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CHINA'S WAR ON CHRISTIANITY AND OTHER RELIGIOUS FAITHS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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CHINA'S WAR ON CHRISTIANITY AND OTHER RELIGIOUS FAITHS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2018

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH,
GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2 o'clock p.m., in room 2255, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Christopher H. Smith (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. SMITH. The committee will come to order.

Good afternoon to everybody.

Several years ago, during a visit to the United States, Xi Jinping chose to be interviewed by a Chinese reporter living in the United States. After the interview, President Xi asked a single question of this reporter, not about his family, not about whether he enjoyed living in the United States, or about any stories he might be writing. The one question he asked was, why do so many Chinese students and faculty living in the United States become Christians?

Whatever was behind that question, religious freedom conditions in China have not improved because of it. Quite the opposite. In fact, President Xi Jinping has personally launched efforts to sinicize religion, and the Central Government has issued commands to each Provincial Party Secretary making them responsible to bring religion in line with Communist Party ideology.

The Chinese government is an equal opportunity abuser of religious freedom. As you, sir, Commissioner Tenzin Dorjee, will testify, Xi Jinping's stated goal of sinicization affects all religious communities in China, Tibetan Buddhists, Falun Gong practitioners, Daoists, Muslims, and Christians.

Over the course of this year, the Chinese government has intensified the most severe crackdown on religious activity since the Cultural Revolution. Regulations on religious affairs, issued in February, tightened the existing restriction and new draft regulations are being circulated to clamp down on religious expression online. Churches, mosques, and temples have been demolished, crosses destroyed. Children have been prohibited from attending services, and surveillance cameras are being installed in churches.

Xi Jinping talks about realizing the China dream, but when Bibles are burned, when a simple prayer over a meal in public becomes an illegal religious gathering, and when over 1 million Uyghur and Kazakh Muslims are interned in reeducation camps

and forced to renounce their faith, that dream is an unmitigated nightmare. Much of the news lately has been the Chinese government's targeting of Christians.

The sinicization campaign has affected both state-controlled and unregistered churches. Protestant and Catholic clergy remain in prison. And the human rights lawyers who defend religious believers have been jailed, disappeared, or tortured into silence.

Xi Jinping views the fast-growing Christian churches, particularly the Protestant house church movement that does not belong to the state-sanctioned Protestant entities, as a threat to the dominance of the Chinese Communist Party. One of our witnesses here today, my good friend, the Reverend Dr. Bob Fu, has detailed on countless occasions the Communist Party's vicious war on independent house churches.

Underground churches, meaning those that do not belong to the state-sanctioned Patriotic Association, have faced tremendous persecution for decades, including Bishop Xu Jiamen, who I met back in 1994. Bishop Xu—and it was in a small apartment in Beijing—Bishop Xu's body bore witness to the brutality of China's Communist Party. He was beaten, starved and tortured for his faith, and spent, ultimately, some 40 years in the Chinese gulag.

Yet, when I met with him, he prayed not just for the persecuted church, but for the conversion of those who hate, torture, and kill. I was absolutely amazed at his kindness and said, "What does the Chinese government fear in Bishop Xu?" All he had in his heart was love and compassion, and as I said, he prayed for those who persecuted him and other believers of all the faiths. Unfortunately, only a couple of years after Bishop Xu met with me, because he was out only a few years, he was arrested and disappeared, and has not been heard from since.

Today's efforts to forcibly close underground parishes expanded this year. China's Ethnic and Religious Bureau told the state propaganda arm, Global Times, in April, that "activities in illegally-built parishes will be prohibited." And underground Catholic churches were being shuttered this very summer.

Recent reports indicate that a deal has been struck by the Holy See and the Chinese government, whereby the Pope will have veto power over Chinese government-approved candidates to be ordained as bishops. In exchange, seven previously excommunicated priests ordained without papal mandate and appointed by the Chinese government will be welcomed back into the full community with Rome.

Already the Vatican has been asked two validly ordained bishops to step aside to make way for two formerly excommunicated bishops. Cardinal Joseph Zen, bishop emeritus in Hong Kong, has questioned whether Vatican officials making these decisions "know what true suffering is."

The reports are that the deal is provisional and full details are yet unknown. But, with the efforts underway to forcibly sinicize religion, it certainly seems an odd time to strike a deal with Xi Jinping in China. I hope and pray this agreement will bring true religious freedom for Catholics and, by extension, all people of all faiths who have suffered so much to maintain their faith. We will continue to monitor that situation closely to see if force is used by

the Chinese government to close all underground or unregistered Catholic churches as a result of the deal.

I do look forward to hearing from our very distinguished witnesses, including Dr. Tom Farr, on what the implications of this deal would be and his recommendations for U.S. religious freedom in diplomacy.

Finally, U.S.-China tensions are high at the moment on a myriad of fronts. And the Chinese government, presumably, is searching for ways to reduce, not escalate them. At least that is the thought. Taking a hammer and a sickle to the cross or jailing 1 million Uyghur Muslims, however, will only ensure a tougher China policy, one with widespread, bipartisan, and even global support.

Frankly, I would call on the Trump administration to use all the tools that they have, including those that were embedded in the Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Act, which was passed just a couple of years ago, and the Global Magnitsky Act, which is designed to hold individual persecutors to account for their crimes. Not only making them ineligible to travel to the United States by way of visa denial, but also ensuring that they could not do business here because of their egregious behavior. So, that would be a followup that we will be asking the administration.

We would also hope, as I think, Tom, you mentioned in your testimony, that the designation of CPC for China and others be done immediately. The Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Act called for that being done by August. So, we have already seen some delay.

I would say, parenthetically, that under the Obama administration, we had years of delay before CPC was designated, which is one of the catalysts for the language that I wrote into that bill, the Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Act. But now we are several weeks past the deadline. What is the holdup? Hopefully, that will be remedied very soon.

Mr. Suozzi, I yield.

Mr. SUOZZI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you for calling this hearing on a very important topic that doesn't get nearly enough attention from the governments around the world.

I want you to just know, on a personal note, that I attended my nephew's wedding in California this week, and the priest who performed the wedding, who is from my hometown of Glen Cove, was asked by Mother Teresa in the 1980s to bring Mother Teresa's order to China, and he has been working there for the past 30 years and I think could give us some good insights as to what is going on in China directly related to the Catholic Church. I think he has been involved in trying to help negotiate this.

In the past, China has been referred to as the "Middle Kingdom" or the "Sleeping Giant." And I think we can be sure that China's aspirations go beyond either of these titles. China has asserted itself on the global scene as an economic power, a military power, and a power that wishes to create a parallel international order. It relies on the lack of transparency to advance its interests, uses their economic clout to bully critics into silence, and is one of the world's biggest sources of illicit capital, funding some of humanities worst impulses across the globe.

