II. Human Rights

Freedom of Expression

International Standards on Freedom of Expression

The Chinese government and Communist Party continued to restrict expression in contravention of international human rights standards, including Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.\(^1\) According to the ICCPR—which China signed\(^2\) but has not ratified\(^3\)—and as reiterated by the Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, under Article 19(3), countries may impose certain restrictions or limitations on freedom of expression, if such restrictions are provided by law and are necessary for the purpose of respecting the “rights or reputations of others” or protecting national security, public order, public health, or morals.\(^4\) An October 2009 UN Human Rights Council resolution, however, provides that restrictions on the “discussion of government policies and political debate,” “peaceful demonstrations or political activities, including for peace or democracy,” and “expression of opinion and dissent” are inconsistent with Article 19(3) of the ICCPR.\(^5\) The UN Human Rights Committee specified in a 2011 General Comment that restrictions on freedom of expression specified in Article 19(3) should be interpreted narrowly and that the restrictions “may not put in jeopardy the right itself.”\(^6\)

Freedom of the Press

Political Control of the News Media

International experts have cautioned that media serving “as government mouthpieces instead of as independent bodies operating in the public interest” are a major challenge to free expression.\(^7\) The Chinese Communist Party’s longstanding position that the media is a political tool—functioning as a “mouthpiece” for its official positions and in shaping public opinion\(^8\)—received high-profile promotion\(^9\) during the Commission’s 2016 reporting year. President and Party General Secretary Xi Jinping reiterated the primacy of the Party’s control of the media in China during widely publicized visits on February 19, 2016, to Xinhua, People’s Daily, and China Central Television (CCTV)—the three flagship state and Party media outlets—and in a speech on media policy at a Party forum the same day.\(^10\) During the speech, Xi reportedly declared that the media “must be surnamed Party” (bixu xing dang)\(^11\) and called for “absolute loyalty” to the Party from official media outlets and personnel.\(^12\) The range of media outlets in Xi’s speech, according to some commentators, also extended to more market-oriented media in China, requiring that these media convey “positive” news about China in conformity with Party ideology.\(^13\)

Although freedom of speech and the press are guaranteed in China’s Constitution,\(^14\) the legal parameters for the protection of the news media in gathering and reporting information are not clearly defined, particularly in the absence of a national press law.\(^15\) The Party and Chinese government continued to use complex and vague
legal and regulatory provisions and a powerful propaganda system to exert political control over journalists and news coverage in China. Chinese and international media reports during the year indicated that government efforts since 2013 and the changing media marketplace have led to tightened management of the news industry and further decreased the space for investigative journalism. An amendment to the PRC Criminal Law that became effective in November 2015, moreover, may place journalists at risk of being criminally charged for "fabricating false reports" in their coverage of "hazards, epidemics, disasters, and situations involving police.

The Party regularly issues propaganda directives to control news media through the Central Propaganda Department and its lower level bureaus. Experts at Freedom House, a U.S.-based organization that monitors press and Internet freedom, analyzed dozens of such directives from 2015 and found that topic areas were "far broader than mere criticism of the regime, dissident activities, or perennially censored issues . . ." such as Tibet, Taiwan, and Falun Gong. These directives restricted information on public health and safety, economic policy, official wrongdoing, regulations on and instances of media censorship, civil society issues, and the Party's reputation. In March 2016, journalists also faced increased government censorship compared to previous years when covering the annual sessions of the National People's Congress and its advisory body, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, as illustrated by a lengthy censorship directive and limited access to delegates. The establishment of "news ethics committees" during the reporting year highlighted the government's intention to enhance official mechanisms to "maintain and intensify press censorship."

Debate over the news media's "supervision by public opinion" (yulun jiandu)—an official term that affirms a role for the media to report critically in the public interest and to monitor those in power, which has been likened to investigative journalism—was featured in reports during the year about the detention of an investigative journalist and the resolution of a defamation litigation case.

