



# CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON CHINA

## 2022 ANNUAL REPORT • EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

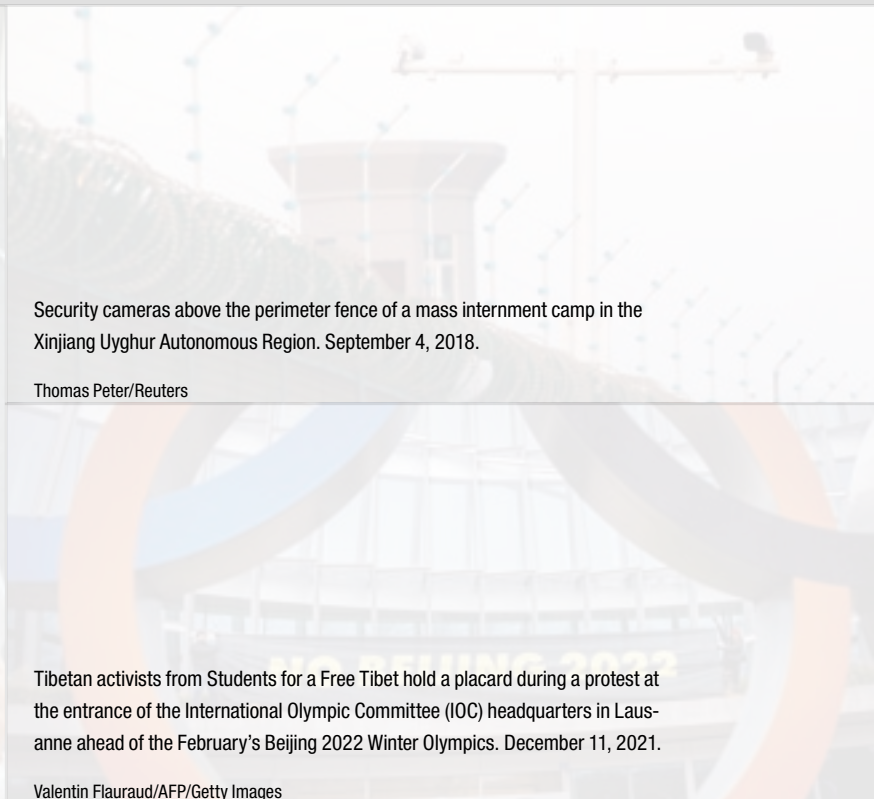


ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION  
NOVEMBER 2022



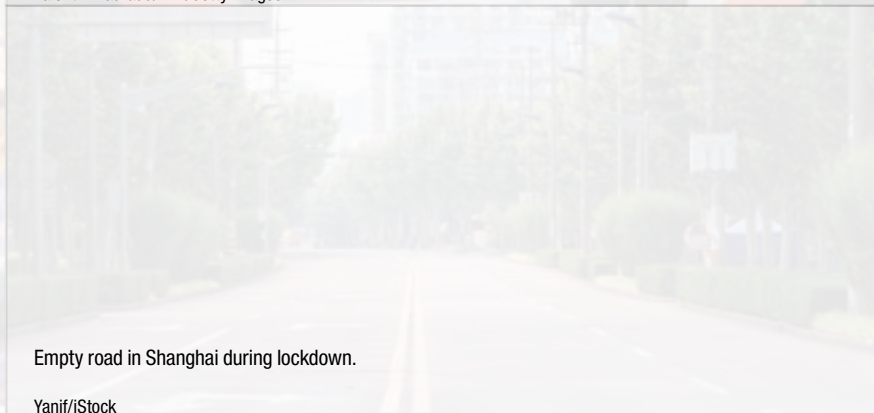
Activists observed 'Global Day of Action' at Place de la Bastille in Paris to boycott the Beijing Winter Olympics that took place in February 2022. June 23, 2021.

Norbu Gyachung/Alamy Stock Photo



Security cameras above the perimeter fence of a mass internment camp in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. September 4, 2018.

Thomas Peter/Reuters



Tibetan activists from Students for a Free Tibet hold a placard during a protest at the entrance of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) headquarters in Lausanne ahead of the February's Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics. December 11, 2021.

Valentin Flauraud/AFP/Getty Images

Empty road in Shanghai during lockdown.

Yanji/iStock



# CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON CHINA

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Matt Squeri, *Staff Director*

Todd Stein, *Deputy Staff Director*



# STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIRS

As the 20<sup>th</sup> Chinese Communist Party Congress approached, General Secretary Xi Jinping and other People's Republic of China (PRC) authorities continued to use the language of democracy and human rights to debase both, promoting a vision of state-determined rights, suppression of civil and political rights to achieve coercive control, and the use of sovereignty as a shield to enable violations of internationally recognized standards. Domestically and abroad, they touted “whole-process people’s democracy” and prioritized steps to “enhance the attractiveness, infectiousness and influence of the contemporary Chinese view of human rights.” By advancing initiatives such as Xi’s Global Security Initiative, Global Development Initiative, and World Internet Conference, PRC authorities sought to subjugate international norms to PRC interests and manipulate international human rights bodies.

Through aggressive censorship, propaganda, and the bullying of critics, these officials aim to mislead PRC citizens and the world about the human costs of the PRC’s approach to governance. This year’s report of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China (Commission) documents the reality of centralized, authoritarian political control: continuing genocide in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, the devastating transformation of Hong Kong into a subservient city under the PRC’s anti-democratic rule, accelerated efforts to “sinicize” ethnic and religious minorities, the spread of patriarchal policies weaponized against the women of China, harsh measures to enforce a draconian and unsustainable “zero-COVID” policy, and more.

The Commission puts a spotlight on the faces of this repression. Leading up to the Beijing Winter Olympics, our #OlympicPrisoner social media campaign told the stories of 81 PRC citizens detained or disappeared for exercising their human rights or for belonging to a disfavored minority group. In our mission to document such cases, we continue to modernize the Commission’s Political Prisoner Database to make it more functional, sustainable, and secure. The database now includes cases in Hong Kong, in light of the tragic erosion of political rights and the rule of law there. With surveillance an ever-present part of life in China, the Commission expanded its coverage of technology-enhanced authoritarianism this year to improve reporting on the use of technology to control populations, trample freedom of expression, and undermine institutions of democratic governance.

In the face of egregious human rights abuses, the Commission continues to champion concrete steps to defend the vulnerable. The enactment of the *Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act*—conceived, drafted, and secured by the Commission’s bipartisan leadership—epitomizes the impact of our work. This law now takes the strongest action anywhere in the world to prevent the importation of products of the slave labor of repressed minorities in China. We hope it will serve as both a call to action and a blueprint for similar steps in other countries.

Just as we work to address the role of global businesses and consumers in supporting activities that abet genocide, we have the power to protect the persecuted who come to our shores. Uyghurs, ethnic Kazakhs, Hong Kongers, and others fleeing repression in China need humanitarian pathways and protection from Chinese authorities’ harassment, intimidation, and worse. This report includes practical bipartisan recommendations for congressional and executive action that puts respect for universal human rights at the heart of our relations with the PRC.

Xi’s attempt to replace universal rights with a “Chinese view of human rights” is unacceptable. The human rights of the people of China are inalienable and enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international norms and standards. Xi’s vision of a world safe for authoritarianism, where the power of the state supersedes personal freedoms and the strong can bully the weak, pits those who yearn for liberty against those in power who deny it to them for ideological or power-hungry ends. Helping the people of China prevail in this struggle depends not on a naïve expectation that we can change the PRC’s government but on the confidence that a strong and principled America will be best able to defend universal values. This starts at home in revitalizing the sources of America’s strength—our democratic institutions, innovative economy, and openness to ideas and people from all corners of the globe. Our greatest asset in the international arena lies in the strength in numbers offered by our alignment with other defenders of freedom. This report makes clear the human stakes of this struggle and punctures the narrative of “Chinese human rights” that Xi Jinping attempts to sell to the world.

Sincerely,



Senator Jeffrey A. Merkley  
Chair



Representative James P. McGovern  
Co-Chair

# OVERVIEW

The People's Republic of China continued to flex its coercive power this past year as it sought to dominate many aspects of daily life to control how citizens express themselves, access information, worship, raise their children, interact with their neighbors, conduct business, and consume entertainment. These actions prioritize the power of the state over individual liberties and put China at the vanguard of a global trend toward authoritarianism.

Leading up to the October 2022 20<sup>th</sup> Party Congress, the Chinese Communist Party escalated efforts to tighten political control and centralize power. A new official version of Party history and the continued proliferation of ideological textbooks and research centers promoted a cult of personality around leader Xi Jinping. This ideological indoctrination targeted parents, journalists, students, and others forced to undergo “patriotic education” as well as ethnic and religious minorities subjected to a relentless campaign of “sinicization.” The mobilization of local citizen groups charged with advancing government objectives echoed the Mao-era practice of enlisting individuals to spy on their neighbors, while a crackdown on leading technology companies dramatized the prioritization of **Party control** over economic growth.

The PRC continued to use the criminal justice system as a political tool. This system endangered PRC citizens who challenged authority, as evidenced by the forcible commitment of “disruptive” individuals to psychiatric facilities and the ongoing extralegal detentions of dissidents and human rights lawyers in “black jails.” An index assessing judicial independence now ranks China’s judicial system as the third most susceptible to political interference in the world, ahead of only those of North Korea and Eritrea.

A report by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights presented a damning assessment of mass internment, torture, forced sterilizations and abortions, family separation, and intrusive homestays in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) and concluded that “the conditions remain in place for serious violations to continue.” Analysis of official documents provided new evidence that Xi and other top leaders directed these **genocidal policies**. A set of newly obtained files includes thousands of photographs of confirmed detainees and provides a window into the situation in the XUAR, including a detention rate in one county more than 64 times the national rate, “shoot to kill” orders issued by authorities for those attempting to escape mass internment camps, and the detentions of children and seniors. As the Chinese government’s five-year plan for the XUAR ended in 2021, the Commission observed an increased reliance on formal imprisonment and long prison terms for Turkic Muslims.

New evidence also emerged from survivors of the internment camps recounting ordeals of torture, systemic rape, and

coercive population control policies that amount to genocide, and reports continued to document deaths in detention. In one chilling account, an ex-detective described his role torturing Uyghur detainees, some as young as 14 years old, to extract false confessions. Outside the camps, the comprehensive technological and human surveillance of Uyghurs, ethnic Kazakhs, and others in the XUAR constitute what an expert deemed a “system of mass psychological torture.”

In response to mounting proof of the systematic use of forced labor in the XUAR tainting global supply chains, the United States enacted the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act to protect consumers and prevent businesses from being complicit in activities that abet atrocities. The legislative action came as XUAR authorities intensified the scope and scale of this heinous crime, likely forcing hundreds of thousands of internment camp detainees to work within the XUAR and transferring millions of “rural surplus laborers” throughout China. Officials also published plans to transfer rural laborers into industrial work and to train workers in revenue-generating tasks through coercive labor programs. China’s ratification of two international conventions related to forced labor in response to international condemnation of these policies failed to assuage “deep concern” from the International Labour Organization, which pressed for unfettered access to the XUAR to investigate these abuses.

Events in this reporting year confirmed the transformation of **Hong Kong** from an open society to a city gripped by fear, subject to invasive political control. Authorities continued to use the National Security Law to carry out widespread detention, prosecution, and imprisonment of pro-democracy advocates and to threaten dissidents abroad. The climate produced by this law led at least 65 organizations—spanning religious, community, political, media, union, and human rights activities—to cease operating in Hong Kong, including Amnesty International and the Hong Kong Alliance, which previously commemorated the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests. The dismantling of civil society included crackdowns on prominent independent media that caused a ripple effect, shuttering other news outlets, as well as the arrests of Cardinal Zen and the other trustees of a group providing assistance to those targeted by authorities.