At the same time, it presents itself as an alternative to the western system through both soft and sharp power initiatives. Our national security strategy calls China a strategic competitor, and our top intelligence sources or officers sounded the alarm in Aspen that China is the No. 1 economic and national security threat.

We have paid a lot of attention to how China acts on the global stage, but looking into how China treats its own gives us a chilling insight into the Chinese Communist Party thinks, what they believe a society should look like, what kinds of rights and dignities they think a government should allow to its citizenry.

It is not the government's role to allow freedoms. Humans are born free, as much as the Chinese seek to act to the contrary. Under the leadership of Xi Jinping, religion is being severely curtailed and repressed. He launched a campaign of harsh and systemic suppression with the goal of sinicizing China's religious by infusing them with Chinese characteristics. Sinicizing has the aim to transform religion and ethnicity in Chinese society, a long-reaching program that seeks to homogenize the Chinese into one single identity and requiring loyalty to the Communist Party.

Their concerns about having complete control and their fear of chaos are dictating much of this policy. This effort has resulted in the brutal religious persecution of Christians, both Catholic and Protestant; Muslims; Falun Gong; Buddhists, and others. International headlines include horrific reports of forced conversions, re-education camps, arbitrary arrests, and torture.

The activity in China is not new. After the People's Republic was established in 1949, all religion was severely suppressed. Religions were viewed by the Chinese Communist Party as a threat to their rule, as an organizing principle besides that of the Party was condemned.

China embraced the Marxist ideology of religion as opium of the masses and as a tactic for foreign influence in China. The Communist Chinese Party viewed Christianity as part and parcel of Western imperialism in China during the 100 years of humiliation, beginning in the 1840s. Religious freedom continued to be severely repressed during the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s.

A revival of the religions that began in the 1980s was marked by development of the unofficial Protestant house church movement and an underground Catholic movement loyal to the Vatican. In 1982, the Chinese constitution does name/guarantee freedom of belief, according to Article 36, and forbids organizations or individuals from compelling citizens to believe in or not believe in religion.

This supposed guarantee of freedom of belief, however, does not guarantee freedom of practice. The practice of religion in China has been stifled by Chinese policy, practice, and ideology. The guiding ideology for religion in China is the three-self policy: Self-lead, self-funded, self-perpetuating. These mandates of "self" have cut off institutional support from world religions and facilitated the exclusion Communist Party's direct control over the Chinese people's religious practice.

In fact, when China cut relations with the Vatican in 1951, it asserted complete control over the Patriotic Catholic Church in China, appointing its own bishops and clergy. Catholics in China

faced either attending churches approved by Beijing or going to underground congregations.

A new government policy further ensconced the Communist Party's control over religion when they announced in October 2017 and closed the state government's Religious Affairs Bureau, and placed administration over religions under the United Front Work Department of the Communist Party.

Under Communist orders, local governments across the country have shut down hundreds of house churches. Catholic clergy anointed by the Vatican were incarcerated, and crosses on churches have been destroyed. A recent agreement between the Vatican and Beijing offers what the Vatican describes as a "gradual and reciprocal rapprochement." I am hoping the witnesses here today can provide some insights into how this will play out.

Another issue of major concern is the brutal persecution of China's ethnic Muslim population, the Uyghurs. In what appears to amount to an ethnic cleansing, anywhere from hundreds of thousands to 1 million Muslims have been arrested and put in reeducation camps or internment. Beijing argues that these measures are necessary for their security to prevent separatism of this northwestern province and to counter terrorism, but the scope of repression far exceeds the perceived threat.

Both Chinese and American officials say that 1500 Uyghurs have fought alongside Islam groups in Syria. But, according to a 2016 list of foreign recruits from an Islamic State defector, only 144 fighters came from Xinxiang.

In these reeducation camps, the Muslims report torture, abuse, forced disappearances, and separation from their children, forced to eat pork and cremate their burials, counter to Muslim tradition. And while Beijing may deny that these camps exist, satellite images show the contrary, and the victims' stories are slowly trickling out.

Xinxiang has become a prototype for their police state that would make the dystopia Orwell described in his book, "1984," seem like a benevolent, with multiple checkpoints, facial recognition, QR scanning codes on the home, thousands of police, both uniformed and plain-clothed. Artificial intelligence is being used to gather data every minute in minute detail that all feeds into a system that rates how loyal the individual is to the Chinese state. While the media has sounded the alarm, we need governments to step in and do more.

I look forward to hearing the witnesses' testimony. I yield back my time.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Suozzi, thank you very much for your testimony.

I would like to now welcome the chairman of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, Dr. Tenzin Dorjee. He is also an associate professor at the Department of Human Communication Studies at California State University in Fullerton.

He was appointed to the Commission on December 8th, 2016 and reappointed by Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi on May 10th, 2018. On June 12, 2018, Dr. Dorjee was unanimously elected Chair of the Commission.

His teaching and research interests include intercultural and intergenerational communication, peacebuilding, and conflict reso-

lution. Dr. Dorjee has authored and coauthored numerous articles and invited chapters on Tibetan culture, identity, nonviolence, Sino-Tibetan conflict, and intercultural communications competence.

Dr. Dorjee is a prominent translator who worked in the Translation and Research Bureau of the Library of Tibetan Works and the Archives of Dharamsala in India for over 13 years. He has had the honor to translate for many prominent Tibetan Buddhist professors, including His Holiness the Dalai Lama, in India and North America.

Dr. Dorjee has traveled to Burma and Iraq to monitor religious freedom conditions there, and has testified before the U.S. Congress before on the issue of religious freedom and conditions in Tibet and China, including the long arm of China in the U.S. academic institutions.

Dr. Dorjee, welcome, and the floor is yours.

STATEMENT OF TENZIN DORJEE, PH.D., COMMISSIONER, U.S. COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Mr. DORJEE. Chairman Chris Smith, Congressman Suozzi, and other members of the subcommittee, good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, or USCIRF, about the Chinese government's outright assault on person of any faith, but particularly those associated with foreigners such as Christians and Muslims.

I am Tenzin Dorjee, USCIRF's current Chair and the only Tibetan Buddhist ever appointed to serve on the Commission. USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan U.S. Federal Government Commission created by the 1998 International Religious Freedom Act, or IRFA. The Commission monitors the universal right of freedom of religion or belief abroad, using international standards to do so, and makes policy recommendations to Congress, the President, and the Secretary of State.

I am honored to be joined at this hearing by two esteemed scholars who also work on international religious freedom, Bob Fu of ChinaAid and Thomas Farr of the Religious Freedom Institute. I look forward to their testimonies.

