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# RELIGION WITH "CHINESE CHARACTERISTICS": PERSECUTION AND CONTROL IN XI JINPING'S CHINA

## HEARING

BEFORE THE

## CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON CHINA

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

JULY 23, 2015

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# RELIGION WITH "CHINESE CHARACTERISTICS": PERSECUTION AND CONTROL IN XI JINPING'S CHINA

**THURSDAY, JULY 23, 2015**

CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE
COMMISSION ON CHINA,
*Washington, DC.*

The hearing was convened, pursuant to notice, at 11:02 a.m., in HVC 210, Capitol Visitor Center, Representative Christopher H. Smith, Chairman, presiding.

Also present: Senator Marco Rubio, Cochairman; and Representatives Randy Hultgren, Robert Pittenger, and Timothy J. Walz.

## OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, A U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM NEW JERSEY; CHAIRMAN, CONGRESSIONAL–EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON CHINA

Chairman SMITH. Good morning, and thank you especially to our very distinguished witnesses for being here this morning, as well as to all of those who care so deeply about human rights and are here in the audience.

The freedom of religion is the most fundamental and the most elemental of all human rights. It is clearly the first freedom from which all the others flow. It allows each citizen the precious right to follow their conscience peacefully and without fear.

It protects the critical part of who we are as human beings to seek, to speak, and to act out our fundamental beliefs. When this freedom is protected, the very well-being of society is enhanced. No government should deny or suppress this essential claim to conscience.

The reality is, and the tragic reality is, governments and terrorist groups do restrict the freedom of religion, sometimes in the most brutal and public ways. The freedom of religion today, as it has been for a number of years, is under siege in many places in the world, including and especially in China, which is of course the subject of today's hearing.

Because religious freedom conditions are deteriorating globally, I recently introduced H.R. 1150, the Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Act. The bill gives the administration tools to better address religious freedom violations around the world.

It is why I am also fighting to reauthorize the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, or USCIRF, which is a bipartisan and independent advisory group that has done incisive work over the years. USCIRF gives Congress vital recommendations

about religious freedom conditions globally and recommendations for actions.

Several years ago during a visit to the United States, Xi Jinping was interviewed by a Chinese reporter on fellowship at U.S. colleges. After the interview, President Xi asked a single question of this reporter who was there, not about his family, not about his studies, not about whether he enjoyed living in the United States.

The one question he asked was, "Why do so many Chinese students studying in the United States become Christian?" Why one of the most powerful political leaders would ask this question may never be known, and the student did not have an answer.

But religion was on President Xi's mind that day. Whatever was behind the complex question, religious freedom conditions in China, especially under his watch, have not improved. Quite the opposite. It has been a punishing year for China's diverse religious communities.

China continues to rank right up there with Iran, Vietnam, and Saudi Arabia in terms of the sheer misery it inflicts on members of its diverse religious communities. This is the verdict of the bipartisan, independent U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.

It is the verdict of the State Department—if only it would connect with policy—but it is in the human rights reports and China has been again designated as a country of particular concern, and has been since 1999, for being one of the worst violators in the world of religious freedom. This is also the verdict of human rights organizations.

Chinese authorities are frightened by the simple proposition that individuals have the right to live out their beliefs openly and peacefully without fear of intimidation. All we have to do is look at events in the past few weeks to see a coordinate, unnecessary, and often brutal campaign to manage, control, or crush China's many religious communities. It has been a very bad month in China.

Two days ago, a cross on a Christian church was burned near the city of Wenzhou. Over 1,200 crosses, along with 35 church buildings, were demolished since 2014. This was done reportedly because they were too prominent, demonstrating the Party's weakness.

During the just-concluded month of Ramadan, Uyghur Muslim students, teachers, professors, and government employees were deprived of the freedom to fulfill their religious duties. In recent years, officials have shut down religious sites, conducted raids on independent schools, confiscated religious literature, and banned private study of the Koran. A new draft counterterrorism law equates terrorism with "the religious education of minors."

The Dalai Lama turns 80 this month and the Chinese Government expanded attempts to undermine his leadership and control in the selection of the Tibetan Buddhist leaders. Two hundred and seventy-three Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns are currently detained. Sadly, the Reverend Tenzin Deleg died in prison last week; he was serving a life sentence on politically motivated charges.

Beijing also continues its relentless 16-year campaign to absolutely obliterate the Falun Gong, the anniversary of which is each year during July. There are reports of torture, detention, deaths in

custody, and allegations based on credible evidence of harvesting of organs.

Two weeks ago, the Chinese Communist Party authorities also launched a massive crackdown on human rights lawyers. The lawyers were accused of being "a criminal gang," charged with "creating chaos" because they defended the rights of Falun Gong, Uyghurs, Christians, and other persecuted persons in China. Many of the lawyers detained are professing Christians, spurred by their faith to defend the vulnerable and at-risk.

Senator Rubio and I put out a statement about the arrest of human rights lawyers in China. We call the detentions unjustified and said the roundup of human rights lawyers was an undeniable set-back in U.S.-China relations. I would like to add that statement for the record. Without objection, it is so ordered.

China actively suppresses the faith of communities. Its massive repression of rights lawyers and the brutal and sometimes deadly ways it deals with prisoners of conscience are a sad and black mark on China's recent history. It will be remembered by history as brutal, unnecessary, and entirely counterproductive.

It is counterproductive because religious restrictions make China less stable. Repression can exacerbate extremism and cause instability. Religious freedom, according to the Pew Research Center, can be a powerful and effective antidote to religious extremism. It is counterproductive because targeting peaceful religious citizens undermines the legitimacy of the state because it reminds even non-believers of the state's capricious power.

It is counterproductive because religious persecution marginalizes the persecuted, robbing China of their talents, their economic productivity, and their contributions to society. The issue of religious freedom must be addressed by the administration during a planned summit in September, but we must ask whether this summit should even take place.

There are many issues in the U.S.-China relationship that need attention, but given President Xi Jinping's bold disregard for human rights and his brutal suppression of dissent, does he deserve to get the red carpet treatment in Washington?

I would like to yield to my good friend, Mr. Walz, for any opening comments.

[The prepared statement of Representative Smith and the joint statement submited for the record by Representative Smith and Senator Rubio appear in the appendix.]

## STATEMENT OF HON. TIMOTHY J. WALZ, A U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM MINNESOTA

Representative WALZ. Well, I thank the Chairman first of all for his passion and his lifelong commitment to human rights, and second for holding this important hearing. I would also like to thank our witnesses. Your courage and activism inspires all of us and it is that very real part of being human that the Chairman spoke about, the spiritual side of each of us, we understand how important it is.

As many of you know—I have spoken about it in this Commission many times—I, as a young man, had the opportunity and the

privilege to live in Foshan in Guangdong and have still many acquaintances and part of who I am shaped by those experiences.

Just like any nation, the sense of what we want as humans, the opportunity to live our lives as we choose, to worship and believe as we choose, is fundamental. So the Chairman holding this hearing is exactly right. I do not think it is any secret, the statistics and the recent events the Chairman talked about against religious freedom.

But I think what most of us know is that, again, nations and citizens are not synonymous, but I think as we both know the way to strengthen a nation and strengthen that sense of resolve is through respecting the spiritual freedoms and the religious freedoms of their citizens. I think it is important to have these hearings.

Every nation strives toward a more perfect union, and I think it is incumbent upon us as citizens of the world, if you will, to make this case. So the Chairman is exactly right. I am grateful for him bringing this forward.

We are here today to hear from each of you, and I think you should view this Commission—the Chairman's passion is evident—that this is a place that we understand our responsibility to be a place where we can have the conversation, where we can further those goals and where we can make the case to the Chinese Government that the way to strengthen the nation is to honor those religious freedoms.

So, Chairman, I thank you.

Chairman SMITH. Mr. Walz, thank you very much. Thanks for underscoring that this is a truly bipartisan Commission and there is no distance between us. There are lots of other issues where we disagree, but not here. I think it is important that that be conveyed to the Chinese leadership.

Randy Hultgren?

## HON. RANDY HULTGREN, A U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM ILLINOIS

Representative HULTGREN. Thank you, Chairman. I also want to echo my gratitude for the work that each of you has done fighting for human rights, letting us know how we can work together. This really is something that is universal for us. We know that if religious freedom is taken away in other places, if people are persecuted for their faith, it very easily can happen here as well. So we have to be vigilant, we have to be ever watchful of how important this basic freedom is.

So I just again want to thank you, all of you, for being here, for the position that you put yourselves in and your families in to be a strong voice for what is right. We want to help. I am convinced that as we shine light into some areas that are dark, this will cause things to change.

So this is a pivotal time, I know, with the President's visit coming up, we need, as a Congress and as an administration, to stand up again for people who do not have a voice themselves. You are speaking up for them, and we need to speak up for them. So, thank you. I look forward to learning from you.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate, as always, your incredible work on this and other issues as well. I yield back.

Chairman SMITH. Thank you so much, Mr. Hultgren, for your leadership. I am glad you are not in the chair again. You have been presiding over the House many, many days. It is good to have you here.

I would like to now begin with our witnesses, beginning first with Ms. Anastasia Lin, who is a Toronto-based actress. She won the Miss World Canada title in 2015. Since her start in acting at the age of seven, Anastasia has appeared in over 20 films and television productions, and most prominently played lead actress in several Toronto-based films about human rights themes in China.

Her work has garnered numerous international awards, including the Mexico International Film Festival's Golden Palm Award and the California Indie Fest Award of Merit. Along with her acting and participation in pageants, she is also known for her public position against human rights abuses in China, a very brave position.

Canadian television reports attributed her victory in the 2015 Miss World pageant in part to her passion for human rights. Anastasia will participate in the 2015 Miss World competition to be held this December in Sanya City in China.

We will then hear from Pastor Bob Fu, who was a leader in the 1989 student democracy movement in Tiananmen Square, and later became a house church pastor. In 1996, authorities arrested and imprisoned Pastor Fu and his wife for their work. After their release, they escaped to the United States and in 2002 he founded ChinaAid Association.

ChinaAid monitors and reports on religious freedom in China and provides a forum for discussion among experts in religion, law, and human rights in China. Pastor Fu is frequently interviewed by media outlets around the world and has testified previously at U.S. congressional hearings and at hearings around the world. He has also appeared before the European Parliament and the United Nations.

Pastor Fu holds a double bachelor's degree from the People's University and the Institute of Foreign Relations and has taught at the Beijing Communist Party School. In the United States, he earned a Master's degree from Westminster Theological Seminary and is now working on his Ph.D.

We will then hear from Ms. Rebiya Kadeer, who is a prominent human rights advocate and leader of the Uyghur people. She is the mother of 11 children and a former laundress-turned-millionaire. She spent six years—six years—in a China prison for standing up to the authoritarian Chinese Government. Before her arrest in 1999, she was a well-known Uyghur businesswoman and at one time among the wealthiest individuals in the People's Republic of China.

Ms. Kadeer has been actively campaigning for the human rights of the Uyghur people since her release in 2005. She was nominated to receive the Nobel Peace Prize several times since 2006.

Despite Chinese Government efforts to discredit her, Ms. Kadeer remains the pro-democracy Uyghur leader and head of the World Uyghur Congress, which represents the collective interests of the Uyghur people in the world.

We will then hear from Mr. Losang Gyatso, who is the service chief of Voice of America's Tibetan Service which broadcasts news and information into Tibet and is arguably the most influential and trusted source of information for the Tibetan people.

Before joining VOA, Mr. Gyatso was a founding director of *mechakgallery.com*, a non-profit group promoting contemporary Tibetan art through exhibitions, publications, and social media.

Prior to that while working as an advertising executive in New York City in the 1980s and 1990s, Mr. Gyatso was a Tibetan community organizer and one of the most prolific graphic designers for projects carried out by groups such as the International Campaign for Tibet, Students for a Free Tibet, and Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy. Thank you for your extraordinary work.

I would like to now turn to Ms. Lin for her testimony.

**STATEMENT OF ANASTASIA LIN, HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST AND THE CURRENT MISS WORLD CANADA**

Ms. LIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the Congressional-Executive Commission on China for convening this event.

My name is Anastasia Lin. I am a Canadian actress. I will be representing Canada at the 2015 Miss World competition in Sanya, China. At least, that is my hope. Recent events leave me worried for my family who are still in China.

I campaigned for the title Miss World Canada on a human rights platform. I wanted to speak for those in China who are beaten, burned, electrocuted for holding their beliefs, people in prison who eat rotten food with blistered fingers because they dared to have convictions. These are not criminals, these are people who believe in truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance.

When I was crowned Miss World Canada my father was very proud of me, but within days his tone changed. He told me to stop my advocacy or he would sever contact with me. I understand he was visited by the Chinese security agents and forced to say these things to me.

I have taken on roles in film and television shows that depict human rights abuses in China, and to prepare I speak with those who have suffered, including Falun Gong practitioners.

In "The Bleeding Edge," a film to be released this winter, I played one such woman. She is in prison and tortured. In one scene, her family is brought before her, made to kneel and beg her to give up her beliefs. This is the region's policy of guilt by association and this is why my father was threatened by the security forces, never mind that I am a Canadian citizen, upholding Canadian values on the other side of the world.

It is a shock to realize that the man who made you feel safe is in danger. I had to choose between silence and my hope for a better China. Then I remembered, silence helps no one. Silence feeds terror.

Practitioners of Falun Gong who have been marginalized, defamed, and vilified in China since 1999 are noble people. Despite the constant threat of arbitrary torture, psychiatric abuse, or death, they are steadfast in their principles. They have always

sought peaceful means to resist persecution and generate awareness.

In China today, our traditional values are buried under the mortal scars of endless political campaigns. Material wealth and the pursuit of self-interest are foremost in people's minds. The courage of Falun Gong practitioners and other dissidents and human rights lawyers are exceptions that give me hope for China's future. Yet, it is these people that suffer the most, people with stories of courage and tragedy, like the father of my fellow Canadian Paul Li.

The elder Mr. Li is 60 years old and lives in Chengdu, China. Once a highly respected county magistrate, he is now beginning his second eight-year prison sentence. He was a rarity in China, a high official that did not use his position to gain wealth or personal advantage, and instead he followed Falun Gong's teachings of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance and sought to be fair in his dealings.

Mr. Li spent his first eight years in prison for writing essays criticizing the Communist Party's crimes and they tortured him and tried to get him to renounce his relief and embrace atheism. They made him blind in one eye.

He did not give up. After being released, he exposed cases of torture and abuse and that was why he was again arrested and sentenced to another eight years this April. This is a story of incredible courage, almost completely ignored by the world's media. There are millions of such stories.

Thousands continue to be sentenced to prison every year, often after show trials. Lawyers who represent Falun Gong practitioners, including those lawyers targeted in the most recent crackdown, have faced disbarment, beating, and imprisonment. The current crackdown on lawyers targets these individuals and comes as some 80,0000 criminal complaints are filed against the former Party leader, Jiang Zemin, by Falun Gong practitioners.

The persecution of Falun Gong is widespread and brutal. In 1998, the Chinese Communist Government estimated there were 70 million practitioners of Falun Gong in China. Since the persecution began in 1999, millions have been imprisoned, tortured, and sexually assaulted. Estimates of the murdered range widely because information is scarce, and exposing the persecution is punished severely.

While we have the names and stories of the some 3,800 practitioners who have been killed in the persecution, multiple independent investigators estimate that tens of thousands have been killed so their vital organs could be harvested and sold for organ transplantation, a lucrative business in China.

This is a gruesome and unspeakable crime that has created profit for those brutal persecutors. The victims did not do anything wrong. They are people of faith and morality. They are people that any country would be fortunate to have. These are the people of integrity that China so desperately needs nowadays.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that, together, we can gain the Chinese people a voice. The hope for a better future lies in the people there gaining the freedom to believe what they want and talk to whoever they want to talk to about whatever they want to talk about. I

hope this can happen soon. For myself, this would give me back a father, but for many others, it would save their lives.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Lin appears in the appendix.]

Chairman SMITH. Thank you so very much, Ms. Lin, for your very eloquent and incisive testimony, and done so with such kindness even toward the persecutors.

I would like to know recognize Bob Fu, and as I do, remind my colleagues, when Frank Wolf and I went and visited China right before the Olympics we had a human rights agenda, obviously, that we were promoting.

We called Bob Fu from the U.S. Embassy van and mentioned that—and it was tongue-in-cheek—that we might go to Tiananmen Square and unfurl a banner that says "Respect Human Rights."

Within 20 to 25 minutes, our embassy got a phone call from the Chinese Foreign Affairs Department saying that we would be escorted out of the country or arrested if we proceeded with that, and this was just in a phone call from ourselves to Bob Fu. Maybe the van, maybe the phone call was bugged. On that trip, Bob had set up for us to meet with a number of house pastors, Christian house pastors.

All but one were stopped by the government, and the one man and his family that we met with was arrested afterward and put through a withering time with the secret policy, again underscoring, just as with the Falun Gong and all the others, and we will hear from the others momentarily, but the repression based on the best information, as bad as it was then, it is even worse now.

Pastor Bob Fu?

## STATEMENT OF BOB FU, FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT, CHINAAID ASSOCIATION

Mr. FU. Thank you, Chairman Smith, for your unwavering leadership and solidarity with those who are persecuted in China and all over the world. I also thank the Cochair, Senator Rubio, and thank all the members, Congressman Walz and Congressman Hultgren, who are demonstrating their support, your support, for this honorable cause.

This is the third year of President Xi Jinping's administration in China, whose policies and actions have raised increasing alarm, and in some cases have astonished the international community. Domestically, Mr. Xi has approached his political rivals through a selective anti-corruption campaign and monopolized power within the leadership of the Communist Party, the government, and the military.

On foreign policy, Mr. Xi has adopted a dangerous and aggressive agenda, challenging existing international law and creating his own when deemed necessary, including the National Security Law, which has been viewed by many as a pretext for human rights abuses.

This antagonistic and arrogant approach to governance over the past two and a half years has earned Xi the nickname "Chairman Mao, Jr.," or "Xitler." In the past two years, the human rights and rule of law in China have rapidly deteriorated.

The number of dissidents taken into police custody, arrested, and convicted since Xi took power has exceeded the total number that occurred during the 10-year reign of President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao. Chinese citizens who peacefully criticize the government or defend the rights of citizens, lawyers who dare to represent so-called "sensitive cases" without cooperating with the government, and activists who assemble in a peaceful manner to attempt to request the government's permission to establish an NGO or peacefully protest against government policies or judicial injustice, even to gather for a meal, are subsequently invited to drink tea, summoned for interrogation, detained, or arrested and eventually tried in a corrupt judicial system.

To be sure, the Chinese Government has intensified its harassment of NGOs, civil society organizations, law firms representing human rights cases, charitable organizations, and political organizations such as the New Citizen Movement.

During the Xi administration, and particularly in the past 18 months, religious freedom abuses have reached a level not seen since the Cultural Revolution. Not only have house churches continued to experience intensifying persecution, but now the government-sanctioned Three-Self churches are being subjected to government-sponsored persecution and campaigns.

The Chinese Government's persecution of Tibetan Buddhists, Uyghur Muslims, and Falun Gong practitioners, as my fellow witnesses will and have testified, has also increasingly worsened. The Chinese Government perceives that religious practitioners are being guided by so-called foreign influence and has subsequently pursued absolute control over religious communities.

This new so-called National Security Law that just took effect on July 1 has expanded the management, oversight, and suppression of religious activity under the guise of so-called national security.

So, I will talk about religious freedom and human rights and rule of law in China, specifically focused on the forced demolition of churches and crosses in Zhejiang province and ongoing persecution of house churches and the torment and treatment of human rights lawyers and human rights defenders in China.

Then, I will offer some recommendations for the U.S. foreign policy on China, and I want to request the Chair to agree for both our annual report and my written testimony to be on the record.

Chairman SMITH. Without objection, all of that, and any additional remarks or materials the other witnesses would like to have included will be made a part of the record.

Mr. FU. Thank you.

The forced demolition of church crosses. In the past year, the government of Zhejiang province has demolished churches and crosses under the pretext of implementing standards for buildings and initially people thought it was maybe just a local eradication of some buildings based on the building codes.

But up until today, we have documented over 1,500 churches that had their crosses forcibly removed, and a number of pastors and believers have been beaten up and some pastors are even sentenced to criminal imprisonment for defending the crosses.

According to the information we have collected at least—besides the government-sanctioned churches, which is more than 1,500

with their crosses being removed by force, or some of the churches, the whole buildings were totally destroyed—at least 50 other house churches in rural areas were also destroyed or their crosses were forcibly removed.

I think we have a few photos, if you could show these photos. You can tell, some of the churches are being demolished as late as yesterday morning. The crosses were even burned from the top of the church building.

Yesterday at a large church, their cross was being forcibly removed. This morning, more than 44 churches had issued a joint declaration, basically denouncing the government's evil act of forceful removal of crosses, and made a commitment to defend their crosses from being removed. A number of Chinese human rights lawyers were also called to help those churches, so some of the lawyers are still in Zhejiang province.

This morning, according to a BBC report, there are a few hundred churches in Guangdong province that have received official notice that they are to be shut down. So, apparently this campaign has already expanded into Guangdong province.

Also this morning, honorable members of this commission, in Guangzhou city, a church called Guangfu Church was raided by 50 public security officers; the pastor's wife and three other senior leaders of the church were taken into custody.

So, these kinds of barbaric acts of just demolishing churches and destroying the peaceful symbol of Christian faith, not only to the Protestant churches, but to Catholic churches as well, demands and warrants a unanimous condemnation by the international community.

Notably, even the government, the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association of Zhejiang, and the Chinese Catholic Bishops Conference of Zhejiang, and the Chinese Christian Council, all sent official letters to the government agencies protesting and basically denouncing this barbaric act and urging the government to stop this kind of destruction.

This is an unprecedented, of course, rebuke from those government-controlled religious institutions, and it certainly reflects the millions of believers' mindset that I think it could trigger more unrest, as contrary to the Communist government's intention.

Of course, the persecution against the house churches with a secret document in 2011 that we obtained, mandates the eradication of all house churches within 10 years. In the past 18 months, we have seen a continued, systematic campaign that increased both the number of the persecutions of the house churches, and also the number of arrests has been dramatically worsened.