In October 2015, authorities in Jiangxi province detained Liu Wei, an investigative journalist on assignment from Southern Metropolitan Daily, on suspicion of "obtaining state secrets," for his coverage of the story of a local traditional healer allegedly involved in the death of a provincial legislator. After public security authorities released Liu on bail following a "confession" televised on state-run China Central Television, fellow journalists reportedly stated that the "space for supervision by public opinion . . . was seriously constrained." Southern Metropolitan Daily editors reprinted a Xinhua editorial that contained Liu's "confession," but prefaced the editorial by discussing the difficulties journalists face in conducting their work: "[I]n-depth investigation is how the media gets at the truth of the matter, and it's a necessary and effective practice. But news investigations, nevertheless, do not enjoy legal impunity . . . ."
Chinese Media’s “Supervision by Public Opinion”—Continued

Journalists and media companies have been frequent targets of defamation suits in China. One observer called the verdict in a defamation case adjudicated in November 2015 a “historic” judicial endorsement of media oversight. A court in Beijing municipality reversed a verdict, on appeal, of two media companies accused of having harmed the reputation of a luxury goods business in articles published in 2012. The verdict stated, “News media have a right and a responsibility to properly carry out critical supervision.” In his work report to the National People’s Congress in March 2016, Supreme People’s Court President Zhou Qiang specifically raised this case, remarking that the court’s decision “in effect, protect[s] the rights (quan) of news media to supervise public opinion.”

CHALLENGES TO THE MEDIA’S “OFFICIAL” ROLE

Chinese citizens and journalists challenged the Party’s news media control and propaganda work during this reporting year, sometimes specifically in response to President Xi Jinping’s speech on Party primacy over news media. A prominent social media commentator and the unknown authors of a letter to Xi who identified themselves as “loyal Party members,” for example, criticized Xi’s February 2016 statements for devaluing the media’s responsibility to report on behalf of the public. An editor at a market-oriented newspaper in Guangdong province quit his job, making note in his March 2016 resignation paperwork that he had “no way to go along with your surname,” in reference to Xi’s injunction to “follow the Party’s surname.” Other challenges to censorship came from Caixin media, a Xinhua staff member, and a former deputy editor of People’s Daily. Authorities countered criticism by shutting down microblog accounts, removing critical content from the Internet and social media, and detaining media professionals and several China-based family members of Chinese journalists and bloggers living overseas.

Chinese authorities continued to broadcast prerecorded confessions on state-controlled media, including those of a journalist, at least two rights lawyers, the Swedish cofounder of a legal advocacy group in Beijing municipality, and the co-owner of a Hong Kong publishing company. The international NGO Chinese Human Rights Defenders asserted that the government used the broadcast of confessions on state media outlets “to denounce individuals or groups,” “control public narratives about government-perceived ‘political threats,’” and retaliate against government critics. Two Chinese officials publicly noted concerns of fairness and access to justice in cases of televised confessions prior to trial. [For more information on televised confessions during the reporting year, see Section II—Criminal Justice.]

Family members of rights defenders, labor rights groups, and lawyers also brought, or planned to bring, lawsuits against official media outlets, with some claiming that the state-run media outlets’ defamatory statements in newspapers and television were politically motivated. The mother of Zeng Feiyang—a labor rights advocate in Guangdong province detained in December 2015—report-
edly withdrew a lawsuit against the state-run news service Xinhua after family members received threats that they would lose their jobs if the lawsuit went forward. In December 2015, a court in Beijing municipality postponed holding the trial in former defense lawyer Li Zhuang’s defamation lawsuit against the Party-run China Youth Daily (CYD), reportedly due to the presiding judge’s back injury. Li’s legal counsel in the case, Peking University law professor He Weifang, noted that Li wanted to bring legal proceedings against CYD in 2011 but was only able to file the case in June 2015 following reform of the judiciary’s case filing system. As of August 2016, the Commission had not observed reports that the case had come to trial.