USCIRF began reporting on China in our very first annual report, and has continued to do so every year since, because of that country's systematic, ongoing, egregious violations of religious freedom. The State Department first designated China as a "country of particular concern," or CPC, in 1999, and has done so in every instance the Department has made such designations, most recently in December 2017. And USCIRF has recommended the CPC designation for China every single year.

Regrettably, the conditions of USCIRF first reported in China nearly two decades ago have not improved. In fact, the conditions have worsened under President Xi Jinping due to the sinicization and securitization of religion. Religions must be in accord with Communist ideology, and religious freedom is most severely restricted in the name of national security. USCIRF has consistently raised these two pertinent issues at various hearings and events. Relatedly, USCIRF's 2018 annual report depicted ongoing repres-

sion and discrimination directed at Tibetan Buddhists, Uyghur Muslims, Protestants, Catholics, and Falun Gong practitioners.

These abuses include: Destruction and dismantling of houses of worship and religious symbols; forced evictions from, and demolition of, religious educational institutions; restrictions, related to the practice and the study of one's faith, on language, culture, attire, parents' ability to name and teach their children, religious rituals and ceremonies, and freedom of movement; imprisonment of religious leaders and followers, as well as lawyers and human rights defenders advocating for religious freedom; prolonged disappearances and arbitrary detention without trial, denials of legal representation and medical care, and intimidation and physical assaults, sometimes through torture, to force believers to renounce their faith; forced attendance, or even unlawful detention, at reeducation and indoctrination facilities; and pressure to join state-sanctioned religious organizations.

The scope and scale of these violations is staggering. Perhaps the best way to convey China's horrific religious freedom conditions is by highlighting the human element, such as the Chinese prisoners that are part of USCIRF's Religious Prisoners of Conscience Project. Through that project, USCIRF Commissioners advocate on behalf of specific individuals imprisoned for their faith background or religious activity. In China, Commissioners are advocating for three such prisoners.

The Panchen Lama. Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the Panchen Lama, holds the second highest position in Tibetan Buddhism and is one of the world's longest-held prisoners of conscience. Chinese government authorities kidnapped the then-6-year-old boy and his family on May 18, 1995. They have not been heard of since. Just days before Gedhun's abduction, His Holiness the Dalai Lama chose him to be the 11th Panchen Lama. The Chinese government, in complete disregard for the Tibetan people, named its own Panchen Lama, though most Tibetan Buddhists reject this selection.

The Panchen Lama's disappearance and detention is in the context of the Chinese government's ongoing vilification of the Dalai Lama; its asserted control over the reincarnation system of Tibetan Buddhism that includes the Dalai Lama's reincarnation; the destruction of important Buddhist sites at Larung Gar and Yachen Gar; the pervasive security presence through the Tibet area, including inside monasteries and nunneries, and imprisonment of countless Tibetans like language advocate Tashi Wangchuk, whose appeal of his 5-year prison sentence was denied just this August. Chinese repression is so extreme that at least 153 Tibetans have self-immolated since February 2009 in support of religious freedom, human rights, and the return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet.

Gulmira Imin. On July 5, 2009, Gulmira Imin, an Uyghur Muslim, participated in a demonstration following the deaths of Uyghur migrant workers. Authorities accused her of helping to organize the demonstration, in part by posting information about it online. A court sentenced Ms. Imin to life in prison on charges of "splittism," leaking state secrets, and organizing an illegal demonstration. Her only crime was defending her fellow Uyghur Muslims.

When we think of a war on religion, Beijing's overt criminalization of Islam certainly comes to mind. The government prevents

Uyghur Muslims from observing Ramadan, invades their private everyday lives with pervasive security measures, prohibits children from attending mosque, and bans Uyghur language instruction in schools.

Worst of all, the Chinese government is detaining approximately 1 million Uyghur Muslims in unlawful detention camps, allegedly to provide vocational training to prevent extremism. Imagine the entire city of San Jose, California, a population of just over 1 million people, detained against their will. And the Chinese government is not just punishing those currently detained. Authorities harass and intimidate their loved ones, cruelly separating families, and have inflicted severe trauma on generations of Uyghurs impacted by gross ill treatment, torture, and shame just because they are Muslim.

Hu Shigen. In August 2016, a Chinese court found underground church leader and religious freedom advocate Hu Shigen guilty of subversion and sentenced him to 7½ years in prison and another 5 years' deprivation of political rights. He was one of nearly 300 lawyers and activists arrested, detained, or disappeared as part of a nationwide crackdown that began on July 9, 2015, also known as the "709 Crackdown."

The already poor situation for Christians, like other religious groups, has markedly declined since new religious regulations came into effect on February 1st this year. Just days prior to the regulations, Chinese police used dynamite to annihilate the evangelical Golden Lampstand Church. More recently, authorities shut down Zion Church, one of Beijing's largest unregistered Protestant house churches.

Across several provinces, authorities have confiscated Bibles; demolished churches; moved or destroyed crosses or other religious symbols, sometimes replacing them with the Chinese flag, and arrested countless Christians. In an unprecedented display of frustration, hundreds of underground house church leaders and clergy have signed a statement calling out the Chinese government's abuse of power and violations against religious freedom.

Each of these individuals are prisoners adopted by USCIRF's Commissioners through our Religious Prisoners of Conscience Project, but, sadly, they represent only a small fraction of the thousands wrongly imprisoned in China, many because of their faith. I am proud to advocate for both the Panchen Lama and Gulmira Imin, and my colleague Commissioner Gary Bauser is advocating on behalf of Hu Shigen.

I would like to make some recommendations. It would be easy to think that there is little hope from a bleak assessment. However, there are a number of steps the U.S. Government can and should take to underscore religious freedom concerns in China.

First, the State Department must immediately redesignate China as a CPC, a country of particular concern, for its systematic, ongoing, egregious violations of religious freedom. Under the Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Act, CPC designations should have been made by the end of August, and the USCIRF urges the State Department to make them as soon as possible.

Second, in addition to the appropriate sanctions available under IRFA subsequent to a CPC designation, the administration should

pursue targeted sanctions against specific Chinese officials and agencies under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act.

Third, the State Department and the entire administration should build on the momentum of the historic Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom and continue their bilateral and multilateral efforts to shine a light on religious freedom concerns in China, such as in the Ministerial's statement on China.

Fourth, the administration and Members of Congress should pursue regular visits to areas in China deeply impacted by the government's religious freedom abuses and raise religious freedom concerns, including cases of prisoners of conscience, whenever they interact with Chinese government counterparts.

The House of Representatives just passed the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act. The Senate should pass the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act. That would deny entry into the United States for Chinese government officials responsible for creating or administering restrictions on U.S. Government officials, journalists, tourists, and others seeking to travel to Tibetan areas. I am a Tibet-American, and I would definitely like to go to see Tibet. So, I don't have that chance right now. Moreover, the U.S. Congress should more actively seek readouts from administration officials about their interactions with China, in particular, to inquire about discussions related to religious freedom.