So, in reviewing religious freedom abuses perpetrated against the house church during both the 2014 and 2015 years, the following characteristics emerged: The abuse of administrative penalties and regulations regarding the length of administrative or criminal detention of church members and leaders, persecuting churches and church members under the guise of so-called eradicating cults and confiscating house church possessions, religious materials, including bibles and other scriptures, and banning and harassing Sunday schools, and even the church-managed kindergartens.

Like in Guangxi province, four leaders of the kindergarten teachers were given a criminal sentence this year for just teaching the children about character building. That is it. They received a two-to-three-year criminal sentence just for managing that kindergarten school.

As the Chairman just mentioned, since July 10, the government initiated this sudden campaign against human rights lawyers. This happened in spite of the number of arrests against other prominent human rights lawyers, including Pu Zhiqiang, including the NGO leader Guo Yushan, including human rights lawyer Xu Zhiyong, and Hu Shigen, including, of course, the human rights defender and journalist, 71-year-old Ms. Gao Yu.

This new wave of attacks against human rights lawyers and human rights defenders really proves that the Xi Jinping administration has no intention—no intention at all—to obey its own law, let alone international law.

These human rights defenders, they courageously not only defend abuses of the house churches and Catholic churches, but also they are the defenders for Falun Gong practitioners and political dissidents and Tibetans, persecuted Muslims, and human rights advocates. So, they are labeled as subversives or some are said to be causing trouble.

I will give you another example that happened in March 2014, when a group of human rights lawyers—Tang Jitian, Jiang Tianyong, Wang Cheng, Zhang Junjie, and nine family members of their clients who are Falun Gong practitioners—in Jiansanjiang, Heilongiang province, when they just visited there, tried to just ask the whereabouts of their clients.

All these human rights defenders and family members were detained and were abused physically, and the four detained human rights lawyers were beaten and tortured, resulting in collectively having 24 of their ribs broken, and some of them are still kind of receiving medical treatment. So, this is just one of the incidents that has happened in the past year.

This morning, Chairman Smith, there was a case in Guangzhou involving three bold human rights defenders. They are a Christian human rights lawyer Tang Jingling, Yuan Xinting, and Wang Qingying. They are human rights defenders.

So, for simply holding a banner in front of a government building demanding freedom of speech, this morning their trial just started, and several of the lawyers have been arrested, including lawyer Sui Muqing, who is one of the victims of this July 10 raid.

So, as of this morning, we learned just over 246 human rights lawyers and advocates and legal professionals have either been interrogated, detained, or have gone missing into police custody, of which 11 human rights lawyers and 3 human rights advocates have been criminally detained and 6 remain missing.

I received a note from one of the missing human rights lawyers with whom Congressman Smith has met, attorney Li Heping. His wife just sent a note this morning saying that she had to send off her 13-year-old son to her hometown in a rural area, away from Beijing.

She basically said this 13-year-old boy, witnessing on July 10 when her home was raided and his father, attorney Li Heping was

taken away in front of this 13-year-old, with another little girl, so she said despite her reluctance to send her son away, she just prayed that being in a rural area, maybe that could protect their 13-year-old son from being further harassed.

The 16-year-old son of the other two human rights lawyers, lawyer Ms. Wang Yu and her husband attorney Bao Longjun, and their 16-year-old son Bao Mengmeng, on July 9, he was just on the way to go to study in Australia.

Then, after the public security officers abruptly just kidnapped his father and also this 16-year-old son and separated them and put him in detention for 48 hours, now today they forced this boy to move from Tianjin city, his hometown, to Inner Mongolia. He was already summoned three times for interrogation.

I have a 16-year-old daughter. Actually, I brought her with me today. As a father, how do you feel that when you are together and suddenly a group of strangers, by force, grab the father away for already 11 days? Nobody knows where the father or the mother is being detained.

Their lawyers are not able to find out anything. So this new wave of campaign, once again, shows that it is almost the government that became part of a Mafia-style, to arbitrarily force the disappearance and kidnapping of these human rights lawyers. They are the backbone of China's rule of law, and they are the defenders, and they should be rewarded for their action, as Chairman Smith made the statement on July 10 right after this happened.

So I want to make a few recommendations, finally.

Chairman SMITH. Pastor Fu, could we get back to that after we get through all the others?

Mr. FU. Yes.

Chairman SMITH. Just in the interest of time.

Mr. FU. Yes.

Chairman SMITH. Marco Rubio will be here momentarily and I am sure he will want to hear those recommendations.

Mr. FU. Yes.

Chairman SMITH. I would like to now yield and recognize Rebiya Kadeer.

[The annual report of ChinaAid and the prepared statement of Mr. Fu appear in the appendix.]

## STATEMENT OF REBIYA KADEER, PRESIDENT, WORLD UYGHUR CONGRESS

Ms. KADEER. I would like to express my deep appreciation to Congressman Smith for the invitation to speak here today. It is my honor to discuss religious persecution of the Uyghur in China.

The situation of the Uyghur Muslim is not getting any better because of our strong belief in Islam and the Chinese Government's repression is only getting worse. So I believe this hearing is very timely to discuss the religious persecution of all groups represented here today. To save time, I will have my special assistant to read my written statement.

I am very honored to be here today and I wish to express my profound appreciation to Representative Chris Smith and Senator Marco Rubio for inviting me to testify today. I also want to thank

other CECC Commissioners for their strong support of religious freedom in China.

The Uyghur people perceive their belief in Islam not only as a personal expression of faith, but also as a statement of their cultural distinctiveness from China's mainstream Communist, atheist, and materialistic culture. For many Uyghurs, the incursion of the Chinese state into this private aspect of their lives and the role it plays in establishing a broader, new identify for them is viewed as part of China's assimilative process or a form of cultural genocide.

In East Turkistan, the two-fold implementation of strict national and regional regulations concerning religious belief and practice mean the Uyghur people are subject to the harshest conditions governing religious life in China.

This occurs even though China's domestic laws, such as the Constitution and the Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law, guarantee religious freedom. Rather than simply forbid religious practice of the Uyghur people, Chinese authorities have implemented regulations that progressively narrow the definition of lawful activity.

As a result, many Uyghurs often discover traditional, normal religious customs are increasingly not permitted. However, Chinese officials justify many of the restrictions through claims that outlawed practices have been imported from overseas and that it faces an organized threat to public security in the form of the "three evil forces" of terrorism, separatism, and religious extremism.

China's highly politicized criminal legal system, as well as the state apparatus governing and monitoring religion, have insured that government is the ultimate arbiter in the interpretation of religious affairs. In fact, the bodies established by the Chinese state to oversee administration in China do little to protect religious believers, but assist the government's repression of religious freedom by helping to formulate and promote restrictive regulations.

Uyghur religious leaders, such as imams, are required to attend annual political indoctrination classes to ensure compliance with Chinese Communist Party regulations and policies. Only state-approved versions of the Koran, the Holy Book of Islam, and the sermons are permitted, with all unapproved religious texts treated as illegal publications liable to confiscation and criminal charges against whoever was found in possession of them.

Any outward expression of faith in government workplaces, hospitals, and some private businesses, such as men wearing beards or women wearing head scarves, is forbidden. No state employees or no one under the age of 18 can enter a mosque, a measure not enforced in the rest of China. Organized private religious education is proscribed and facilitators of private classes in Islam are frequently charged with conducting illegal religious activities.

Students, teachers, government workers are prohibited from fasting during Ramadan, the holy month of Islam. In addition, Uyghurs are not permitted to undertake Hajj, which is pilgrimage, unless it is with an expensive official government tour in which state officials carefully vet Uyghur applicants.

Uyghurs found to have contravened religious regulations are punished severely. In a disturbing number of cases, Uyghurs have been given long prison sentences for illegal religious activities for

actions considered normal by international human rights standards.

For example, in East Turkistan today police can stop any Uyghur at any time to check their mobile phones for religious content. If the police deem such religious content as illegal, the Uyghur can be arrested on the spot. An area of considerable concern is also the open discrimination against Uyghur religious believers, especially women, who choose to lead religious lives publicly.

In 2015, the restrictions placed on Uyghurs' ability to observe Ramadan fasts were widely reported. As detailed by the overseas media, government work units outrightly denied Uyghurs the right to follow their religious customs. For example, middle schools in Bortala, Tarbaghatay and Tumshuq informed their employees and students that they were not permitted to fast.

In Jing county, restaurant owners were mandated by the local Food and Drug Administration to remain open during fasting hours and some were even forced to sell alcohol and tobacco products, which were against their religious faith.

Reports also surfaced on social media that Uyghurs were being compelled to eat watermelon in public to demonstrate non-observance of the fast. Although these reports remain unconfirmed, they are consistent with numerous accounts I have heard from Uyghurs, particularly students, who were required to drink water at school in front of their teachers to prove they were not fasting, but were following school and local government regulations.

Ramadan, in 2015, was particularly tense and harsh for the Uyghur people. In an article dated June 24, 2015, Radio Free Asia described how government workers were being put on alert prior to the holy month. Their report was an alarming indication of the suspicion with which the state views Uyghurs who continue with their religious practices.

Furthermore, according to Radio Free Asia, one county issued guidelines calling for intrusive searches of convenience stores, repair shops, and mosques. These restrictions create an atmosphere of distrust and fear.

However, 2015 witnessed provocations against the Islamic faith previously not seen. Reports that a beer drinking festival had been organized in Niya, a predominantly Uyghur settlement, on the eve of Ramadan. It was a humiliation of the Islamic faith and an attack on the Uyghur people's belief.

A report published by Human Rights Watch in 2005 described the close relationship between the Uyghur identity and Islam. The authors of the report accurately state Islam is perceived as a fading Uyghur ethnic identity and so the subordination of Islam to the state is used as a means to ensure the subordination of the Uyghur people as well.

A report issued by the Uyghur Human Rights Project [UHRP] in 2013 found a sharp deterioration in Uyghur religious rights in the period following 2005. Since the publication of the UHRP report, in April of 2013 the abuse of China's denial of Uyghurs' rights to freedom of religion has not abated.

The increased repression of religious practices and belief under way corresponds with Chinese President Xi Jinping's determination

to implement a major strategic shift in East Turkistan that prioritizes security policies in the region.

State rhetoric regarding the tightening of security is often accompanied by crackdowns on the so-called "three evil forces," which frequently target peaceful religious expression of the Uyghur people.

A trip to East Turkistan by Xi Jinping concluded on April 30, 2014, reinforced the call for enhanced security measures. Xi visited People's Liberation Army soldiers and the People's Armed Police in Kashgar, a Uyghur-majority city, that he claimed was the front line of counterterrorism.

Radio Free Asia reported a series of cases involving limits placed on Uyghur religious expression across East Turkistan in 2013 and 2014, including Balaqsu near Kashgar in May 2013, Beshtugmen in Igerchi near Aksu city in May 2013, Uchturpan in Aksu prefecture in August 2013, Shihezi in November 2013, Turpan in April 2014.

In April 2014, the fourth extension to an original 12-year jail term handed down to Uyghur religious leader Abdukiram Abduveli, in an extraordinary move, the harshness of the religious policies prompted a Uyghur delegate to China's People's Consultative Conference to speak up during a March 2014 session.

Further signs that regulations governing religion hardened since Xi's announcement is an April 2014 notice issued by the Chinese Communist Party committee of Qartal Bazaar in Aksu city regarding the holding of an unlawful funeral ceremony for Uyghur cadre Nurdin Turdi, a loyal Party official, distinguished actually by the state.

The notes widely circulated on social media said that as Nurdin Turdi's funeral was held at the mosque and not at his home, his family was in contravention of regulations on funerals for individuals holding Turdi's status.

As a consequence of the infraction, the funeral fees normally paid by the state to such individuals were rescinded, six months of benefits for the family were withheld. Customarily, the state used to permit Islamic burials for any Uyghur who wished to have one in the past.

Prior to Ramadan 2015, reports surfaced of the harsh sentencing of a Uyghur man from Kashgar to six years in jail because he had grown a beard, in accordance with his religious beliefs. The man's wife was handed a two-year sentence for veiling herself. The ban on Islamic veiling in Urumqi in 2015 was described by scholars James Leibold and Timothy Grose as "a sign of a deepening rift of mistrust between the Uyghurs and the Han-dominated Communist Party."

Universal religious freedom is protected under Article 18 of the normative human rights standards outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments whose standards China is obliged to meet, and also ensure the right of religious freedom, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

China's domestic laws, such as the Constitution and the Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law, have strong provisions on freedom of religious belief. Despite the international and domestic legal frame-

work, restrictions on religious freedom are deemed lawful by Chinese authorities through the strict implementation of regulations that contradict China's own laws and international obligations.

Thank you.

Chairman SMITH. Thank you very much, Ms. Kadeer, for your testimony and leadership.

Mr. Gyatso?

**STATEMENT OF LOSANG GYATSO, TIBETAN SERVICE CHIEF, VOICE OF AMERICA**

Mr. GYATSO. Thank you, Chairman Smith. Thank you to the Commission for inviting me. I would just like to clarify that I am not a practicing activist. I am here as an engaged Tibetan and as Service Chief of Voice of America's [VOA] Tibetan language service. I am here to provide a sense of what is happening in Tibet today and to put it in the context of Chinese policies and actions in Tibet over the last 50, 60 years.

I have four images to show you. It will be in the first two or three minutes. As I hold them up, it will be a signal for you to view it on the screen over there.

Since problems facing religion, religious institutions, and religious teachers in Tibet is widely known and well-documented by this Commission and many other governmental and non-governmental organizations in the United States and abroad, I will not take up too much of your time going over too many examples.

I would like to, however, touch on two events that took place this month which may serve to highlight the degree to which the Chinese Communist Party is willing to carry out actions that cause enormous suffering for Tibetans, and that create an environment of oppression in monasteries and in the personal lives of Tibetans that have triggered the self-immolation protests by over 140 Tibetans since 2009.

The latest such protest took place on the afternoon of July 9, two weeks ago. A young monk named Sonam Topgyal set himself on fire at a public square in Kyegudo, the prefectural capital of what China today refers to as the Yulshul Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai province.

Photos and videos showing Sonam Topgyal on the ground in flames have emerged since then and once again, as in many previous such cases, Sonam Topgyal was taken from the site by Chinese security and is believed to have died at a hospital.

A note he wrote one week earlier has surfaced, and in it he says, "I am the 27-year-old son of Tashitsang of Nangchen, Yulshul, in Tsongon region," referring to his hometown and the region with the traditional Tibetan geographic designation.

He continues, "Currently, I am a monk studying in Dzongsar Institute. As people within the country and outside are aware, the Chinese Government does not look at the true and real situation of the minorities, but practices only harsh and repressive policies on them. At a time when the government is carrying out policies to stamp out our religion, tradition, and culture and destroy our natural environment, there is absolutely no freedom of expression for the people and there is no channel to appeal our situation."

The other development this month which has been particularly difficult for Tibetans is the prison death of a widely respected lama and political prisoner on July 12, 11 days ago. Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche's family and monastic community had not been allowed to see him since 2013, and were not allowed to see him on the day that Chinese authorities claim he died of a heart attack, nor for several more days as they pleaded to have his body returned to them in order to conduct a funeral fitting for a high lama.

Tibetans pleading for the return of his body were beaten severely by security forces on July 13, 10 days ago, in Nyagchu county, Sichuan province. Several days after the announcement of his death, his family and some monks were allowed to see his body in the detention center, where he was incinerated in the prison crematorium against their wishes.

The Chinese have been in Tibet since 1951, long enough to understand that a prison cremation for a highly regarded spiritual teacher will be seen by Tibetans as a humiliating and degrading act, and therefore understand it to be an added punishment for those who had been pleading his innocence for 13 years, and then pleading for his remains after his death.

Further troubling is the fact that his sister and niece have gone missing since July 17. A relative of Rinpoche living in exile that VOA interviewed, suspected that the two women had been detained for possibly persisting in demanding a proper investigation into his sudden death.

On July 14, nine days ago, House Members at a hearing on Tibet by the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission had urged the Chinese authorities to return the body of Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche to his family members. As far back as 2004, the U.S. Senate passed a resolution by unanimous consent, calling for Rinpoche's release. Both calls have gone unheeded.

Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche's story is neither unique nor rare when you look back over the last six decades of Chinese rule of Tibet. Today, there are many known and probably many, many more unknown Tibetans languishing in China's prisons for simply expressing their dissent with the oppressive rules and regulations governing Tibetan lives and the institutions and figures of Tibetan Buddhism.

Writers and artists are imprisoned for simply writing or singing about their love of Tibet's mountains and lakes, culture and history. Many more are detained for refusing to denounce their religious heads, such as the Dalai Lama, during reeducation campaigns at temples and monasteries. All of the above seemingly innocuous acts can today be categorized as separatist acts according to recent regulations targeting Tibetans.

Once imprisoned, the Tibetans are accused of acting at the instigation of the Dalai Lama and/or foreign anti-China forces, by which most Tibetans understand the Chinese to mean the United States, and are then subjected to torture and prolonged mistreatment with the sole purpose of extracting confessions that correspond to the accusations.

This process, repeated across Tibet for 50 years, has created immeasurable suffering for the Tibetan people and deeply disturbed their psychological well-being for decades. As I mentioned earlier,

the Chinese Government's attack on religion and religious institutions and figures in Tibet is not a recent development, nor are they random aberrations in their rule of Tibet since 1951. The Chinese Communist Party has been purposefully and methodically working to dismantle the very fabric of Tibetan spirituality and religious tradition since 1955.

Between 1955 and 1968, almost every single religious institution in Tibet, estimated to number over 6,000 monasteries and temples, many of them a 1,000 years, 500 years old, had been aerial bombed, artillery shelled, and razed to the ground. Tens of thousands of lamas, religious teachers, monks, and nuns were imprisoned, executed, or disrobed.

Public humiliation and torturing of respected reincarnated lamas, often to death, took place across Tibet in the 1950s and 1960s in order to ridicule religion and to prove that religious figures were powerless.

Attacks on religion during that period was the reason why all of the heads of the major schools of Tibetan Buddhism, all five heads, went into exile in 1959 before the fall of the Tibetan Government and remain so to this day.

The highest ranking lama remaining inside Tibet in 1959 was the Panchen Lama. He spent 13 years in solitary prison for speaking against what the Chinese had done in Tibet up to 1961. After his sudden death in 1989, the Chinese installed their own choice of his reincarnation, a child whose parents were Party members, Chinese Communist Party members. The child that was selected by monks in the Panchen Lama's own monastery and approved by the Dalai Lama as is customary, was disappeared, along with his entire family in May 1995 and has not been heard of since then.

In 2007, China's State Administration for Religious Affairs introduced measures that dictate which Tibetan religious figures may or may not reincarnate, and the requirement for the approval of selected reincarnated lamas by offices under the Communist Party. While this may appear simply surreal and bizarre to most people, there are two very serious possible consequences from these measures; one that will even further diminish human rights in Tibet, and the other that will impact the state of religious institutions and the very existence of religious practice as we know it in Tibet.

First, since nearly all expressions critical of conditions in Tibet, and/or, in praise of aspects of Tibetan culture and identity can be categorized as "separatist" activities that are punishable acts today, the following sentence in the measure, "living Buddha reincarnations should respect and protect the principles of the unification of the state," would mean that all officially sanctioned reincarnated lamas and the religious institutions affiliated with them, would be forced into silence on issues relating to human rights and the state of religious and cultural freedoms in Tibet.

And second, and this may not be fully appreciated by many people at present, the interference by the Communist Party in the selection or de-selection of reincarnated spiritual masters undermines Tibetan Buddhism at its most fundamental level by aiming to break the trust and faith that Tibetans have invested in their lamas for hundreds of years.

Tibetan Buddhist practice, based on ancient Indian traditions, holds at its very core the sacred relationship between religious teachers with pure and direct spiritual lineages, many that go back 1,000 years, and the student practitioners who take vows, initiations, and meditation instructions from them. The successful guidance through complex psychological states and through layers of consciousness in the course of a person's spiritual practice relies completely on this connection between trusted and respected reincarnated lamas and their followers.

The measures to control reincarnated lamas is therefore aimed at this bedrock of Tibetan religious practice and could lead to the destruction of thousands of unbroken spiritual lineages of the lamas, and to the eventual demise of Tibetan Buddhism as it has been practiced since the 13th century when the reincarnation system was initiated in Tibet. As an example and on a much more mundane level, it is as if a government decided that it would select people to practice medicine, surgery, and psychiatry, based not on their qualifications and background, but on their political leaning. You can imagine what this would do to the state of healthcare.

These are just a few examples of how persecution of religion and religious institutions and figures in Tibet are an ongoing feature of Chinese rule of Tibet, and they are posing existential challenges for Tibetans in maintaining intellectual rigor and spiritual vitality in the monasteries and temples across Tibet.

The Dalai Lama says in his autobiography that in one of his meetings with Chairman Mao in 1954, Mao turned to him, leaned forward, and said, "Religion is poison." That view appears to have been, and continues to be, the guiding principle of Chinese rule in Tibet, where its policies since 1955 have gone from destroying religion completely, to today, where a small number of monitored monasteries and controlled religious figures are allowed to exist as a show of the government's tolerance for religion and as tourist attractions, while in reality, the monastic institutions and the system of reincarnated lamas is being controlled and used purely for the perpetuation of China's control of Tibet.

Thank you.

Chairman SMITH. Mr. Gyatso, thank you very much for your very comprehensive and incisive testimony.

We are joined by Senator Marco Rubio, who was in, and probably has to go back to, a hearing that is on the Iran nuclear deal as a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, a leader on that committee. Secretary Kerry is testifying, but I would like to yield to my good friend and colleague.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MARCO RUBIO, A U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA; COCHAIRMAN, CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON CHINA**

Senator RUBIO. I just want to thank you, and I want to thank all of you for being here for this important hearing. I do not have an extensive statement. Are we going to go into the question period?

Chairman SMITH. Yes.

Senator RUBIO. Yes. I just wanted to make a couple of points. I mean, we have all watched over the last two weeks as the Chinese

Communist Party and its authorities have launched an unprecedented crackdown on human rights lawyers, on activists, the most severe since the legal system was reestablished after the Cultural Revolution.