HARASSMENT AND CRIMINAL PUNISHMENT OF DOMESTIC JOURNALISTS

The number of professional and citizen journalists detained in China increased in 2015, making China “the world’s worst jailer of the press” for the second year in a row, according to the international advocacy group Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). A significant percentage of individuals on CPJ’s list were ethnic Tibetans and Uyghurs with backgrounds as freelance or citizen journalists and bloggers, but the number of imprisoned journalists from mainstream media also increased in 2015. In May 2016, China was 1 of 10 countries to vote against CPJ’s accreditation for non-governmental consultative status at the United Nations, a move criticized by rights groups and foreign government officials. The international press freedom organization Reporters Without Borders ranked China 176th out of 180 countries in its 2016 World Press Freedom Index, which assesses the independence of the media, quality of legislative framework and safety of journalists, and also gave China the worst score under the category “abuse” of all 180 countries covered in the index.

The Chinese government used a variety of legal and extralegal measures to target journalists, editors, and bloggers who covered issues authorities deemed to be politically sensitive. The Commission observed reports of dismissal or disciplinary action over alleged criticism of government policy and editorial “mistakes,” official harassment, physical violence, detention, and prison sentences. [For information on media developments and cases in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and in Hong Kong, see Section IV—Xinjiang—Freedom of the Press and Section VI—Developments in Hong Kong and Macau—Press Freedom.] Selected cases of such harassment and detention included:

• **Gao Yu.** In November 2015, the Beijing High People’s Court reduced the April 2015 sentence of Gao Yu—a 72-year-old journalist whose 2014 televised confession of “revealing state secrets” reportedly had been made under duress—from seven years to five years. Although released on medical parole, authorities continued to harass Gao, including by demolishing a small study in her garden and assaulting her son in March 2016, forcing her to leave her home in Beijing municipality for a “vacation” during the annual meeting of the National People’s Congress, and not granting her permission to travel to Germany for medical treatment.
• **Li Xin.** In February 2016, the family of Li Xin, a former journalist with the Southern Metropolitan Daily, learned that Li was at an unidentified detention site in China after going missing from Thailand in January.\(^81\) Thai authorities reportedly stated that they had a record of Li’s entry into Thailand, but not his exit.\(^82\) Li left China in October 2015, alleging public security bureau officials pressured him to inform on fellow journalists and rights advocates.\(^83\) Li also provided details on how media censorship operates in China in a November 2015 interview with Radio Free Asia.\(^84\)

• **Wang Jing and 64 Tianwang citizen journalists.** In April 2016, authorities in Jilin province sentenced Wang Jing to 4 years and 10 months in prison for her volunteer reporting for the human rights news website 64 Tianwang,\(^85\) including a report on a self-immolation protest in Tiananmen Square in 2014.\(^86\) Chinese authorities also continued to harass and detain other 64 Tianwang contributors\(^87\) during this reporting year. In September 2015, authorities in Zhejiang province arrested Sun Enwei, who had reported on inadequate pension benefits for demobilized soldiers.\(^88\) Authorities in Sichuan province reportedly harassed Huang Qi, 64 Tianwang’s founder, after he accompanied two Japanese journalists to report on sites in Sichuan province affected by the 2008 earthquake.\(^89\)

**HARASSMENT OF FOREIGN JOURNALISTS AND NEWS MEDIA**

The Chinese government and Communist Party continued to use a range of methods to restrict and harass foreign journalists and news media outlets reporting in China. According to the Foreign Correspondents’ Club of China’s (FCCC) most recent annual report (2015) on working conditions for foreign reporters in China,\(^90\) these methods included official harassment of reporters,\(^91\) news assistants, and sources;\(^92\) attempts to block coverage of issues that authorities deemed sensitive; restrictions on travel to areas along China's border and ethnic minority regions; visa renewal delays and denials; and blocking foreign media outlets’ websites\(^93\) and journalists’ social media accounts in China.\(^94\) Examples of harassment during the reporting year included:

• **October 2015.** Plainclothes police in Ulanhot city, Hinggan (Xing’an) League, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, forced journalists from Australian and Japanese news publications to stay at a local public security bureau for hours to verify their press credentials.\(^95\) The journalists had planned, but were unable, to interview Bao Zhuoxuan, the son of detained human rights lawyers Wang Yu\(^97\) and Bao Longjun,\(^98\) at his grandmother’s home in Ulanhot.\(^99\)

• **December 2015.** Security agents reportedly assaulted foreign journalists on assignment outside a court in Beijing municipality who were reporting on the trial of public interest lawyer Pu Zhiqiang.\(^100\)

• **February and April 2016.** Authorities in Sichuan province prevented Japanese journalists from the Asahi Shimbun from investigating conditions in areas affected by the 2008 earthquake.\(^101\) Unidentified individuals temporarily detained the journalists during the February incident.\(^102\)
Based on the FCCC’s annual survey on foreign journalists’ experiences obtaining press credentials and work visas, the processing time for annual renewals of press cards (through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and residence visas (through public security bureaus) was shorter in 2015 compared to prior years and a relatively small percentage of correspondents reported problems with their visa renewals. The FCCC, however, emphasized that authorities continued to use visa applications and renewals as a political tool against foreign journalists, illustrated during this reporting year by the Chinese government’s effective expulsion of French journalist Ursula Gauthier by not renewing her visa in December 2015. In a November 2015 article, Gauthier had criticized the government’s counterterrorism policy in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

Internet and Social Media Communications

The scale of Internet and social media use continued to grow in China during this reporting year, while the government and Party continued to expand censorship of content. According to the China Internet Network Information Center, there were 710 million Internet users in China by June 2016, 656 million of whom accessed the Internet from mobile phones. As of April 2016, WeChat, an instant messaging platform, reportedly had more than 700 million monthly active users. Sina Weibo, a microblogging platform similar to Twitter, reportedly had 400 million monthly active users. One scholarly assessment found that government efforts to control social media and telecommunications have resulted in “an exodus from public microblogging platforms to private messaging apps.”

GOVERNMENT AND PARTY CONTROL

The Chinese government and Communist Party further entrenched institutional oversight and regulatory mechanisms to control Internet governance in China, and reiterated an Internet policy based on China’s claims of “Internet sovereignty.” According to scholar Rogier Creemers, under President and Party General Secretary Xi Jinping, government and Party leaders have shifted responsibility for Internet governance away from “technocratic” state entities and brought Internet governance “into the center of political decision-making.”

Cyberspace Administration of China

The expanding influence of the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC), designated by the State Council in 2014 as the agency responsible for the “governance of all online content” in China, illustrates the government and Party’s shifting priorities in Internet governance. Formerly known as the State Internet Information Office, the CAC is subordinate to the State Council but is directly supervised by the Central Leading Group for Cybersecurity and Informatization, a combined government and Party leadership group headed by Xi Jinping.
Cyberspace Administration of China—Continued

Draft revisions of regulations managing Internet news services issued in January 2016 appear to grant responsibility to the CAC for all news-related online content and supervision of news websites’ licensing, editorial liability, and disciplinary decisions. The definition of “Internet news information” in the draft revisions encompasses reporting and commentary on public affairs, including politics, economics, military affairs, and diplomacy, as well as reporting and commentary on emergent or “sudden social incidents” (shehui tufa shijian). The scope of the draft revisions, moreover, extends beyond news websites to include “applications, discussion forums, blogs, microblogs, instant messaging tools, search engines, and other applications that contain news, public opinion, or social mobilization functions.” At least one Chinese source described the draft revisions as the “toughest” ever, aimed at further restricting the space for the public to discuss the news. In July, the Beijing branch of the CAC reportedly directed domestic Internet companies, including Sohu, Sina, and Netease, to discontinue online news programs producing original content that violated a provision in the 2005 version of the regulations on Internet news services’ management that limits the reposting or republishing of news from “central news units” and those directly under the central government. In March 2016, Caixin, a market-oriented media outlet known for its investigative work, reportedly referred to the CAC as “a government censorship organ,” following the deletion of an article that discussed restrictions on airing opinions during the annual meetings of China’s legislature and its advisory entity. The CAC, moreover, moved to impose “eight requirements” to further online news control, including 24-hour monitoring of online news content and holding editors-in-chief responsible for content. The “eight requirements” were imparted at an August 2016 meeting attended by representatives from official media outlets as well as commercial websites such as Tencent and Baidu.

