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**Statement of Rep. James P. McGovern
Co-chair, Congressional-Executive Commission on China**

**Hearing on “The Threat of Transnational Repression from China and the U.S.
Response”**

Wednesday, June 15, 2022, 10:00 a.m.

As delivered

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing about transnational repression by the People’s Republic of China.

In September 2020, federal authorities arrested a New York City police officer and U.S. Army reservist for acting as an illegal agent of the Chinese government. The man, originally from Tibet, had tried to ingratiate himself within the Tibetan-American community of New York. It turns out he was spying on them and advancing Chinese interests. This revelation caused fear and concern in the community.

The Uyghur-Americans at Radio Free Asia who work diligently to report facts from Xinjiang, including crimes against humanity, are protected by our First Amendment’s safeguard of freedom of the press. The Chinese government has attempted to silence them by punishing their relatives back home. Gulchera Hoja testified before this Commission in 2018 that two dozen of her relatives are missing, almost certainly held in re-education camps run by Chinese authorities in Xinjiang.

These are but two examples. The Chinese government tries to deflect criticism of its human rights record by claiming that it has a sovereign right to do what it wants within its borders. And yet, Chinese officials have no problem setting aside sovereignty principles when they reach across our border to threaten the human rights of Americans.

In his May 26 speech on China, Secretary of State Tony Blinken said the Chinese government “purports to champion sovereignty and territorial integrity while standing with governments that brazenly violate them.” I would add that the Chinese government itself violates them.

I am pleased that the Biden Administration has recognized this trend and is deploying diplomatic, investigative and prosecutorial resources to the problem.

I look forward to hearing from Under Secretary Zeya and Assistant Secretary Hoy about what their respective Departments are doing to address this issue and these violations. We want to hear whether there are additional authorities or tools that you need from Congress, including the expansion of humanitarian pathways to provide refuge to those who risk their lives to stand up to authoritarian regimes. We also look forward to getting input from the Department of Justice in a separate setting, as the Chair has mentioned.

While our focus today is China, my concern has been global.

Freedom House’s extensive report from earlier this month finds that 36 governments engage in transnational repression, and documented 735 incidents of “direct, physical transnational repression” between 2014 and 2021, with 85 incidents in 2021 alone.

I, along with several of my colleagues, have expressed concern over transnational repression by Egypt, Russia, and Saudi Arabia, including such heinous crimes as the murder of U.S. resident and

journalist Jamal Khashoggi by Saudi officials and the poisoning of Russians living in exile in the UK by Russian authorities.

I hope to hear how the Administration is approaching the challenge not only as a whole of government effort but as a global one too.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.