To date, there has been over—that we know of—200 people detained, questioned, reported missing. So I think this hearing today is timely, and in particular the focus on religious liberties, which there seems to be an amped-up effort to target those, whether it is the extensive cross removal campaign resulting in the destruction of hundreds of Chinese crosses, the Thai authorities forcibly repatriating Uyghur Muslims back to China, Tibetan Buddhists who have continued to set themselves on fire in desperation at the abuses of their people; it goes on and on.

So I think this is an important opportunity to shed light on this extraordinary development that is going on in China, that the world seems largely either unaware of, or uninterested in, given all the other challenges that exist on this planet. I think it is one we need to continue to focus on and ensure that this country's foreign policy is one deeply and firmly anchored in moral clarity and human rights.

So thank you for the opportunity to be a part of this hearing today, and I look forward to hearing from our witnesses. I apologize that I have to leave a few minutes early. We are in the middle of an Iran hearing. It is the only chance we will have to talk to Secretary Lew, Secretary Kerry, and Secretary Moniz on an important issue as well. But again, I wanted to come by for a few minutes and hopefully be able to ask some questions.

I would love to, if I can go first. I appreciate your indulgence in that regard.

So Mr. Gyatso, I want to begin with you. Do you think that a Chinese-appointed Dalai Lama is something that Tibetans would ever accept or eventually get used to?

Mr. GYATSO. Thank you for that question. It is an extremely difficult and delicate subject for Tibetans. I think the clearest answer I can provide would be that there is actually an existing example of an imposition of an important lama inside Tibet, the Panchen Lama. The Panchen Lama, as I mentioned earlier, this current Panchen Lama, was imposed by the Chinese in 1996. The Panchen Lama that was recognized by his own monastery, and as customary, approved by the Dalai Lama, has been disappeared since 1996 to this day.

The Chinese-appointed Panchen Lama has not received acceptance at all across Tibet. He has had trouble finding proper religious teachers who are willing to accept that role. He has had problems having monasteries that are willing to have him study in the institutions, and almost every aspect of his public appearances in Tibet have to be orchestrated and choreographed with people bussed in to greet him, et cetera. So I think that gives you a very small indication, although he is a lama of a smaller scope than the Dalai Lama, that acceptance of a Chinese-appointed Dalai Lama is not a viable option.

Senator RUBIO. And Mr. Fu, I wanted to ask you, what policy recommendations do you have for the U.S. Congress, for the executive branch, in terms of protecting religious freedom in China? How

should the U.S. Government convey those concerns to Chinese officials in these high-level bilateral meetings?

Mr. FU. Thank you, Senator Rubio. Yes, I think the how part, at least I can give a few recommendations. First of all, I think given the fruitless years of U.S.-China human rights dialogue with China, I think I would really recommend the administration to cancel this kind of really useless, toothless human rights dialogue.

I would also recommend that human rights should play a more central role instead during the annual U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue instead, including a review mechanism to ensure progress on human rights is made during each year's meeting.

I also would urge Congress, both the House and Senate, to seriously pass the Global Magnitsky Act and the other Human Rights Protection Act sponsored by Congressman Smith, and I think that the mechanism, if passed by the Congress for the Global Magnitsky Act, would really give the true teeth to ensure, at least partially, those human rights abusers would be more hesitant to make further persecution.

For instance, the latest campaign against human rights lawyers. And the Chinese Government admitted the central figure who orchestrated or laid this campaign is Minister Guo Shengkun. He is the Minister of Public Security, and he has contributed to this increasing crackdown, like the crackdown and forced removal of crosses in Zhejiang province.

The Party secretary of Zhejiang, Mr. Xia Baolong, who has been the leading force for these latest abuses, although with the authorization and approval from President Xi Jinping. Mr. Xia Baolong and Mr. Guo Shengkun should clearly be put on the list at the State Department for the travel ban, banning them to travel to America. We can coordinate with the European allies to ban them as well.

So these are some of the key recommendations I would give.

Senator RUBIO. And Ms. Lin, I wanted to ask you, you have documented that this has happened to you as well, how the Chinese Government often uses China-based family members of Chinese rights activists as leverage to get them to stop their work.

Can you describe a little bit about it? I mean, you have written about it before, but is that an ongoing practice? How many people have you met that are affected by it, the idea that they use your relatives back in China as leverage against you to prevent you, or hopefully to convince you?

Because I think it is amazing. I know it would be shocking to a lot of Americans to know that there are people living in this country, perhaps American citizens, who are being extorted and/or blackmailed through the safety or security of their own relatives back in China.

Ms. LIN. Yes. I would say that this is a common experience of many Chinese overseas, including Chinese Canadians, Chinese Americans. It is a well-known fact among the community that the Chinese consulate would send people to watch over the Chinese.

Religious freedom and human rights does not just affect people that are living in China, but every Chinese who still has loved ones there. I do not know what it feels like to be tortured by prison guards, but now I know the deep fear probably felt by many Chi-

nese people that their convictions might be paid by their loved ones.

But if we keep silent, there is no end to this kind of compromise. The Chinese people overseas need to speak up about this issue. Yes, we might be afraid, but courage is not always the absence of fear. To be courageous, is to know that something else is much more important than fear. To be able to live according to your conscience, for Falun Gong practitioners and other dissidents, it outweighs the fear of death. That is why I am going back to China. I hope my presence in that country would help those who are facing these unspeakable horrors, to preserve their hope a little longer. Thank you.

Chairman SMITH. Thank you.

At my request, I would like to ask that Senator Rubio, we will suspend for about two minutes. If you would not mind saying hello. I know you could not get here because of the hearing and you are going back to the Iran hearing.

Senator RUBIO. I am just going to come down to say hello to everyone.

Chairman SMITH. That would be great.

[Whereupon, at 12:26 p.m. the hearing was recessed.]

## AFTER RECESS

[12:27 P.M.]

Chairman SMITH. Thank you, Cochair Senator Rubio. The hearing will now reconvene.

Let me just ask a few questions. Again, your testimonies have been absolutely stellar and hopefully motivating, not just to the Congress and to the press and free peoples everywhere, but to the President and to the administration as well.

When Pastor Fu says that in the past two years human rights and the rule of law in China have rapidly deteriorated, the number of dissidents taken into police custody, arrested, and convicted since Xi took power has exceeded the total number that occurred during the 10-year reign of President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao.

That ought to be in headlines across the world that the race to the bottom with North Korea is unprecedented. It has shades as you pointed out, of Chairman Mao, Jr. There is an emulation here of the extraordinary excesses of Chairman Mao and the depravity, the cruelty that was visited.

As you said, Mr. Gyatso, about the meeting with the Dalai Lama and Chairman Mao, the answer back was that religion is poison. What the government is doing to its own people is poison.

We fail in capitals around the world, including this one, to recognize the insatiable appetite for depravity and cruelty by the guards, right up to the highest levels of this government in Beijing, to hurt people, to find very specific ways, whether it be ensuring that fasts are broken, Ramadan is not followed, public drinking of water and taking of food in order to humiliate, of course the genocide being committed against the Tibetans which is ongoing and pervasive, the relentless attempt to not just persecute, but to eradi-

cate religion and spiritual belief and exercises, and I think that is the track that Xi Jinping is on. The evidence is overwhelming.

My first question—I think the point is, and Mrs. Rebiya Kadeer certainly has dealt with this with her own family as well, the Senator asked a very, I think, important question about not just the incarcerated and persecuted dissident or religious believer or Falun Gong practitioner, but also the whole family goes to jail, not just in China, but everywhere else where members of the family and the extended family reside.

We know that with Chen Guangcheng, who Bob Fu worked tirelessly to free and to get his wife and family out of Beijing; we are waiting for his nephew to be released—you might want to speak to that. But they always find other people to take actions against.

I remember being in Hungary not so long ago and a member of our Embassy there made a very serious faux pas when they were somehow accusing the Hungarian Government of having a cozy relationship with China. Who has a cozy relationship with China then? President Obama and others in our government, particularly on the economics front.

But I said, do you realize that they follow and they send more people to follow—this is to say, the Chinese Government—in capitals around the world and in cities around the world when there is more of a diaspora there because they feel they own you, they own the Chinese people? If you speak out—and Rebiya Kadeer has dealt with that here as well, where she has been harassed by the Chinese Government here, not just there but here.

So I think the point—and maybe some of you might want to build on it—about what this government so cruelly does to the families, they torture, they imprisoned, but then they cruelly mistreat the families as well, trying to do what they are doing—trying to do to you, with your dad saying to back off on human rights. So the whole family goes to jail and I think that is under-appreciated by policymakers everywhere.

I would say on the Muslim persecution—and you might want to respond to all that. I would say on the persecution of the Muslims, I do not know any other country in the world where Muslims are persecuted the way the Uyghurs are in the People's Republic of China, yet China sits as a member of good standing on the Human Rights Council, on the Security Council of the United Nations, and on many other prestigious seats there.

I plan on taking this testimony, which again, I think every Member of Congress needs to read and we will get it out to the Members, the House and Senate, hopefully the press will report accurately—I believe they will—as to what they have heard today, but also to Prince Zeid. He is the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

I have worked with him on human trafficking issues in the past. He runs a large UN bureaucracy of human rights personnel and he is a Muslim. He should be speaking out every day of the week generally on all the persecution in China, but if he cannot show solidarity with the Uyghurs, that would be a very serious flaw on his part. So we will convey this record to him, especially the urgency that it is worse now than it was a year ago, two years ago, and China is in, like I said, a race to the bottom with North Korea.

If you might want to respond to any of that, I would appreciate it. That is an opener. Also, Pastor Fu, we are going to talk about your recommendations, if you would include them as well.

Mr. FU. Yes. You are absolutely right, Chairman Smith, about the cruelty, the increasing cruelty, toward the family members. Family members oftentimes have become hostages. I have received multiple messages from these human rights lawyers even before they were arrested, and, of course, the example of Gao Zhisheng is another example, whose daughter was just attacked, and the wife was beaten up on the street. I remember when I spoke up in 2002 after I came to the United States, then my 70-year-old father was taken into the police station.

Later on, after I rescued him out of China, I learned he was beaten up with a big stick and basically tried to send a signal to silence my voice here. I am the latest example. Of course, you know that Major Yan Xiong, who is the army chaplain, should be a hero and who is one of the student leaders in the student democracy movement, a close friend of mine. We always pray together over the phone, and he is a human rights campaigner, too.

He requested to even visit his mother initially. Remember, you also tried to intervene, and a number of other Members of Congress wrote letters, tried to really do a private diplomacy for just simple, humanitarian grounds. Major Yan Xiong's mom was recently holding her last breath, waiting for her son to go back to say farewell. The Chinese Embassy and Consulate rejected his visa application, and his mom died last week, and he still was not granted a visa.

So this shows the cruelty. Of course, my friend Yang Jianli, who spent five years in prison for just speaking up and traveling in China, meeting with other dissidents, I think given the kind of deteriorating situation, one of the concrete recommendations I would urge you and Senator Rubio to really strongly push is to urge the Obama administration to reconsider the invitation to President Xi Jinping to visit the United States in September. This is not the environment for him to get a red-carpet welcome. He is not welcome by the American people.

He may be welcomed by some politicians who care nothing but for economic interests and who really value nothing but their purse. And this visit by Xi Jinping in September should either be canceled, postponed, or at least pre-conditioned on the release of those prisoners of conscience, some prominent ones in the Free China 18 list.

Of those prominent human rights activists, journalists, like Gao Yu, Pu Zhiqiang, Guo Yushan, Ilham Tohti, those are the peaceful citizens, the conscience of China. With them in the dark cells of Chinese prisons, I do not see that there is any good reason to justify a state visit, a welcome to Xi Jinping this September. So, this is one of my concrete recommendations.

Ms. KADEER. Thank you, Mr. Smith, for the question. In the case of the Uyghurs, the Chinese Government not only targets Uyghur activists in East Turkistan, but also those Uyghurs who have fled outside of the country, and especially targets their family members.

In my case, as you know, it is very well-known that two of my sons were sentenced by the Chinese authorities just because of my

human rights advocacy. One son was sentenced to seven years, another to nine, basically for guilt by association.

Although both of my sons are out of prison now, having served their terms, I do have 24 other relatives, including children and grandchildren. They are not in prison, but it is not any different than if they were in prison. Actually, they are all under surveillance and strict government control, so they are in an open prison.

All their financial means are frozen and confiscated by the government. Some of my grandchildren who graduated from universities, they are also black-listed and they could never get a job anywhere.

Another example is a reporter, a Uyghur reporter at Radio Free Asia. His name is Shohret Hoshur. Because of his reporting of Chinese Government human rights violations, three of his siblings were detained by the Chinese authorities.

These are obviously just two cases, but for all Uyghurs who have fled Chinese persecution and have become active overseas, their relatives and family members are harassed and some family members, the government uses them to pressure their relatives outside of the country, to spy on their own communities on behalf of the Chinese authorities.

Due to the increasing religious repression of the Chinese authorities against the Uyghur people and targeting the Uyghur people's faith in Islam, which is demonized by the Chinese authorities, for many religious Uyghurs it is almost impossible to live a normal life in and around East Turkistan.

As a result, many have sold whatever they could sell and fled to southeastern Asian countries like Thailand and Malaysia, hoping to reach Turkey in recent years. We have seen men, women, children, and even pregnant women leaving our homeland en masse.

We had several hundred Uyghurs detained by the Thai authorities for the past two years, and recently 109 of them were forcibly deported by the Thai Government to China. We have seen the photos of the deportation. They were treated like criminals by the Chinese authorities and taken away.

We now have nearly 60 Uyghurs still in Thai detention centers. We deeply fear for their future, should any deportation happen, but we already know the Chinese Government is harassing the relatives of the nearly 60 Uyghurs detained in Thailand, pressuring the family members basically to pressure the Uyghurs detained in Thailand to return to China.

So the situation, of course, is very similar across the board, whether one is a Falun Gong member, one is a Chinese Christian, one is a Tibetan under Chinese rule. The Chinese Government's aggressive persecution of the activists, both inside and outside China, is extremely severe. But at the moment we are deeply concerned with the fate of the 109 Uyghurs deported to China. We also hope the rest of the Uyghurs in Thai detention would not be deported.

Thank you.

Ms. LIN. I would like to talk about some of my colleagues' experiences. These are very courageous people that I work with on independent film and television projects that expose human rights abuses in China.

The NTD TV president's brother was harassed in China because he practiced Falun Gong and also speaks about the abuses that are happening. A film producer I worked with last summer, Leon Li, made a film about the organ harvesting that is happening in China and his family members have been threatened by the security force.

These are people that are working in the media and helping to bring light to these kinds of abuses. I think if every Chinese can speak up and if our governments can protect these citizens by talking about it publicly, to let the Chinese Government know that when they do such things they will have a reputational cost, then perhaps they will respect our borders more. Thank you.

Chairman SMITH. We are joined by Commissioner Pittenger, a good friend and colleague, and also a religious freedom human rights activist and a very, very strong believer and inspiration to me.

Mr. Pittenger?

**STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT PITTENGER, A U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM NORTH CAROLINA**

Representative PITTENGER. Thank you, Chairman Smith, for your wonderful leadership applied to religious freedom for people throughout the world. We met some 30 years ago and I have always been grateful for your big heart and compassion toward these important issues.

I have been engaged in this since my involvement with Campus Crusade for Christ back in the 1970s. For 10 years, I was an assistant to Dr. Bill Bright, president of the organization. We quietly worked through various groups in various parts of the world and the plight of those who are suppressed for their faith, as well as working and traveling in the former Soviet Union back in the 1980s with Congressman Frank Wolf and David Amess, a Member of Parliament. We went there on behalf of those seeking freedoms of conscience and religious liberties.

So I am deeply committed to these issues and I want to express my heartfelt solidarity with each of you. I know that many gathered here last week for the Falun Gong demonstration and for the rights to practice their beliefs.

We stand with all people of all faiths for that right and that privilege. It is a God-honored commitment that I believe that all people should have. So, thank you for having this hearing, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to continued discussion and dialogue with you.

Chairman SMITH. Thank you very much.

Before we conclude, if there are any other points that any of you would like to make, I do want to say that China is a signatory to the Genocide Convention. They have, in my opinion—and they ought to be held to account for it—committed multiple acts of genocide and do so to this very day.

There is the gendercide issue, where females are being slaughtered through the One-Child-Per-Couple policy. They pass laws that are absolutely ineffective and unenforced because it brings the numbers down. We know that as part of population control that came right out of Washington, Planned Parenthood, and other or-

ganizations in the 1960s, the idea of destroying the baby girl, the girl child in utero, is an effective means of reducing your population because not only do you kill the baby in the womb who happens to be a girl, you also kill the chances of that girl being a mother when she is 20, 25, and 30.

On religious grounds, the Tibetans, there is no clearer example ever of genocide. I have read the Dalai Lama's book when he talked about the Han majority replacement, systematically displacing indigenous Tibetans. The multiple, systematic attacks against Tibetan Buddhists is a clear example of genocide.

The same goes, I believe, with the Uyghurs, less visible to many people. It ought to be, but it is not. It is another genocide, a systematic destruction of a people in whole or in part. It fits the definition. Christians. They have tried to manage it for years after trying to completely eliminate, as Mao Zedong told the Dalai Lama, the poison of religion, then they looked to manage it.

I think now they are reverting back to a destructive modality. The Falun Gong, it is inexplicable what the fear is there. It ought to be—I mean, people of faith form wonderful citizens who are law-abiding and Falun Gong have shown no tendency other than to be very, very good people with good principles, and yet the Chinese Government has been on a tear to slaughter, kill, and as you pointed out, Ms. Lin, the organ harvesting issue is something we are really looking aggressively into because that is another major fundamental human rights abuse, to kill someone to procure their organs.

I held hearings 20 years ago, and we had a man who actually was a police officer who left, got asylum here. He got asylum in part because he came and appeared before our hearing. But he brought documentary evidence showing that they were exterminating, killing, executing prisoners, but not totally until they got the preferred body organ for transplant. He gave us a tremendous amount of documentation on that.

To think that kind of horror, which is Nazi-like, continues today against Falun Gong and perhaps others is an atrocity that cannot go unaddressed. Bob Fu, Pastor Fu, said that Xi Jinping's invitation, and who knows if it is going to be a full White House dinner with the red carpet. You enable evil, in my opinion, when you bring people in and give them a public relations opportunity back home that is second to none.

I believe in meeting with people that you profoundly disagree with. I met with Bashir, who did the genocide against the people of Darfur in South Sudan. I met with him for well over an hour, argued with him. We do not do the arguing part. We meet, we toast and we make nice. Diplomacy ought to be heavily imbued with truth and reality.

Unfortunately—and the one that got me even more than when President Obama had Hu here was when Chi Haotian came in, the Defense Minister of China who was the operational commander for the Tiananmen Square massacre. He should have been sent to the Hague for crimes against humanity. Instead, he was given a 19-gun salute by President Bill Clinton.

I will never forget it. I put together a hearing that day. Some of you were here and we bore witness to the fact, two days after Chi

Haotian said nobody died at Tiananmen Square. Back home, as I ready People's Daily, the English version, it was like Chi Haotian takes Washington by storm. We need our government, we need the President—he can do it as diplomatically as he wants, but to have some red lines about these human rights abuses that, as you have pointed out, all of you have pointed out, has gone from bad to worse.

Again, we are going to give this hearing over to the White House. Hopefully they will look at it and hopefully they will not throw it into the circular file. But the President himself, and Biden himself—you know, if you are going to get these positions, if you aspire to be President, you had better be president for all the people, Americans, as well as for people who are struggling under the tyranny of a dictatorship as they are in Beijing and throughout China.

So if you want to make any final comments, or Mr. Pittenger, if you would want to conclude on anything, thank you for your speaking truth to power with risks to yourselves and your loved ones when you do it. I just want to say how grateful we are. We will give this to Prince Zeid.

I will get a copy to Ban Ki-moon and hopefully I will physically put it in his hands and ask him to read it, because China gets a pass on human rights. They have been for far too long and now that they are in a race to the bottom, I will say it for the third time, with North Korea for abuses against their own citizens, it is about time that the United Nations found its voice.

Pastor Fu?

Mr. FU. Yes. Thank you, Chairman, once again. I just want to have the rest of the four specific recommendations to the State Department specifically, and thank you, Congressman Pittenger, for your leadership, too.

As you just mentioned, the family members, I mean, we actually even on our list today there was a petitioner from Heilongjiang province, Ms. Ma Yuqin. She was abused and tortured even for just simply making peaceful petitions for her property. Her whole factory was arbitrarily confiscated with all her wealth gone.

I think the U.S. State Department should strongly consider posting an officer at the U.S. Embassy in China with the sole responsibility of monitoring and reporting on religious freedom and related human rights abuses within China, including in the areas of Tibet and Xinjiang. I also recommend that the State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom and the Commission on International Religious Freedom to, each year, at least request to visit China.

When was the last time each of the offices and agencies have visited China? I think it is already years that there has been no visit. My request for a visit of the former Ambassador was even denied a visa, but we did not hold any protests on even denying a president-appointed ambassador-at-large. That is a shame.

The third recommendation I would recommend is that the State Department should make an official public statement condemning this forced demolition of churches and crosses in Zhejiang and other areas of China. So far, neither Secretary Kerry nor the spokesperson has issued a public statement condemning this large, brutal, shameful campaign.

The fourth and last one, is the State Department should raise publicly and at all levels of exchange with the Chinese Government the cases of prisoners of conscience, including the China 18 and others. I know you had led the campaign to urge President Obama to meet with the daughters of the prisoners of conscience multiple times.

I think if the excuse not to meet with these family members in China—it could pose a danger or potential threat—but how about here in the United States? There is no threat to meet with the family members. So, these are the recommendations.

I hope the State Department and our Embassy can really actively engage with those family members affected by the forced removal of crosses and the demolition of churches, the pastors can go and visit them and to meet with them and to really know about the situation and take concrete steps. Thank you.

Ms. LIN. Just one final remark, Mr. Chairman. There are 50 Falun Gong practitioners who have been recently denied refugee status in South Korea and are ready to be deported back to China to face those inhumane violations.