In June 2016, CAC’s prominent director Lu Wei stepped down from his position as China’s “Internet czar,” though he still held a senior position at the Party’s Central Propaganda Department. An August 2016 report in Hong Kong’s South China Morning Post speculated that Lu Wei’s departure “came after a spate of errors about politically sensitive topics made their way online . . ..”

Punishing Citizens’ Free Expression

The Chinese government and Communist Party continued to violate the international standards noted at the beginning of this section as well as to exploit vague provisions in Chinese law to prosecute citizens for exercising their right to freedom of speech. Human Rights Watch, for example, asserted that official statistics from the Supreme People’s Court on prosecutions on state security and terrorism charges in 2015 signaled that the government had intensified efforts to “smother peaceful dissent.” During the UN Committee against Torture’s review in November 2015 of China’s compliance with the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, a member of the official Chinese delegation claimed that “[t]he efforts of the Chinese
judicial authorities were aimed at fighting criminal behaviour that truly undermined national security, not at criminalizing free speech exercised in accordance with the law.”¹²⁹ Contrary to this claim, Chinese authorities put individuals on trial during this reporting year who had been detained over the past three years for peaceful assembly and online advocacy for a range of issues such as press freedom, commemorating the violent suppression of the 1989 Tiananmen protests, officials’ financial disclosure, the ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), support for the 2014 pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong, and discussing ethnic minority rights and policy. Many of these individuals spent months in pre-trial detention without access to lawyers and reported suffering abuse and maltreatment while in custody,¹³⁰ in violation of rights accorded in the ICCPR and Chinese law.¹³¹ Examples included the following cases.

- **Beijing municipality.** In December 2015, the Beijing No. 2 Intermediate People’s Court sentenced lawyer Pu Zhiqiang to three years’ imprisonment, suspended for three years, on the charges of “inciting ethnic hatred” and “picking quarrels and provoking trouble” based on seven microblog posts that criticized government officials and China’s ethnic policy.¹³² Beijing authorities took Pu into custody following his attendance at an event in May 2014 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Tiananmen protests and their violent suppression.¹³³ The conditions of Pu’s suspended sentence included restrictions on his activities.¹³⁴ In addition, in April 2016, the Beijing municipal justice bureau reportedly sent written notification to Pu on his permanent disbarment from legal practice, a consequence of the criminal conviction.¹³⁵

- **Guangdong province.** Authorities in Guangdong imposed prison sentences on Yang Maodong (commonly known as Guo Feixiong) (six years),¹³⁶ Sun Desheng (two years and six months),¹³⁷ Liu Yuandong (three years),¹³⁸ Wang Mo (four years and six months),¹³⁹ Xie Wenfei (four years and six months),¹⁴⁰ and Liang Qinhui (one year and six months).¹⁴¹ Authorities charged Guo, Sun, and Liu with “gathering a crowd to disturb order in a public place.”¹⁴² The judge in Guo’s case added the charge of “picking quarrels and provoking trouble” while sentencing Guo on November 27, 2015.¹⁴³ Security officials in Guangzhou municipality had detained Guo, Sun, and Liu in 2013 in connection with their protests against press censorship,¹⁴⁴ and also for Guo and Sun’s advocacy of government officials’ asset disclosure and China’s ratification of the ICCPR.¹⁴⁵ Authorities charged Wang, Xie, and Liang with “inciting subversion of state power,” a crime of “endangering state security” in the PRC Criminal Law.¹⁴⁶ Although Wang also reportedly was involved in the protests against press censorship in 2013, authorities detained him and other mainland Chinese advocates—including Xie—for their support of the pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong in October of that year.¹⁴⁷ Liang, an online commentator, shared his critiques of Chinese President and Communist Party General Secretary Xi Jinping on the social media network QQ prior to his detention.¹⁴⁸
• **Qinghai province.** In February 2016, authorities in Qinghai sentenced Tibetan writer Drukar Gyal (also known as Druglo and by the pen name Shogjang) to three years in prison on the charge of “inciting separatism.” Shogjang had written a blog post about security force deployments in Tongren (Rebgong) county, Huangnan (Malho) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai, in the days prior to his detention in March 2015. According to the Tibetan Buddhist monk Jigme Gyatso (also known as Golog Jigme), Shogjang also wrote about the corporal punishment of students in Haibei (Tsojang) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai.