A year after an overhaul of Hong Kong’s electoral system that curtailed public participation and eliminated candidates lacking government approval, the selection of new leaders underscored the inability of the people of Hong Kong to participate meaningfully in their own governance and made the erosion of freedoms more difficult to reverse. Turnout in Legislative Council elections plummeted to record lows and more than two-thirds of district council members resigned or were disqualified. Twenty-five years after the PRC took control

## COMMISSION ACTIVITY

JULY 2021–OCTOBER 2022



## Hearings

- Corporate Sponsorship of the 2022 Beijing Olympics (July 2021)
- China's Environmental Challenges and U.S. Responses (September 2021)
- Protection from Persecution: Establishing Humanitarian Pathways for Hong Kongers and Uyghurs (October 2021)
- Techno-Authoritarianism: Platform for Repression in China and Abroad (November 2021)
- How China Uses Economic Coercion to Silence Critics and Achieve Its Political Aims Globally (December 2021)
- The Beijing Olympics and the Faces of Repression (February 2022)
- The Future of Women in China: #MeToo, Censorship, and Gender Inequality (March 2022)
- Growing Constraints on Language and Ethnic Identity in Today's China (April 2022)
- The Threat of Transnational Repression from China and the U.S. Response (June 2022)
- Tibet: Barriers to Settling an Unresolved Conflict (June 2022)
- The Dismantling of Hong Kong's Civil Society (July 2022)
- Control of Religion in China through Digital Authoritarianism (September 2022)

of Hong Kong promising a “high degree of autonomy” and “universal suffrage,” Xi presided over the inauguration of a new Hong Kong Chief Executive, John Lee, selected by a Party-controlled committee without any opposition.

Several of the highest profile stories of the year highlighted the pervasive problem of **violence against women**. A horrifying video of a mother of eight chained by her neck put renewed attention on issues of bride trafficking, coercive population policies, and lack of mental health treatment. Tennis star Peng Shuai's allegation of sexual assault by senior Party official Zhang Gaoli, along with Alibaba's mishandling of a rape accusation against one of its managers, reinvigorated China's #MeToo movement. While domestic violence remains widespread in China, some provincial-level governments sought to strengthen reporting and personal protection orders.

The review of China's compliance with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which the PRC has signed and ratified, did not occur as originally scheduled, a delay that comes at a time when the World Economic Forum ranks China 107th out of 156 countries in gender equality. The PRC's “three-child policy” maintains the decades-long intrusion of the state into families' decisions about if, when, and how to have children. Implementation of this policy prompted concern that, to achieve demographic goals, the government's coercive approach could shift to forced procreation.

Women, religious believers, LGBTQ persons, and others experienced an escalation in **online censorship and harassment** as China retained its designation, according to Freedom House, as the world's worst environment for internet freedom for the seventh straight year. Amidst ongoing suppression of feminist content and a national campaign promoting traditional gender roles, digital platforms abetted an unprecedented attack on online spaces for LGBTQ people, including the closure of dozens of WeChat accounts connected to communities at Chinese universities and other actions targeting rights advocacy, search terms, and entertainment content. A new set of sweeping regulations on online religious activities, which enact onerous registration requirements and ban a wide range of activities, could tightly restrict the already limited space for online religious freedom.

**Technology-enhanced authoritarianism**, exemplified by comprehensive surveillance and “predictive policing,” metastasized throughout China. Futuristic speculation about technology's capacity to control vast populations became reality for an estimated 373 million Chinese swept into draconian lockdowns as part of the government's “**zero-COVID**” policy, which leading Chinese and international medical experts deemed unsustainable. Using big data and artificial intelligence, authorities integrated information from mobile phone geolocation and contacts, facial recognition, consumer shopping habits, and personal health histories. This data provided the backbone

for disproportionately harsh public security measures, often using violent implementation of quarantine controls, that infringed on privacy rights, freedom of movement and expression, and due process. Many citizens under lockdown reported lack of food and medicine, deaths related to the inability to access medical care, and deprivation of care among vulnerable populations. The Chinese government's required political vetting of scientific papers, active disinformation campaigns about the origins of COVID-19, and continued refusal to provide key data obstructed international cooperation to address COVID-19, investigate its origins, and prepare for future pandemics.

Xi's continued **assault on ethnic minority cultures**, with the education system as the front line, stands as one of the year's most pernicious developments. Despite constitutional and legal protections for minority languages, officials introduced policies that emphasized Mandarin and reduced instruction in ethnic minority languages. Authorities' coercive assimilation policies included requirements to use Mandarin in preschools, the closure of private schools, and bans on Tibetan-language education. Most insidiously, reports documented the placement of nearly 80 percent of all Tibetan grade-school students, as well as hundreds of thousands of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslim children, in state-run boarding schools. Such schools disrupt the intergenerational transmission of language and culture and their students experience a high incidence of violence, abuse, and mental trauma.

The Commission observed no change in the other ways authorities oppress **Tibetans' freedom and self-determination**. Chinese officials remained intransigent with regard to reopening dialogue with the Dalai Lama and he remained a source of official paranoia, as evidenced by continued Party assertion of control over the selection of his reincarnation and the detention of at least 30 Tibetans for celebrating his birthday. Severe access restrictions continued, with zero approvals for journalists to independently report from the Tibet Autonomous Region in 2021. Three self-immolations by Tibetans drawing attention to political or religious issues, the first reported cases in over two years, tragically illustrated the failure of PRC rule in Tibet.

Heightened pressure on Tibetan Buddhists, Muslims, Falun Gong practitioners, Catholics, Protestants, and others produced an environment experts characterized as a **low point for religious freedom** in recent decades. Party officials sought to co-opt certain groups for nationalistic activities, restricting their ability to practice their religion freely. Falun Gong adherents faced brutal hardship, including custody-related deaths, lengthy prison sentences, and harassment, and a peer-reviewed study validated years of appalling anecdotal accounts of Falun Gong prisoners being executed by the harvesting of their organs. There also continued to be accounts that Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities in the XUAR have also been targeted for

## COMMISSION ACTIVITY

JULY 2021–OCTOBER 2022



### Annual Report

- 2021 Annual Report (March 2022)



### Commission Analysis

- Case Study: China's Economic Coercion against Intel, Sam's Club, and Walmart (April 2022)
- Hong Kong Prosecutors Play a Key Role in Carrying Out Political Prosecutions (July 2022)
- Hong Kong's Civil Society: From an Open City to a City of Fear (October 2022)



### Enacted Legislation

- Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (Public Law No. 117–78, December 2021)

## COMMISSION ACTIVITY

JULY 2021–OCTOBER 2022



## Letters

- Commissioners Ask IOC President to Postpone and Relocate the 2022 Winter Olympics If China Does Not End Abuses (July 2021)
- Xinjiang: Chairs Ask Hilton to End Hotel Project on Site of Destroyed Mosque (July 2021)
- Xinjiang: Chairs Seek Affirmation That Forced Labor Not Being Used by New York Fashion Week Exhibitors (September 2021)
- Chairs Ask Customs to Bar Imports from Companies Endorsing Use of Xinjiang Cotton as New NBA Season Begins (October 2021)
- Chairs Ask International Olympic Committee to Confirm Peng Shuai's Safety and Intervene on China's Human Rights Violations (November 2021)
- Chairs Ask NBC to Cover Uyghurs, Hong Kong and Human Rights during Beijing Winter Olympics Broadcast (December 2021)
- Chairs Seek Answers from Airbnb about Its Business Activities in Xinjiang (January 2022)
- Chairs Ask IOC President to Justify Contracts with Chinese Companies Using Forced Labor (January 2022)
- Chairs Ask UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to Release Xinjiang Report before Olympics (January 2022)

(continued on next page)

forced organ removal. Members of Muslim minority groups in China, beyond those subjected to genocide in the XUAR, suffered an escalating campaign throughout the country to remove characteristically Muslim elements from mosques. Unregistered Protestant churches encountered significant pressure via the detention of church leaders and crackdowns on religious education and media.

Chinese authorities built on previous regulatory structures and pressure campaigns to constrain **press freedom** and suppress **civil society**. The Foreign Correspondents Club of China decried the “breakneck speed” decline in press freedom and Reporters Without Borders named China the world’s “biggest jailer” of journalists generally and female journalists specifically. Female journalists of East Asian descent and Chinese employees of foreign news organizations experienced harassment. While officials tolerated organizations providing social welfare services locally, those advocating for citizen participation in governance received harsher treatment. Human rights lawyers, citizen journalists, women’s and LGBTQ rights organizations, labor organizers, and religious organizations, as well as foreign non-governmental organizations operating in those spaces, faced an especially constricted landscape, with many closing.

In addition to egregious human rights abuses within China’s borders, Chinese authorities increasingly reached into other countries to silence critics and enhance control over emigrant and diaspora communities, conduct digital and in-person surveillance, and force the repatriation of their targets. China’s campaign of **transnational repression**, which Freedom House considers the most comprehensive in the world, relied on a suite of tools that included passport controls, cyberattacks, intimidation, smear campaigns, spying, threats to family members still in China, and abuse of INTERPOL mechanisms. Chinese officials used coercive means in attempts to repatriate individuals from such places as Cyprus, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco to China, where they would face risk of torture. Chinese authorities reported that they “returned” 1,273 “fugitives” in 2021.

A sustained strategy of **economic coercion** threatened governments and businesses with retaliation for running afoul of Party priorities. This bullying, which Chinese authorities carried out through trade restrictions, fines, removal of products from commerce platforms, and calls for consumer boycotts, tended to be most effective on subnational levels. Governments generally stood their ground, epitomized by the resilience of Lithuania against a comprehensive assault on its economy after its government allowed the opening of a Taiwanese Representative Office. Australia also stood firm during the third year of China’s campaign of economic reprisals, for calling for an investigation into the origins of COVID-19. Conversely, companies often self-censored or complied with Chinese government demands.



The Chinese government signaled its intention to further extend its coercive power globally. New laws with extraterritorial application included legislation on data security, personal information protection, and foreign sanctions. Authorities sanctioned members of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom and two companies that sold arms to Taiwan. At the United Nations, Chinese representatives attempted to weaken human rights protections and help Russia avoid accountability for the invasion of Ukraine.

Belt and Road Initiative projects produced extensive threats to human rights, rule of law, and the environment, including substandard and abusive working conditions, corruption, destruction of fish populations, and threats to biodiversity posed by the promotion of certain traditional Chinese medicines. China continued to construct new coal facilities and experienced negative health effects caused by high air pollution levels.

The egregious human rights violations documented in this report place in stark relief Chinese authorities' efforts to control citizens and to reshape the global governance system away from the primacy of universal rights. The PRC continues to provide authoritarians around the world a model for how to assert coercive power and ideological purity over human dignity and individual liberty. Those who value human rights must stand up for basic freedoms against those who would unleash the unlimited power of the state.

## COMMISSION ACTIVITY

JULY 2021–OCTOBER 2022

### Letters (continued)

- **Chairs Ask U.S. Olympic Committee for Plans to Protect Athletes' Free Speech and Privacy** (January 2022)
- **Chairs Seek Protection for Uyghurs and Kazakhs at Risk of Deportation from Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and Kazakhstan** (February 2022)
- **Bipartisan CECC Leadership Seeks Increased Funding to Implement Uyghur Forced Labor Bill** (February 2022)
- **Commissioners Ask Amazon to Advocate for Labor Rights Activist** (February 2022)
- **Commissioners Ask Whether HSBC Is Undermining Democratic Freedoms in Hong Kong** (March 2022)
- **Chairs Promote Human Rights Provisions in China Bill Conference** (March 2022)
- **Commissioners Ask World Bank to Stop Funding Human Rights Abuses in Xinjiang** (April 2022)
- **Commissioners Urge a UN Committee on Torture Review of China** (April 2022)
- **Commissioners Seek Expanded Funding to Enforce the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act** (May 2022)
- **Commissioners Ask President to Sanction Hong Kong Prosecutors** (July 2022)