I admire your commitment to human rights, but not every government is like that. I think we now face a choice, every one of us who are outside and inside China. We can choose to be silent and conform to these kinds of violations or we can use our liberty to advocate for those whose liberty has been deprived. Thank you very much.

Chairman SMITH. On those 50, we will look into it and see if it would be appropriate—it probably will, but we will have to do a quick vetting of it. I mean, the whole issue of refoulement is that you do not send somebody back where there is a well-founded fear of persecution. You can count on each of those people, I think, going back to persecution, not even the fear of it.

We have had ongoing arguments with the UNHCR, and then a number of host governments who continually do this, send Falun Gong and others back to near certainty, either incarceration, certainly harassment, and we contact not only the government of South Korea, but also the High Commissioner for Refugees. So we will follow up on that right after this hearing.

Ms. Kadeer?

Mr. GYATSO. If I may, just one final.

Chairman SMITH. Yes.

Mr. GYATSO. In terms of finding some sort of a resolution and a solution to the situation inside Tibet, one thing that is clear for Tibetans in exile, and I think from messages coming out of inside Tibet also, there is support for the Dalai Lama's proposal made to the Chinese Government many years ago of finding an amicable solution for Tibetans to exist within the Chinese state but with autonomy over their culture, education, et cetera.

I think a possible solution within this Dalai Lama's lifetime would be for the United States and other ally countries that may see the wisdom of this solution, this proposal, to support it more openly and to help introduce education for the Chinese people to understand the content of that proposal so that they can see that a viable solution is not being properly addressed by the Chinese

Government. Because after the passing of this Dalai Lama, I believe Tibet will enter a much bleaker situation.

Thank you.

Ms. KADEER. In the case of Uyghurs, our biggest concern is extrajudicial killing of Uyghurs by the Chinese security forces, especially in predominantly Uyghur areas of Yatican, Kashgar, and Hotan.

It is also extended sometimes to Aksu and Urumqi areas. In most cases, we see Chinese security forces shoot and kill Uyghurs and just blame them. We do see, sometimes, family members, women and children, who are involved especially in police raids into the homes of the Uyghurs.

Just two days ago, the Chinese security forces in the city of Aksu shot and killed a Chinese woman with her child. She was taking her daughter to a piano lesson, and for some reason she may not have stopped at the particular checkpoint. We believe she was mistaken as a Uyghur and shot and killed. This is the first time a Han Chinese was extrajudicially killed in our home.

Her husband was obviously furious with the extrajudicial killing of his wife in the presence of the daughter, so he basically asked, "Why didn't you stop her? Or if you were suspicious, why didn't you shoot the tires? Why did you shoot inside of the car and kill my wife? Is it your job to just shoot and kill, not to stop people?" They said we thought maybe some Uyghurs or something were inside.

So my hope is both the administration and U.S. Congress, especially the State Department, could raise the issue urgently of the extrajudicial nature of Chinese security forces killing of not just Uyghurs, because they test with Uyghurs and then they extend to Tibet, to Falun Gong, to Chinese Christians. Usually this is the way to go, so I hope the U.S. Congress and the administration will pay particular attention to the extrajudicial killings. Thank you.

Chairman SMITH. Any concluding comments?

[No response].

Chairman SMITH. Thank you so much. You are true heroes.

[Whereupon, at 1:04 p.m. the hearing was concluded.]

# A P P E N D I X

# PREPARED STATEMENTS

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## PREPARED STATEMENT OF ANASTASIA LIN

JULY 23, 2015

Thank you Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the Congressional-Executive Commission on China for convening this event.

My name is Anastasia Lin. I'm an actress and a Canadian citizen. I will be representing Canada at the 2015 Miss World competition in Sanya, China, at least that is my hope. Recent events leave me uncertain, I'm a little worried about what will happen next if I continue to speak out.

I campaigned for the title of Miss World Canada on a human rights platform. I wanted to speak for those in China that are beaten, burned and electrocuted for holding to their beliefs; people in prison who eat rotten food with blistered fingers because they dare have convictions. These are some of China's most noble people, people of moral fortitude—a characteristic once treasured in my homeland, a characteristic now so desperately needed.

When I was crowned Miss World Canada, my father was so proud of me.

He received hundreds of congratulatory messages. But within a couple days, my father's tone changed. He told me nervously that I must stop my advocacy for human rights in China, or else he would have no choice but to sever contact with me. I understand my father was visited by Chinese security agents, who forced him to apply pressure on me in this way.

Over the past several years, I have taken on roles in several independent film and television programs that depict human rights abuses in China. My job requires me to be intimately familiar with the stories of those who have suffered unspeakable horrors, including a number of Falun Gong practitioners who were imprisoned and tortured for their beliefs.

Prison guards put bamboo sticks under their fingernails. Women are tortured with electric batons on their private parts and raped. Hundreds of thousands have been jailed for a belief. These are not criminals. They are simply people who wanted to meditate and improve themselves by following the values of truthfulness, compassion and tolerance.

I have studied these stories and performed them. In Bleeding Edge, a film to be released this Winter, I play a woman imprisoned for practicing Falun Gong. Like so many millions, she is tortured. But it is the scene where her family members are brought before her, made to kneel and beg her to give up her belief, that is the hardest to bear.

Because it is not just her body and her mind that are battered; the Communist Party makes her family suffer. This is the regime's policy of guilt by association. It is why my father was threatened by security forces. Nevermind that I am a Canadian citizen, upholding Canadian values, on the other side of the world.

I can't understand what it is like to be tortured or face the inhuman violations of prison guards. But I now understand what it means to feel deep fear that my convictions could be paid for by the people I love the most in the world.

I wish I could tell you that I didn't waver, that I didn't question if I wasn't being too selfish and putting my family at risk, but I did. Then I remembered, this isn't about me.

Through my encounters with persecution victims and their family members, I have found that these practitioners of Falun Gong—who have been marginalized, defamed and vilified in China for the past sixteen years—are noble people. Despite the constant threat of arbitrary detention, torture, psychiatric abuse, or death, they have been steadfast in their commitment to their principles, and have always sought peaceful means to resist and generate public awareness of the persecution.

In China today, our traditional values have buried under the moral scars of endless political campaigns. Material wealth and the pursuit of self-interest are foremost in many people's minds. The courage of Falun Gong practitioners, and of other dissidents and human rights lawyers, stand in stark contrast to these trends and this is what gives me hope for China's future. There are still people of integrity there.

And yet, it is these people that suffer the most. Good people like my father, a law abiding and contributing citizen, an honest businessman now too afraid to talk to his daughter, who once supported her in everything she did, who now must leave her to face the world alone.

Mr. Chairman, I hope you understand this is a common experience for so many American and Canadian citizens. Those Chinese who dare to speak their minds do so knowing that those still within the regime's reach in China could pay the price for it.

We have a saying these days, being "invited to tea." It is when the Chinese security agents ask you to come with them to remind you who has the baton and that they don't mind using it.

For myself, I know silence is more dangerous. If you don't speak up, those security personnel will know that their tactic work, and they will never stop. That's why I told the world what happened to my dad. I hope he understands. I hope he knows how much I love him.

I also hope that people will pay attention to stories so much more tragic than my own. Like that of Paul Li who, like me, is also a Canadian citizen in Toronto.

Three months ago, Paul's father Li Xiaobo was sentenced to his second 8-year prison term. Mr. Li is 60-years-old and in Chengdu, China. He was once a highly respected county magistrate, and because he followed Falun Gong's teachings of truth, compassion and tolerance, he and sought to be fair in all his dealings. He didn't use his position to gain wealth and personal advantage. That is very rare among chinese officials.

After the persecution of Falun Gong began in 1999, Mr. Li wrote essays criticizing the Communist Party's actions. He spent 8 years in prison for these words. In order to try to force him to renounce his beliefs and embrace the Party's doctrine of atheism, authorities tortured him brutally, making him blind in one eye.

After being released from prison, he continued to publicize cases of torture and abuse, and again wrote and distributed literature to inform his compatriots about the persecution of Falun Gong.

I could never claim to have that kind of courage and unbending integrity. This is the kind of person that China needs, the kind of person the world needs.

Last year, while Mr. Li and his son were out distributing information, he was again arrested. Paul, who is a Canadian citizen, was eventually deported back to Canada. But in April of this year, Mr. Li was again sentenced to eight years in prison.

His deeds are heroic, and yet unlike myself, when Paul Li tried to get the media to pay attention to his case, he met with silence.

Maybe nobody paid attention because Mr. Li's story is just too common.

The persecution on Falun Gong is among the worst most widespread and the brutal human rights violations in history. After the end of 1998, the Chinese Communist government estimated that the number of people who practiced Falun Gong was about 70 million.

Since the persecution began in 1999, millions have been arbitrarily detained, arrested, imprisoned, tortured, sexually assaulted or murdered.

Thousands of Falun Gong practitioners continue to be sentenced to prison every year, often after show trials where they have no chance of justice, and where decisions are made by Communist Party authorities rather than independent judges.

Lawyers who try to represent Falun Gong practitioners—including many of the lawyers targeted in the most recent crackdown—have faced harassment, disbarment, beatings, and imprisonment.

Historically, most Falun Gong practitioners have been detained in reeducation-through-labor camps (RTL). In a 2013 study, Amnesty International reported that Falun Gong detainees comprise between one third to 100 percent of the prisoners in the labor camps it studied.

Freedom House recently reported that "hundreds of thousands" of practitioners had been sent to these camps, where they face an elevated risk of torture and death in custody. Common torture methods include beatings; shocks with electric batons; violent forced-feedings that often puncture the esophagus or lungs; suspension in stress position; and sexual humiliation and abuse.

Facing growing international and domestic pressure, the Chinese government closed the reeducation-through-labor system in 2013. But this was mainly a cosmetic change, as many camps were simply renamed as prisons, rehabilitation centers, or reeducation centers. For Falun Gong practitioners, it did nothing to improve their circumstances. In fact, between 2013 and 2014, the reported number of abductions and arrests of Falun Gong practitioners rose by nearly a third (29.8%), from 4,942 to 6,415 per year.

While Falun Gong practitioners have the names and stories of some 3800 practitioners who have been killed in the persecution, multiple independent investigators estimate that tens of thousands of Falun Gong practitioners have been killed so their vital organs could be extracted and sold for organ transplantation—a lucrative business in China.

I'd like to remind you all that there are so many people in China facing unspeakable suffering, not because they did anything wrong, but because they are people of faith and morality. They are people any country would be fortunate to have. I hope China realizes that before too many more of them have been jailed or killed for possessing the kind of conviction and virtue China so desperately needs.

I want to finish by telling you about my father. He is a successful and decent businessman. He's also uniquely generous. For many years, he has been contributing to villages to build roads and donating money to people that can't get work. He brings his children out to the street to give out red envelopes of money every New Year to people less fortunate than himself. He has really inspired me throughout my life to think of others.

I don't get to talk to him anymore. Here I am doing something I think he should be so proud of, something I think is so important for the country I was born in, and he and I can't even speak. I also have to question if my testimony here today may make him angry with me, or worried for his business and family in China.

These threats are how American and Canadian citizens with family in China feel the weight of the regime's repression even here, on the other side of the world. Human rights and religious freedom in China don't just affect the people they live there, they affect every person of Chinese ethnicity around the world that still have loved ones there.

I hope that you can help Chinese people gain a voice, to support them in their wish to believe what they want to believe and talk to whoever they want to talk to about any topic they wish. I hope this can happen soon. I miss my dad.

Thank you.

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## PREPARED STATEMENT OF BOB FU

JULY 23, 2015

Honorable Chairman Congressman Smith, Co-Chairman Senator Rubio, Members of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, and distinguished guests:

This is the third year of President Xi Jinping's Administration in China, whose policies and actions have raised alarm, and in some cases astonished the international community. Domestically, Xi has purged his political rivals through a "selective anti-corruption campaign" and monopolized power within the leadership of the Communist party, the government and the military. In foreign policy, Xi has adopted a dangerous and aggressive agenda, challenging existing international law and creating his own when deemed necessary, including the national security law, which is being viewed by may as a pretext for human rights abuses. This antagonistic and arrogant approach to governance over the past two and half years has earned Xi the nickname "Chairman Mao Junior" and "Xi-tler."

In the past two years, human rights and rule of law in China have rapidly deteriorated. The number of dissidents taken into police custody, arrested and convicted since Xi took power has exceeded the total number that occurred during the 10-year reign of President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao. Chinese citizens who peacefully criticize the government or defend the rights of citizens; lawyers who dare to represent "sensitive cases" without cooperating with the government; and activists who assemble in a peaceful manner, attempt to request the government's permission to establish a non-governmental organization (NGO), or peacefully protest against government policies or judicial injustices are subsequently "invited to drink tea," summoned for interrogation, detained or arrested, and eventually tried in a corrupt judicial system. To be sure, the Chinese government has intensified its harassment of NGOs, civil society organizations, law firms representing human rights cases, charitable organizations, and political organizations such as the "New Citizen Movement."

During the Xi Administration, and particularly in the past 18 months, religious freedom abuses have reached a level not seen since the Cultural Revolution. Not only have house churches continued to experience intensifying persecution, but now "Three-Self" churches, that is, government-sanctioned churches are being subjected to government-sponsored persecution campaigns. The Chinese government's persecution of Tibetan Buddhists, Uyghur Muslims, and Falun Gong practitioners has also worsened. The Chinese government perceives religious practitioners as being guided by "foreign influence" and has subsequently pursued absolute control over religious communities.

Finally, China's newly passed national security law will expand the management, oversight, and suppression of religious activity under the guise of national security. Specifically, Article 27 states that "The State lawfully protects citizens' freedom of

religious belief and normal religious activities, upholds the principle of religions managing themselves, preventing, stopping and lawfully punishing the exploitation of religion's name to conduct illegal and criminal activities that endanger national security, and opposes foreign influences interference with domestic religious affairs, maintaining normal order of religious activities. The State shuts down cult organizations in accordance with law, preventing, stopping, lawfully punishing and correcting illegal and criminal cult activities." The last clause regarding so called "cults" is especially concerning noting the Chinese government's use of this term to persecute both Falun Gong practitioners and most recently house churches. To be sure, the new national security law is expected to embolden the Chinese government to intensify its harassment of religious practitioners and organizations in order to control all aspects of religious life.

I will testify on religious freedom, human rights and rule of law in China and focus specifically on the forced demolitions of churches and crosses in Zhejiang province, the ongoing persecution of the house church, and the treatment of human rights defenders and the rule of law in China.

I will then offer related observations and recommendations for U.S. foreign policy on China.

## I. FORCED DEMOLITIONS

In the past year, the government of Zhejiang province has demolished churches and crosses under the pretext of implementing standards for buildings. Based on China Aid's research during 2014 and the first six months of 2015, the Chinese government's suppression of house churches and "Three-Self," that is, government sanctioned churches have escalated significantly compared to previous years. In 2014, the comprehensive intensity of the government's persecution of Christian churches and Christians overall in China increased dramatically. In comparing the total number of religious persecution cases, the number of religious practitioners persecuted, the number of citizens detained and sentenced, the number of severe rights abuse cases, and the number of individuals in severe abuse cases with China Aid statistics from 2013, the totals of these six categories increased by 152.74 percent. In comparison with China Aid statistics from previous annual reports, there is a trend of increased persecution over the past eight years, which averages an annual increase of 166.47 percent.

In 2014, the Communist Party Committee and the government of Zhejiang province destroyed churches and crosses under the guise of a campaign entitled "three rectifications and one demolition," which attempted to regulate so-called "illegally constructed buildings." By the end of 2014, more than 30 churches were forcibly demolished throughout the province, over 300 individuals were interrogated by police, more than 150 religious practitioners were physically injured, more than 60 individuals were administratively or criminally detained, and more than 10 pastors and church leaders were arrested. According to information collected by China Aid, by the end of June of this year, more than 1,500 churches had their crosses forcibly demolished or removed in Zhejiang province, at least 50 of which were house churches in rural areas, with more than 1,300 Christians having been interrogated, arrested, or held in custody for protesting or attempting to prevent the destruction of their churches or crosses.

Just in the past month, both Protestant and Catholic government sanctioned churches in the cities of Hangzhou and Jinhua had their crosses forcibly demolished or removed. A few members of these churches peacefully protested and in some cases hired lawyers to defend their rights. In addition, both the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association and China Christian Council representing Zhejiang province sent letters to the provincial and central government authorities demanding they cease from forcibly demolishing their church's crosses. The government sponsored campaign to destroy the crosses of predominately government sanctioned churches reflects a new development in religious persecution in China.

## II. PERSECUTION AGAINST THE HOUSE CHURCH

The Chinese government's persecution campaign against the house church movement continues to escalate as a continuation of the 2011 government mandate to "eradicate house churches within 10 years." During the past 18 months, the Chinese government has orchestrated a systematic campaign to persecute house churches in China. The larger urban house churches such as the Shouwang Church in Beijing and Wanbang Church in Shanghai continue to remain prohibited by the Chinese government, while house churches such as Chengdu's Xiuyuzhifu Church, Guangzhou's Liangren Church, and Guiyang's Huoshi Church are subjected to strict

control and harassment by public security and religious affairs bureaus. House churches in rural areas also continue to experience increased levels of persecution.

Unlike previous years, the Chinse government began to persecute house churches under the guise of "eradicating cults" in 2014. The Chinese government consistently cites "attacking cults" as a pretext to launch large-scale persecution campaigns against house churches. Details of religious freedom cases reveals that the CPC regularly cited Clause 300 of the Criminal Law, defined as "organizing cults and sects and using superstition to undermine law enforcement," in an attempt to harass and persecute house church pastors, elders, and church members.

The Chinese government's persecution of house churches under the pretext of "eradicating cults" and through other means is detailed in China Aid's 2014 Annual Report on Religious and Human Rights Persecution in China. Unfortunately, the persecution of the house church continues to worsen in 2015, here is a sampling of the reports we have received this year:

- January 20, 2015: Over 20 church members from Sichuan's Langzhong Church were taken into police custody, and nine were administratively detained for 10–15 days.
- March 20, 2015: 10 Christians in Jiangsu province were detained for attending a worship service.
- March 23, 2015: Yongxing Christian Church in Anhui province was forcibly demolished.
- April 14, 2015: A church in Anhui province was forcibly demolished.
- April 16, 2015: Approximately 10 Christians in two regions of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region were taken into police custody.
- April 24, 2015: Two religious practitioners in Xinjiang were administratively detained for gathering in a house to worship.
- April 24, 2015: Three Christians were sentenced to two years in prison and a contractor was sentenced to one year and nine months in prison for "illegal business operations" for printing character improvement textbooks that included references to Christian values.
- April 26, 2015: Five members of the Discipleship Church in Shandong province were sentenced to three to four years in prison.
- April 30, 2015: Bethany Church Jilin province was forcibly closed.
- May 10, 2015: Over 30 Christians in Xinjiang were detained by police and their church was forcibly closed.
- May 20, 2015: Three house churches in Guangdong province were forcibly closed.
- May 26, 2015: Twelve members of Qianxi Church in Guizhou province were administratively detained, and seven were later placed under criminal detention.
- May 28, 2015: In Liaoning province, the wife of Pastor Wang Zhongliang was bound and gagged by public security officers for several hours prior to the interrogation of her husband.
- June 1, 2015: Pu'er Church in Yunnan province was raided by the government.
- June 13, 2015: Beijing's Yahebo Church was raided.
- June 16, 2015: Members of Sichuan's Langzhong Church were detained for 10 days, and members of Shuiguanzhen Church were detained for 15 days.
- June 29, 2015: 8 members of the Daguan Church in Guizhou province were criminally detained.

In reviewing religious freedom abuses perpetrated against the house church during both 2014 and 2015, the following characteristics emerged: the abuse of administrative penalties and regulations regarding the length of administrative or criminal detention of church members and leaders; persecuting churches and church members under the guise of "eradicating cults;" confiscating house church possessions, religious materials, and books; banning and harassing Sunday schools and their use of religious publications; forcibly collecting and documenting information about house churches and church members; forcing house church members to join the government sanctioned Three-Self church; detaining and sending house church leaders to labor camps on the pretext of "suspicion of organizing and using a cult to undermine law enforcement;" and restricting religious teaching to minors and college students.

## III. HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND THE RULE OF LAW

Ironically, Xi Jinping shouted the slogan "govern the country according to law" when he took office, but the rule of law in China has perhaps regressed to a time of reminiscent of the Cultural Revolution. In the less than three years of Xi's presi-

dency, human rights conditions and the rule of law in China has deteriorated significantly. The Chinese government has increased its interrogation, detention, and arrest of dissidents, human rights advocates, NGO leaders, feminist activists, human rights lawyers, and other civil society actors. The Chinese government also continues to abuse Article 73 of China's criminal procedural law, known as "residential surveillance," which allows for the arbitrary detention of Chinese citizens, which has been used against human rights lawyers, dissidents, religious practitioners, and journalists.

The Xi Administration continues to harass, intimidate, and arrest NGO and think tank leaders, such as Dr. Xu Zhiyong of the New Citizen Movement, whose campaigns to promote equal access to education and the public disclosure of government official's financial records have been banned by the Chinese government. The leaders of the Beijing-based non-governmental think tank "Transition Institution," namely Guo Yushan and He Zhengjun have been arrested on the charge of "illegal business operations" and are awaiting trial.

The Chinese government continues to arrest influential public intellectuals and journalists who dare to criticize the government and disseminate information on constitutionalism, including the veteran journalist Gao Yu, 71, who was unjustly sentenced to seven years in prison for the crime of "illegally providing state secrets to (institutions) outside (China's) borders."

To be sure, human rights lawyers in China are among the bravest Chinese citizens seeking justice and promoting the rule of law in China. Unfortunately, the reward for courageously defending Falun Gong practitioners, political dissidents, and human rights advocates is to be labeled a "trouble maker" by the government and subsequently subjected to harassment from local government public security agencies and government officials in the judicial system.

The Chinese government has intensified it persecution of human rights lawyers, including the arrest and detention of prominent lawyer Pu Zhiqiang, who has been in detention for over one year and still awaits trial. Pu represented numerous Chinese citizens whose basic rights had been violated by the government, and expressed his views on public issues via the Internet, including criticizing the government's policies on the treatment of ethnic minorities.