In conclusion, I am going to say that religious freedom is called a universal right for a reason: It belongs to everyone everywhere. Everyone has the right to have a faith or no faith at all, and no one has the right to control it for others. When the Chinese government attacks freedom of religion or belief in a wholesale and brutal manner, it is incumbent upon us all to hold them to account, not just because they have violated the norms and standards of rules-based international order, but because, in doing so, Beijing has assailed humanity with its blatant disregard for the human conscience.

Thank you again for holding a hearing on such a timely and important subject.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Dorjee follows:]

UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON
INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Testimony by Dr. Tenzin Dorjee, Chair
United States Commission on International Religious Freedom

Hearing on
"China's War on Christianity and Other Religious Faiths"
Before the House Foreign Affairs Committee
Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights,
and International Organizations

September 27, 2018
2:00pm
Room 2255 Rayburn House Office Building

Chairman Chris Smith, Ranking Member Karen Bass, and other members of the Subcommittee: Good afternoon, and thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, or USCIRF, about the Chinese government's outright assault on persons of any faith, but particularly those it associates with foreigners, such as Christians and Muslims.

I am Tenzin Dorjee, USCIRF's current chair and the only Tibetan Buddhist ever appointed to serve on the Commission. USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan U.S. federal government commission created by the 1998 International Religious Freedom Act, or IRFA. The Commission monitors the universal right to freedom of religion or belief abroad, using international standards to do so, and makes policy recommendations to Congress, the President, and Secretary of State.

I'm honored to be joined at this hearing by two esteemed colleagues who also work on international religious freedom: Bob Fu of ChinaAid and Tom Farr of the Religious Freedom Institute. I look forward to their testimonies.

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"sinicization" and securitization of religion. Religions must accord with communist ideology, and religious freedom is most severely restricted in the name of national security. USCIRF has consistently raised these two pertinent issues at various hearings and events. Relatedly, USCIRF's 2018 Annual Report depicted ongoing repression and discrimination directed at Tibetan Buddhists, Uighur Muslims, Protestants and Catholics, and Falun Gong practitioners. These abuses include:

- destruction or dismantling of houses of worship and religious symbols;
- forced evictions from and demolition of religious educational institutions;
- restrictions—related to the practice and study of one's faith—on language, culture, attire, parents' ability to name and teach their children, religious rituals and ceremonies, and freedom of movement;
- imprisonment of religious leaders and followers, as well as lawyers and human rights defenders advocating for religious freedom;
- prolonged disappearances and arbitrary detention without trial, denials of legal representation and medical care, and intimidation and physical assault—sometimes through torture—to force believers to renounce their faith;
- forced attendance—or even unlawful detention—at "re-education" or "indoctrination" facilities; and
- pressure to join state-sanctioned religious organizations.

The scope and scale of these violations is staggering. Perhaps the best way to convey China's horrific religious freedom conditions is by highlighting the human element, such as the Chinese prisoners that are part of USCIRF's Religious Prisoners of Conscience Project. Through that project, USCIRF Commissioners advocate on behalf of specific individuals imprisoned for their faith background or religious activity. In China, Commissioners are advocating for three such prisoners.

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The Panchen Lama's disappearance and detention is in the context of the Chinese government's ongoing vilification of the Dalai Lama; its asserted control over the reincarnation system of Tibetan Buddhism that includes the Dalai Lama's reincarnation; the destruction of important Buddhist sites at Larung Gar and Yachen Gar; the pervasive security presence throughout the Tibet Area, including inside monasteries and nunneries; and the imprisonment of countless Tibetans like language advocate Tashi Wangchuk, whose appeal of his five-year prison sentence was denied just this August. Chinese repression is so extreme that at least 153 Tibetans have self-immolated since February 2009 in support of religious freedom, human rights, and the return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet.

Gulmira Imin
On July 5, 2009, Gulmira Imin, a Uighur Muslim, participated in a demonstration following the deaths of Uighur migrant workers. Authorities accused her of helping to organize the demonstration, in part by posting information about it online. A court sentenced Ms. Imin to life in prison on charges of "splittism", leaking state secrets, and organizing an illegal demonstration. Her only "crime" was defending her fellow Uighur Muslims.

When we think of a war on religion, Beijing's overt criminalization of Islam certainly comes to mind. The government prevents Uighur Muslims from observing Ramadan, invades their everyday lives with pervasive security measures, prohibits children from attending mosque, and bans Uighur language instruction in schools. Worst of all the Chinese government is detaining approximately one million Uighur Muslims in unlawful detention camps, allegedly to provide "vocational training" to prevent extremism. Imagine the entire city of San Jose, California—population just over one million people—detained against their will. And the Chinese government is not just punishing those currently detained: authorities harass and intimidate their loved ones, cruelly separating families, and have inflicted severe trauma on generations of Uighurs impacted by gross ill-treatment, torture, and shame just because they are Muslim.

Hu Shigen
In August 2016, a Chinese court found underground church leader and religious freedom advocate Hu Shigen guilty of subversion and sentenced him to seven and a half years in prison and another five years' deprivation of political rights. He was one of nearly 300 lawyers and activists arrested, detained, or disappeared as part of a nationwide crackdown that began on July 9, 2015, also known as the 709 Crackdown.

The already poor situation for Christians, like other religious groups, has markedly declined since new religious regulations came into effect on February 1 this year. Just days prior to the regulations, Chinese police used dynamite to annihilate the evangelical Golden Lampstand Church. More recently, authorities shut down Zion Church, one of Beijing's largest unregistered Protestant house churches. Across several provinces, authorities have confiscated Bibles, demolished churches, moved or destroyed crosses and other religious symbols—sometimes replacing them with the Chinese flag —and arrested countless Christians. In an unprecedented display of frustration, hundreds of underground house church leaders and clergy have signed a statement calling out the Chinese government's abuse of power and violations against religious freedom.

Each of these individuals are prisoners adopted by USCIRF Commissioners through our Religious Prisoners of Conscience Project, but sadly they represent only a small fraction of the thousands wrongly imprisoned in China, many because of their faith. I'm proud to advocate for both the Panchen Lama and Gulmira Imin, and my colleague Commissioner Gary L. Bauer is advocating on behalf of Hu Shigen.

Recommendations
It would be easy to think that there is little hope from such a bleak assessment. However, there are a number of steps the U.S. government can and should take to underscore religious freedom concerns in China.

First, the State Department must immediately redesignate China as a CPC for its systematic, ongoing, egregious violations of religious freedom. Under the Frank Wolf International Religious Freedom Act, CPC designations should have been made by the end of August, and USCIRF urges the State Department to make them as soon as possible.