# KEY FINDINGS

## Freedom of Expression

- In contravention of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and China's Constitution, the People's Republic of China (PRC) enhanced control over the press; internet; art, literature, and entertainment sectors; and educational and research institutions.
- The government proposed new professional requirements for media organizations and journalists, including mandatory continuing education that includes studying ideological concepts developed by Xi Jinping and the Chinese Communist Party, as well as proposed restrictions on the use of private capital to fund news media activities.
- Reporters Without Borders (RSF) ranked China the world's "biggest jailer of journalists" and "biggest jailer of female journalists" this past year. Hong Kong authorities continued a crackdown on independent reporting that resulted in significant erosion of press freedom. China continued to detain and imprison professional journalists, non-professional "citizen" journalists, and Chinese nationals working for foreign media organizations. Of the journalists in prison this past year documented by the Committee to Protect Journalists, nearly half were Uyghurs.
- Authorities harassed and arbitrarily restricted the press freedom of foreign journalists amid what the Foreign Correspondents Club of China called a "breakneck speed" decline in press freedom. Authorities tried Australian citizen and China Global Television Network anchor Cheng Lei on a "state secrets" charge after 19 months of detention.
- The PRC took steps to control media coverage of the Party's image abroad, including coverage of high-profile events that took place in China. Authorities reportedly supported technology, foreign social media influencers, and academic research to better understand and implement manipulation of public opinion abroad, including countering human rights criticism, advancing disinformation about the origins of COVID-19, and understanding how "key opinion leaders" can help overcome negative international perceptions of Chinese state-affiliated media.
- Freedom House ranked China the "worst environment for internet freedom for the seventh year in a row." The Cyberspace Administration of China took steps to implement Party political guidance, including content controls; enforcement; and new, updated, and proposed regulations that raise concerns about their potential to restrict expression on broadly construed "national security" grounds.
- The PRC continued its campaign to create counter-narratives to criticism of Party positions on human rights conditions in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) and other sensitive topics abroad and domestically. Some digital content creators who developed content that discussed human rights issues in China reportedly faced harassment attempts and efforts to trigger censorship or demonetization of their content. At the same time, the PRC paid content creators to develop content in support of its priorities and mandated that Uyghurs do the same. Content creators, who have criticized the Chinese government, leaked emails from Chinese companies and state-controlled media that asked them and other creators to produce content supporting PRC interests. U.S. social media platforms were inconsistent in the labeling of content related to Chinese authorities.
- Before and during the 2022 Winter Olympics, authorities restricted press freedom arbitrarily, censored both online and broadcast content that did not align with PRC priorities, threatened athletes about human rights criticism, and implemented preemptive restrictions on high-profile critics, contravening protections for freedom of expression in the ICCPR, UDHR, China's Constitution, and the Host City Contract for the Olympic Games.
- Authorities censored discussion of a variety of topics on the internet; in the entertainment, art, and literature sectors; and in educational and research institutions. Sample topics included COVID-19 lockdown conditions, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and portrayals of gender roles and masculinity.
- Schools in China reportedly began incorporating compulsory education on Xi Jinping's signature political ideology into their curricula, following new guidance from the Ministry of Education.
- Authorities detained and imprisoned individuals in connection with their peaceful expression. The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention determined that human rights advocate and China Citizens Movement member **Zhang Baocheng** had been arbitrarily detained.

## Civil Society

- During this reporting year, PRC authorities continued to restrict the space for autonomous civil society and public participation, using regulations and harassment to suppress advocacy, expression, and assembly by unregistered religious groups, "illegal social organizations," human rights defenders, and groups promoting labor rights,

women's rights, and the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) people.

- The Ministry of Civil Affairs released its first-ever Five-Year Plan for the Development of Social Organizations (FYP). While the FYP authorizes “social organizations” to expand in the areas of social welfare and service provision, it constitutes “a grim blueprint for the [non-profit] sector’s development over the next five years,” according to an international expert.
- The government continued to constrain foreign non-governmental organization (NGO) activity under the 2017 PRC Law on the Management of Overseas Non-Governmental Organizations’ Activities in Mainland China (Foreign NGO Law). Freedom House observed that some foreign NGOs have decided to de-register due to the heavy annual administrative burdens imposed by the law. Five years into the implementation of the Foreign NGO Law, the space for universities and research institutions to work with foreign NGOs has been severely curtailed.
- In June 2022, authorities tried China Citizens Movement organizers and rights defenders **Ding Jiaxi** and **Xu Zhiyong** in closed-door trials for “subversion of state power.” They have been held for over two years in connection with a private gathering of civil society advocates and scholars in December 2019. Public security officials also continued to hold in detention feminist and labor rights advocate **Li Qiaochu**, after she revealed that authorities had tortured Xu, and charged her with “inciting subversion of state power.”
- Online platforms for civil society organizing and expression were shut down, censored, subjected to pressure, and their individual users harassed in an ongoing effort to deprive civil society movements of space and resources.
- The LGBTQ community in China continued to face many challenges – including persistent stigma, widespread discrimination, and harassment. Chinese government authorities increased restrictions on LGBTQ advocacy and organizing, as they have done with other advocacy groups. Chinese law neither recognizes same-sex marriage nor otherwise protects same-sex relationships.
- The Chinese government has signaled a shift toward an emphasis on traditional gender roles and family structures and Chinese authorities intensified their censorship of LGBTQ-related media and squeezed the online advocacy space, causing once thriving organizations to shutter their operations after many years.
- In July 2021, LGBTQ groups at several Chinese universities were shut down. In August 2021, administrative officials

at Shanghai University circulated surveys asking LGBTQ people to self-identify with no explanation as to what would be done with the information.

- In April 2022, the National Health Commission revised guidelines directly affecting the transgender community in what observers believe is an effort to comply with international standards. Additionally, in November 2021, the National Children’s Medical Center and Children’s Hospital of Fudan University in Shanghai municipality opened China’s first child and youth transgender clinic, aimed at providing children and youth with mental health and other healthcare resources.

## Freedom of Religion

- During the Commission’s 2022 reporting year, the PRC escalated efforts to “sinicize” religion, a process it defines as strengthening religious believers’ allegiance to the “great motherland, the Chinese nation, Chinese culture, the Chinese Communist Party, and socialism with Chinese characteristics.”
- In December 2021, the Party and government convened the first National Conference on Religious Work since 2016, signaling Xi Jinping and the Party’s intent to prioritize religious affairs.
- The National Religious Affairs Administration issued a set of sweeping Measures for the Administration of Internet Religious Information Services, which were announced on December 20, 2021, and went into effect on March 1, 2022. The measures require religious groups to have government-issued permits for their online activity, enact onerous registration requirements, and limit permissible online religious activity by registered groups.
- The Party attempted to coopt Buddhist and Taoist groups for a Party history campaign intended to inculcate patriotism and loyalty, including by forcing clergy to watch “patriotic movies.”
- Authorities continued to suppress the religious freedom of ethnic minority Muslims throughout the country, promoting the eradication of distinct ethnic and religious characteristics and increasing assimilation with Han Chinese culture.
- The PRC continued to exert pressure on unregistered Catholic communities in 2021 and 2022, as demonstrated by the detention of lay Catholics, clergy, and at least two Vatican-appointed bishops. Hong Kong authorities have also increasingly targeted the Catholic Church. In May, Hong Kong national security police arrested former bishop of Hong Kong Cardinal Joseph Zen.

- During this reporting year, PRC authorities continued to violate the religious freedom of Protestant Christians by engaging in pressure campaigns against unregistered churches, especially by detaining church leaders—often under manufactured “fraud” charges—and by cracking down on religious education and publishing.
- Public security and judicial authorities continued to use Article 300 of the PRC Criminal Law, which forbids “organizing and using a cult to undermine implementation of the law,” to persecute members of spiritual groups deemed to be illegal or to be “cults” (xiejiao), including Falun Gong, Church of the Almighty God, the Jehovah’s Witnesses, and others.
- Authors of a 2022 study published in the *American Journal of Transplantation* concluded that it was highly likely that transplant surgeons in China had participated in the execution of prisoners “by organ transplant” as recently as 2015. They further concurred with previous “anecdotal and textual” accounts provided by Falun Gong-affiliated organizations alleging organ harvesting from prisoners of conscience. There also continued to be accounts that Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities in the XUAR have also been targeted for forced organ removal.

## Criminal Justice

- The criminal justice system remained a political instrument used for maintaining social order in furtherance of the Chinese Communist Party’s authoritarian rule. The government punishes criminal acts, but it also targets individuals who pursue universal human rights, particularly when they independently organize or challenge the Party’s authority.
- Government officials used extrajudicial and extralegal means—such as mass internment camps, “black jails,” and psychiatric hospitals—to detain members of ethnic minorities, government critics, and people who seek redress for harm caused by official actions. “Retention in custody” is another form of extrajudicial detention. It is provided for by law and allows anticorruption officials to detain people without legal representation or judicial process. In one example, local officials detained police officer **Wang Shengli** through retention in custody and tortured him, reportedly in retaliation for Wang’s efforts to expose their corrupt schemes.
- Arbitrary detention did not abate despite official rhetoric promoting “rule-based governance.” Authorities labeled rights advocates and dissidents as criminals, using provisions such as “endangering state security” and other vaguely defined offenses. For example, authorities sentenced entrepreneur **Sun Dawu** to 18 years in prison on a range of criminal charges including “picking quarrels and

provoking trouble.” Previously, Sun had voiced support for human rights lawyers and criticized the government’s handling of the African swine flu epidemic.

- Legally recognized forms of detention—such as retention in custody and “residential surveillance at a designated location”—may lend a veneer of legality to official actions, but detention was often arbitrarily applied and used by officials as cover for secret detentions. Reports emerged this past year indicating that officials had tortured individuals while holding them in these forms of detention. As examples, petitioner **Wan Wenying** suffered fractured ribs due to repeated beatings; citizen journalist **Zhang Zhan** was subjected to force-feeding and was denied adequate medical care despite her fast-deteriorating health; and a transgender person, **Chen Luo’an**, reportedly endured sexual assault in a detention facility but the government did nothing to investigate.
- There continued to be examples of authorities denying detainees family and counsel visits. In one example, officials in Beijing municipality invoked public health concerns in preventing **Wang Su’e** from visiting her husband **Zhang Wenhe**, who was forcibly committed to a psychiatric hospital for the fifth time for his pro-democracy activities. In the case of **Wang Zang**, detention center officials prevented him from meeting with his lawyer for over one year and two months, alleging public health reasons; they granted a telephone conversation only after the lawyer filed a complaint with the procuratorate.

## Access to Justice

- To the extent that citizens rely on courts to protect their rights against state encroachment, political pressure on the court system undermines their ability to access justice. The Chinese Communist Party requires loyalty from the courts.
- Central authorities issued rules subjecting judges to performance evaluation, but such a system may be incompatible with judges’ duty of administering justice. Morality, listed as the first evaluation criterion, is primarily described as a political quality, referring to the judge’s political alignment and rejection of constitutional democracy, judicial independence, and separation of powers. Requiring judges to preserve PRC leader Xi Jinping’s core leader position can be problematic because judges “should uphold the laws, not a given leader.”
- Judicial transparency in China took a step backward due to the removal of court judgments from a database maintained by the government. Over a three-month period in early 2021, court officials removed from the site at



least 11 million cases which were primarily criminal and administrative cases involving politically sensitive subject matter or where government agencies were named as defendants.

- The quasi-governmental agency All China Lawyers Association issued provisional regulations that prohibit lawyers from “hyping up” cases, thereby violating their right to free speech and undermining government accountability, which may lead to wrongful convictions. The regulations additionally require lawyers to speak in line with official policies and are therefore in conflict with lawyers’ duty of loyalty owed to their clients, particularly in administrative litigation where government actions are in dispute.
- This past year, Chinese authorities continued to undermine rights lawyers’ ability to render legal help, by means including criminal prosecution, license revocation, and physical attack.

## Governance

- The Chinese Communist Party’s efforts to extend control over all sectors of society violate citizens’ right to fully participate in public affairs. As the Party’s dominance permeates society, the space for institutions of democratic governance diminishes, thereby weakening citizens’ ability to hold authorities accountable for human rights violations.
- Central authorities issued a policy plan with a stated goal of promoting the rule of law in China for the next five years. While the plan outlines strategies to improve bureaucratic efficiency and standardize administrative actions, it makes no mention of developing a mechanism to check the Party’s power. The Party further monopolized the narrative of the past, as it adopted an official version of its historical contribution to China’s development, portraying events in a way that served to legitimize government policies, tighten political control, and bolster Party General Secretary Xi Jinping’s personal authority, preparing him to serve at least one additional five-year term as General Secretary.
- The central and local governments issued plans to institutionalize the existing practice of mobilizing citizens through “social organizations,” whose members are sometimes paid to further government objectives. Recent examples show that the government has used social organization members to harass independent candidates who planned to run for a local election, and to boycott businesses that were alleged to have tried to comply with sanctions related to the Chinese government’s use of forced labor in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

- This past year, central authorities took a series of actions against businesses that had the effect of increasing the Party’s power to intervene in the economy so as to advance its objectives in politics, security, and ideology. Substantial fines were imposed on leading technology companies for alleged monopolistic activities. Those companies made contributions to support the “common prosperity” wealth redistribution policy as an apparent hedge against further penalties.
- The Commission observed a whole-of-government approach by the PRC in establishing stricter control over its population through its surveillance and “zero-COVID” policies during this reporting year. The Chinese government passed a new law on data that maintains government’s access to personal data while ostensibly safeguarding the “rights and interests” of PRC citizens. The PRC continued to invest in artificial intelligence surveillance systems and big data analysis programs that enhanced its ability to monitor citizens and implement social controls, which resulted in discrimination and violations of the right to privacy under PRC domestic law.