Sadly, the internationally recognized human rights lawyer Gao Zhisheng is still being denied freedom of movement and access to medical treatment since being released from prison in August of 2014 after serving a 5-year prison sentence.

In March of 2014, human rights lawyers Tang Jitian, Jiang Tianyong, Wang Cheng and Zhang Junjie, and nine family members of their clients, visited the "Jiansanjiang Rule of Law Education Center" in China's northeastern Heilongjiang province and demanded the release of illegally detained citizens. These lawyers and family members were all arrested by the local public security agent and subsequently placed under administrative detention for "utilizing cult activities to harm society." The four detained human rights lawyers were beaten and tortured resulting in collectively having 24 of their ribs broken. The "Jiansanjiang" incident became well known throughout China among both human rights lawyers and citizens alike causing many to travel to Jiansanjiang to show their support. In the end, the local public security bureau kidnapped and beat more than 100 individuals that were peacefully protesting.

Unfortunately, there are a hundreds of these incidents in which human rights lawyers are harassed or worse, beaten. Here is a sampling of the reports we have received this year:

- In February, during a trial in the city of Liuzhou attorneys Wen Yu and Sui Muqing were expelled from the court by the presiding judge and physically injured by judicial police.
- In April, Beijing-based attorneys Wang Fu, Liu Jinping and Zhang Lei were surrounded and assaulted at the gate of Hengyang Intermediate Court by judicial police.
- In June, attorney Zhang Kai, Li Guisheng and six other human rights lawyers traveled to Guizhou province to represent a human rights case and were beaten by local police.
- On July 10th, the Chinese government began interrogating and detaining human rights lawyers and advocates, and legal professionals, which continues today. As of July 21st, 242 human rights lawyers and advocates, and legal professionals have either been interrogated, detained, or have gone missing into police custody, of which 11 human rights lawyers and 3 human rights advocates have been criminally detained, and 6 remain missing.

There are many who fear that the July 10th crackdown on human rights defenders may be under the pretext of China's new national security law, including the

State department, which made the the following statement last week: "Over the last few days we have noted with growing alarm reports that Chinese public security forces have systematically detained individuals who share the common attribute of peacefully defending the rights of others, including those who lawfully challenge official policies. We are deeply concerned that the broad scope of the new National Security Law is being used as a legal facade to commit human rights abuses. We strongly urge China to respect the rights of all of its citizens and to release all those who have recently been detained for seeking to protect the rights of Chinese citizens."

In April of this year, the 14th Plenary of the 12th National People's Congress Standing Committee reviewed the Foreign NGO Management Law, which many fear will further suppress civil society. The eventual enactment of this law and the national security law recently passed on July 1st indicate that the Chinese government aims to comprehensively exercise unconstrained control over its citizens, including limiting access to information, and controlling every aspect of civil and political life, which is a dangerous and alarming trend that should be viewed as both a United States foreign policy and national security priority.

**In gauging U.S. foreign policy towards China, I'd like to make the following observations:**

The U.S. government must carefully evaluate the effectiveness of its foreign policy with China over the past few years. The United States has numerous exchanges and partnerships with the Chinese government on economic, military, and political issues, but has yet to produce any positive outcome in advancing human rights, religious freedom or rule of law in China. In fact, the over the last decade, the United States has done little more that expressed its concern over China's deteriorating human rights record. Nobel Peace Prize laureate Liu Xiaobo still remains in prison, and prominent political prisoners of conscience Wang Bingzhang and Peng Ming who peacefully advocated for China's democratization are still serving life sentences.

In the past decade, the Chinese government has both openly and secretly executed more than one thousand prisoners of conscience. The Chinese government's persecution of Falun Gong practitioners, Tibetan Buddhists, Uyghur Muslims, and Christians both within house churches and government sanctioned TSPM churches has reached an unprecedented level. To be sure, religious freedom and related human rights remain an empty promise for Chinese citizens, and President Xi's suppression of freedom of speech on university campuses, and arrest and detention of dissidents, human rights lawyers, and civil society actors appears to be becoming the norm in China. Yet, every year, Congressional leaders and human rights organizations make strong appeals to the Obama administration, hoping that the U.S. government will take stronger and more effective measures to pressure the Chinese government to adhere to basic human rights as defined by international law. To be sure, the current approach of our U.S. foreign policy with the Chinese government has not worked, and there are consequences to this failed foreign policy, namely the lives of those Chinese citizens working at their peril to advocate for the basic freedoms we too often take for granted here in the United States.

Thus the U.S. government must have a new policy with China that clearly defines human rights as a priority in ongoing and future dialogues and identifies opportunities to pressure the Chinese government to respect their citizen's access to basic human dignity, freedom, and civil and political rights. U.S. foreign policy must link the improvement of human rights and rule of law in China with ongoing and future cooperation in the economic, political, and military sectors.

**Therefore, I would offer the following recommendations for U.S. foreign policy on China:**

- Noting that the annual U.S.-China Human Rights Dialogue has yet to make any significant gains, many within the human rights community, including myself, believe the dialogue should be cancelled indefinitely. However, if the dialogue should continue, there should be strict preconditions, such as clearly defined and measureable outcomes and the inclusion of human rights advocates and Chinese civil society representatives.
- Human rights should play a more central role during annual U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogues (S&ED) and include a review mechanism to ensure progress on human rights is made during each year's meeting. This year's discussions of human rights at the S&ED was extremely disappointing, which included no reference of specific human rights cases, such as those prisoners of conscience listed among the China 18, or others.
- The U.S. Congress must periodically evaluate the efficacy of U.S. foreign policy towards China regarding human rights and when necessary enact legislation that addresses the unique challenges of confronting China on its human rights

record. The United States' foreign policy must send a strong and consistent message to the Chinese government that it must reverse its trajectory of denying basic human rights to its citizens or face specific consequences.

• The U.S. State Department should strongly consider posting an officer at the U.S. Embassy in China with the sole responsibility of monitoring and reporting on religious freedom and related human rights abuses within China, including in the areas of Tibet and Xinjiang.

• The State Department's office of the International Religious Freedom and the U.S. Commission International Religious Freedom should attempt to visit China each year to conduct field work and communicate with Chinese religious communities directly.

• The U.S. State Department should make an official public statement condemning the forced demolition of churches and crosses in Zhejiang province and throughout China.

• The U.S. State Department should raise publicly and at all levels of exchanges with the Chinese government the cases of prisoners of conscience included in the China 18 and others.

• The U.S. government must reconsider its invitation to President Xi to visit the United States in September, which should either be cancelled, postponed or preconditioned on the following: (1)the release of prisoners of conscience listed among the China 18 and others such as Gao Yu, Pu Zhiqiang, Guo Yushan, and Ilham Tohti; 92) the release of human rights lawyer Gao Zhisheng from house arrest; 93) ending the harassment and detention of human rights lawyers, including releasing currently detained lawyers and legal professionals; and 94) ending the forcible demolition of churches and crosses in Zhejiang province and throughout China.

ADDENDUM:

1. China Aid's 2014 Annual Report on Religious and Human Rights Persecution in China
2. China 18 Prisoners of Conscience: http://www.china18.org

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对华援助协会

**2014 Annual Report**

**Religious and Human Rights Persecution in China**

*The Year of "Persecution and Endurance"*

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**China Aid Association, USA**

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Read the report at www.chinaaid.org (English) and www.chinaaid.net (Chinese)

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## I. Introduction

In 2014, Christians and practitioners of other faiths in China experienced the harshest persecution seen in over a decade, including draconian measures taken by Xi Jinping's Administration to eliminate all religious, political, and social dissent. Noting China Aid predominately receives reports of abuse from Christian communities in China, the following information and data predominately reflects persecution against Christians. The increase in government-sanctioned persecution against religious practitioners and human rights lawyers and advocates reflects the overall political transformation that is occurring within the Communist Party in China (CPC), namely an orchestrated effort to consolidate power and suppress dissent and any perceived threats to the Chinese government, including the growth of religion in China.

*The political reality of the Xi Jinping Administration*

The Xi Administration created the Comprehensively Deepening Reform Leading Small Group (CDRLSG) to lead reforms in China during the Third Plenary Session of 18th CPC Central Committee at the end of 2013. At the Fourth Plenary Session of 18th CPC Central Committee from October 20-23, 2014, the CPC approved deepening reforms, advancing governance according to a Socialist rule of law and intensifying efforts to eradicate corruption. According to CPC-released statistics, 180,000 "tigers and flies" (high-ranking CPC leaders and low ranking bureaucrats) have been targeted, and 58 officials from the province-level and higher have been investigated and subsequently punished. The CPC has also established the Central National Security Commission chaired by President Xi, which is indicative of the power restructuring of the Communist Party, the government, and the military, all of which are concentrated in President Xi's control. The military also possesses considerable power and has become a decisive factor in shaping the political situation in China, in many cases operating above the law. That being said, the corruption of the military is staggering, evidenced by the downfall of a large number of high-ranking officers, such as Gu Junshan and Xu Caihou. The so-called political reform initiated by the CPC may be nothing more than a mechanism to eliminate internal dissent.

It appears clear that the CPC has entered into a "post-totalitarian era," no longer able to rely on ideology and authority to unite the party. Inevitably, the CPC has broken into various political factions as a result of competing interests amongst party members and escalating conflicts between local and central government officials. The downfall of government officials Bo Xilai in 2013 and Zhou Yongkang in 2014 reflect this power struggle between factions within the CPC. Furthermore, subsequent to global economic decline, China's economic growth has also slowed considerably. According to state-run media, there has been an increase in social conflict, with an average of 200,000 incidents of conflict or crisis occurring every year. As a result, stability maintenance has become the focus of the Xi Administration. In creating a model of totalitarian government, the Xi Administration has sanctioned severe measures to regulate and eliminate dissidents both within and outside the Party. To suppress dissent outside of the party, specific measures have been taken to eliminate all criticism of the CPC or challenges to the status quo of the political order, including crackdowns on social movements such as the New Citizen's Movement, suppression of NGOs, restrictions on free speech at universities, and the harassment and imprisonment of well-known human rights lawyers. Thus, the Xi Administration's harassment, arrest, and criminal conviction of individuals such as Xu Zhiyong, Guo Yushan,

Ding Jiaxi, Pu Zhiqiang, Tie Liu, and Gao Yu can be viewed as tactics to intimidate Chinese citizens who may dare to criticize or challenge the Xi Administration and the Communist Party.

*The CPC's resistance to religion and campaign of religious persecution*

As the CPC officially endorses atheism, it is inherently hostile and resistant to all religion and, perhaps, especially Christianity. It is fair to say that the rapid increase in the number of Christians in China over the past decade has triggered a unique sense of crisis within the CPC. As the Christian faith continues to grow in China, so does the number of Chinese citizens who embrace rule of law, oppose totalitarian governance, and support the expansion of civil society. As ongoing growth of house churches in both rural and urban areas is perceived by the CPC as a serious threat, the CPC's suppression of Tibetan Buddhism, Islam in Xinjiang and surrounding areas, and Falun Gong practitioners persists. In addition, several Catholic churches and bishops have been persecuted for their expressed discontent with the Chinese governments' interference and harassment of the Catholic church. To address the growth of Christianity, the CPC government has continued its attempts at reforming Protestantism and Catholicism, including efforts within the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) Church to reflect a "Party-governed" church. Yet as a result of the vigorous growth of house churches in urban and rural areas, attendees of house churches currently outnumber those of Three-Self Churches. A conservative estimate suggests that the total number of Christians attending both Three-Self churches and house churches is approximately 70 million, which is growing. Dr. Yang Fenggang, a professor of religion and sociology at Purdue University, has estimated that by 2030, the number of Christians in China will exceed those in the United States, thus making China the largest Christian nation in the world. In response to research provided by Dr. Yang and other scholars, the CPC is growing increasingly concerned about the rapid growth of Christianity in China.

In 2014, the CPC adopted perhaps the most severe suppressive measures since the Cultural Revolution by targeting TSPM churches in addition to house churches. In addition, government-sponsored campaign to suppress and eradicate the house church movement has been reported throughout China, including numerous house churches being forcibly closed, approximately 100 church buildings being demolished, and thousands of religious practitioners being subjected to criminal or administrative penalties by the public security bureau. In Zhejiang province, both Three-Self churches and house churches had their crosses forcibly demolished, and 70-80 Three-Self church pastors and house church leaders were detained. Moreover, the CPC persecuted house churches throughout China under the guise of eradicating "cults." The CPC also promoted the "construction of Christianity with Chinese characteristics," mobilizing leaders from the Three-Self churches and religious and academic leaders to advocate for constructing a Chinese Christianity with socialist characteristics, thus attempting to reform and subsequently utilize Christianity as a political and social mechanism for the CPC to govern and control its citizens.

## II. Summary and Analysis of Religious and Human Rights Persecution in China

In 2014, practitioners from all religions in China experienced a comprehensive escalation of government persecution. As China Aid predominately receives information on Christian communities, the following information and data mainly reflects persecution against Christians.

In comparing the total number of religious persecution cases, the number of religious practitioners persecuted, the number of citizens detained, the number of citizens sentenced, the number of severe abuse cases, and the number of individuals in severe abuse cases with China Aid statistics from 2013, the total of all six categories increased **152.74 percent**. In comparison with China Aid statistics from previous annual reports, there is a trend of increased persecution over the past eight years, which averages an annual increase of **166.47 percent**.

*A brief summary of predominately Christian persecution of religious practitioners*

In 2014, the scope, depth, and intensity of persecution against religious practitioners far surpassed that of 2013. The Chinese government's persecution against the government-sanctioned Three-Self church reached a historic high not seen since the Cultural Revolution. The widespread forced demolition or removal of churches and crosses throughout Zhejiang province also occurred in Anhui, Shandong, and Henan provinces. The persecution of the house church movement also intensified as both urban and rural house churches were thoroughly scrutinized, and in some cases forced to join the Three-Self church. In 2014, the Chinese government launched a campaign to persecute so-called "cults," similar to the crackdown on Falun Gong in 1998. Certain Christian sects throughout China were banned, such as "the Church of Almighty God," leading to the arrest and conviction of more than 1,000 religious adherents. The Chinese government also made significant efforts to promote "the construction of Christianity with Chinese characteristics," or "sinicization," thus attempting to transform Christian theology into a doctrine that aligns with the core values of socialism and so-called Chinese characteristics.

As previously mentioned, the Chinese government has intensified its persecution against practitioners representing all religions in China. In the case of Christianity, both the government-sanctioned Three-Self church and the house church movement experienced unprecedented persecution. The Chinese government's persecution campaign included forced demolition of churches and crosses, the detention and imprisonment of pastors and church members on criminal charges, forcing churches into bankruptcy by confiscating church property and imposing fines, and manipulating state-run media to label house churches as "cult" organizations.

*Escalation of the CPC's suppression of government-sanctioned Three-Self churches*

In 2014, China Aid received reports from China on the persecution of pastors and church members of the government-sanctioned Three-Self church from the municipalities of Shanghai and Beijing and the regions of southwest, northeast, northwest, east, central, and south China.

During a campaign entitled "Three Rectifications and One Demolition," operated under the guise of correcting "illegal structures," the CPC Committee and government of Zhejiang demolished crosses and entire churches for violations such as having incomplete government paperwork. Thus, the persecution of Three-Self churches in many cases was a consequence of conflicts with local governments related to church property disputes. According to statistics received by China Aid from Christian leaders in Zhejiang, by the end of 2014, more than 30 churches were forcibly demolished, 422 crosses were removed, over 300 church members were taken into police custody, 150 individuals were physically injured, at least 60 church members were criminally or administratively detained, and more than 10 pastors and church leaders were arrested. However,

it appears that the scope of persecution may be wider than reported due to fear of reprisal from government authorities. According to unverified local reporting in Chinese media outlets, as many as 1,000 crosses were forcibly removed across Zhejiang province, approximately 50 churches, particularly those in rural areas, were forcibly demolished, and at least 1,300 Christians were detained, arrested, or held in custody for protesting or attempting to prevent the destruction of churches or crosses. To no surprise, the government-sponsored persecution campaign garnered significant attention and outcry from the international community.

Among the most widely covered cases reported by China Aid included persecution against the Sanjiang Church, the Salvation Church, and the Nanle County Christian Church.

The government-sanctioned Sanjiang Church, a Three-Self church, in Yongjia County, in the city of Wenzhou, Zhejiang province, was forcibly demolished during the night of April 28. The church was built over 12 years and cost 30 million Yuan (U.S. $ 4.8 million) to build, which was donated by members of the church. In an effort to protect the church from forced demolition, several thousand church members stood guard at the church for over a month. The Chinese government detained dozens of church staff members, including elders Zhao Rendi and Guo Yunhua, eight of which were charged with "illegally appropriating farmland" and "gathering a crowd to disturb social order." The forced demolition of the Sanjiang Church raised concern from the international community, with scholars comparing the severity of the destruction to the Taliban's destruction of the Bamiyan Buddha Statues and as significant evidence of the CPC campaign to persecute Christian churches and religious practitioners in Zhejiang province.

Persecution continued when the local government of Pingyang County, also in the city of Wenzhou, Zhejiang province, dispatched 600 SWAT officers, policemen, and Chinese government agents to the Salvation Church, a Protestant house church, to demolish the church's cross. Prior to this attempt, more than 1,000 members of the church had successfully stopped the government's attempted demolition of the cross on two other occasions. Unfortunately, on July 21, approximately 14 church members were physically attacked by SWAT officers, five of whom, including Zhang Zhimin, were severely injured. The incident involving the Salvation Church is yet another example of persecution perpetrated by the Chinese government against the house church movement in China as a coordinated effort to suppress and control religion.

Pastor Zhang Shaojie of the Nanle County Christian Church was sentenced to 12 years in prison and fined 100,000 Yuan (U.S. $16,141) on charges of "gathering a crowd to disrupt public order" and "fraud." A few months later, Zhang Cuijuan, Pastor Zhang's sister and church member, and Zhao Junling, a Nanle Church missionary, were both found guilty of "gathering a crowd to disrupt the public order" and sentenced to 1-1/2 years and one year in prison with a reprieve, respectively. The Nanle County case began in 2013 when 25 members of the church were criminally detained; most of the detained were gradually released or have been released on probation awaiting trial. The underlying conflict of the case arose when the government seized the property on which the Nanle Church had planned to erect a new church building, causing Pastor Zhang Shaojie to lead church members to defend the church's legal right to the property and to petition the central government in Beijing. In response to the church's efforts to defend their rights, the local CPC committee and Nanle County government abused its power and mobilized the public security bureau, religious affairs bureau, education bureau, united front

work department, and a number of other government agencies of Nanle County to engage in a campaign to persecute the church and its members, including preventing members from traveling to Beijing to petition, threatening and subjecting church members to house arrest and detention in extrajudicial "black jails," and physically assaulting foreign news reporters and lawyers. The Nanle church, which previously hosted more than 1,000 members, was forced to close.

*The CPC increased persecution of house churches throughout China*

In 2014, the CPC's persecution campaign to investigate and suppress the house church movement escalated on all fronts, as a continuation of the 2011 mandate to "eradicate house churches within 10 years." The overall number of house church leaders and members who were administratively detained, arrested and sentenced, or summoned to court, the number of forcibly demolished churches and prohibited church gatherings, and the total number of church members who experienced physical or verbal abuse or threats all demonstrated a dramatic increase in comparison to China Aid statistics from 2013. In the case of urban churches, namely the Shouwang Church in Beijing and Wanbang Church in Shanghai, they continued to remain prohibited by the Chinese government, though still persevere against ongoing persecution. As large house churches in medium to large-sized cities, such as Chengdu's Xiuyuzhifu Church, Guangzhou's Liangren Church, and Guiyang's Huoshi Church, continue to be subjected to strict control and harassment by local public security and religious affairs bureaus, house churches in rural areas experienced increased levels of violence and persecution against their faith communities. In reviewing statistics, it appears that the Chinese government's persecution of the house church was most severe in north, northwest, south, and southwest regions of China.

Although the majority of the characteristics that have defined persecution against the church in previous years remains, the level and modes of persecution during 2014 has evolved. In reviewing reports China Aid has received from China in 2014, a specific model of persecution appeared throughout the entire the country, namely forcibly demolishing or prohibiting church gatherings in rural areas; unjustly declaring churches as "illegal structures" or engaging in the "illegal use" of building structures; arresting, detaining, and harassing house church leaders; increases in citing specific criminal charges against the church; the abuse of administrative penalties and regulations regarding the length of administrative or criminal detention of church members and leaders; persecuting churches and church members under the guise of "eradicating cults;" confiscating house church possessions, religious materials, and books; banning and harassing Sunday schools and their use of religious publications; forcibly collecting and documenting information about house churches and church members; forcing house church members to join the government sanctioned Three-Self church; detaining and sending house church leaders to labor camps on the pretext of "suspicion of organizing and using a cult to undermine law enforcement;" and restricting religious teaching and proselytizing to minors.

In reports of persecution against the house church received by China Aid (see Section III of this report), the Shouwang Church in Beijing continues to be persecuted, house churches in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region were persecuted for the religious teaching of minors, and a house church in Cao County was persecuted under the guise of "engaging in cult activities."

The Shouwang Church marked its fourth year of holding outdoor worship services. In May, the government's persecution escalated, subjecting church members who attended outdoor worship services to administrative detention, typically for five to seven days for those attending services for the first time and 10 days for regular attendees. In 2014, nearly 100 members of the Shouwang Church received administrative detention notices, some detained multiple times. In addition, police physically injured more than 10 church members, including Jin Shaohua. Senior Pastor Jin Tianming and other pastors and elders from the church have been under house arrest for the past four years with limited personal freedom, bringing church operations nearly to a halt.

In June, the Cao County Public Security Bureau in the city of Heze, Shandong province, dispatched government authorities to apprehend Zhao Weiliang, Cheng Hongpeng, and 20 additional house church members under the accusation of "engaging in cult activities." In the aftermath, 18 of the 22 church members were charged and nine received criminal charges. The only alleged offense the church members committed was gathering to practice worship songs. As a result of the public attention given to their case and the intervention of human rights lawyers, a majority of the detained church members were released on probation and are awaiting trial.