• **Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR).** In January 2016, the Urumqi Intermediate People’s Court in Urumqi municipality, XUAR, sentenced Zhang Haitao, an electronics tradesman and rights defender, to serve a total of 19 years in prison for “inciting subversion of state power” and “stealing, spying, buying and illegally supplying state secrets or intelligence for an overseas entity” for more than 200 microblog posts and content he provided to allegedly “hostile” overseas media outlets. In his appeal, Zhang argued that the court verdict had unreasonably equated dissent with spreading rumors and peaceful expression with serious social harm.

Nobel Peace Prize laureate Liu Xiaobo remained in prison, serving year 7 of his 11-year sentence on the charge of “inciting subversion of state power” for several of his essays and his co-authorship of Charter 08, a treatise advocating political reform and human rights that was circulated online. Advocacy organizations continued to call for his release from prison and for the release of his wife, poet and artist Liu Xia, whom authorities have detained under extralegal detention at the couple’s home in Beijing since October 2010.
Notes to Section II—Freedom of Expression

1. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) of 16 December 66, entry into force 23 March 76, art. 19; Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted and proclaimed by UN General Assembly resolution 217A (III) of 10 December 48, art. 19.


6. UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 34, Article 19, Freedom of Opinion and Expression, CCPR/C/GC/34, 12 September 11, para. 21.


8. David Schlesinger et al., “How To Read China’s New Press Restrictions,” Asia Society, ChinaFile (blog), 17 July 14; David Bandurski, “Mirror, Mirror on the Wall,” University of Hong Kong, China Media Project, 22 February 16; Jun Mai, “Communist Party Warns of Gap Between ‘Public and Official Opinion,’” South China Morning Post, 23 February 16; Bandurski, for example, points to former Chinese Communist Party leaders’ pronouncements, such as Mao Zedong’s injunction that “politicians run the newspapers,” Jiang Zemin’s “guidance of public opinion,” and Hu Jintao’s “channeling of public opinion,” to illustrate the Party’s expectation that the media serve as its “mouthpiece” and shaper of public opinion.


14. PRC Constitution, issued 4 December 82, amended 12 April 88, 29 March 93, 15 March 99, 14 March 04, art. 35.


Protection of State Secrets [Zhonghua renmin gongheguo baoshou guojia mimi fa], passed 5 September 88, amended 29 April 10, effective 1 October 10, arts. 9, 27; Supreme People’s Court, Several Provisions on the People’s Court Accepting Supervision of News Media [Zuigao renmin fayuan guanyu renmin fayuan jieshou xinwen meiti yulun jiandu ruogan guiding], issued 8 December 09. Other key regulations touching on news publications and journalists include the PRC Administrative Licensing Law [Zhonghua renmin gongheguo xingzhi xingfa xige], effective 1 October 97, amended and effective 19 March 11; State Administration of Press, Publications, Radio, Film and Television (SAPPRFT), Measures on Managing Information Obtained by Press Personnel Through Professional Conduct [Xinwen congwey renyuan zhiwen xinweixinxi gongzuobanfa], issued 30 June 14. For Commission analysis on the SAPPRFT Measures of June 2014, see CECC, “China’s Media Regulator Places New Restrictions on Journalists and News Organizations,” 5 November 14.