## Ethnic Minority Rights

- During the Commission’s 2022 reporting year, PRC authorities implemented policies that limited the freedom of ethnic minority groups to express their cultural and religious identities, in contravention of the PRC Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law and international law such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.
- During this reporting year, PRC officials introduced language and education policies that prioritized the acquisition of Mandarin Chinese and the reduction of ethnic minority language instruction. Australian scholar James Leibold said “[T]he education system is now the front lines in President Xi Jinping’s assault on ethnic minority cultures in China.”
- Authorities implemented programs and activities in Hui religious communities this past year which were aimed at “sinicizing” Islamic practices, a trend observers say limits Hui Muslims’ ability to practice their religion and culture.
- Following protests in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in fall 2020 over a new policy to reduce Mongolian language instruction in schools, authorities worked to eliminate dissent among Mongol parents, students, teachers, and others in the region. Officials launched mass “rectification” and “re-education” campaigns, including through “patriotism courses,” to shore up support

throughout all segments of Mongol society for the PRC's sinicization policies.

## Status of Women

- Women in China continue to face persistent gender inequality through ongoing promotion of traditional gender norms and gender-based discrimination. The Chinese government's poor implementation and lack of consistency after its codification of several laws and regulations aimed at addressing widespread gender inequality have failed to adequately address and implement structural reforms.
- In September 2021, the Chinese government announced the "Outline of Women's Development in China (2021–2030)," which the government says will play a vital role in the implementation of gender equality across numerous sectors. Additionally, the National People's Congress publicized proposed revisions to the PRC Women's Rights and Protection Law.
- As in previous years, the Chinese government has failed to fulfill its commitment to adequately represent women in legislative bodies, public institutions, and corporate entities.
- In response to a viral video of a mother of eight chained by her neck, the Chinese government announced a "strike hard" campaign directed at combating trafficking of women and children. The video brought renewed attention to the plight of rural trafficked women and to widespread issues concerning domestic violence in China.
- Chinese authorities continued to pressure and harass the digital community of feminists and women's rights advocacy organizations, which led advocates to shut down social media accounts and websites and rely on overseas networks to advance their causes.
- Several prominent cases this year highlighted weaknesses in the Chinese legal system regarding sexual harassment and assault, including the disappearance professional tennis player Peng Shuai following her sexual assault allegations, the dismissal of former China Central Television (CCTV) intern Zhou Xiaoxuan's #MeToo case, and the workplace sexual assault case against a former manager and company client at Alibaba.

## Population Control

- PRC authorities rejected calls to end birth restrictions, even though experts raised demographic, economic, and human rights concerns about the official population control policies. In August 2021, the National People's Congress amended the PRC Population and Family Planning Law from a two-child policy to a three-child policy based on

a policy change announced by the Chinese Communist Party in May 2021. The amended law also abolished "social maintenance fees," onerous government fines for exceeding birth limits under the one- and two-child birth limit policies. The government's enforcement of birth limits has included forced abortion and sterilization.

- PRC authorities have used draconian population control measures targeting Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR), including detention in mass internment camps, forced abortions, and forced sterilizations. This past year, research by scholar Adrian Zenz found that policies implemented since 2017 had "drastically reduced birth rates of ethnic [minority] groups." A historian said the government's claim of a regional population increase from 2010 to 2020 was a "distortion" aimed at masking population suppression. At the same time that PRC authorities have encouraged higher birth rates among Han Chinese women, they have continued to perform forced abortions and sterilizations among ethnic minority women in the XUAR, a practice that one expert described as carrying a "strong undertone of eugenics."
- The government's population control policies have exacerbated China's sex ratio imbalance; these policies have been linked to the ongoing trafficking of women for purposes of forced marriage and commercial sexual exploitation. The plight of trafficked women received considerable public attention following media reports in January 2022 about a woman found chained and malnourished in a shed in Jiangsu province, who reportedly was a victim of bride trafficking.
- A 2022 report found that many women, perhaps thousands, who suffered injuries from botched or untested sterilization and other procedures under the one-child policy, had sought redress for their injuries to no avail.
- Observers posited that, consistent with the coercive nature of the PRC's past population policies, new policies aimed at raising birth rates might give rise to coerced procreation involving human rights violations.

## Human Trafficking

- In April 2022, the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress ratified the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Forced Labor and Abolition of Forced Labour conventions. The PRC's multiple violations of forced labor human rights standards diminish any meaningful expectations that the government will work in good faith to meet the newly ratified ILO forced labor conventions, according to a human rights advocate.

- In November 2021, scholar Adrian Zenz and the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation published an analysis of leaked classified official documents that are known as the Xinjiang Papers. The analysis found that forced labor programs in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) were implemented in order to comply with “explicit statements and demands” made by PRC officials, including Chinese leader Xi Jinping. Chinese government-sponsored forced labor in the XUAR is a form of human trafficking under the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol).
- In February 2022, the ILO released the annual report of the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations. The Committee requested that the Chinese government review, repeal, and revise its forced labor and detention policies in order to end discrimination against ethnic minorities in the XUAR.
- A 2022 article in the American Journal of Transplantation found 71 organ transplant cases between 1980 and 2015 in which the removal of organs was the likely cause of a prisoner’s death. 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.
- The Chinese Communist Party-led ACFTU remains the only trade union organization legally recognized under Chinese law, and workers are not allowed to establish independent unions. The Party and government revised the PRC Trade Union Law to allow gig workers to join the ACFTU, and instructed the ACFTU to redouble outreach to unionize gig workers.
- The government does not publish official data on the number of strikes and labor actions, and its censorship of news and social media, along with its harassment and detention of citizen journalists and labor advocates, further limits access to information about labor unrest. The Hong Kong-based non-governmental organization (NGO) China Labour Bulletin (CLB) documented 1,094 strikes and other labor actions in 2021, which may only reflect between 5 and 10 percent of total worker actions. CLB found that more than 68 percent of those labor actions were related to wage arrears.
- Official repression of non-governmental advocacy for workers’ rights intensified during the past ten years. The detentions of graduate student **Fang Ran** and labor advocate **Wang Jianbing** in August and September 2021, respectively, reflect local authorities’ aggressive approach to individuals engaged in worker rights research and advocacy. Authorities appear to have released food delivery workers’ organizer **Chen Guojian** from detention in January 2022, but the circumstances of his release were not reported.

## Worker Rights

- The Chinese government describes digital platform workers, including food delivery workers, couriers, ride-hailing drivers, and truckers, as “flexibly employed.” Many of these workers face violations of international labor standards with regard to access to fair pay, employment contracts and agreements, and pensions and other insurance categories. They handle on-the-job risks that endanger their health and safety, and often lack residential permits (*hukou*) in the urban areas where they work, which limits their options for education, healthcare, and housing. Gig workers played a crucial role in transporting and delivering food and other essential goods to ordinary citizens in China held under draconian lockdowns due to coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreaks this past year.
- Officials have increasingly pressured technology and e-commerce companies to improve gig workers’ conditions. The campaign included a legislative amendment to allow gig workers to join the All-China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU), the issuance of multiple joint opinions that aim to establish employment norms for gig work and the platform economy, the publication of typical court cases involving overtime, and new provisions on algorithm management.

## Public Health

- As the highly infectious Delta and Omicron variants of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) spread quickly in China this past year, the Chinese Communist Party and government’s public health response continued to be shaped by Party General Secretary Xi Jinping’s political priorities. Features of political influence included the Party’s promotion of its “zero-COVID” policy as a success story to validate the Party’s decision making despite a growing chorus within and outside China that criticized a lack of planning for coexistence with the virus; active disinformation about the origins of COVID-19; lockdown management that employed disproportionately harsh public security measures and surveillance to “maintain stability”; and an ongoing lack of transparency in providing data needed by the international scientific community to more effectively handle COVID-19 through investigating SARS-CoV-2’s origins and better preparing for a future infectious pathogen. Authorities used repressive tactics against individuals, including **Zhang Zhan** and **Fang Bin**, who provided unauthorized

reports about the government's mishandling of the COVID-19 outbreak.

- International concern over the publication of genetic research by Chinese scientists using DNA samples taken from Uyghurs in China allegedly without obtaining informed consent sparked several genetics journals to investigate and retract several research papers.
- A case illustrating the vulnerability to human trafficking of women with developmental and mental health disabilities in China galvanized the public and pushed the government to prioritize aid to persons with psychosocial disorders in an anti-trafficking campaign, but domestic experts report a lack of systemic legal protections. Public security officials also continued to forcibly commit petitioners and other individuals whom authorities have deemed “disruptive” to psychiatric facilities in spite of clear provisions in the PRC Mental Health Law that prohibit this. Among the cases the Commission monitored this year were **Li Tiantian** and **Zhou Caifan**.
- Individual and organized public health advocacy continues in China, but the personal and professional risks of organized public health advocacy that authorities deem politically sensitive or even threatening, are evident in the ongoing or new detentions this past year of **Cheng Yuan** and **Wu Gejianxiong**, from the advocacy organization Changsha Funeng; **He Fangmei**, an advocate for victims of defective vaccines; and **Hu Xincheng**, a former investigative journalist and rights advocate.

## The Environment and Climate Change

- China remained the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases, including coal mine methane emissions, and is constructing 169 new coal mines and at least 5 new coal-fired power plants. China's high levels of air pollutants contribute to negative health effects including premature death.
- At the UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in November 2021, China and the United States, the world's two largest emitters of carbon dioxide, together pledged to cut greenhouse gases and take other actions in the “U.S.-China Joint Glasgow Declaration on Enhancing Climate Action in the 2020s.” In April 2022, U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry said that cooperation with China on climate change had become more difficult after Chinese authorities linked cooperation on climate change with U.S. behavior on unrelated matters, a position they reiterated in August 2022. During this reporting year, PRC citizens continued to face problems of water pollution and water scarcity.

The Ministry of Ecology and Environment (MEE) reported that 84.9 percent of tested surface water and 22.7 percent of tested groundwater in China was fit for human consumption. In addition, the construction of dams along major rivers in China and outside China as part of its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) was reported to have negative impact on the 11 countries downstream and elsewhere in the world.

- Authorities prosecuted and sentenced some citizens who raised concerns about the environment through protests and other forms of public advocacy. A court in the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region sentenced environmental advocates **Li Genshan**, **Zhang Baoqi**, and **Niu Haibo**, to prison in connection with their efforts to protect local endangered species. In another case, a court in Jiangxi province sentenced three individuals, **Xiong Yugen**, **Yang Fengying**, and **Yi Lianxiang**, to one year in prison, suspended for two years, in connection with their protests against a polluting factory near their village.
- A group consisting of 1 U.S.-based and 15 China-based environmental scientists concluded that climate change exacerbated extreme rainfalls in China in July 2021; these rains caused the deaths of 25 persons in Henan province, including 12 who were trapped in a subway. Observers noted that despite years of warnings from scientists, Chinese officials and scientists scarcely mentioned climate change as a contributing factor to increases in rainfall.

## Business and Human Rights

- Chinese and international businesses continue to be at risk of complicity in—and of profiting from—the PRC's use of forced labor to repress ethnic minorities in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). A report investigating Xinjiang cotton and the global supply chain concluded that “human rights due diligence is [currently] inadequate in identifying and addressing Uyghur forced labor in supply chains of manufacturers outside of China and enforcement mechanisms are not currently responding to the export of those goods internationally.”
- The PRC continued to threaten for-profit and non-profit organizations with loss of revenue or other forms of punishment if they mentioned human rights violations in the XUAR. In one case, authorities closed down an affiliate of labor auditor Verité Inc., after it reportedly investigated reports of forced labor in the XUAR. In another case, pro-Chinese Communist Party and Party-affiliated organizations criticized, and insinuated potential retaliation against, Kodak for posting pictures by a photographer who described the XUAR as “an Orwellian dystopia.”