Second, in addition to the appropriate sanctions available under IRFA subsequent to a CPC designation, the Administration should pursue targeted sanctions against specific Chinese officials and agencies under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act.

Third, the State Department and the entire Administration should build on the momentum of the historic Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom and continue their bilateral and multilateral efforts to shine a light on religious freedom concerns in China, such as in the Ministerial's Statement on China.

Fourth, the Administration and Members of Congress should pursue regular visits to areas in China deeply impacted by the government's religious freedom abuses and raise religious freedom concerns—including cases of prisoners of conscience—whenever they interact with Chinese government counterparts. Congress should pass the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act that would deny entry into the United States for Chinese government officials responsible for creating or administering restrictions on U.S. government officials, journalists, tourists, and others seeking to travel to Tibetan areas. Moreover, the U.S. Congress should more actively seek readouts from Administration officials about their interactions with China, in particular to inquire about discussions related to religious freedom.

Conclusion
Religious freedom is called a universal right for a reason: it belongs to everyone, everywhere. Everyone has the right have a faith or no faith at all, and no one has the right to control it for others. When the Chinese government attacks freedom of religion or belief in such a wholesale and brutal manner, it is incumbent upon us all to hold them to account. Not just because they have violated the norms and standards of a rules-based international order, but because, in so doing, Beijing has assailed humanity with its blatant disregard for the human conscience.

Thank you again for holding a hearing on such a timely and important subject.

Mr. SMITH. Dr. Dorjee, thank you very, very much for your leadership and for that tremendous statement to the committee.

Let me just begin now with some questions. Obviously, the State Department's Ministerial that was held in July was a very, very important event, it had all of the high-caliber people, including Ambassador-at-Large for Religious Freedom Sam Brownback and, of course, Secretary Pompeo. You and so many others were there.

I wonder if you could just give us your thoughts as to the followup. How well do you think the momentum that was created at that Ministerial has been acted upon, especially as it relates to China? Why have few countries signed the statement on China? Is it out of fear of retaliation, in your view, or some other reason?

And you did call for looking at sanctions? One of the concerns we have all had for years is that the Tiananmen Square sanctions have been used in a double-hatting fashion when it comes to CPC, putting curbs on police equipment. I have argued for years that a new set of very specific sanctions needs to be imposed on China to let them know that we are not kidding.

In the past, we have even had to fight the State Department when they wanted to double-hat the Ambassador-at-Large himself or herself, and give somebody else the portfolio, and in addition to that, you will be the Ambassador-at-Large for Religious Freedom, which we very vigorously push back on. But, on the sanctions front, that is what we do. If you could speak to that, I would appreciate it.

Marco Rubio and I chaired a hearing just a few weeks ago, a little longer than that. It has been a month. We focused on the Uyghurs and a number of aspects of the people being rounded up, about 1 million strong, maybe more; and put into concentration camps, reeducation camps. And we raised strongly—and Ambassador Kelly Curry, who is our Ambassador to the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations, gave very chilling testimony about the problem of surveillance; that the surveillance state has gone from looking for speeding, like we have here, those kinds—and that is not surveillance. That is perhaps even good law enforcement, arguably. But, there, it is everywhere.

As he put it, "thousands of surveillance cameras, including in mosques; facial recognition software; obligatory content-monitoring apps on smartphones and GPS devices on cars; widespread new police outposts with tens of thousands of newly-hired police and even Party personnel embedded in people's homes; and compulsory collection of vast biometric databases on ethnic and religious minorities throughout the region, including DNA and blood samples, 3D photos, iris scans, and voiceprints." And he goes on from there. I mean, an intrusive state, the likes of which we have never seen.

Back in 2006, I chaired a series of hearings on how Google, Microsoft, Cisco, and others were enabling the surveillance state to monitor the internet, to find out where people were, who they were talking to. And that continues unabated to this day. But now, doubling down, they are doing even more, and obviously, the technology here is being used elsewhere, but it could be used even more aggressively elsewhere as well. If you could speak to that?

I mean, if ever there was a need for a sanctions regime, that is truly—and one of the things that came out in our last hearing was

all of the American companies, European companies, that are just going along and selling them all of that equipment, which is being used to persecute, to torture, and to kill.

Mr. DORJEE. Thank you for the opportunity to answer your questions.

The Ministerial to Advance Religious Freedom was a very historic one. As you said, it was held for the first time. We believe that it was fruitful to a certain extent and there were some positive outcomes that we observed.

For example, the like-minded countries are able to organize maybe religious events in the coming months. A number of countries have expressed their interest to create petitions for international religious freedom Ambassadors in the governments; for example, Mongolia, Taiwan, possibly Bahrain, and Poland. And so, the United States, here we have been fortunate to be highly active and engaged in the IRFA Roundtable supporting this and efforts.

So, USCIRF has also engaged with a number of country delegations that already have, or are seeking to create, their own religious freedom roundtables. In Denmark last month, USCIRF engaged with country delegations from Vietnam, Burma, Indonesia, Malaysia at a Fourth Annual Southeast Asia Freedom of Religion or Belief Conference. And USCIRF looks forward to staying engaged with these stakeholders as well as existing partners like the International Panel of Parliamentarians for the Freedom of Religion or Belief.

And so, USCIRF looks forward to having a more active role in planning the process for the next Ministerial. The Commission was proud to host two events that were part of the official program this July, including a 20th anniversary of IRFA reception, a U.S. grant workshop; plus, the efforts of NGOs in hosting so many successful site events during the Ministerial.

With regards to why few countries signed on the statement of China, my understanding is that participating countries had really limited time to review the language before the deadline to sign on. And also, very few, if any, had like authority to sign it without consulting back at their home governments. And so, it is probably the matter of being the first time and a short time that it might have happened.

Mr. SMITH. Is it still open, if somebody wanted to sign it today?

Mr. DORJEE. I believe so, but I am not sure exactly what the language reads.

Mr. SMITH. Okay. Because I think, if it is, an effort should be made to gather further——

Mr. DORJEE. I would assume it would be, right? That we are welcoming, you know.

Mr. SMITH. Right.

Mr. DORJEE. But a number of countries signed—we should acknowledge them—like Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Kosovo. And we hope more will sign to that.

With regard double-hatting, that there are issues, USCIRF, in our recommendations to the State Department for the CPC designations—so, 10 countries have been designated as CPC countries, and out of which, six have been subject to double and at the exten-

sion of preexisting sanctions. That includes China as well. And four have the waivers, if you will.

And so, the administration has relied on this approach. While the statute permits the use that has the longest precedence under preexisting sanctions or indefinite waivers, it provides little incentive for the CPC designated government to reduce or hold egregious religious freedom violations. So, we would rather encourage the State Department for targeted sanctions, especially based upon religious freedom violations. And so, such sanctions, or the CPC designation must be followed by implementing a clear, direct, and unique Presidential action.