18 "Annual Oversight: Industry Standards Frequently Involve Heavy Strikes, 5 Items of Targeted Work Causing Concern” [Niandu jiasong: hangye guifan pinchu zhongguo, 5 xiang zhongguo gonggao reren guangzhao], Donghe Information Net, 14 April 16; “Central News Units Clean-Up and Consolidate Journalist Stations: More Than 30 Percent Eliminated or Merged” [Zhongyang xinwen danwei qingji zhengdu jiezhezhuan: chebing jiaoyu guo sanchang], Procuratorial Daily, 28 January 16; Zhou Hongyong, “Newspaper Industry Keywords in 2015” [2015 nian baoye guanjian ci], People’s Daily, 7 April 16.


20 "Minitrue: 21st Century Media Verdicts,” Committee to Protect Journalists (blog), 30 October 15.

21 PRC Criminal Law [Zhonghua renmin gongheguo xingfa], passed 1 July 79, amended 14 March 97, effective 1 October 97, amended 25 December 99, 31 August 01, 29 December 01, 29 December 02, 28 February 05, 29 June 06, 29 February 09, 25 February 11, 29 August 15, effective 1 November 15, art. 291.


23 Sarah Cook, “Chinese Journalism, Interrupted,” Foreign Policy, Tea Leaf Nation (blog), 6 January 16.

24 Ibid.


27 David Bandurski, "Pulitzer’s ‘Lookout on the Bridge’ vs. China’s ‘News Ethics Committees,’” Asia Society, ChinaFile (blog), 20 November 15.

28 David Bandurski, "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall,” University of Hong Kong, China Media Project, 22 February 16; Li-Fung Cho, "The Emergence of China’s Watchdog Reporting,” in Investigative Journalism in China: Eight Cases in Chinese Watchdog Journalism, eds. David Bandurski and Martin Hala (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010), 166–67.


30 "Southern Metropolitan Reporter Liu Wei Shows Penitence on CCTV, Released on Bail” [Nandu jiezi liu wei shang yangshi hezi hua qiao touhuan], Radio Free Asia, 31 October 15.


33 Feng Yuding, “After Three Years of the World Luxury Association’s Lawsuit, Southern Weekend Wins on Appeal” [Yu shishehui su meiti mingyu qinquanan zhongguo baishu], Caixin, 9 November 15.

34 Zhao Fuduo, “World Luxury Association Loses Defamation Lawsuit Against Media on Appeal” [Shishehui su meiti mingyu qinquanan zhongguo baishu], Caixin, 9 November 15.


36 "Supreme People’s Court Work Report” [Zuigao renmin fayuan gongguo baogao], People’s Daily, 13 March 16, sec. 2, para. 6.
China Morning Post, 1 May 16. ‘Labour Activist Takes on State Media—and Forced Into Hardest Decision of Her Life,’ South China Morning Post, 1 May 16; Mimi Lau, ‘Mother of Detained Plans To Sue CCTV’ [Zhang wuzhou wei didi zhang liumao shenzhang zhengyi ni qisu yangshi], 6 September 15; ‘Zhang Wuzhou Seeks Justice on Behalf of Younger Brother Zhang Liumao, wenzhong laoshi zhuanggao ’changsha wanbao’ mingyu qinquan yi an jiang yu 7 ri kaiting’ [Hunan nu weiquan renshi chen], 16 March 16; ‘Defamation Lawsuit of Female Rights Defender in Hunan, Teacher Chen Wenzhong, for Defaming Her Husband,’ translated in Human Rights in China, 3 August 15; Rights Defense Activist Zeng Feiyang Sues China’s State Media,’ 12 April 16; ‘Civil Complaint by Wang Qiaoling, Li Jinhong, Chinese Human Rights Defenders, ’Against ‘Changsha Evening News’ Will Go to Trial on the 7th’ [Hunan nu weiquan renshi chen], 16 March 16; ‘Outspoken Chinese Real Estate Mogul Becomes Latest Target of Party Wrath,’ China Change, 25 February 16.