- The Chinese government restricted freedom of expression this reporting year, and corporations continued to take part in censorship. Instances include the following examples:
  - Apple removed a globally used Quran app from the Apple app store in China.
  - Chinese companies removed media content of foreign individuals whose speech or actions did not conform with PRC narratives.
  - Disney Plus Hong Kong removed an episode of “The Simpsons” that satirically referenced human rights violations committed by the Party, including the violent suppression of the 1989 Tiananmen protests.
  - Apple and two British publishing firms, Octopus Books and Quarto, censored products intended for sale outside of mainland China.
- The Washington Post reported that, based on presentations obtained from Huawei’s website, Huawei marketed surveillance technology to the Chinese government—including surveillance technology used in the XUAR.
- The Commission observed reports that a labor rights whistleblower was tortured prior to being sentenced to two years in prison for exposing labor rights violations. The violations took place in a factory producing the Amazon Echo, Amazon Echo Dot, and the Amazon Kindle.

### North Korean Refugees in China

- Chinese and North Korean authorities arranged the repatriation of reportedly 50 North Korean refugees in July 2021. Repatriated North Koreans remained vulnerable to torture, imprisonment, forced labor, and execution, and the North Korean government signaled harsher punishment for escapees as well as family members within North Korean borders.
- In 2021, only 63 North Korean refugees were recorded as entering South Korea, compared to 229 in 2020 and 1,047 in 2019, the lowest since the South Korean Ministry of Reunification began recording the number of escapees in 1998. The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and related border closures contributed to the decrease.
- The UN Security Council issued a Resolution in 2017 requiring Member States, which includes China, to repatriate North Korean nationals working overseas to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) by December 2019. The Chinese government did not comply with this deadline to repatriate the approximately 20,000 to 100,000 North Koreans working in China as dispatch

workers, many of whom are subjected to forced labor and abusive working conditions.

- Women remain the largest demographic of North Korean refugees leaving the DPRK for China and they continue to be vulnerable to human trafficking and forced and low-wage labor. The Chinese government’s refusal to recognize survivors of trafficking and abuse prevents them from receiving legal protection or access to vital services.

### Tibet

- The Commission did not observe any interest from PRC officials in resuming formal negotiations with the Dalai Lama’s representatives, the last round of which, the ninth, was held in January 2010.
- The PRC continued to restrict, and seek to control, the religious practices of Tibetans, the majority of whom practice Tibetan Buddhism. Authorities in Tibetan areas issued prohibitions on forms of religious worship, particularly during major religious events or around the times of politically sensitive anniversaries, and restricted access to Tibetan Buddhist religious institutions. The PRC continued to assert control over the process of selection and recognition of Tibetan Buddhist reincarnated teachers, including the Dalai Lama.
- The Commission observed reports of three Tibetan self-immolations, bringing the number of self-immolations since 2009 in Tibetan areas reported to focus on political or religious issues to 154, of which 135 were reportedly fatal. On February 25, 2022, 25-year-old pop singer Tsewang Norbu fatally self-immolated near the Potala Palace in Lhasa municipality, Tibet Autonomous Region. On March 27, 81-year-old Tashi Phuntsog (or Taphun), fatally self-immolated at a police station near Kirti Monastery in Aba (Ngaba) county, Aba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan province. On March 30, Tsering Samdrub (or Tsering) self-immolated in Yushu (Yulshul) city, Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai province.
- Chinese authorities continued to threaten linguistic rights in Tibetan areas and enforce policies promoting or mandating the use of Mandarin Chinese instead of Tibetan or other local languages, including through ordering the closures of Tibetan-language schools. A rights advocacy group reported that nearly 80 percent of all Tibetan students were educated in state-sponsored colonial boarding schools, threatening Tibetans’ linguistic and cultural rights by separating children from their families and communities.
- In contravention of international human rights standards, officials punished residents of Tibetan areas for exercising

protected rights, including the expression of religious belief, criticism of PRC policies, and sharing information online. Notable cases this past year included writer **Lobsang Lhundrub**, better known as **Dhi Lhaden**, sentenced to four years in prison, possibly because of a book he was writing; **Rinchen Kyi**, a teacher at a private school that officials shut down in July 2021, detained for “inciting separatism” (and later released); and **Lobsang Trinle**, a Tibetan Buddhist monk sentenced to five years in prison after he shared the Dalai Lama’s teachings and writings about the Dalai Lama with other Tibetans.

## Xinjiang

- Key findings from a cache of tens of thousands of files obtained from public security bureaus in two counties in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) included: the key role of senior Communist Party and central government officials in carrying out the mass detention and other persecution of Turkic Muslims in the XUAR; the highly securitized nature of detention in the region’s camps and prisons; the high rate of imprisonment in Konasheher (Shufu) county in Kashgar prefecture, XUAR, as authorities increasingly sentenced Turkic Muslims to formal imprisonment; and arbitrary deprivation of liberty in camps and prisons.
- Reports published during the Commission’s 2022 reporting year indicated that XUAR officials increasingly sentenced many Turkic and Muslim individuals to long prison terms, sometimes following their detention in mass internment camps. According to international reporting and analysts’ review of satellite imagery, officials have converted many former mass internment camps into prisons or other types of formal detention facilities.
- International researchers and journalists found evidence that authorities continued to expand detention facilities, including mass internment camps. Based on research and analysis of leaked official documents and satellite imagery, BuzzFeed News journalists estimated in July 2021 that authorities in the XUAR had enough space in detention facilities in the region, including prisons and mass internment camps, to detain more than one million people at the same time.
- Authorities in the XUAR maintained a system of forced labor that involved former mass internment camp detainees and other Turkic and Muslim individuals. In its annual report released in February 2022, the International Labour Organization expressed “deep concern” over forced labor in the XUAR and asserted that the “extensive use of forced labor” on Turkic and/or Muslim minorities in the region violated the Employment Policy Convention of 1964.

- In September 2021, official media in the XUAR announced a new plan pairing Uyghur children with children from across the country, a move that observers believe is designed to control Uyghurs’ lives and eliminate Uyghurs’ cultural identity. Called the “Pomegranate Flower Plan,” the initiative matched Uyghur toddlers and elementary school students from a village in Kashgar prefecture with predominantly Han Chinese children from other parts of China, in order to establish “kinship” ties between the children.
- During the 2022 Ramadan period, which lasted from April 1 to May 1, authorities in parts of Urumqi municipality and Kashgar and Hotan prefectures reportedly enforced quotas for local Muslims allowed to fast during the holiday, and required them to register with officials. Reports published this past year showed that authorities have sentenced Turkic Muslims in the XUAR, including members of the clergy, to lengthy prison terms.
- Turkic women who had been detained in mass internment camps in the XUAR provided evidence to the Uyghur Tribunal that many female detainees were raped in the camps. One former camp detainee testified that unmarried, divorced, and widowed women were raped in a camp where she was detained and that men paid to come to camps to rape female detainees.

## Hong Kong and Macau

- The overhaul of Hong Kong’s electoral system in March 2021 substantially curtailed public participation and created a system that eliminates candidates whom central authorities do not endorse. Even before the overhaul, the spectrum of political voices had already narrowed rapidly, as most pro-democracy activists were in exile or criminal detention as a result of the National Security Law (NSL), passed in June 2020. The Legislative Council (LegCo) election held in December 2021 had almost exclusively pro-Beijing candidates and saw record-low turnout amidst calls for boycott over the election’s perceived illegitimacy. In May 2022 there was only one candidate for Chief Executive, John Lee, who was nominated and selected by a committee that was controlled and vetted by the Party. By design and in practice, the electoral overhaul is a departure from the ultimate aim, as stated in the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (Basic Law), of electing the legislative and executive officeholders by universal suffrage.
- Hong Kong authorities broadly applied criminal charges in a manner that undermined fundamental freedoms and damaged democratic institutions and the rule of law. Police have arrested over 10,499 people for political

and protest-related offenses since June 2019. Of these arrests, 183 involved national security offenses, which triggered procedures under the National Security Law including a strict bail standard that presumes guilt, trial by politically selected judges, and possible extradition to mainland China. Cases of note include **Jimmy Lai Chee-ying**, founder of a pro-democracy newspaper who is facing national security charges and a potentially lengthy prison term; **Leon Tong Ying-kit**, who was denied a jury trial; **Adam Ma Chun-man**, who received a five-year sentence for his speech; and 34 individuals whom authorities held in pretrial detention for over a year for peacefully participating in an informal primary election.

- The National Security Department of the Hong Kong Police Force raided pro-democracy news outlets Apple Daily and Stand News, froze their assets, and arrested their executives and editors on NSL charges. The police's actions forced the news outlets to cease operations, causing a ripple effect that shuttered other independent news outlets.
- Following the lead of mainland state-run media, rhetoric and actions by Hong Kong officials displayed a concerted effort to target civil society groups that were part of the pro-democracy movement in 2019, isolating them from the international community and causing their rapid disintegration in 2021. As of January 2022, at least 65 organizations had shut down or left Hong Kong after the enactment of the National Security Law, a trend that accelerated in the second half of 2021. These organizations include religious, community, political, media, union, and human rights groups, and their members cited pressure under the National Security Law.
- Macau Special Administrative Region authorities invoked political grounds in the disqualification of 21 pro-democracy candidates for election to the Legislative Assembly, which was followed by a record low turnout and the closure of a pro-democracy online news outlet.

## Human Rights Violations in the U.S. and Globally

- The People's Republic of China (PRC) continued a multi-year campaign of transnational repression against critics, Uyghurs, and others to stifle criticism and enhance control over emigrant and diaspora communities. Authorities and those acting at their direction engaged in digital and in-person harassment and surveillance, harassment and intimidation of China-based relatives of overseas targets, and attempted repatriation—in some cases coercive—to China, where UN and other experts argued they would face significant risk of torture. In June 2022, Freedom House reported that it had counted 229 cases of “physical transnational repression”—which can include “detention, assault, physical intimidation, unlawful deportation, rendition, or suspected assassination”—originating from China since 2014.
- The PRC used economic coercion against foreign governments and companies to stifle criticism of China's human rights conditions and other issues Chinese authorities deemed sensitive. Authorities used unacknowledged, informal economic coercion, such as a campaign against Lithuania—which resulted in economic losses—and economic coercion against Intel, Sam's Club, and Walmart that reportedly resulted in some consumers in China canceling their Sam's Club memberships. The government also introduced new authorities in Chinese law for carrying out economic coercion and formally sanctioned officials of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, as well as Raytheon and Lockheed Martin.
- Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) projects in multiple regions experienced worker rights violations, environmental problems, corruption, and opacity in project debt and project agreements with host country institutions. Those developments were consistent with reports of systemic problems in recent years as the scale of BRI investment, as well as Chinese government support and involvement in BRI, has increased.
- The PRC continued a longstanding global campaign to discredit universal rights in international institutions and reshape international consensus around human rights, in what Human Rights Watch described in 2017 as “a systematic attempt to subvert the ability of the UN human rights system to confront abuses in China and beyond.” The PRC took steps to impede UN bodies in their work to hold Russia accountable for human rights violations committed in its invasion of Ukraine, and the government attempted to weaken human rights protections in a draft instrument that would create legally binding human rights obligations for transnational and other businesses.
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# POLITICAL PRISONER CASES OF CONCERN

Members of Congress and the Administration are encouraged to consult the Commission's Political Prisoner Database (PPD) for credible and up-to-date information on individual prisoners or groups of prisoners. The Political Prisoner Cases of Concern in the Commission's 2022 Annual Report highlight a small number of individuals whom

Chinese authorities have detained or sentenced for peacefully exercising their internationally recognized human rights. Members of Congress and the Administration are encouraged to advocate for these individuals in meetings with People's Republic of China officials. For more information on these cases and other cases raised in the Annual Report, see the PPD.

