recognition, protection from discrimination, or recognition of same-sex marriage, Chinese representatives in international fora have articulated the Chinese position, see, e.g., “Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review—China,” *U.N. Human Rights Council*, A/HRC/56/6, March 11, 2024; “Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review—China—Addendum,” *U.N. Human Rights Council*, A/HRC/56/6/Add.1, May 31, 2024, 2, 4. In China’s state party response to its Universal Periodic Review, the PRC declined to acknowledge the need for specific protections for LGBTQ persons as a class, claiming to protect all citizens against discrimination. PRC representatives have stated this position more explicitly at several U.N. treaty body reviews, saying that China does not have a concept of LGBTQ persons, see, e.g., “China Review—5th Meeting, 73rd Session, Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR),” *U.N. Web TV*, February 15, 2023, 1:06:17–1:06:40, 1:17:29–1:18:29; “China Review—1978th Meeting, 85th Session, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),” *U.N. Web TV*, May 12, 2023, 2:07:32–2:08:00; For a detailed discussion of PRC representations at the United Nations of Chinese law pertaining to the rights of LGBTQ persons, see Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “2023 Annual Report,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, May 2024, 77. For previous discussion of Chinese law pertaining to the rights of LGBTQ persons, see Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “2024 Annual Report,” *U.S. Government Publishing Office*, December 2024, 70.

<sup>71</sup>Jaxx Artz, “How Your Government’s Commitments to Human Rights Are Tracked—And Why You Should Care,” *Global Citizen*, January 4, 2023.

<sup>72</sup>“Report on the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review: China,” *U.N. Human Rights Council*, A/HRC/56/6, March 11, 2024; “Report of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review: China—Addendum,” *U.N. Human Rights Council*, A/HRC/56/6/Add.1, May 31, 2024. See also “Latest UN Review Displays China’s Disregard for Human Rights, UN Findings,” *International Service for Human Rights*, July 4, 2024; Human Rights in China et al., “Joint Statement on The Chinese Government’s Failure to Implement UPR Recommendations on LGBTQ+ Rights,” *Human Rights in China*, July 10, 2024. For more on the January 2024 U.N. Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the Chinese government’s human rights record, see the Commission’s February 2024 hearing, “The PRC’s Universal Periodic Review and the Real State of Human Rights in China,” *YouTube*, hearing before the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, 118th Cong., February 1, 2024.

<sup>73</sup>Human Rights in China et al., “Joint Statement on the Chinese Government’s Failure to Implement UPR Recommendations on LGBTQ+ Rights,” *Human Rights in China*, July 10, 2024.

<sup>74</sup>“Report on the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review: China,” *U.N. Human Rights Council*, A/HRC/56/6, March 11, 2024; “Report of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review: China—Addendum,” *U.N. Human Rights Council*, A/HRC/56/6/Add.1, May 31, 2024; Human Rights in China et al., “Joint Statement on the Chinese Government’s Failure to Implement UPR Recommendations on LGBTQ+ Rights,” *Human Rights in China*, July 10, 2024.

<sup>75</sup>“Report on the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review: China,” *U.N. Human Rights Council*, A/HRC/56/6, March 11, 2024; “Report of the Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review: China—Addendum,” *U.N. Human Rights Council*, A/HRC/56/6/Add.1, May 31, 2024; Human Rights in China et al., “Joint Statement on The Chinese Government’s Failure to Implement UPR Recommendations on LGBTQ+ Rights,” *Human Rights in China*, July 10, 2024.

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<sup>78</sup>China Rainbow Collective and China Rainbow Observation, “‘You Are on Our List’: Urgent Support Needed for Chinese LGBTQ Activists at Risk,” *Outright International*, October 8, 2024, 8, 23–24.

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<sup>80</sup>Vivian Wang, “She Sued over Transgender ‘Conversion Therapy,’ a First for China,” *New York Times*, December 8, 2024; Lucie Lo, “Transgender Woman Wins Payout in China for Electroshock ‘Conversion’ Therapy,” *Radio Free Asia*, December 3, 2024.

<sup>81</sup>Lucie Lo, “Transgender Woman Wins Payout in China for Electroshock ‘Conversion’ Therapy,” *Radio Free Asia*, December 3, 2024. The settlement was for illegal use of electroshock therapy and does not address her gender identity.

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