And so, USCIRF also comments that current and future administrations and Congress need to recommend such to the full and robust application of mechanisms available under the International Religious Freedom Act, just as you pointed out that all the tools available must be used effectively.

Mr. SMITH. So, it is time to sanction, in your view?

Mr. DORJEE. Yes, it is, I think, time, very much time to sanction, yes, targeted sanctions, I must say.

Mr. SMITH. Of course.

Mr. DORJEE. And you also raised the issue about the Uyghur, or about 1 million Uyghurs' detention. And so, the surveillance of every movement, you know, and they use the most up-to-date technology they could buy from the American countries available that they could to track down everything. And there is so much of a social control of movements, basically, of the Chinese back in their own country. And so, that is a serious matter.

I think American countries, if they are involved in such trade—of course, we are not saying don't do the trade. Yes, you need to make your profits. But we must also keep in mind our human concerns and humanity at heart. And so, what are the implications of selling this technology to China where they put it to wrong use?

And not only, I think, in its circumstance with the Uyghur Muslims, they have been doing the same thing back in Tibet, where in the monasteries they have put all kinds of surveillance. And now, basically, the Chinese government, they appoint administrators in the monasteries, so that they can—how should I say it?—plan out everything and control everything.

So, such serious matters, I think the Congress and the President, all of us should look at. And you also mentioned how like Microsoft enabled that.

Mr. SMITH. Right, right.

Mr. DORJEE. I think a company really has to—you know, we also have human and social responsibility besides making money. So, the only thing about trade, that is what enables China to be bold and do—how should I say?—egregious things in violation that they are doing. So, we do have to put a check on that, and I very much agree with your mindset, yes.

Mr. SMITH. Without objection, the letter by Marco Rubio and I to Wilbur Ross, the Secretary of Commerce, calling for bans, curbs on the export of those devices and that capability, without objection, it will be made a part of the record.

I would like to yield to Mr. Suozzi.

Mr. SUOZZI. So, Dr. Dorjee, thank you so much for your testimony. We really appreciate it very much.

Looking at your biography, I see that you are very much an expert on Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism. I look at the population of China of 1.38 billion, and I looked at the different populations of the different religions of religious Buddhists, Chinese Buddhists, 185 million to 250 million; Christians, Protestants, 60 to 80 million; Catholics, 12 million; Muslims, 21 to 23 million; Falun Gong, 7 to 20 million, and 6 to 8 million Tibetan Buddhists. Why is it that China sees the Tibetan Buddhist being such a tremendous threat to them? Why do they have to have such control over the Tibetan Buddhists? And why would they imprison the second—how did you refer to this boy? Well, he is not a boy now; he is a man.

Mr. DORJEE. The Panchen Lama.

Mr. SUOZZI. "Bengee"?

Mr. DORJEE. Lama.

Mr. SUOZZI. Panchen Lama. So, he is the successor?

Mr. DORJEE. Right.

Mr. SUOZZI. Is he——

Mr. DORJEE. He is the second highest leader in Tibetan Buddhism.

Mr. SUOZZI. Yes.

Mr. DORJEE. Very important, you know, for recognizing, for example, the reincarnation of the next Dalai Lama.

Mr. SUOZZI. Yes.

Mr. DORJEE. So, yes, he is very important.

Mr. SUOZZI. But why is that seen as being such a threat to China?

Mr. DORJEE. China claims to have 55 national minorities, and Tibetans are counted among those 55. But my understanding is that Uyghur Muslims and especially Tibetan Buddhists are very distinctive in terms of their history, language, culture, and religion, which stands out very much, as much as China claims Tibet to be part of China and Tibetans to be Chinese, but the fact of the matter is that, on many of those other issues, Tibetans are a very distinctive group of people.

And so, the Tibetan Buddhism is a core of Tibetan identity, the Tibetan language and Tibetan Buddhism. And so, the Tibetan language is very different Chinese. Chinese origin is a pictograph form, but Tibetan is based upon the ancient Sanskrit language of India. And so, Tibetan came straight from India. Actually, we don't call it Tibetan Buddhism. When it came to the West, it started to be labeled, but we just call it Buddhism.

Mr. SUOZZI. Buddhism.

Mr. DORJEE. Right. And so, Tibet as a nation, the people, for centuries they did one thing the best they could. They did get all the resources, human and everything, to—how shall I say it?—to further their Buddhist faith. And that is why they are known around the world today.

So, if you take the Tibetan Buddhism out of them, the Tibetan language, then, you know, they probably are much less to be Tibetan in terms of cultural identity. So, that is why the Chinese know that, if you allow Tibetans to practice their faith and speak their language, which is really restricted—they don't like Tibetans

to be taught in schools and universities. They require them to study Mandarin. And so, the Tibet language advocate Tashi Wangchuk, right, he called for that very right, and he has been in prison still. So, it is the distinctive nature of things.

And, of course, you mentioned that Tibetans are only like a small, probably 6 million.

Mr. SUOZZI. Very small.

Mr. DORJEE. Very small. But, right now in Tibet, there are more Chinese than Tibetans. And so, that demographic shift and change probably the Chinese government thinks is the ultimate solution to Tibet-China issues, which is a big concern for us. And so, that is why I think we——

Mr. SUOZZI. But why is this small population of people such a threat to the Chinese government? Why do they perceive it as being such a threat?

Mr. DORJEE. So, my belief is, as in the culture, as a communications scholar, whether the threat is actually there are not, it is the perception.

Mr. SUOZZI. Yes. Why?

Mr. DORJEE. Because they feel that, if you let the Tibetans to practice their religion and language, then those are the bases that they can claim that they are not Chinese anymore, right? Whereas, that really subverts their claim.

And also, I mean, to add to that, I have heard that, overall, there are about 300 million Buddhists in China, because that includes Tibetan Buddhists. So, that, itself, is probably threatening to the Chinese government, right, because the Buddhists believe in Buddha. All Buddhists believe in Buddha.

So, combined with things, it is a potential for them that there could be big change that could——

Mr. SUOZZI. If you include all the religious groups, the Buddhists, the Chinese Buddhists, the Protestants, the Catholics, the Muslims, the Tibetan Buddhists, the Falun Gong, it is 380 million people. There is still another billion people that are not affiliated with any of those religions.

Mr. DORJEE. Exactly.

Mr. SUOZZI. So, I met with some Chinese experts recently, and they pointed out to me that the big driving factor of the Chinese government and the Chinese hierarchy is control because they are afraid of chaos. They are afraid of things happening on their borders. You know, Tibet on their border, the Uyghurs out in the northwestern border. They are just concerned about losing control of their frontiers. Is that something you would agree with?