During the summer of 2014, several house churches in the cities of Urumqi and Kuerle and in the Yili Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture located in China's western Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region were harassed and persecuted for organizing vacation bible schools and summer camps. In the end, local public security and religious affairs bureaus forcibly closed the schools and camps, and several church leaders were either arrested or placed under administrative detention.

Sample reports of religious persecution and human rights abuse cases, including statistics and data analysis can be viewed in Section IV and the Appendix of this report (pp. 10-18).

*The CPC persecutes so-called "heretics" and churches under guise to eradicate "cults"*

In 2000 and 2005, China's Ministry of Public Security issued the "Notice of the Ministry of Public Security of the People's Republic of China on Various Issues Regarding Identifying and Banning Cult Organizations." In the section entitled "Currently Identified Cult Organizations," the notice lists 14 cults, seven of which were specified in the papers of the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council, while the other seven were identified and specified by the Ministry of Public Security. Among the listed cults were so-called Christian "heretical" faith communities such as the Shouters, the Church of the Almighty God, the Church of Total Scope, the Church of Disciples, and the Three Teams of Servants Church. According to China Aid statistics, more than 20,000 religious practitioners have been accused of being "heretics" and were taken into police custody during the CPCs "anti-cult" campaign in 2014, of which approximately 1,100 have been convicted on criminal charges and sentenced.

The CPC has historically regarded religion as hostile and representative of government dissenters, who have subsequently been persecuted under the guise of "attacking cults." Noting an inherent hostility towards religion and the fact that the CPC endorses atheism as the official doctrine of the Chinese state, its attempt to define any particular religion as a cult is biased, at the very least.

Hence, the campaign to eradicate so-called "cults" appears to be used selectively on religious communities whose doctrines inherently object to the official atheist ideology of the CPC or are perceived as threats to the "stability" of Chinese society as defined by the Chinese government.

The CPC government has consistently cited "attacking cults" as a pretext to launch large-scale persecution campaigns against Christians and house churches. Details of religious freedom cases in Shandong, Sichuan, and Hunan provinces have been disclosed to the public and reveal that the CPC regularly cited Clause 300 of the Criminal Law, defined as "organizing cults and sects and using superstition to undermine law enforcement," in an attempt to harass and persecute house church pastors, elders, and church members. The CPC's handling of the majority of cases has disregarded the rule of law and standard legal procedures. A large number of "anti-cult" trials were conducted in secret, and many of those accused were not permitted to hire legal counsel and were forced to accept government-appointed lawyers. The Chinese government has also intimidated and pressured family members of those accused of so-called "cult activities" to not raise their legal cases and incidents of persecution publicly, thus many remain unknown.

*The CPC advances its campaign on the "sinicization" of Christianity*

The National Committee of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement of Protestant Churches in China marked its 60th anniversary in 2014. Subsequently, China's government-sponsored China Christian Council (CCC) and the TSPM orchestrated a conference in Shanghai on August 4-6 to commemorate the anniversary of the TSPM, which included a seminar on the so-called "sinicization" of Christianity. Fu Xianwei, chairman of the TSPM, was quoted as saying that "churches in China will continue to explore the sinicization of Christianity [and] ensure Christianity takes root in the soil of Chinese culture, ethnicity, and society… To advance the sinicization of Christianity, churches will need guidance and support from government agencies in charge of religious affairs." Gao Feng, chairman of the CCC, stated that the TSPM would "take on a new mission in this age, adhere to the path of sinicization, and deepen and advance the process of sinicizing Christianity." Wang Zuo'an, director of the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA), also reinforced the need for the sinicization of Christianity.

Subsequent to this meeting, provincial- and city-level CCC and TSPM committees throughout the country held meetings for church leaders to study the statements made by SARA, CCC, and the TSPM and to adhere to the inherent instructions on the "sinicization" of Christianity. News reports from within China specify instructions for implementation, which include producing local television programming; writing and performing Christian songs with traditional Chinese melodies; and sending church leaders to "Patriotic Education Sites" to study and practice patriotism. For example, the CCC in Chengdu arranged for church leaders to tour the CPC's "holy lands of revolution" to emphasize loyalty to the Party. Additional instructions for implementation include facilitating seminars on the "sinicization" of Christianity; persuading churches to adopt traditional Chinese practices for funeral and burial ceremonies; and changing the architectural style of church buildings to bear noticeable characteristics of Chinese culture.

At a symposium on the sinicization of Christianity held by Liushi Church in Wenzhou, Zhejiang province, Zhuo Xinping, director of the Institute of World Religions of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, pointed out that Christianity was at a crossroads. Zhuo stated that the

sinicization of Christianity was not limited to absorbing elements of traditional Chinese culture, but also included a political element that defines the existence and prosperity of the Church. The symposium attendees also heard from Buddhist scholars, who described how Buddhism had conformed to the political dynamics of faith, thus urging the Christian community to emulate Buddhism's compliance with the CPC directives on cultural and political assimilation.

The essence of Christian sinicization is to prioritize loyalty to the CPC over religious identity and transform Christianity into a socialist force that complies with the authority of the Chinese government. The process of the sinicization of Christianity has included Chinese churches abandoning relationships with the global church, dissolving the core of the Christian faith, and preventing Christianity from exercising its social and cultural influence to positively influence Chinese society. Therefore, the sinicization of Christianity amounts to de-Christianizing the church in China and eradicating the universal nature of Christianity under the appearance of constructing a "Christianity with Chinese characteristics," and, in the name of prioritizing the interests of the Communist Party, usurping Christian doctrine that "Christ is the head of Church."

*Religious practitioners use the rule of law and social media to defend religious freedom*

In 2014, a large number of religious practitioners utilized the rule of law to defend their right to religious freedom in response to ongoing government-sponsored persecution. Human rights lawyers, both Christian and non-Christian alike, organized to provide legal assistance to pastors, churches and their members. For example, a legal team comprised of Christian human rights lawyers, led by attorney Chen Jiangang, offered legal assistance to detained church members from Cao County, in the city of Heze, Shandong province, and Liupanshui, Guizhou province. Attorney Zhang Kai led a team of human rights lawyers to obtain the release of arrested Christians from Dongkou County and Longhui County, in the city of Shaoyang, Hunan province. In Nanle County, in the city of Puyang, Henan province, several dozen human rights lawyers, including Li Fangping, Liu Weiguo and Zhao Yonglin, resisted government intimidation throughout a trial for detained house church members, including roadblocks and physical attacks. In a case in the city of Liuzhou, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region more than 10 human rights lawyers, including Wen Yu, Sui Muqing and Li Guisheng, traveled numerous times to Liuzhou, using their own financial resources to defend the rights of four persecuted citizens. As a result of the dedication of these human rights lawyers, local government officials have made concessions to churches and more than 100 arrested Christians have been subsequently found innocent and released or in some cases released on probation and are currently awaiting trial.

In 2014, human rights lawyers and other legal professionals provided house church members throughout China with rule of law training to defend their rights according to Chinese and international law. This past year, according to reports sent to China Aid from a network of human rights lawyers in China, more than 100 trainings were conducted and over 100,000 religious practitioners trained. As a result, church members began to defend their right to religious freedom and other related human rights. Throughout China, Chinese citizens filed administrative lawsuits against the government in response to acts of religious persecution and related illegal administrative practices, many of which had successful outcomes for the plaintiffs.

In 2014, religious practitioners throughout China bravely disclosed information regarding persecution in order to expose illegal practices of local government officials, attracting the attention of the international community. Specifically, religious practitioners released detailed information on government persecution, including photos, texts, and videos through social media outlets such as WeChat, Sina Weibo, Facebook, and QQ. The timely disclosure of incidents of persecution greatly assisted the international community to understand the unfortunate reality for religious practitioners in China and the restrictions on religious freedom. Through citizen reporting on persecution via social media, it is apparent that the CPC does not value rule of law or religious freedom and has consistently attempted to restrain and reform all religion in China, often deeming religious practitioners who assert their rights as merely government dissenters.

**III. Conclusion: Religious Practitioners and Human Rights Advocates Endure**

In reviewing the level of persecution in 2014, China Aid believes that the CPC's persecution of religious communities and human rights advocates will persist under the guise of "stability maintenance." In addition to organized opposition by China's civil society, house churches are perhaps the most organized social force in Chinese society today. For instance, the advocacy initiatives orchestrated by Beijing's Shouwang Church over the past five years has demonstrated that faith communities cannot simply be eliminated. This reality has also been exemplified by the failure of the CPC's comprehensive crackdown on Falun Gong practitioners over the past decade.

In 2014, President Xi's Administration restructured its power by launching an unprecedented anti-corruption campaign, and instituted harsh measures against civil society and non-governmental organizations, apprehending over 1,000 human rights activists, legal professionals, and political and religious dissidents for peacefully expressing their views. President Xi's Administration also intensified its regulations governing the media and applied advanced technology to filter information on the Internet and on social media, reinforced government propaganda, and intensified its control and suppression of free expression on college and university campuses. Thus, as President Xi's campaign to monopolize power and restrict society persists, China Aid expects that all aspects of Chinese society will continue to be subjected to increased suppression, including the denial of religious freedom and related human rights.

As statistics indicate, Christian religious practitioners in China have experienced unprecedented persecution in 2014. That being said, tens of millions of religious practitioners throughout China including Protestant, Catholic, Tibetan Buddhist, Uyghur Muslim, Falun Gong, and other religious minority groups are persecuted for their faith by the Chinese government. However, government sponsored persecution will ultimately fail to eliminate religious communities, who often grow under threat and are strengthened in the midst of persecution. In the Christian tradition, we are taught, "*You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments*" (Exodus 20:5-6). To be sure, religious practitioners throughout China are fighting to defend their right to religious freedom and working to create a Chinese society that adheres to the rule of law and respects the basic human rights of its citizens.

**IV. Statistics: Instances of Religious and Human Rights Persecution in China**

As sections I, II and III of this report has focused on the characteristics of persecution in China, predominately affecting house church communities, section IV of the report will detail persecution in 2014 through statistics and data analysis. The Appendix in section V will provide sample reports of religious freedom and human rights abuse cases and the mode of persecution.

In 2014, the government persecution of religious practitioners and human rights advocates in China exhibited a dramatic **152.74 percent** increase compared to reporting from 2013. It should be noted that the reported statistics and information on instances of persecution in China reflects data received by China Aid in 2014. Though not comprehensive, these cases cover a wide-range of Chinese provinces and municipalities, are diverse in nature, and represent a variety of individual backgrounds, including urban and rural house churches and Three-Self churches and their members, individual religious practitioners, college students, human rights lawyers and advocates, political dissidents, and sellers of religious materials. Thus, this report reflects the status of religious freedom, though predominately for the Christian house church movement, rule of law, and human rights in China and the severity of persecution faced by Chinese citizens.

In 2014, China Aid collected information on **572** cases of religious persecution across the country, which increased **300 percent** from 2013. Of the **17,884** people who were persecuted for their religion, more than **1,592** were church leaders, which represents a **140.89 percent** increase over the previous year. The **2,994** people who were detained constituted an increase of **103.67 percent** over the previous year. The CPC sentenced **1,274** people, a **10,516.67 percent** jump over 2013. There were **71** severe abuse cases, including verbal, mental, and physical abuse and torture, an increase of **343.75 percent** over the previous year. In those severe abuse cases, **242** people were abused, which demonstrates a **384 percent** increase compared to 2013.

Comparing the data in the above six categories—total number of religious persecution cases, total number of people persecuted for their religion, number of people detained, number of people sentenced, total number of severe abuse cases, and the number of individuals in severe abuse cases —the overall situation of persecution can be statistically represented as being **152.74 percent** worse than in 2013, **250.85 percent** worse than in 2012, **296.64 percent** worse than in 2011, **465.19 percent** worse than in 2010, **549.48 percent** worse than in 2009, **673.31 percent** worse than in 2008 and **1,331.76 percent** worse than in 2007.

Note: As China Aid receives the majority of its reporting on religious persecution and human rights abuse from the house church movement in China, the charts and related statistics below that reference the terms "Christian," "church," "meeting," or "training" all refer to those in the house church context. Where "Three-Self" churches are involved, they are so indicated.

**Comparison by Year of Persecution in China (2007-2014)**

| | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | *2014 | *2014 percentage increase over 2013 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. of Religious Persecution Cases | 60 | 74 | 77 | 90 | 93 | 132 | 143 | 572 | 300% |
| No. Persecuted | 788 | 2027 | 2935 | 3343 | 4322 | 4919 | 7424 | 17884 | 140.89% |
| No. Detained | 693 | 764 | 389 | 556 | 1289 | 1441 | 1470 | 2994 | 103.67% |
| No. Sentenced | 16 | 35 | 23 | 6 | 4 | 9 | 12 | 1274 | 10516.67% |
| No. of Severe Abuse Cases | 17 | 19 | 9 | 18 | 24 | 28 | 16 | 71 | 343.75% |
| No. Abused | 35 | 60 | 114 | 63 | 76 | 37 | 50 | 242 | 384% |
| Statistical Representation of the Combined Instances of Persecution Described Above | The overall level of persecution in China can be statistically represented as being **152.74 percent** worse in 2014 than in 2013, **250.85 percent** worse than in 2012, **296.64 percent** worse than in 2011, **465.19 percent** worse than in 2010, **549.48 percent** worse than in 2009, **673.31 percent** worse than in 2008 and **1331.76 percent** worse than in 2007. *Note: Statistics from 2014 are based on reports received by China Aid and additional research on persecution in China. | | | | | | | | |

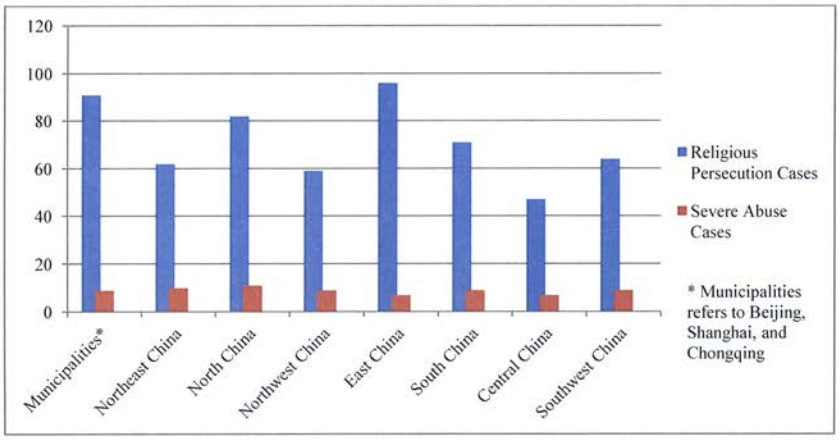
Note: The total number of Chinese citizens detained and sentenced includes the 1,100 people detained and sentenced during the CPC's campaign against "cult activities" in 2014.

I. Instances of Persecution in China in 2014 as Compared with 2013

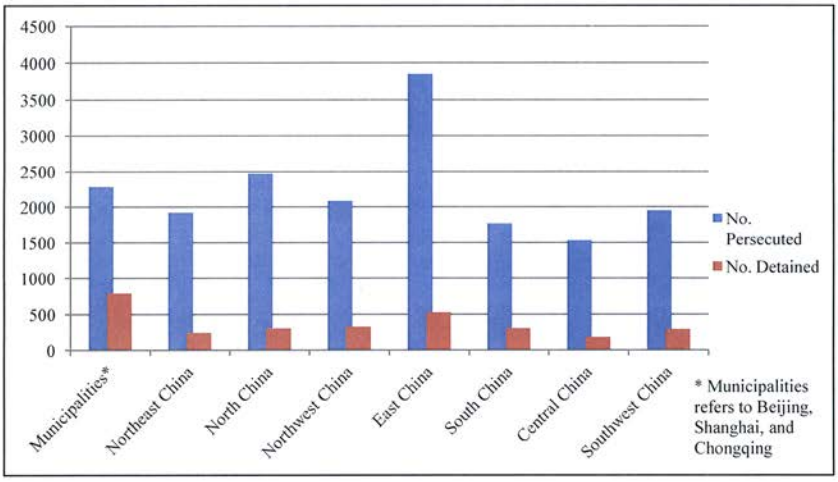
| 2014 | 2013 |
|---|---|
| Number of Religious Persecution Cases: 572 | Number of Cases: 143 |
| Number Persecuted: 17,884<br>(Church Leaders: 2,682) | Number Persecuted: 7,424<br>(Church Leaders: 800) |
| Number Detained: 2,994<br>(Church Leaders: 449) | Number Detained: 1,470<br>(Church Leaders: 54) |
| Number Sentenced: 1,274 | Number Sentenced: 12 |
| Number of Severe Abuse Cases: 71 | Number of Abuse Cases: 16 |
| Number Abused: 242 | Number Abused: 140 |

II. Data Analysis of Instances of Persecution by Region and Province in 2014

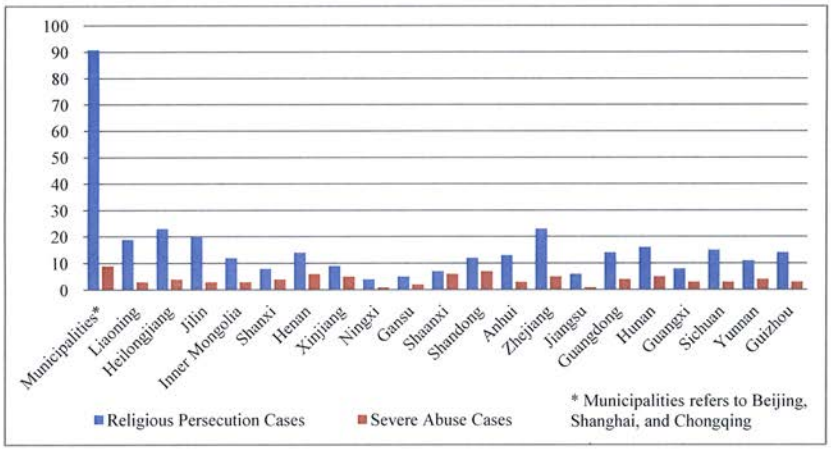
1. Diagram of Religious Persecution and Severe Abuse Cases by Region



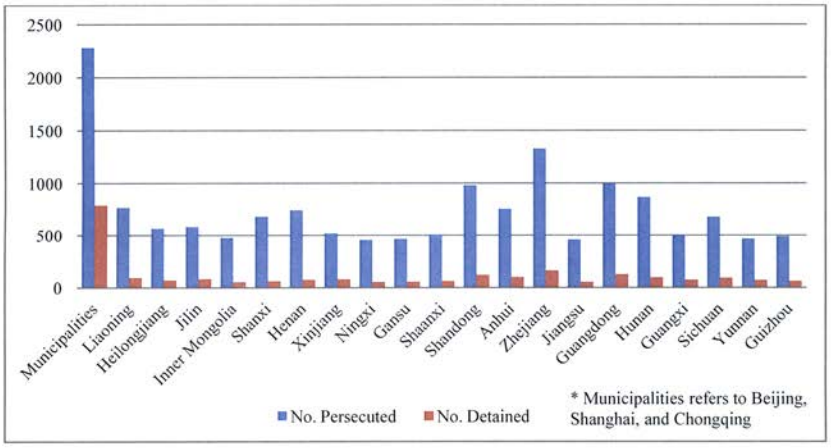

2. Diagram of Total Number Persecuted and Number Detained by Region



3. Diagram of Religious Persecution and Severe Abuse Cases by Province




4. Diagram of Total Number Persecuted and Number Detained by Province



## V. Appendix

The following appendix reflects a selection of sample religious persecution and human rights abuse cases by region and the resulting mode of persecution by the Chinese government.