To Have Beaten Female Reporter Behind Closed Doors, Police at Doorway Blocked Other Journalists. [Zhengzhou laopan daizou jizhe, Henan TV, reprinted in Sohu, 31 October 15; “Police Station Chief Revealed and Taken Away by Police” [Zhengzhou loupan zhaohuo zhi 2 si jizhe caifang bei da bing zao song xin weixie lianghui tiwen jizhe: “xiaoxin ba ni zhuaqilai”], Radio France Internationale, 16 March 16; Choi Chi-yuk, “Beijing Clamps Down on News Portals, Ordering Round the Clock Monitoring,” South China Morning Post, 19 August 16.]

Questions at Two Sessions: ‘Be Careful, or You’ll Be Taken Away’ [Quanguo zhengxie weiyuan yuan zongbianji zhao xinyu bei shuangkai], People’s Daily, 2 November 15; Tom Phillips, “China’s Last Leader Alleged To Be ‘Political Mistake,’ Editor Dismissed and Loses Status as ‘World’s Worst Jailer of the Press; Global Tally Second Worst on Record,’” 71 See, e.g., “Media: What Do Journalists’ Ordinary Reports Have To Do With State Security?” [Meiti: jizhe zhongzai ba dao yo guojia anquan he gan?], Beijing News, reprinted in Sina.com, 10 April 16; Cao Guoxing, “CPPCC Delegate Song Xin Intimidates Journalist Raising Questions at Two Sessions: ‘Be Careful, or You’ll Be Taken Away’” [Quanguo zhengxie weiyuan song xin weixie lianghui tiwen jizhe: “xiaoxin ba ni zhuanshang yi quan hui’], Radio France Internationale, 16 March 16.]


nalis From Entering” [Paichususuohang bei bao guanmen da nu ji jie menkou jingcha zuzhi jihe jinru], Harbin Broadcast TV, reprinted in Global Times, 21 April 16.


75 Amnesty International, China Human Rights Lawyers Concern Group, Committee to Protect Journalists et al., “Joint Letter to President Xi Jinping,” reprinted in Human Rights Watch, 5 August 15. For more information on Gao Yu, see the Commission’s Political Prisoner Database record 2004-05037.


77 “Gao Yu ‘Forced To Travel’ During Two Sessions” [Gao yu lianghui qijian “bei liaoyou”]. Radio Free Asia, 18 March 16.


79 “Gao Yu ‘Forced To Travel’ During Two Sessions” [Gao yu lianghui qijian “bei liaoyou”]. Radio Free Asia, 18 March 16.

80 “Gao Yu’s Lawyer Calls on Authorities To Follow Through on Promise To Allow Gao To Go Abroad for Medical Treatment” [Gao yu shi hui xiang liu dui lu xing yuan yu hu sheng yu jia cai]. Radio Free Asia, 4 February 16; Human Rights Watch, “China: Detained Activist, Journalist Denied Needed Health Care,” 6 May 16.


83 Li Xin: Applies for Political Asylum So That He Doesn’t Split Himself Further” [Li xin: shengqing zhengzhi bihu shi bu xiang ren’ge fenliu xiaqu]. BBC, 11 November 15.


86 “Gao Yu ‘Forced To Travel’ During Two Sessions” [Gao yu lianghui qijian “bei liaoyou”]. Radio Free Asia, 18 March 16.


88 Huang Qi, 64 Tianwang, “Old War Veteran Sun Enwei Faces Criminal Detention,” 64 Tianwang, 26 November 15.

89 “Tianwang Citizen Journalist Wang Jing Fares Criminal Detention,” 64 Tianwang, 26 November 15.

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