Mr. DORJEE. Well, the Chinese is security conscious. You know, they may have some, and those are legitimate, of course, we understand. But, then, they use the national security as the protest to control everything, right, whether it has to do with national security or not. And, yes, you rightly said it. You know, they are—I am sorry to use this kind of word—control freaks really, China. And so, they have about 60 million Communist members, but there are 380 million religious faith believers. Look at the number. There is a potential, of course, they think the threat, you know, to their power and control.

Mr. SUOZZI. Okay.

Mr. SMITH. Will the gentleman yield on that point?

Mr. SUOZZI. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. But it is really to me control inside. I mean, they have no natural threat coming from Taiwan, coming from Vietnam, or anywhere else. And they have a military that is really a very high-grade military. It is really they just want power. Is that your view?

Mr. DORJEE. I think it is just to stay in control and power. And, you know, the threat doesn't have to be objectively this, based upon my research studies. It is just perception-based.

China is very strong militarily. I don't think these faith believers can really subvert the control, but, then, they believe in that, and that is why they——

Mr. SUOZZI. Where in the Chinese history do you think control comes from, this fear of chaos, or this desire to be control freaks?

Mr. DORJEE. Well, I think, largely, in my understanding, it is rooted in their Communist ideology and maybe past history where they were dominated by other countries. So, China, culturally speaking, is very much concerned with what we call "face concerns." They don't want to lose their face concerns, and they want to be the powerful nation. Perhaps they want to be the only superpower, if possible. So, it is all combined, those things that make them who they are, I believe.

Mr. SUOZZI. Okay. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Just one brief thing, if I could. When we did the religious freedom law in 2016, many parts of that I think will make a difference, but two—we created a designated persons list for individuals who create egregious violations of religious freedom. And it also created a comprehensive religious prisoners list, persons who have been detained, imprisoned, tortured, and subjected to forced renunciation of faith.

Are you satisfied that the State Department has faithfully created those two lists and they are up-to-date?

Mr. DORJEE. I can appreciate that they are created, but I think we definitely would like to see more names on it. We understand that it has to be kept confidential until they put an action, but yes. And we also have, at USCIRF, amended to create a victims list and we are working on a database, too.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you so very much for your testimony and for your leadership.

Mr. DORJEE. Thank you very much for the opportunity.

Mr. SUOZZI. Thank you so much.

Mr. SMITH. I would like to now ask our second panel to come to the witness table, beginning with Dr. Bob Fu, who is the founder and President of ChinaAid, a former student leader during the Tiananmen Square democracy movement in 1989.

Dr. Fu graduated with a law degree in international relations from Remnant University in Beijing in 1993 and was a house church leader in Beijing until he and his wife were imprisoned in 1996. In 1997, he was exiled to the United States with his family, and, in 2002, founded ChinaAid to promote religious freedom and the rule of law in China.

Dr. Fu regularly briefs policymakers on religious freedom and, in 2016, hosted the first-ever Asia-Pacific Regional Freedom Forum in Taiwan. He is a life member of the Council on Foreign Relations and editor-in-chief of the journal Chinese Law and Religion Monitor, and holds a doctorate in the field of religious freedom from St. John's College at the University of Durham in the United Kingdom.

Then, we will hear from Dr. Thomas Farr, who is the President of the Religious Freedom Institute. Dr. Farr served for 28 years in the United States Army and the U.S. Foreign Service. In 1999, he became the first Director of the State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom.

Dr. Farr is a Senior Fellow at the Institute for Studies of Religion at Baylor University; serves as consultant to the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace, and teaches regularly at the U.S. Foreign Service Institute. Prior to these positions, he has directed the Witherspoon Institute's International Religious Freedom Task Force; was a member of the Chicago World Affairs Council's Task Force on Religion and U.S. Foreign Policy; taught at the National Defense University, and served on the Secretary of State's IRF Working Group. Most recently, Dr. Farr served as an associate professor of the practice of religion and world affairs at Georgetown University, where he directed the Religious Freedom Project at Georgetown's Berkely Center.

He serves on boards of multiple organizations that seek to promote religious freedom. He has published multiple essays and major works on religious freedom. He holds a doctorate in history from the University of North Carolina, and he is also the author of World of Faith and Freedom, among other great writings that he has done.

Dr. Fu, I yield.

STATEMENT OF BOB FU, PH.D., FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT, CHINAAID

Mr. FU. Thank you, Chairman Smith, for your leadership, and thank you, Congressman Suozzi.

I am also very honored to be on the same panel with the chairman, Dr. Dorjee, and Dr. Tom Farr.

The religious freedom in China really has reached to the worst level that is not seen since the beginning of the Cultural Revolution by Chairman Mao in the 1960s. I will only maybe give you like five different aspects or symbols of those points to show why it has become the worst since the Cultural Revolution.

Especially after the 19th Party Congress, the Communist Party has taken some unprecedented measures in cracking down on all independent faith groups. So, it is not only just the targeting of Christians or Catholics. As Chairman Dorjee just mentioned, it has been targeting any groups that show any independent spirit, such as, of course, the Tibetan Buddhists, the Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang, as the chairman and Congressman Suozzi just mentioned, and Falun Gong, of course, and many other groups.

So, because of the time limitation, I am asked to pay particular attention on the persecution against the Christians. First, we have not seen a level of persecution really since the end of the call for

revolution on the number of religious institutions and churches that have been targeted or shut down. Since February the 1st, when the newly-enacted Regulations on Religious Affairs was taken into effect, in Henan Province alone, according to our documentation, the crosses of the churches, between 4,000 to 6,000 of churches, the crosses were being forcibly demolished or burned, as you can see from these latest photos. And a number of house churches, I mean the independent, unregistered house churches—I mean, we are talking thousands—were being shut down.

Last week, we just received in one particular province, in one particular county within the Hunan Province, which is called kind of the "Jerusalem of China," with perhaps the largest number of Christians populated in that province, at least an estimated number of Christians in that province alone is over 10 million members. So, in one county called Jiahe County, among the 140—these are government-sanctioned, supposedly registered and protected churches—90 of them were already shut down. And a number, of course, of the crosses were being demolished and burned, and the laborers were even being detained for simply showing up in defense of the crosses.

Ironically, many of those churches, even the government-sanctioned churches, when the cross was allowed to continue to exist inside the church, I mean on the church wall, they were forced to put the portrait of Chairman Mao and Chairman Xi Jinping on both sides of the cross.

In the beginning of every worship service, the choir of the church has to sing a few Communist revolutionary songs praising the Communist Party before they can sing their worship-of-God songs.

And the number of Chinese clergymen, I mean, these are even previously registered, approved by the government-sanctioned body. You know, the Three-Self Patriotic Movement and the Chinese Christian Council are forced to go through another round of examination, and the first criterion they have to pass as legitimate clergymen is whether they can publicly pledge they will follow the Party's words and the Party's Path.