1. Municipalities directly under the central government: Beijing, Shanghai and Chongqing included 91 total persecution cases, 2,283 persecuted, 796 detained, and 120 sentenced. Please find below a sample of these cases.

| Date | Religious Persecution and Human Rights Abuse Cases | Mode of Persecution |
|---|---|---|
| **2014** | Throughout the year Shouwang Church members were detained and taken into police custody | 484 Detentions; 1120 in Police Custody |
| Further details unavailable in English, further details available at www.chinaaid.net | | |
| **01/24** | Thirteen members of Beijing's Holy Love Fellowship church detained | 13 Detained |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/02/update-detained-beijing-christian-meets.html | | |
| **05/06** | Three Shouwang Church members detained | 3 Detained |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/05/beijing-shouwang-church-releases-letter.html | | |
| **07/22** | Beijing police dispersed Guoshulin House Church gathering, took 40+ church members into police custody | 40+ in Police Custody |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/07/worship-service-in-beijing-interrupted.html | | |
| **08/20** | More than 1000 members of the Church of the Almighty God arrested | 1000+ Arrested |
| Further details unavailable in English, further details available at www.chinaaid.net | | |
| **08/08** | Gathering of 6 members of Beijing Aiqi Church dispersed; 2 interrogated by police | 2 Interrogated |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/08/liaoning-police-disperse-outdoor.html | | |
| **10/27** | Christian orphanage in Beijing forcibly closed | Forced Closure |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/11/beijing-authorities-shut-down-school.html | | |

2. Northeast China: Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang included 62 total persecution cases, 1,929 persecuted, 245 detained, and 129 sentenced. Please find below a sample of these cases.

| Date | Religious Persecution and Human Rights Abuse Cases | Mode of Persecution |
|---|---|---|
| **01/07** | Yichun authorities and "Three-Self" church forcibly confiscate house church property | Church Forcibly Seized |
| Further details unavailable in English, further details available at www.chinaaid.net | | |
| **10/23** | Legal training class in Dalian raided; 2 detained and beaten | 2 Detained |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/12/sichuan-law-training-class-raided-8.html | | |

3. North China: Inner Mongolia, Habei, Henan, and Shanxi included 82 total persecution cases, 2,478 persecuted, 307 detained, and 196 sentenced. Please find below a sample of these cases.

| Date | Religious Persecution and Human Rights Abuse Cases | Mode of Persecution |
|---|---|---|
| **01/06** | Police prohibit 20 members of Nanle County Christian Church to attend services, government surveillance | 20 Prohibited; Surveillance |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/01/believers-in-henan-still-barred-from.html | | |
| **02/28** | Baoding government seals Wuyi Christian Church building | Church Sealed |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/05/china-aid-president-bob-fus-full.html | | |
| **04/02** | Police condemn Nanle County Christian Church building; church member detained | Church Condemned; 1 Detained |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/04/persecution-continues-at-nanle-county.html | | |
| **07/04** | Nanle County Christian Church Pastor Zhang Shaojie sentenced to 12 years in prison, fined $16,141 | Sentenced; Fined |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/07/court-sentences-three-self-pastor-to-12.html | | |
| **09/09** | Nanle County Christian Church members Zhang Cuijuan and Zhao Junling sentenced to 18 months, one year in prison with two-year reprieve, respectively | Sentenced |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/09/henan-christians-convicted-of-gathering.html | | |

4. Northwest China: Xinjiang, Gansu, Qinghai, and Shaanxi included 59 total persecution cases, 2,084 persecuted, 332 detained, 173 sentenced. Please find below a sample of these cases.

| Date | Religious Persecution and Human Rights Abuse Cases | Mode of Persecution |
|---|---|---|
| **01/13** | Shaanxi police submit three arrest requests in Zizhou | 3 Arrested |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/01/public-security-bureau-submits-arrest.html | | |
| **01/07** | Christian woman dies in detention in Urumqi after police raid gathering; 9 church members detained | 9 Detained |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/01/series-of-disrupted-new-years-christmas.html | | |
| **03/12** | House church gathering in Xinjiang banned; church property confiscated; 2 church members detained | 2 Detained; Property Confiscated |
| Further details unavailable in English, further details available at www.chinaaid.net | | |
| **03/31** | Christian arrested in Zizhou | 1 Arrested |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/04/shaanxi-zizhou-authorities-detain-woman.html | | |
| **05/20** | Two Xinjiang Christians summoned for distributing religious materials | 2 Summoned |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/05/2-xinjiang-women-sentenced-to.html | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **05/27** | Urumqi police detained four Christians during raid | 4 Administratively Detained |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/06/four-detained-for-training-program-in.html | | |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/07/xinjiiang-sees-multiple-persecution.html | | |
| **07/09** | Xinjiang pastor detained; gathering in Urumqi raided; six Christians in Kuerle detained | Church Raided; 7+ Detained |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/07/xinjiiang-sees-multiple-persecution.html | | |
| **07/18** | Multiple Christian training events in Urumqi raided; church leaders administratively detained | Administrative Detention |
| Further details unavailable in English, further details available at www.chinaaid.net | | |
| **09/03** | Urumqi house church closed; church leader detained | Administrative Detention |
| Further details unavailable in English, further details available at www.chinaaid.net | | |

5. East China: Shandong, Anhui, Zhejiang, and Jiangsu included 96 total persecution cases: 96, 3,854 persecuted, 529 detained, and 231 sentenced. Please find below a sample of these cases.

| Date | Religious Persecution and Human Rights Abuse Cases | Mode of Persecution |
|---|---|---|
| **02/27** | Hangzhou government forcibly demolish church cross | Cross Demolished |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/03/three-self-churches-in-zhejiang-anhui.html | | |
| **04/23** | Zhejiang police detain Christians; Internet censored | Detention |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/04/thousands-of-christians-again-guard.html | | |
| **04/24** | Police forcibly demolish Baiquan Christian Church outer walls and cross; missionary placed under house arrest; Catholic Church in Wenzhou forcibly demolished, church members detained and summoned | Cross Forcibly Demolished; Arrest; Church Demolished; Church Members Detained, Summoned |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/04/two-zhejiang-churches-demolished.html | | |
| **04/28** | Sanjiang Church in Wenzhou forcibly demolished; Internet censored; church members' businesses threatened | Church Demolished |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/04/zhejiang-christians-fear-sanjiang.html | | |
| **05/03** | Wuai Church Catholic Church in Liushi demolished | Churches Demolished |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/05/more-zhejiang-churches-report-threats.html | | |
| **05/08** | Crosses forcibly demolished in Zhejiang | Crosses Demolished |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/05/more-zhejiang-churches-report-threats.html | | |
| **05/12** | Wenzhou authorities forcibly demolished Hebin Church and Shangwan Church in Longwan District | Churches Demolished |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/05/more-zhejiang-demolitions-overseas.html | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **05/30** | SWAT officers forcibly demolish Dongyang Church cross | Cross Demolished |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/06/zhejiang-authorities-remove-cross-5.html | | |
| **07/03** | Anhui police and religious affairs bureau employees raided house church, confiscated property | Property Confiscated |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/07/christian-gathering-place-in-anhui.html | | |
| **07/11** | Police in Shandong raid choir practice, detaining church members | Criminal Detention |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/07/believers-in-shandong-detained-accused.html | | |

6. South China: Guangdong, and Hainan included 71 total persecution cases, 1,768 persecuted, 306 detained, and 161 sentenced. Please find below a sample of these cases.

| Date | Religious Persecution and Human Rights Abuse Cases | Mode of Persecution |
|---|---|---|
| **08/18** | Shenzhen police raided seminary conference; 30+ Christians taken into police custody; conference's teachers, pastors deported | 30+ in Police Custody |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/08/guangdong-police-shut-down-shenzhen.html | | |
| **08/18** | Guangzhou police prohibit house church from gathering, take 80 into police custody; social media monitored | 80 in Police Custody |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/09/persecution-continues-churches-in.html | | |
| **09/22** | Police raid eight house churches in Guangzhou and Foshan; 100 Christians interrogated; all churches sealed | Churches Sealed; Interrogation |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/09/guangdong-churches-raided-6-believers.html | | |
| **11/21** | Guangzhou house churches prohibited from gathering | Forced Closure |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/12/guangzhou-house-churches-gatherings.html | | |

7. Central China: Henan, Hunan included 47 total persecution cases, 1,535 persecuted, 183 detained, and 95 sentenced. Please find below a sample of these cases.

| Date | Religious Persecution and Human Rights Abuse Cases | Mode of Persecution |
|---|---|---|
| **05/14** | Hubei house church pastor and 7-8 other church members physically abused during raid; church member detained | 1 Detained |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/05/hubei-pastor-hospitalized-after.html | | |
| **08/14** | Shaoyang police detained house church members | 15 Criminally Detained |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/08/more-than-10-house-church-leaders-in.html | | |

8. Southwest China: Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou included 64 total persecution cases, 1,953 persecuted, 296 detained, and 169 sentenced. Please find below a sample of these cases.

| Date | Religious Persecution and Human Rights Abuse Cases | Mode of Persecution |
|---|---|---|
| **02/21** | Two employees of church-run kindergarten criminally detained for "illegal business operations" | 2 Criminally Detained |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/02/update-lawyers-find-charges-against.html | | |
| **04/09** | Three Christians in Sichuan's Tibetan region detained, filed for administrative review | 3 Criminally Detained |
| Further details unavailable in English, further details available at www.chinaaid.net | | |
| **06/24** | Twelve Guizhou Christians administratively detained on "cult" charge | 12 Administratively Detained |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/07/guizhou-believers-submit-administrative.html | | |
| **10/02** | Sichuan police raided house church, detained 36 Christians | 36 Administratively Detained |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/12/sichuan-house-church-seeking-help.html | | |
| **11/26** | Sichuan police raid legal training seminar led by Pastor Guo Pingxi; 8 Christians were detained | 8 Administratively Detained |
| Further details: http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/12/sichuan-law-training-class-raided-8.html | | |

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REBIYA KADEER

JULY 23, 2015

I am very honored to be here today and I wish to express my profound appreciation to Representative Chris Smith and Senator Marco Rubio for inviting me to testify.

Uyghurs perceive their belief in Islam not only as a personal expression of faith, but also as a statement of their cultural distinctiveness. For many Uyghurs, the incursion of the state into this private aspect of their lives and the role it plays in establishing a broader identity is viewed as part of an assimilative process.

In East Turkestan, the twofold implementation of strict national and regional regulations concerning religious belief and practice mean the Uyghur people are subjected to the harshest conditions governing religious life in the People's Republic of China (PRC). This occurs even though China's domestic laws, such as the Constitution and the Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law, guarantee religious freedom.

Rather than simply forbid religious practice, Chinese authorities have implemented regulations that progressively narrow the definition of lawful activity. As a result, many Uyghurs often discover traditional religious customs are increasingly not permitted. However, Chinese officials justify many of the restrictions through claims that outlawed practices have been imported from overseas and that it faces an organized threat to public security in the form of the "three evil forces" of terrorism, separatism and religious extremism.

China's highly politicized criminal-legal system, as well as the state apparatus governing and monitoring religion, have ensured the government is the ultimate arbiter in the interpretation of religious affairs. In effect, the bodies established by the Chinese state to oversee administration in China do little to protect religious believers, but assist the government's repression of religious freedom by helping to formulate and promote restrictive regulations.

Religious leaders, such as imams, are required to attend political education classes to ensure compliance with Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regulations and policies; only state-approved versions of the Koran and sermons are permitted, with all unapproved religious texts treated as "illegal" publications liable to confiscation and criminal charges against whoever was found in possession of them; any outward expression of faith in government workplaces, hospitals and some private businesses, such as men wearing beards or women wearing headscarves, is forbidden; no state employees and no one under the age of 18 can enter a mosque, a measure not in force in the rest of China; organized private religious education is proscribed and facilitators of private classes in Islam are frequently charged with conducting "illegal" religious activities; and students, teachers and government workers are prohibited from fasting during Ramadan. In addition, Uyghurs are not permitted to undertake Hajj, unless it is with an expensive official tour, in which state officials carefully vet applicants.[1]

Uyghurs found to have contravened religious regulations are punished severely. In a disturbing number of cases, Uyghurs have been given long prison sentences for "illegal" religious activities for actions considered normal by international human rights standards.[2] An area of considerable concern is the open discrimination against Uyghurs, especially women, who choose to lead religious lives publicly.[3]

In the 2015, restrictions placed on Uyghurs' ability to observe the Ramadan fast were widely reported. As detailed by the overseas media, government work units outright denied Uyghurs the right to follow their religious customs. For example, middle schools in Bortala, Tarbaghatay and Tumshuq informed their employees and students that they were not permitted to fast.[4] In Jing County, restaurant owners were mandated by the local Food and Drug Administration to remain open during fasting hours.[5] Reports also surfaced on social media that Uyghurs were being compelled to eat watermelon in public to demonstrate non-observance of the fast. Although these reports remain unconfirmed, they are consistent with numerous accounts I have heard from Uyghurs, particularly students, who are required to drink

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[1] See: http://docs.uyghuramerican.org/Sacred-Right-Defiled-Chinas-Iron-Fisted-Repression-of-Uyghur-Religious-Freedom.pdf

[2] http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/hunger-04252014152239.html

[3] http://www.cecc.gov/pages/virtualAcad/index.phpd?showsingle=125102

[4] See: http://www.cnn.com/2015/07/02/asia/china-xinjiang-ramadan/ and http://www.ibtimes.com/ramadan-2015-fasting-banned-china-muslim-government-employees-students-teachers-1975294

[5] See: http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/06/china-bans-ramadan-fasting-muslim-region-150618070016245.html

water at school in front of their teachers to "prove" they are following school and local government regulations.

Ramadan in 2015 was particularly tense. In an article dated June 24, 2015, Radio Free Asia described how government workers were being put on alert prior to the holy month. The report was an alarming indication of the suspicion with which the state views Uyghurs who continue with their religious practices. Furthermore, according to Radio Free Asia, one county issued "guidelines calling for the intrusive searches of convenience stores, repair shops, and mosques."[6] These restrictions create an atmosphere of distrust; however, 2015 witnessed provocations against the Islamic faith previously not seen. Reports that a beer drinking contest had been organized in Niya, a predominately Uyghur settlement, on the eve of Ramadan was a humiliation of the Islamic faith.[7]

Religious repression of Uyghurs has been long documented by the State Department, the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom and several human rights organizations. In 2014 USCIRF called for China to remain a Country of Particular Concern on the US State Department's blacklist of religious freedom violators. USCIRF vice chair, Katrina Lantos Swett told reporters: "Any independent religious expression is targeted in China . . . unless practitioners of whatever faith basically submit to government-controlled religious organizations and religious worship, they are at risk of becoming a target."[8]

A report published by Human Rights Watch in 2005 described the close relationship between the Uyghur identity and Islam. The authors of the report accurately state: "Islam is perceived as feeding Uighur ethnic identity, and so the subordination of Islam to the state is used as a means to ensure the subordination of Uighurs as well."[9] A report issued by the Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP) in 2013 found a sharp deterioration in Uyghur religious rights in the period following 2005.[10]

Since the publication of UHRP's report in April 2013, the evidence of China's denial of the Uyghurs' right to freedom of religion has not abated. The increased repression of religious practices and belief underway corresponds with Chinese president, Xi Jinping's determination to implement a "major strategic shift" in East Turkestan that prioritizes security policies in the region.[11] State rhetoric regarding the tightening of security is often accompanied by crackdowns on the "three evil forces of separatism, extremism and terrorism," which frequently target peaceful religious expression.[12] A trip to East Turkestan by Xi Jinping concluded on April 30, 2014 reinforced the call for enhanced security measures. Xi visited People's Liberation Army soldiers and the People's Armed Police in Kashgar, a Uyghur majority city that he claimed was the frontline of counterterrorism.[13]

Radio Free Asia reported a series of cases involving limits placed on Uyghur religious expression across East Turkestan in 2013 and 2014, including: Balaqsu, near Kashgar in May 2013; Beshtugmen and Igerchi, near Aksu City in May 2013; Uchturpan, in Aksu Prefecture in August 2013; Shihezi in November 2013; Turpan in April 2014; and in April 2014, the fourth extension to an original 12-year jail term handed down to Uyghur religious leader, Abdukiram Abduveli. In an extraordinary move, the harshness of the religious policies prompted a Uyghur delegate to the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference to speak out during a March 2014 session.[14]

A further sign that regulations governing religion hardened since Xi's announcement is an April 14, 2014 notice issued by the Chinese Communist Party committee of Qartal Bazaar in Aksu City regarding the holding of an "unlawful" funeral ceremony for Nurdin Turdi, a loyal party official distinguished by the state. The notice, widely circulated on social media, states that as Nurdin Turdi's funeral was held at a mosque and not at his home, his family was in contravention of regulations

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[6] See: http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/ramadan-06242015084626.html

[7] www.reuters.com/article/2015/06/22/us-ramadan-china-idUSKBN0P20L620150622

[8] See: http://www.rfa.org/english/news/vietnam/religious-04302014155256.html

[9] See: http://www.hrw.org/reports/2005/china0405/china0405.pdf

[10] See: http://docs.uyghuramerican.org/Sacred-Right-Defiled-Chinas-Iron-Fisted-Repression-of-Uyghur-Religious-Freedom.pdf

[11] http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/836495.shtml#.U2KfFa1dWi4

[12] http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012–03/06/content—14766900.htm

[13] http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/04/29/us-china-xinjiang-idUSBREA3S03D20140429

[14] See: http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/registration-05022013112851.html; http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/hijab-05312013175617.html/; http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/uchturpan-08052013173737.html; http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/imam-04232014162941.html; http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/hunger-04252014152239.html and http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/delegate-03192014174510.html

on funerals for individuals holding Turdi's status. As a consequence of the infraction, the funeral fees normally paid by the state to such individuals were rescinded and six months of benefits to the family withheld. Customarily, the state used to permit Islamic burials for any Uyghur who wished to have one.[15]

Prior to Ramadan in 2015, reports surfaced of the harsh sentencing of a Uyghur from Kashgar to six years in jail because he had grown a beard in accordance with his religious beliefs. The man's wife was handed a two year sentence for "veiling herself."[16] The ban on Islamic veiling in Urumchi in 2015 was described by scholars James Leibold and Timothy Grose as a sign of "a deepening rift of mistrust between the Uighur and the Han-dominated Communist Party."[17]

Universal religious freedom is protected under Article 18 of the normative human rights standards outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Other international instruments whose standards China is obliged to meet also ensure the right of religious freedom, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. China's domestic laws, such as the Constitution and the Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law, have strong provisions on freedom of religious belief. Despite this international and domestic legal framework, restrictions on religious freedom are deemed "lawful" by Chinese authorities through the strict implementation of regulations that contradict China's own laws and international obligations.

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## PREPARED STATEMENT OF LOSANG GYATSO

JULY 23, 2015

Since problems facing religion, religious institutions, and religious teachers in Tibet is widely known and well documented by this Commission and many other governmental and non-governmental organizations in the US and abroad, I won't take up too much of your time going over examples.

I would like to however touch on two events that took place this month which may serve to highlight the degree to which the Chinese Communist Party is willing to carry out actions that cause enormous suffering for Tibetans, and that create an environment of oppression in monasteries and in the personal lives of Tibetans that have triggered the self-immolation protests by over 140 Tibetans since 2009.

The latest such protest took place in the afternoon of July 9. A young monk named Sonam Topgyal set himself on fire at a public square in Kyegudo, the prefectural capital of what China today refers to as Yulshul Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai province. Photos and videos showing Sonam Topgyal on the ground in flames have emerged since then, and once again as in many previous cases, Sonam Topgyal was taken from the site by Chinese security and is believed to have died in a Xining hospital.

A note he wrote one week earlier has surfaced and in it he says, "I am a twenty-seven-year-old son of Tashitsang of Nangchen, Yulshul in Tsongon region. Currently, I am a monk studying at Dzongsar Institute. As people within the country and outside are aware, the Chinese government does not look at the true and real situation of the minorities but practices only harsh and repressive policies on them. At a time when the government is carrying out policies to stamp out our religion, tradition and culture, and destroy our natural environment, there is absolutely no freedom of expression for the people, and there is no channel to appeal our situation. "

The other development this month which has been particularly difficult for Tibetans is the prison death of a widely respected Lama and political prisoner on July 12. Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's family and monastic community had not been allowed to see him since 2013, and were not allowed to see him on the day that Chinese authorities claim he died of a heart attack, nor for several more days as they pleaded to have his body returned to them in order to conduct a funeral fitting for a high Lama. Tibetans pleading for the return of his body were beaten severely by security forces on July 13 in Nyagchu county, Sichuan. Several days after the announcement of his death, his family and some monks were allowed to see his body in the detention center where he was then incinerated in the prison crematorium. The Chinese have been in Tibet since 1951, long enough to understand that a prison cremation for a highly regarded spiritual teacher will be seen by Tibetans as a humiliating and degrading act, and therefore understand it to be an added punishment for those

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[15] http://docs.uyghuramerican.org/5–8-14—Briefing-Religious—Restrictions.pdf

[16] http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/3/30/activists-call-chinas-jailing-of-muslim-over-beard-absurd.html

[17] http://www.latrobe.edu.au/news/articles/2015/opinion/why-china-is-banning-islamic-veils

who had been pleading his innocence for 13 years, and then pleading for his remains after his death. Further troubling is the fact that his sister and niece went missing since July 17. A relative of Rinpoche in exile that VOA interviewed, suspected that the two women had been detained for possibly persisting in demanding a proper investigation into the cause of his sudden death.

On July 14, House members at a hearing on Tibet by the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission had urged the Chinese authorities to return the body of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche to his family members, and as back as 2004, the US Senate passed a resolution by unanimous consent calling for Tulku Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's release. Both calls have gone unheeded.

Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's story is neither unique nor rare when you look back over the last six decades of Chinese rule of Tibet. Today, there are many known and probably many more unknown Tibetans languishing in China's prisons for simply expressing their dissent with the oppressive rules and regulations governing Tibetan lives and the institutions and figures of Tibetan Buddhism. Writers and artists are imprisoned for simply writing or singing about their love for Tibet's mountains and lakes, culture, or history. Many more are detained for refusing to denounce their religious heads, such as the Dalai Lama, during reeducation campaigns at temples and monasteries. All of the above seemingly innocuous acts can today be categorized as separatist acts according to recent regulations targeting Tibetans. And once in prison, the Tibetans are accused of acting at the instigation of the Dalai Lama, and or foreign anti-China forces, by which most Tibetans understand the Chinese to mean the United States, and are then subjected to torture and prolonged mistreatment with the sole purpose of extracting confessions that correspond to the accusations. This process, repeated across Tibet for 50 years has created immeasurable suffering for the Tibetan people, and deeply disturbed their psychological wellbeing for decades.

As I mentioned earlier, the Chinese government's attack on religion and religious institutions and figures in Tibet is not a recent development, nor are they random aberrations in their rule of Tibet since 1951. The Chinese Communist Party has been purposefully and methodically working to dismantle the very fabric of Tibetan spirituality and religious traditions since 1955. Between 1955 and 1965, almost every single religious institution in Tibet, estimated to number over six thousand monasteries and temples, had been aerial bombed, artillery shelled, and razed to the ground. Tens of thousands of Lamas, monks and nuns were imprisoned, executed, or disrobed. Public humiliation and torturing of respected reincarnated Lamas, often to the death, took place across Tibet in the 1950s and 60s in order to ridicule religion and prove that religious figures were powerless. Attacks on religion during that period was the reason why all of the heads of the five major schools of Tibetan Buddhism went into exile in 1959 before the fall of the Tibetan government, and remain so to this day. The highest ranking Lama remaining inside Tibet was the Panchen Lama, who spent 13 years in solitary prison for speaking against what the Chinese had done in Tibet. After his sudden death in 1989, the Chinese installed their own choice of the predecessor's reincarnation, a child whose parents are Party members. The child that was selected by monks in the Panchen Lama's own monastery and approved by the Dalai Lama, was disappeared along with his entire family in May 1995 and has not been heard of since then.

In 2007, China's State Administration for Religious Affairs introduced measures that dictate which Tibetan religious figures may or may not reincarnate, and the requirement for the approval of selected reincarnated lamas by offices under the communist party. While this may appear simply surreal and bizarre to most people, there are two very serious possible consequences from these measures; one that will even further diminish human rights in Tibet, and the other that will impact the state of religious institutions and the very existence of religious practice as we know it in Tibet.

Firstly, since nearly all expressions critical of conditions in Tibet, and or, in praise of aspects of Tibetan culture and identity can be categorized as 'separatist' activities that are punishable acts today, the following sentence in the measure, "Living Buddha reincarnations should respect and protect the principles of the unification of the state," would mean that all officially sanctioned reincarnated Lamas and the religious institutions affiliated with them would be forced into silence on issues relating to human rights, and the state of religious and cultural freedoms in Tibet.