Name	PPD Record No.	Case Summary (as of June 30, 2022)		
 <b>Xu Na</b> <b>2008-00675</b>  <b>Date of Detention</b> July 19, 2020		<b>Place of Detention</b> Dongcheng District Public Security Bureau (PSB) Detention Center, Beijing municipality	<b>Charge(s)</b> Organizing and using a cult to undermine implementation of the law	<b>Status</b> Sentenced to eight years
			<b>Context</b> Xu was detained along with 12 other Falun Gong practitioners for allegedly sharing photos of Beijing street scenes during the COVID-19 pandemic with an overseas publication associated with Falun Gong, and for possession of Falun Gong materials found at their homes.	<b>Additional Information</b> Xu's original lawyer, Liang Xiaojun, was disbarred in December 2021 by
				Beijing officials partly over his social media posts defending the rights of Falun Gong practitioners. Xu previously served two prison sentences, from 2001 to 2006 and 2008 to 2011, in connection with her practice of Falun Gong. She was detained in 2008 along with her husband Yu Zhou, who died in police custody shortly thereafter.
 <b>Niu Tengyu</b> <b>2021-00062</b>  <b>Date of Detention</b> August 22, 2019		<b>Place of Detention</b> Sihui Prison in Zhaoqing municipality, Guangdong province	<b>Charge(s)</b> Picking quarrels and provoking trouble; infringing on citizens' personal information; illegal business activity	<b>Status</b> Sentenced to 14 years
			<b>Context</b> In August 2019, public security officials took into custody 20-year-old coder Niu Tengyu and held him in Maoming municipality, Guangdong, as part of a major crackdown on users of the internet site EsuWiki, on which personal information of two relatives of Communist Party General Secretary Xi Jinping allegedly had been published. The court sentenced Niu to serve a total of 14 years in prison and fined him 130,000 yuan (US\$19,000).	<b>Additional Information</b> From December 10, 2019, to January 22, 2020, authorities held Niu under "residential surveillance at a designated location" (RSDL) to investigate him on a charge of endangering state security. Authorities tortured Niu, including through use of the "tiger bench," hanging him by his arms, burning his genitals, pouring saline solution over his injuries, and causing permanent injury to his right hand.
 <b>Tonyee Chow Hang-tung</b> <b>2021-00514</b>  <b>Date of Detention</b> June 4, 2021		<b>Place of Detention</b> Tai Lam Centre for Women, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR)	<b>Charge(s)</b> Inciting others to join an unauthorized assembly; inciting subversion of state power; failure to comply with notice to provide information	<b>Status</b> Detained
			<b>Context</b> On June 4, 2021, Hong Kong police arrested Tonyee Chow Hang-tung,	alleging that she had incited others to join a candlelight vigil commemorating the 1989 Tiananmen protests, which police had declined to authorize on public health grounds. Police released her on bail but arrested her again on June 30, accusing her of inciting others to join an unauthorized assembly on July 1, the anniversary of Hong Kong's handover. Chow was a rights lawyer and vice chair of the non-governmental organization Hong Kong Alliance, which organized June 4th vigils annually.
				In September, police arrested Chow and several other Hong Kong Alliance members for failing to surrender documents relating to the organization's operations, additionally charging her with "inciting subversion of state power" under the National Security Law (NSL). Chow has been sentenced to a total of 22 months in prison for two charges relating to unauthorized assembly. The charges brought under the NSL remained pending as of April 2022.



Name PPD Record No.	Case Summary (as of June 30, 2022)		
 <b>Jimmy Lai Chee-ying</b> <b>2020-00323</b>  <b>Date of Detention</b> August 10, 2020	<b>Place of Detention</b> Stanley Prison, Hong Kong SAR  <b>Charge(s)</b> Collusion with a foreign country or with external elements to endanger national security; conspiracy to defraud  <b>Status</b> Detained  <b>Context</b> On August 10, 2020, Hong Kong police took Jimmy Lai Chee-ying into	custody on suspicion of “collusion with a foreign country or with external elements to endanger national security” under the NSL and “conspiracy to defraud.” Lai is the founder of Apple Daily, which media sources have described as a pro-democracy publication. On August 10, 2020, police also detained nine other individuals, including Lai’s two sons and other democracy advocates and newspaper executives. Police did not disclose the specific facts underlying	the NSL charge and did not explain why the fraud charge, which was based on an alleged breach of a commercial lease, rose to the level of a criminal offense. Observers have said the arrests were authorities’ efforts to suppress free press and to intimidate pro-democracy advocates. Lai was formally charged under the NSL on December 11. He was briefly released on bail but has remained in detention since December 2020.
 <b>Chang Weiping</b> <b>2020-00014</b>  <b>Date of Detention</b> January 12, 2020	<b>Place of Detention</b> Feng County PSB Detention Center, Baoji municipality, Shaanxi province  <b>Charge(s)</b> Subversion of state power  <b>Status</b> Awaiting trial  <b>Context</b> Following his attendance at a December 2019 gathering of rights advocates in Xiamen municipality, Fujian province, rights lawyer Chang	Weiping was placed under RSDL in January 2020. Authorities released him on bail, but after he posted a video online in which he described his maltreatment while in custody, authorities again placed him under RSDL in October 2020 on suspicion of “inciting subversion of state power.” During the next six months, authorities repeatedly tortured Chang, and in April 2021 he was formally arrested for “subversion of state power.”	<b>Additional Information</b> During Chang’s time in RSDL, authorities subjected him to torture, including extended interrogation sessions, denial of adequate nutrition and hygiene, and sleep deprivation. As a result, he suffers from nerve damage to his fingers and sores caused by being restrained in a “tiger chair” for several days.
 <b>Li Yuhan</b> <b>2017-00361</b>  <b>Date of Detention</b> October 9, 2017	<b>Place of Detention</b> Shenyang Municipal No. 1 PSB Detention Center, Liaoning province  <b>Charge(s)</b> Picking quarrels and provoking trouble, fraud  <b>Status</b> Tried, awaiting sentencing  <b>Context</b> A lawyer, Li previously represented rights lawyer Wang Yu,	whom authorities detained in a crackdown on human rights legal professionals that began in mid-2015. Authorities held Li in extended pretrial detention from 2017 until her trial before the Heping District People’s Court in Shenyang on October 20, 2021.  <b>Additional Information</b> Li suffers from various health conditions, including heart disease, hypertension, and hyperthyroidism.	Staff at the detention center reportedly urinated on her food, denied her hot water for showering, denied her medical treatment, and threatened to beat her to death. In March 2018, Li went on a hunger strike to protest mistreatment, which prompted detention center officials to force-feed her. Detention center officials blocked her lawyer from meeting her, citing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Name PPD Record No.	Case Summary (as of June 30, 2022)		
 <p><b>Xu Qin</b> <b>2016-00015</b></p> <p><b>Date of Detention</b> February 9, 2018</p>	<p><b>Place of Detention</b> Yangzhou Municipal PSB Detention Center, Jiangsu province</p> <p><b>Charge(s)</b> Inciting subversion of state power</p> <p><b>Status</b> Formally arrested, held in extended pretrial detention</p> <p><b>Context</b> Police in Gaoyou city, Yangzhou, detained veteran rights defender Xu Qin in February 2018 on suspicion of “picking quarrels and provoking</p>	<p>trouble” in apparent connection with her advocacy on behalf of other rights advocates, including detained lawyer Yu Wensheng. In March, police placed Xu under “residential surveillance at a designated location” and accused her of “inciting subversion of state power.” After releasing Xu on bail in September, authorities maintained her bail conditions for three years. In November 2021, she was taken back into custody and formally arrested for “inciting subversion.” In June 2022,</p>	<p>Xu’s lawyer reported that she was paralyzed and in a wheelchair.</p> <p><b>Additional Information</b> A former Communist Party member, Xu was detained previously in 2016 in connection with a planned gathering of petitioners in Beijing municipality. Xu has been a member of the rights defense organizations China Human Rights Watch and Rose China, whose founder Qin Yongmin is serving a 13-year prison sentence for his democracy advocacy.</p>
 <p><b>Zhang Zhan</b> <b>2020-00175</b></p> <p><b>Date of Detention</b> May 19, 2020</p>	<p><b>Place of Detention</b> Shanghai Women’s Prison</p> <p><b>Charge(s)</b> Picking quarrels and provoking trouble</p> <p><b>Status</b> Sentenced to four years</p> <p><b>Context</b> On May 14, 2020, unknown individuals “disappeared” citizen journalist</p>	<p>Zhang Zhan in Wuhan municipality, Hubei province, the epicenter of the COVID-19 outbreak, in connection with her efforts to document the epidemic on WeChat, Twitter, YouTube, and other social media platforms. The Pudong New District People’s Court in Shanghai municipality tried and sentenced Zhang on December 28, 2020.</p>	<p><b>Additional Information</b> After the trial, Zhang went on a hunger strike that reportedly left her near death; in November 2021, her family reported that she weighed less than 40 kilograms and could not walk or lift her head on her own. In early 2022, her mother reported that Zhang’s health began to improve after she resumed eating.</p>
 <p><b>Li Genshan</b> <b>2020-00248</b></p> <p><b>Date of Detention</b> September 9, 2020</p>	<p><b>Place of Detention</b> Zhongwei municipality, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region</p> <p><b>Charge(s)</b> Picking quarrels and provoking trouble; extortion; harming or endangering rare wildlife</p> <p><b>Status</b> Sentenced to 4 years and 6 months</p> <p><b>Context</b> Zhongwei police criminally detained environmental advocate Li Genshan</p>	<p>on September 9, 2020, along with two fellow volunteers, in connection with their advocacy work. By the end of the month, police had detained 14 individuals in total as part of the case, and formally charged 8 of them, including Li. Li and several of those detained were volunteers with the Zhongwei Mongolian Gazelle Patrol Team, which sought to protect local wildlife. The Shapotou District People’s Court sentenced Li and two others on August 31, 2021; upon</p>	<p>appeal, the Zhongwei Intermediate People’s Court ordered a retrial on November 3. Following a January 2022 retrial, the Shapotou court sentenced Li and the other two to four years and six months in prison.</p> <p><b>Additional Information</b> Li and other members of the patrol team had previously reported corporations for environmental destruction and local forestry police for allegedly protecting poachers.</p>

Name PPD Record No.	Case Summary (as of June 30, 2022)		
 <p><b>Ding Jiayi</b> <b>2013-00307</b></p> <p><b>Date of Detention</b> December 26, 2019</p>	<p><b>Place of Detention</b> Linshu County PSB Detention Center, Linyi municipality, Shandong province</p> <p><b>Charge(s)</b> Subversion of state power</p> <p><b>Status</b> Tried, awaiting sentencing</p> <p><b>Context</b> Ding Jiayi is a disbarred lawyer and rights advocate. His December 2019 detention is linked to other rights advocates detained the same month following a gathering</p>	<p>at which participants discussed Chinese politics and civil society. Yantai municipality, Shandong, police initially placed Ding under RSDL in Shandong before Linyi police arrested him in June 2020 for “inciting subversion of state power,” a charge later changed to the more serious “subversion of state power.” Ding and legal advocate Xu Zhiyong have alleged that officials tortured them in custody, including by restraining them in “tiger chairs” during prolonged</p>	<p>interrogations. In June 2022, the Linshu County People’s Court held closed trials for Xu and Ding.</p> <p><b>Additional Information</b> Ding served a prison sentence from 2013 to 2016 due to his anti-corruption and government transparency advocacy. Authorities sentenced him to three years and six months in prison for “gathering a crowd to disrupt public order” in connection with planned demonstrations calling on officials to disclose their wealth.</p>
 <p><b>Xu Zhiyong</b> <b>2005-00199</b></p> <p><b>Date of Detention</b> February 15, 2020</p>	<p><b>Place of Detention</b> Linshu County PSB Detention Center</p> <p><b>Charge(s)</b> Subversion of state power</p> <p><b>Status</b> Tried, awaiting sentencing</p> <p><b>Context</b> Xu Zhiyong is a prominent legal advocate and one of the initiators of the New Citizens’ Movement (also known as China Citizens Movement). His detention is connected to the December 2019 gathering which led to Ding Jiayi’s detention.</p>	<p>Xu evaded a police search for 50 days prior to his detention, during which time he publicly urged Xi Jinping to leave office because of the government’s handling of the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to Xu’s arrest in June 2020, authorities held him under RSDL in Beijing municipality. Xu and Ding have alleged that officials tortured them in custody, including by restraining them in “tiger chairs” during prolonged interrogations. In June 2022, the Linshu County People’s Court held closed trials for Xu and Ding.</p>	<p><b>Additional Information</b> On February 16, 2020, Beijing police detained Li Qiaochu, a women’s and labor rights advocate and Xu’s partner; on June 18, authorities released her on bail. Xu previously served four years in prison from 2013 to 2017 for his rights advocacy work. In November 2020, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention found Xu’s detention to be arbitrary and in violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.</p>
 <p><b>Hao Zhiwei</b> <b>2020-00257</b></p> <p><b>Date of Detention</b> July 31, 2019</p>	<p><b>Place of Detention</b> Ezhou No. 1 PSB Detention Center, Ezhou municipality, Hubei province</p> <p><b>Charge(s)</b> Fraud</p> <p><b>Status</b> Sentenced to eight years</p>	<p><b>Context</b> Police from Echeng district, Ezhou, detained Hao, a pastor at the unregistered Egangqiao Church in Ezhou, and two of the church’s parishioners on July 31, 2019, on suspicion of “fraud.” Authorities alleged that Hao had directed the parishioners to fraudulently collect</p>	<p>church offerings. A September 2019 indictment charged Hao with conducting religious activities illegally because she refused to join the official Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement or Chinese Christian Council, and her church operated without approval from the two bodies.</p>
 <p><b>Helchem Pazil</b> <b>2022-00112</b></p> <p><b>Date of Detention</b> Unknown date in 2018 or 2019</p>	<p><b>Place of Detention</b> Changji Women’s Prison, Changji Hui Autonomous Prefecture, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR)</p> <p><b>Charge(s)</b> Inciting ethnic hatred; gathering a crowd to disturb public order</p>	<p><b>Status</b> Sentenced to 17 years</p> <p><b>Context</b> In a court judgment issued in 2019, the Korla (Ku’erle) Municipal People’s Court in Bayangol (Bayingoleng) Mongol Autonomous Prefecture, XUAR, sentenced</p>	<p>78-year-old Helchem Pazil and several of her relatives, including her three daughters and a daughter-in-law, to prison in connection with private gatherings in which they discussed family life and Islam.</p>

Name			
PPD Record No.		Case Summary (as of June 30, 2022)	
 <p><b>Meryem Emet</b> <b>2022-00124</b></p> <p><b>Date of Detention</b> Unknown date in 2017</p>	<p><b>Place of Detention</b> A prison in Kucha (Kuche) county, Aksu prefecture, XUAR</p>	<p><b>Context</b> In 2017, authorities in Urumqi municipality, XUAR, detained Meryem Emet and later sentenced her to 20 years in prison. Her sentence was reportedly connected with her marriage to a Turkish national, and with her having met and spoken with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan during his 2012 visit to Urumqi.</p>	<p><b>Additional Information</b> After her detention, XUAR authorities forced her two children, then ages four and six, into boarding schools in Urumqi, where teachers subjected them to traumatizing disciplinary measures including beatings and being forced to hold stress positions. After nearly 20 months at the schools, the two children were left unable to communicate in Uyghur.</p>
	<p><b>Charge(s)</b> Unknown</p>		
	<p><b>Status</b> Sentenced to 20 years</p>		
 <p><b>Lobsang Trinle</b> <b>2022-00016</b></p> <p><b>Date of Detention</b> July 1, 2021</p>	<p><b>Place of Detention</b> Mianyang Prison, Mianyang municipality, Sichuan province</p>	<p><b>Context</b> A monk at Kirti Monastery in Ngaba (Aba) county, Ngaba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan, Lobsang Trinle was detained by police in July 2021 and held at an unknown location. He was reportedly detained for sharing the Dalai Lama's teachings and</p>	<p>writings about the Dalai Lama with other Tibetans.</p> <p><b>Additional Information</b> His family was unable to attend the trial and sentencing, and he may not have had legal counsel.</p>
	<p><b>Charge(s)</b> Unknown</p>		
	<p><b>Status</b> Sentenced to five years</p>		
 <p><b>Thubten Lodroe</b> <b>2022-00125</b></p> <p><b>Date of Detention</b> October 2021</p>	<p><b>Place of Detention</b> Unknown; likely in Chengdu municipality, Sichuan</p>	<p><b>Context</b> A Tibetan writer also known by his pen name Sabuche, Thubten Lodroe was detained by Sichuan province security officials near his home in Sershul (Shiqu) county, Kardze (Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan, in October 2021 and taken to Chengdu. His writings are well known online and cover topics including Tibetan society, politics, and language rights. Further infor-</p>	<p>mation on Thubten Lodroe's case following his sentencing, including his whereabouts and his condition in custody, was unavailable.</p> <p><b>Additional Information</b> Chinese authorities reportedly blocked his social media accounts and deleted his posts, placed his family under surveillance, and prevented his two children from attending school.</p>
	<p><b>Charge(s)</b> Inciting separatism; possibly picking quarrels and provoking trouble</p>		
	<p><b>Status</b> Sentenced to four years and five or six months</p>		



# GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO CONGRESS AND THE ADMINISTRATION

The Commission makes the following recommendations for Administration and congressional action, recognizing that human rights are at the core of the U.S. relationship with the People's Republic of China (PRC), as a reflection of American principles and as a commitment to fundamental rights and freedoms in the People's Republic of China.

## Address Transnational Repression

The PRC targets Uyghurs, Hong Kongers, Tibetans, dissidents, members of the Chinese-American diaspora community, and others in a sophisticated and comprehensive effort to silence criticism, conduct surveillance, and in some cases abduct or repatriate critics and others deemed sensitive. The Administration should send to Congress a comprehensive strategy outlining efforts to constrain the PRC's ability to commit acts of transnational repression, to increase accountability for perpetrators of such acts, and to better protect those at risk of intimidation and harassment. In addition, the Administration and Congress should:

- Instruct federal law enforcement to ensure protection from intimidation and surveillance for U.S. residents; provide outreach directly to diaspora communities; and ensure there are easily accessible, safe, and secure portals to report coercion or intimidation;
- Update transparency laws to better identify and take legal action against foreign officials and individuals acting on behalf of foreign governments to surveil and intimidate dissident and diaspora communities;
- Seek to expand existing authorities to sanction individuals and entities directing transnational repression from abroad and bolster intelligence-gathering capacity to identify the perpetrators;
- Enhance training for State Department and law enforcement personnel to recognize and combat transnational repression;
- Describe the scope and impact of censorship and surveillance on Tencent's WeChat platform, ByteDance's TikTok, and Chinese-made mobile phone browsers and any steps taken to protect users' sensitive personal information and freedom of expression; and
- Take the lead on a UN Human Rights Council resolution to create a UN special rapporteur for transnational repression.

## End Forced Labor Imports.

The Administration should fully implement the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA) (Public Law No. 117-78), and the Forced Labor Enforcement Task Force should regularly update and expand the lists of entities identified as complicit in forced labor, pursuant to this law. Congress should provide robust funding to U.S. Customs and Border Protection to enforce the import restrictions required to carry out the law. In addition, the Administration should:

- Sanction individuals engaged in significant labor trafficking under section 111 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, as amended (22 U.S.C. § 7108) and under section 5 of the UFLPA;
- Issue a report on forced labor and the U.S. Government's procurement process with the aim of excluding any companies engaged in the production of goods using the forced labor of ethnic minorities or other persecuted groups in China;
- Direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to require issuers of securities to disclose whether they have established or maintained activities with entities in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) identified as complicit in the use of forced labor or other gross violations of human rights; and
- Encourage foreign governments and legislatures to adopt their own national legislation or regulations modeled on the UFLPA.

## Stop Atrocity Crimes

The Administration should create and fund programs to document, preserve, and analyze evidence of genocide and crimes against humanity committed by PRC officials in the XUAR, with a view toward future accountability measures, including criminal prosecutions. In addition, the Administration should:

- Coordinate with allies and partners to request the appointment of a UN special rapporteur on the XUAR or other special procedures to address the PRC's egregious human rights abuses, including pressing for the formation of a UN Commission of Inquiry on human rights in the XUAR;
- Request open debates on the XUAR at the UN Human Rights Council and UN Security Council, as well as an Arria-formula briefing, to address the human rights violations outlined in the assessment released by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights;

- Expand the Department of Commerce’s “Entity List” to include any company engaged in biometric surveillance that aids in the commission of atrocity crimes in the XUAR; and continue to use available sanctions authorities, including those provided by the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act (Title XII, Subtitle F of Public Law No. 114-328; 22 U.S.C. § 2656 note), as well as the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act (22 U.S.C. § 6901 note) as amended by the UFLPA, including for any officials or entities complicit in forced sterilizations and forced abortions in the XUAR or the forced separation of children from their families.

### Defend the People of Hong Kong

The Administration should robustly implement the sanctions provided in the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act (Public Law No. 116-76) and the Hong Kong Autonomy Act (Public Law No. 116-149), including those for financial institutions and individuals complicit in the dismantling of Hong Kong’s autonomy and rights protections and the PRC’s violation of the 1984 Sino-British Declaration, an international treaty; and work with allies and partners at the United Nations and other multilateral organizations to issue frequent public statements and make other diplomatic efforts to seek the release of political prisoners and address violations of international human rights standards. In addition, the Administration and Congress should:

- Extend the lapsed prohibition on sales of police equipment and crowd control technology to the Hong Kong police, as provided by Public Law No. 116-77, and make this ban permanent unless the U.S. President certifies that Hong Kong is again sufficiently autonomous to justify special treatment under U.S. law;
- Use appropriated funding to support non-governmental organizations (NGOs) outside of Hong Kong working to promote the rule of law, human rights, civil society development, and democratic freedoms in Hong Kong; and
- Seek to preserve the flow of independent news and information from Hong Kong by supporting the creation of academic residency programs and media accelerator projects for Hong Kong journalists and executives whose news and media outlets were shuttered due to abuse or threats under the PRC Law on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

### Support Victims of Persecution

Congress and the Administration should work to accelerate processing times for current refugee and asylum cases and ensure that the expansion of the annual cap on refugees admitted to the United States is used to increase protection and resettlement of those fleeing PRC persecution, prioritizing steps to:

- Remove barriers for properly vetted Hong Kong residents to receive U.S. visas, particularly those attempting to exit Hong Kong for fear of political persecution, and pass the Hong Kong Safe Harbor Act (S. 295, H.R. 461) and the Hong Kong People’s Freedom and Choice Act (H.R. 4276);
- Extend Priority 2 refugee status to Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities by passing the Uyghur Human Rights Protection Act (S. 1080, H.R. 1630), and expand use of the T-visa provided for in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. Chapter 78) for trafficking victims already in the United States to assist in investigations of both labor and sex trafficking;
- Engage with countries with significant populations of Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities fleeing persecution in China, as well as the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, to stop forced deportations to the PRC of those persecuted by the PRC; and
- Ensure that sufficient funding and authorities are available for psychological and health care support for victims of genocide and crimes against humanity, particularly in countries of first asylum, through programs authorized by the Torture Victims Relief Act (Public Law No. 105-320) as funded through the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022 (Public Law No. 117-103).

### Address the Threat of Economic Coercion

The PRC has used the threat and execution of trade restrictions and predatory infrastructure loans as leverage to silence criticism and to influence discussion of its human rights violations. The Administration should provide Congress a strategy for reducing the threat of trade restrictions or other economic coercion. In addition, the Administration and Congress should:

- Identify legal authorities needed to create a global reserve fund to assist companies, industries, municipalities, and others affected by the PRC’s economic coercion;
- Consider trade barriers that need to be revised either to impose retaliatory tariffs on Chinese imports as part of joint action with allies and partners or to buy products targeted by the PRC through economic coercion;
- Develop a plan to deploy expert economic response teams to assist countries facing economic coercion or challenges related to worker rights violations, environmental protection, debt restructuring, and other human rights concerns created as a result of Belt and Road Initiative projects; and
- Work in concert with allies and partners at the World Trade Organization or other international institutions to challenge boycotts and trade restrictions that undermine the integrity of the rules-based global economic order.