And secondly, and this may not be fully appreciated by many people at present, the interference by the communist party in the selection or deselection of reincarnate spiritual masters undermines Tibetan Buddhism at its most fundamental level by aiming to break the trust and faith that Tibetans have invested in their Lamas for hundreds of years. Tibetan Buddhist practice, based on ancient Indian traditions, holds at its very core, the sacred relationship between religious teachers with

pure and direct spiritual lineages, many that go back a thousand years, and the student practitioners who take vows, initiations, and meditation instructions from them. The successful guidance through complex psychological states and through layers of consciousness in the course of a person's spiritual practice relies completely on this connection between trusted and respected reincarnated Lamas and their followers.

The measures to control reincarnated Lamas is therefore aimed at this bedrock of Tibetan religious practice and could lead to the destruction of thousands of unbroken spiritual lineages of the Lamas, and to the eventual demise of Tibetan Buddhism as it has been practiced since the 13th century.

As an example and on a much more mundane level, it is as if a government decided that it would select people to practice medicine, surgery, and psychiatry based not on their qualifications, but on their political leaning. You can imagine what that would do to the state of health care.

These are just a few examples of how persecution of religion and religious institutions and figures in Tibet are an ongoing feature of Chinese rule of Tibet, and they are posing existential challenges for Tibetans in maintaining intellectual rigor and spiritual vitality in the monasteries and temples across Tibet. The Dalai Lama says in his autobiography that in one of his meetings with Chairman Mao in 1954, Mao turned to him, leant forward, and said that, "religion is poison." That view appears to have been and continues to be the guiding principle of Chinese rule in Tibet, where its policies since 1955 have gone from destroying religion completely, to today, where a small number of monitored monasteries and controlled religious figures are allowed to exist as a show of the government's tolerance for religion, and as tourist destinations, while in reality, the monastic institutions and the system of reincarnated Lamas is being controlled and used purely for the perpetuation of China's control of Tibet.

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER SMITH, A U.S. REPRESENTATIVE FROM NEW JERSEY; CHAIRMAN, CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON CHINA

JULY 23, 2015

The freedom of religion is the key human right. It is clearly the first freedom from which all others flow. It allows each citizen the precious right to follow their conscience peacefully and without fear. It protects the critical part of who we are as human beings—to seek, to speak, and to act out our fundamental beliefs. When this freedom is protected the very well-being of society is enhanced. No government should deny or suppress this essential claim to conscience.

The reality is that governments and terrorist groups do restrict the freedom of religion, sometimes in the most brutal and public ways. The freedom of religion is under siege in many places of the world, including in China which is the subject of today's hearing.

Because religious freedom conditions are deteriorating globally, I introduced HR 1150, the Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Act. The bill gives the Administration tools to better address religious freedom violations around the world. It is why I am also fighting to reauthorize the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) which is a bipartisan and independent advisory body. USCIRF gives Congress vital recommendations about religious freedom conditions globally.

Several years ago during a visit to the United States, Xi Jinping was interviewed by a Chinese reporter on fellowship at a U.S. college. (*Some of the details changed to protect the identity of the person.*) After the interview, President Xi asked a single question of this reporter—not about his family, not about his studies, not about whether he enjoyed living in America—the one question he asked was "Why do so many Chinese students studying in the United States become Christians?"

Why one of the world's most powerful political leaders asked this question may never be known. And the student did not have an answer. But religion was on President Xi's mind that day. Whatever was behind that complex question, religious freedom conditions in China have not improved because of it. Quite the opposite, in fact, it has been a punishing year for China's diverse religious communities.

China continues to rank up there with Iran, Vietnam, and Saudi Arabia in terms of the sheer misery it inflicts on members of its diverse religious communities. This is the verdict of the bipartisan and independent U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. It is the verdict of the State Department, which has designated China as a "Country of Particular Concern" since 1999 for being one of the world's

worst violators of religious freedom. This is the verdict of human rights organizations. We will hear today if our witnesses share this verdict.

Chinese authorities are frightened by the simple proposition that individuals have the right to live out their beliefs openly and peacefully, without fear or intimidation. All we have to do is look at events in the past few weeks to see a coordinated, unnecessary, and often brutal campaign to manage, control, or crush China's many religious communities. It's been a very bad month in China:

- Two days ago, a cross on a Christian church was burned near the city of Wenzhou . Over 1,200 crosses, along with 35 church buildings, were demolished since 2014. This was done reportedly because they were too prominent, demonstrating the Party's weakness.
- During the just-concluded month of Ramadan, Uyghur Muslim students, teachers, professors, and government employees were deprived of the freedom to fulfill their religious duties. In recent years, officials have shut down religious sites; conducted raids on independent schools, confiscated religious literature, and banned private study of the Koran. A new draft Counterterrorism law equates terrorism with "religious education of minors."
- The Dalai Lama turned 80 this month and the Chinese government expanded attempts to undermine his leadership and control the selection of Tibetan Buddhist leaders. 273 Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns are currently detained. Sadly, revered teacher Tenzin Deleg died in prison last week. He was serving a life sentence on politically motivated charges.
- Beijing also continues its relentless 16-year campaign to obliterate the Falun Gong, the anniversary which is each year during July. There are reports of torture in detention, deaths in custody, and allegations of the harvesting of organs.
- Two weeks ago, Chinese Communist Party authorities also launched a massive crackdown on human rights lawyers. The lawyers were accused of being a "criminal gang" charged with "creating chaos" because they defended the rights of Falun Gong, Uyhgurs, Christians, and others persecuted. Many of the lawyers detained are professing Christians, spurred by their faith to defend the vulnerable.

Senator Rubio and I put out a statement about the arrest of human rights lawyers in China. We called the detentions "unjustified" and said the round-up of human rights lawyers was "an undeniable setback in U.S.-China relations." I would like to add that statement to the record without objection.

China's active suppression of faith communities, its massive repression of rights lawyers, and the brutal, and sometimes deadly, way it deals with prisoners of conscience are a sad and black mark on China's recent history. *And it will be remembered by history as brutal, unnecessary, and entirely counterproductive.*

It is counterproductive because religious restrictions makes China less stable, repression can exacerbate extremism and cause instability. Religious freedom, according to the Pew Research Center, can be a powerful and effective antidote to religious extremism.

It is counterproductive because targeting peaceful religious citizens undermines the legitimacy of the state, because it reminds even non-believers of the state's capricious power.

It is counterproductive because religious persecution marginalizes the persecuted, robbing China of their talents, their economic productivity, and their contributions to society.

The issue of religious freedom must be addressed by the Administration during a planned September summit.

But we must ask whether this summit should even take place. There are many issues in the U.S.-China relationship that need attention, but does President Xi—given his "bold disregard" for human rights and his brutal suppression of dissent—deserve to get red carpet treatment in Washington?

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MARCO RUBIO, A U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA; COCHAIRMAN, CONGRESSIONAL-EXECUTIVE COMMISSION ON CHINA

JULY 23, 2015

Nearly two weeks ago Chinese Communist Party authorities launched an unprecedented crackdown on human rights lawyers and activists that has been characterized as the most severe since the legal system was reestablished in 1980 after the Cultural Revolution. To date, more than 200 have been detained, questioned, or reported missing.

These "Black Friday" events have rightly garnered widespread international condemnation but Chinese President and Communist Party General Secretary Xi Jinping is unbowed and in fact seemingly emboldened. State media reported earlier this week that the Party managed to extract so-called "confessions" from some of the accused regarding their alleged involvement in a criminal gang suspected of interfering with the judicial process and inciting disorder.

As we examine the situation facing China's courageous lawyers, men and women who have been described as the closest thing China has to a political opposition, an interesting thread emerges—namely the role of faith.

Many of those detained are practicing Christians. Several of the detained have taken on high-profile cases of individuals who have earned the ire of the Chinese Government for daring to live out their religious and spiritual convictions, including Uyghur Muslims, Christian house church leaders, Tibetan Buddhists, and Falun Gong practitioners.

It is precisely this issue of religious freedom which is the focus of today's Congressional-Executive Commission on China hearing.

Without question, religious freedom is under assault in China. Irrespective of belief, the government's oppression knows no bounds.

In its most recent annual report, the independent, bipartisan U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) described the situation facing religious adherents in China this way: "In 2014, the Chinese government took steps to consolidate further its authoritarian monopoly of power over all aspects of its citizens' lives. For religious freedom, this has meant unprecedented violations against Uighur Muslims, Tibetan Buddhists, Catholics, Protestants, and Falun Gong practitioners. People of faith continue to face arrests, fines, denials of justice, lengthy prison sentences, and in some cases, the closing or bulldozing of places of worship."

USCIRF and the U.S. Department of State are of one mind that China is deservedly considered a Country of Particular Concern, a designation reserved for only the most severe violators of religious freedom.

News headlines in just the last year have been dominated by harrowing accounts of persecution and repression. Chinese authorities have implemented an extensive cross removal campaign resulting in the destruction of hundreds of Christian crosses. Thai authorities forcibly repatriated Uyghur Muslims to China where they face an uncertain future. Tibetan Buddhists have continued to set themselves on fire in desperation at the abuses their people have endured at the hands of the Chinese government.

The Chinese government has sought, through brutal methods, to restrict the ability of the Chinese people to worship and peacefully live out their faith according to the dictates of their conscience. Their misguided efforts have arguably had the unintended consequence of infusing many of these religious adherents with greater vibrancy as evidenced most dramatically by the explosive growth of Christianity in China.

The developments in China, including the crackdown on human rights lawyers and the deteriorating situation for religious freedom, are worthy of attention at the highest levels of the U.S. Government. With the upcoming human rights and counterterrorism dialogues and the pending September visit by Chinese President Xi Jinping, the Obama administration must seriously weigh what points of leverage exist in our bilateral relationship and seize on them.

# SUBMISSIONS FOR THE RECORD

## STATEMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY ELLEN BORK, SENIOR FELLOW, FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVE; VISITING FELLOW, HENRY JACKSON SOCIETY

JULY 23, 2015

I thank the Chairman, co-chairman and the commission for inviting me to comment on the geopolitical context for China's religious persecution and to offer thoughts on how the United States should respond.

Even considered in the light of China's worsening record on human rights, developments over the past several weeks have been disturbing. They include the roundup of over 200 human rights lawyers and activists, the forced repatriation to China from Thailand of more than 100 Uighurs, Turkic Muslims from China's far west, the adoption of a new national security law, and the death in prison of a revered Tibetan monk, Tenzin Delek Rinpoche. His death was followed by the cruel and suspicious refusal to return his body to his family for funeral rites, which prevented independent examination to determine the cause of death.

These events occur in the context of two geopolitical trends: a decline in democracy around the world and concerted efforts by the most powerful authoritarian regimes to undermine settled democratic norms and the institutions that uphold them. At the same time, President Obama has downgraded democracy and human rights as priorities in American foreign policy, contradicting the case for American leadership in Asia based on democratic values he placed at the heart of his "pivot' to Asia.

According to Freedom House's most recent annual survey, democracy around the world has declined for the ninth year in a row. The number of countries that registered declines in political and civil liberties outstripped those with gains by nearly two to one. The survey also recorded the lowest number of countries showing improvement in democratic governance in the past nine years. Arch Puddington wrote in an essay accompanying the survey: "acceptance of democracy as the world's dominant form of government—and of an international system built on democratic ideals—is under greater threat than at any point in the last 25 years."

China is a leading force in this "democratic recession." Domestically, China's notorious human rights record has been judged by Chinese Human Rights Defenders to be the worst since the mid-1990s, "especially in terms of abuses aimed at silencing, intimidating, and punishing those who promote the protection of fellow Chinese citizens' rights." Although Communist Party General Secretary Xi Jinping didn't start the trend, CHRD noted he has accelerated it, including by leading "an ideological shift that harkens back to the Maoist era" and stressing "a CCP orthodoxy that rejects constitutional democracy, human rights, free press, and rule of law as 'Western universal values.'" "Never allow singing to a tune contrary to the party center," Xi commented on party and academic websites earlier this year, the New York Times reported. "Never allow eating the Communist Party's food and then smashing the Communist Party's cooking pots."

General Secretary Xi uses subtler language in the global assault China is leading on democratic norms and multilateral institutions based on them. China, along with Russia and other authoritarian countries, is trying to redefine settled norms in order to weaken the liberal international order that threatens their external and internal legitimacy. To do this, they are using tools including media and foreign aid as well as adopting "laws" to restrict freedoms of assembly, speech, religion and other rights. I recommend to the commission the work Alexander J. Cooley of Columbia University and Christopher Walker and the National Endowment for Democracy and Arch Puddington and others at Freedom House have done on the challenge of "resurgent authoritarianism."

China, writes Professor Cooley, is taking the lead in advancing an "emerging counter norm" of "civilizational diversity" and the "principle of noninterference in the domestic affairs of sovereign states." The forced repatriation of the Uighurs from Thailand, and other countries, is a perfect example. Beijing has long claimed Xinjiang, the former East Turkistan, along with Tibet and Taiwan as a "core interest," a phrase that conveys these claims and the party's policies there are beyond compromise. Now, in addition to rebuffing unwelcome criticisms of repression inside Chinese-held territory, Beijing is pursuing its "core interests" by interfering in other countries' affairs, violating international law on non-refoulement of refugees in the process. It seems unlikely that a democratic government in Thailand would have done Beijing's bidding.

China attempts much the same thing with regard to Tibetans, interfering brazenly in the affairs of Nepal, its much smaller, weaker neighbor that has historically provided refuge for Tibetans fleeing Chinese repression. "Under China's Shadow: Mistreatment of Tibetans in Nepal," a 2014 report by Human Rights Watch details intelligence cooperation agreements between Nepal and China, pressures on Nepal to restrict rights of Tibetans in Nepal and quotes Tibetans fearful of being returned to China from Nepali territory.

Now it appears China is expanding its "core interests" to encompass new territorial and maritime claims, as well as an ambiguously broad concept of national security. Edward Wong of the New York Times reports the recently adopted national security law can be read as defining "core interests" to include "the political regime; the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the nation; and people's livelihoods, sustainable economic development of society and other major interests." This articulation of "core interests" could extend the concept to islands in the East China Sea or to China's disputed border with India, including in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, which Beijing already claims as "Southern Tibet." A definition of China's "core interests" that includes the survival of the party or unity of the nation could also make activities of lawyers, including, for example, those defending the rights of Uighurs or Tibetans, vulnerable to charges of violating national security.

The assault on democracy is a direct challenge to the U.S. In an article earlier this year in the Journal of Democracy, Robert Kagan traced democracy's ascendancy in the last century to a "configuration of power and ideas." The victory of democratic values was not preordained or inevitable. At different times, other ideologies had held sway. The U.S. used a "variety of tools, including direct military intervention" – or the threat of it – "to aid democratic transitions and prevent the undermining of existing fragile democracies all across the globe." Europe played an important role as well. The norms that emerged Kagan writes "did not appear out of nowhere or as the result of some natural evolution of the human species." They were built and defended. They were and remain "transient."

Despite its stake in the survival of democratic values and institutions, Washington is on its back foot when it comes to defending them. President Obama has made a different approach to democracy and dictatorships, uncritical engagement and passivity, the signature of his administration. His "pivot to Asia" initially contained a strong rationale for U.S. leadership based on the advancement of democratic values. He quite rightly presented these as universal rather than American. In his speech to the Australian parliament, he rejected other political models, including communism, as failures.

That ambitious and principled vision has not been sustained.

In the absence of executive leadership, Congress can play an important role. It has done so in the past. Members of Congress led American support for the Helsinki movement even when the executive was reluctant. Congress was central to the effort to pressure China on human rights, especially through the annual review of China's trade status, although eventually it too gave way to pressures to pursue unconditioned trade and engagement.

As a first step, Congress can help by carrying this cause to their constituents. They should make individual Chinese political prisoners household names just as Soviet dissidents were. At a minimum, there is evidence that such attention improves the conditions under which political prisoners are held and protects them from torture. Human rights activists welcome international attention. Dissidents are already in trouble with the regime, one Chinese intellectual once told me. "If the support is not there it will hurt much more."

Congress should identify or create leverage to use in pressing Beijing. Congress should consider the global application of the visa and financial sanctions regime adopted for Russia in 2012. That legislation, known as the Magnitsky Act, after the Russian lawyer whose death in jail inspired them, did two things. It replaced the historic Jackson-Vanik amendment's link of free emigration to trade with the Soviet Union with a measure tailored to Russia's current post-Soviet circumstances. Adoption of the Magnitsky sanctions also ensured that there was no lapse in America's support for human rights in Russia. By contrast, China's MFN process was ended and PNTR adopted without something to replace it. Expressing U.S. disapproval of human rights abuses through a visa ban or possible financial sanctions would be an important step, as would adoption of a pending measure that would enable the State Department to make Chinese diplomats' travel within the U.S. conditional on access to Tibet.

The U.S. must reassert American leadership in defending the liberal democratic order against the alternative leading authoritarian countries are trying to establish. "Insofar as there is energy in the international system," Kagan wrote, "it comes

from the great-power autocracies." America must match and exceed their efforts. There is no doubt we can. As President Obama often says, it is "who we are."

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STATEMENT BY CECC CHAIRS REPRESENTATIVE CHRIS SMITH AND SENATOR MARCO RUBIO ON PRESIDENT XI'S "INCREASINGLY BOLD DISREGARD FOR BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS"

TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2015

(Washington, DC)—With the recent detentions and interrogations of scores of human rights lawyers and the death in detention of Tibetan Buddhist religious leader Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche, the Chairs of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) issued the following statement.

"We are deeply alarmed by the recent round-up of scores of human rights lawyers and activists in China and believe this wave of repression constitutes an undeniable setback in U.S.-China relations. These unjustified detentions and interrogations, part of a coordinated nationwide crackdown reaching far beyond Beijing, are just the latest example of President Xi Jinping's intolerance for dissent and mockery of the rule of law. President Xi promised a China governed by the rule of law, but is instead using the law, particularly an onerous and vague National Security Law, as a tool of oppression and control. The detentions come on the heels of a joint statement of solidarity released by 100 lawyers last Friday protesting the disappearance of prominent human rights lawyer Wang Yu, who worked at the Fengrui Law Firm, which police have labelled a 'major criminal organization' for daring to take on dozens of sensitive cases. The detentions coincided with the sad and unnecessary death of a prominent 65-year old Tibetan religious leader, Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche, who had served thirteen years of a life term based on politically motivated charges. He had been repeatedly denied medical parole for his heart condition."

"President Xi wants a 'new type' of relationship with the U.S, but continues to pursue repressive policies rooted in China's past. Sadly, China seems to be closing its doors to new ideas and ways of thinking that are essential for the type of economic innovation, political transparency, and diplomatic cooperation needed to shape the future of U.S.-China relations. These issues and President Xi's increasingly bold disregard for basic human rights must necessarily serve as the backdrop for the planned September summit. We are compelled to ask whether such treatment of one's own citizens is deserving of a red carpet welcome in Washington."

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RELIGION WITH "CHINESE CHARACTERISTICS": PERSECUTION AND CONTROL IN XI JINPING'S CHINA

JULY 23, 2015

*Witnesses*

**Anastasia Lin, Human Rights Activist and the Current Miss World Canada**

Ms. Anastasia Lin is a Toronto-based actress. She won the Miss World Canada title in 2015. Since her start in acting at the age of seven, Anastasia has appeared in over 20 films and television productions, and most prominently played lead actress in several Toronto-based films about human rights themes in China. Her work has garnered numerous international awards including the Mexico International Film Festival's Golden Palm Award and California's Indie Fest Award of Merit. Along with her acting and participation in pageants, she is known for her public position against human rights abuses in China. Canadian television reports attributed her victory in the 2015 Miss World Canada Pageant in part to her passion for human rights. Anastasia will participate in the 2015 Miss World competition to be held this December in Sanya city, Hainan province, China.

**Bob Fu, Founder and President, ChinaAid Association**

Pastor Bob Fu was a leader in the 1989 student democracy movement in Tiananmen Square and later became a house church pastor. In 1996, authorities arrested and imprisoned Pastor Fu and his wife for their work. After their release, they escaped to the United States and, in 2002, he founded ChinaAid Association. ChinaAid monitors and reports on religious freedom in China and provides a forum for discussion among experts on religion, law, and human rights in China. Pastor Fu is frequently interviewed by media outlets around the world and has testified at U.S. congressional hearings. He has also appeared before the European Parliament and the United Nations. Pastor Fu holds a double bachelor's degree from

People's University and the Institute of Foreign Relations, and he has taught at the Beijing Communist Party School. In the United States, he earned a master's degree from Westminster Theological Seminary and is now working on his Ph.D.

**Rebiya Kadeer, President, World Uyghur Congress**

Ms. Rebiya Kadeer is a prominent human rights advocate and leader of the Uyghur people. She is the mother of 11 children, and a former laundress turned millionaire. She spent six years in a Chinese prison for standing up to the authoritarian Chinese government. Before her arrest in 1999, she was a well-known Uyghur businesswoman and at one time among the wealthiest individuals in the People's Republic of China. Ms. Kadeer has been actively campaigning for the human rights of the Uyghur people since her release in 2005. She was nominated to receive the Nobel Peace Prize several times since 2006. Despite Chinese government efforts to discredit her, Ms. Kadeer remains the pro-democracy Uyghur leader and heads the World Uyghur Congress, which represents the collective interest of the Uyghur people in the world.

**Losang Gyatso, Tibetan Service Chief, Voice of America**

Mr. Losang Gyatso is the service chief of Voice of America's Tibetan Service which broadcasts news and information into Tibet and is arguably the most influential and trusted source of information for the Tibetan people. Before joining VOA, Gyatso was a founding director of mechakgallery.com, a non-profit group promoting contemporary Tibetan art through exhibitions, publications, and social media. Prior to that, while working as an advertising executive in New York City in the 1980s and 1990s, Gyatso was a Tibetan community organizer and one of the most prolific graphic designers for projects carried out by groups such as the International Campaign for Tibet, Students for a Free Tibet, and Tibetan Center for Human Rights and Democracy.