## Limit Malign Influence Operations

Malign political influence operations conducted by the PRC are part of an increasing global threat to stifle basic freedoms and bolster repressive forms of governance and pose significant challenges to the United States and countries around the world. The Administration and Congress should work together on measures to address these challenges, such as to:

- Establish an interagency “China Censorship Monitor and Action Group” to address the impacts of censorship and intimidation on American citizens, legal residents, and companies, and consider expanding such group globally with allies and partners;
- Employ a portion of the funds appropriated for the “Countering Chinese Influence Fund” to promote transparency and accountability projects, including increasing the capacity of independent investigative journalists and civil society organizations in countries with Belt and Road Initiative projects to expose corruption, malign influence tactics, and environmental risks;
- Develop a multi-stakeholder action plan and code of conduct with universities, foundations, think tanks, film production companies, publishers, NGOs, and state and local governments so that their interactions with foreign governments or entities uphold standards of academic freedom, corporate ethics, and human rights;
- Require U.S. colleges, universities, and their faculty to publicly report all foreign gifts, contracts, and in-kind contributions that exceed \$50,000 in any single year from any source associated with a country designated by the Secretary of State as a foreign country of concern, building on the model provided by the disclosure requirements in the Research and Development, Competition, and Innovation Act (Public Law No. 117-167);
- Expand Mandarin language training in U.S. schools and colleges by creating and funding the Liu Xiaobo Fund for the Study of Chinese Language and alternatives to PRC-funded Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms;
- Require U.S. think tanks and NGOs to disclose foreign grants and gifts as part of their tax filings to maintain non-profit status; and
- Update and expand the requirements of the Foreign Agents Registration Act (22 U.S.C. § 611 et seq.) to cover individuals and other entities lobbying on behalf of foreign governments, entities, or organizations working on educational or scientific pursuits; to restrict acquisitions of technologies banned under U.S. export controls; and to curtail efforts to stifle academic freedom by acting through

organizations like the Chinese Students and Scholars Association and Confucius Institutes.

## Confront the Challenge of Digital Authoritarianism

The PRC is developing technology and using artificial intelligence (AI) to expand mass surveillance and social control of its citizens while exporting surveillance technology globally in an effort that could undermine democratic freedoms and governance. The Administration should work with like-minded allies to protect user privacy and human rights by developing a set of global principles for the use of AI-driven biometric surveillance and championing high-standard internet governance principles that support freedom of expression. In addition, the Administration and Congress should take steps to

- Amend the Foreign Investment Risk Review Modernization Act (Title XVII, Public Law No. 115-232) to trigger a Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) review of any foreign company seeking to acquire U.S. assets controlling biometric information of Americans or technology to more efficiently collect and process biometric information; and
- Expand and focus foreign assistance projects on internet freedom and media literacy to provide digital security training for civil society advocates, identify and counter foreign government propaganda efforts, and help users circumvent sophisticated internet firewalls that infringe on freedom of expression and association.

## Champion Human Rights Standards Globally

The United States must create public messaging and public diplomacy programs that clearly communicate to domestic and international audiences the nature and scope of PRC challenges to international law and universal human rights standards and develop human rights programming that creatively supports legal reformers, civil society activists, independent journalists, and rights defenders as well as labor, religious freedom, and democracy advocates in China and globally. In addition, the Administration and Congress should work together on steps to:

- Provide sufficient funding for public diplomacy efforts and the U.S. Agency for Global Media, both to combat PRC propaganda and provide messaging platforms to communicate the U.S. Government’s efforts to protect human rights and democracy globally;
- Authorize and appropriate funds for technical assistance and capacity-building initiatives for rights and rule-of-law advocates in settings outside China, given growing restrictions on the funding of these types of civil society organizations inside mainland China and in Hong Kong; and

- Support educational and cultural exchange programs, including restoration of the Fulbright exchange program in mainland China and Hong Kong and preservation of scholarship and exchange programs for Tibetans, as a valuable resource and to maintain positive influence channels with the Chinese people.

### Form Global Coalitions to Protect Human Rights

The Administration should mobilize issue-based coalitions to coordinate messaging, technical assistance programming, and rules-based governance approaches to technology, trade, supply chain, standards, sustainable development, and other issues. These coalitions would facilitate the creation of a toolkit of actions to address genocide and crimes against humanity and any new violation of international standards by the PRC—including coordinated sanctions, import restrictions to address forced labor, export controls on surveillance technology, infrastructure and development models that respect human rights, supply chain transparency and resilience, and joint action at the United Nations and other multilateral institutions.

### Strengthen International Organizations

The Administration should work to ensure that international organizations remain true to their founding principles. The Administration should work with allies and partners to ensure that the governance structures of entities like the International Telecommunication Union, the International Labour Organization, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), the World Intellectual Property Organization, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the World Health Organization (WHO) meet the highest standards of transparency, accountability, and reform; uphold universal human rights; and address pressing transnational challenges. In particular, the Administration should coordinate with allies and partners to strengthen commonly held positions on internet freedom, human rights norms, and human rights violations. The Administration should raise these issues repeatedly with PRC officials at the United Nations and other international bodies, including the UN Human Rights Council, and at hearings of treaty monitoring bodies, such as the Committee against Torture. In addition, the Administration and Congress should work together to:

- Support representation by countries that will promote transparency, accountability, and reform at human rights bodies and international organizations setting standards on issues such as public health and the internet, particularly by coordinating with like-minded countries to advance candidates for leadership positions and support robust staffing at all levels of the organizations, including the UN Junior Professional Officer Programme;
- Establish an annual report on the PRC's malign influence operations in the United Nations and other international organizations that details any actions that undermine the principles and purpose of the United Nations and its various agencies, particularly those related to human rights, internet governance, law enforcement, global health, environmental protection, the development of norms on artificial intelligence and biometric surveillance, labor, standards setting, and freedom of navigation; and
- Press the WHO to conduct a transparent and credible investigation into the origins of SARS-CoV-2, including a forensic investigation of relevant laboratories and other venues in Wuhan municipality, Hubei province; promote reforms to reliably limit malign Chinese Communist Party influence in the WHO; strengthen the International Health Regulations (IHR) to make clearer the obligations of Member States and consequences for those that fail to provide timely and transparent information about infectious disease outbreaks; and create a regular Periodic Review for compliance of Member States with the IHR.

### Require Human Rights Due Diligence from the World Bank

Congress should direct the Secretary of the Treasury to instruct the executive directors of relevant International Financial Institutions (IFIs) to determine whether any existing projects are funding entities that, directly or indirectly, support the PRC's "poverty alleviation" programs in the XUAR or Tibetan areas or whether IFI funding abets human rights abuses in other parts of the PRC. Congress should require a report providing details of efforts by the executive directors to end these projects and include the specific steps taken in the last fiscal year to promote human rights more generally in IFI lending, as required by the FY2021 Consolidated Appropriations Act (Public Law No. 116-260).

### Condition Access to U.S. Capital Markets

The Administration should continue to identify and list Chinese companies and entities that have provided material support or technical capabilities that violate U.S. laws, enhance mass surveillance capabilities, bolster PRC police or security apparatus, and facilitate human rights abuses in China, including in the XUAR and Tibetan areas, in the Treasury Department's Non-SDN Chinese Military-Industrial Complex Companies List (NS-CMIC List) and the Commerce Department's Entity List and Unverified List. In addition, Congress should strengthen disclosure and auditing requirements for any listed Chinese companies in U.S. capital markets to ensure that American retirement and investment dollars do not fund companies with links to the PRC's security apparatus, genocide, or other malevolent behavior that undermines U.S. interests or internationally recognized human rights.



### **Defend Values While Not Abetting Anti-Asian Discrimination or Chinese Propaganda.**

The Administration and Congress should create public messaging strategies that clearly differentiate the peoples and cultures of China from the PRC and challenge Chinese Communist Party propaganda efforts to exploit protests in the United States, such as those against anti-Asian discrimination, as well as xenophobic rhetoric, to further its objectives. Poorly designed and communicated messaging about U.S. efforts to counter PRC policies can fuel Chinese Communist Party propaganda that references instances of intolerance or harassment of people of Chinese descent and other Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, frustrating the ability of the United States to craft a domestic consensus for a China policy grounded in the principles of human rights and the rule of law. U.S. officials should always be clear that they stand for human rights and the rule of law, and against discrimination and intolerance of any kind.

### **Promote Women's Rights and Gender Equality**

The Administration should work with Congress to support the reinstatement of international NGOs that aim to support women in the economic, legal, and healthcare sectors in China and fund cross-border training, academic exchange, and other technical assistance programs with the goal of adequate implementation of the PRC Anti-Domestic Violence Law, particularly the use of personal protection orders. In addition, the State Department should urge the PRC to cease harassment, intimidation, and other forms of mistreatment, offline and online, of women's rights activists and organizations and to ratify International Labour Organization Convention No. 190, the Convention Concerning the Elimination of Violence and Harassment in the World of Work (2019).

### **Preserve Threatened Cultures and Languages**

Congress and the Administration should respond to myriad threats to the cultural and linguistic heritages of repressed groups in the PRC by developing programming, both in the United States and around the world, to preserve threatened cultures and languages. The Administration should expand grant programs to assist Uyghur, Mongol, and other ethnic and religious minorities in cultural and linguistic preservation efforts and leverage the tools available in the Tibetan Policy and Support Act (Public Law No. 116-260, 134 Stat. 3119) to help sustain the religious, linguistic, and cultural identity of the people of Tibet. The Administration should prioritize, and Congress should fund, exhibitions, research, and education related to these efforts.

### **Promote a Resolution to the Tibet-China Conflict**

PRC officials continue to show no interest in responding to the Dalai Lama's request for dialogue and continue to disseminate

false information about Tibet's history. To strengthen the longstanding, bipartisan U.S. policy of promoting dialogue, the Administration and Congress should ensure that calls for dialogue are based on the Tibetan people's right of self-determination under international law and use available resources to counter disinformation about Tibet from PRC officials.

### **Restore a Diplomatic Presence in Tibet**

The closure of the U.S. Consulate in Chengdu municipality, Sichuan province, in 2020 deprived the State Department of an operational diplomatic presence in proximity to the Tibetan Plateau. The State Department should engage the PRC on opening a consulate in Lhasa, Tibet, as called for in the Tibetan Policy Act (Public Law No. 107-228, 116 Stat. 1396), as amended, or as an interim step, reopening the consulate in Chengdu.

### **Create a Special Advisor for Political Prisoners.**

The Administration should consider creating the position of Special Advisor for Political Prisoners to develop and coordinate diplomatic strategies to gain the release of political and religious prisoners and to serve as a resource to former political prisoners living in the United States seeking guidance on their travels abroad and medical and psychological care. The Administration should also work to end the PRC's unacceptable use of "exit bans."

### **Advocate for Political Prisoners**

Members of Congress and Administration officials at all levels, including the highest levels, should raise specific political prisoner cases in meetings with PRC officials. Experience demonstrates that consistently raising individual prisoner cases and the larger human rights issues they represent can result in improved treatment in detention, lighter sentences, or, in some cases, release from custody, detention, or imprisonment. Members of Congress are encouraged to consult the Commission's Political Prisoner Database for reliable information on cases of political and religious detention in mainland China and in Hong Kong, and to "adopt" individual prisoners and advocate on their behalf through the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission's "Defending Freedoms Project."

**T**he Commission's mandate is to monitor the behavior of the People's Republic of China according to international human rights standards. It is the state that incurs obligations under international law, and thus it is the government that bears responsibility thereunder for the private activities of persons or entities, including political parties. Given the Chinese Communist Party's nearly absolute control of the Chinese political system, there is negligible practical difference between Party and government when discussing the wielding of power in China. As a matter of monitoring human rights, the Commission must be clear in its reporting both that the Party exercises power over the government and that the government bears the obligation to uphold such rights.

This Annual Report seeks to reflect the Party-state dynamics in China by listing the Party or the government as the primary actor in cases where it is appropriate to do so. In order to promote readability, this Annual Report uses the acronym "PRC" (People's Republic of China) as a general descriptor in instances in which the roles of the Party and the government are indistinguishable or both applicable.

The Commission faces a similar challenge in characterizing Xi Jinping. His power primarily derives from his position as General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party and as Chairman of the Central Military Commission. Xi Jinping also has the title of "*zhuxi*," a largely ceremonial post that carries little power but one that makes him head of state. While the U.S. Government translates this title as "President," some Commissioners view it as inaccurate or inappropriate to use this title. Thus, the report uses the identifier "Chinese leader" as shorthand for Xi Jinping's multiple roles. This report does not reflect any changes in leadership titles announced at the 20th National Party Congress, which occurred after this report went to press.

Descriptions of the Party, government, and their leadership do not reflect judgments of the Commission regarding the legitimacy of these entities and individuals. The Commission will continue to evaluate characterizations of the aforementioned leadership dynamics in future annual reports to conform to standards of accuracy, relevance, and consistency with common practice among the community of interest.



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