[Mr. Fu speaks Chinese briefly.]

"Listen to the Party's words first and follow the path of the Communist Party first." And these slogans are being hanged around the church. I mean even many Catholic churches, on the wall, I mean on the door, on the entrance door, there is a slogan that says, "Listen to the words of the Party; follow the path of the Party."

So, how can you have a real independent faith? I mean, the believers, as a Christian believer, we are taught to obey the command of the Lord, to listen to the word of the Lord. And, essentially, the Communist Party wants to impose them self as the Lord over the church. I think that tells maybe one of the essential reasons why these churches are being targeted.

The second symptom we can see why that this is the worst time of our religious freedom in China is, for the first time since the Cultural Revolution, the Communist Party is now implementing a policy, I mean a mandate for Chinese citizens of the faithful, religious citizens, to sign a form to renounce their faith. So, we have produced the documentation showing the villager chief, the Communist Party chief, door to door forced the believers to sign a pre-

pared form claiming that, oh, this believer were misled by an evangelist into believing Christianity. And now, after a few weeks of self-examination and the studies, political studies, they realized they made a mistake. They pled they will never believe Christianity anymore. So, this has not happened in the past.

The No. 3 symptoms to showing the unprecedented persecution is burning Bibles. The last time, under the Communist Party rule, when a Bible-burning ceremony happened was 1967 when Chairman Mao's wife, Madam Jiang Qing, organized a 1-minute Bible-burning ceremony in the Square of Shanghai. This is the first we have seen government officials went into the church, I mean confiscated all their Bibles and hymn books and Christian materials and piled them on the street, and started a Bible-burning ceremony. So, this is also unprecedented.

And the No. 4 signature of this unprecedented persecution shows that, not only the Communist Party is doing this persecution in its own borders, now we have evidence showing that the kind of persecution and the methodology our Communist Party is using in China is being exported to the neighboring country and regions.

Last week, we have received a documented report showing to the Kachin autonomous region the Communist Party officials, at least three or four of them were sent them in the Kachin minority areas inside the Burma border and directed a campaign there almost word-by-word, including the forced demolition of crosses from the rooftop of the church building in the Kachin, in the Burma area, including arrests and so-called sinicization like, you know, arrest those church pastors for interrogation.

And they also disbanded 23 Christian schools that were started by Pastor John Cao, with whom I had been befriended for over 25 years. And this year, he was sentenced to 7 years imprisonment as a Chinese-American pastor. And he is still suffering imprisonment, as we are talking now.

So, all the Chinese house church Christians who are volunteering selflessly as the missionaries teaching Chinese and education in these schools were being rounded up—all. All of them were being imprisoned in the Kachin autonomous region. Then, last week, they were handed over to the Chinese authority, and at least eight of them are still being held in the Chinese prison, as we are talking.

So, these are the measures that really, taken personally, again, that has not been seen since the Cultural Revolution. And how to tackle this? You are asking me to provide some recommendations. So, I have listed a few recommendations at the end of my written testimony. I would just highlight a couple of them, and then, I will add a few.

First of all, I think I would recommend, besides the sanction put under the Global Magnitsky Act, I hope a Member of Congress should also really, and the U.S. Department of State and Treasury, should list more names of high-rank officials responsible for severe and systematic religious persecutions, as defined the USCIRF for sanctions. Because to sanction just one kind of middle, lower-rank, you know, one official is not enough. There are so many of those persecutors who are at large. So, we can work with the Member, with the Congress and the administration to produce more lists.

And secondly, I urge Congress, through the CECC or other mechanisms, to target, to kind of create a watchlist, a religious persecutors watchlist, because we have a conscience, a Prisoner of Conscience list at both the CECC and the USCIRF Web site, but we also need to create a persecutors, to really let them know they are being watched. Let them know their family members, their children, their wife, and their other colleagues should be ashamed of those officials taking the persecution.

And I also want to add a few recommendations. One of the way that we have seen the Chinese Communist Party have adopted really very efficiently in a sense, that targeting the religious minorities is through their internet control, through their censorship of the internet and smartphones, as you said. Because that is what they did when they are implementing this Uyghur, this 1 million group of Uyghur Muslims. I mean, the first thing when they are targeted is to check their smartphone or cut off their kind of internet access.

I think even as the former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton even said, the kind of highway for internet freedom, for religious freedom, is to promote internet freedom. So, unfortunately, the BBG, under the current policy, only spent less than 1 percent of its budget on the internet circumvention. If we just appropriate 10 percent, I think it will scare, I mean not only scare, but bring the true freedom for the religious practice. I think that will be very effective. I would urge Congress to take concrete measures to urge the BBG or mandate the BBG to do more on the internet freedom.

And another thing I really want to urge Congress to do to help is those religious freedom advocates have paid a heavy price during the incarceration, especially during the kind of inhumane torture and interrogations. And we have found that in the Chinese academy of police, the police academy, they have a department specifically making studies on the kind of torture and interrogation techniques that they are using for mental torture to break the will.

We have seen many friends, the human rights lawyers, Christian leaders, such as Guo Xijin, who, by the way, disappeared again for over a year now without knowing where he is, and Attorney Wang Yu, Attorney Li Heping, Attorney Huang Qi, and the other Attorney Wang Quanzhang, who is still disappearing for almost 3 years. They had been subject for enormous torture under these kinds of techniques. So, I think this warrants Congress to have a targeted report to study and make recommendations on these departments.

Finally, I want to call Congress to also investigate those Chinese-American citizens—they are American citizens—that are being used as a tool, willingly or unwillingly, to spread propaganda, lies, deceptions. And we have evidence showing that they are buying radio stations on the border of U.S. and Mexico, for instance, on the side of the Mexico border, so that they can broadcast daily propaganda, deception, lies to the Chinese-populated areas along the California coast from Los Angeles to San Francisco. I think it warranted a particular investigation because these are people managed by the Chinese-American citizens here in the U.S., but they get their funding from the Chinese Communist Party propaganda fund.

So, these are some of the recommendations I would recommend that the committee to take a look.

Oh, by the way, I want to ask the chairman to grant me to submit, as part of the congressional record, the letter, the 426 Chinese house church leaders signed urging the Chinese government to stop the persecution, and they signed with their real name and their church affiliation in a most really bold and unprecedented way. So, I want to——

Mr. SMITH. But, by making it public, does that put a target on their back?

Mr. FU. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. Is there any——

Mr. FU. Pardon me, Chairman. Okay.

Mr. SMITH. By making it further public at a congressional hearing, does that a target on their back under Xi Jinping's repressive police?

Mr. FU. No, because they already made their names public. They want to make a statement. They are not afraid. It is time for them to speak up.

Mr. SMITH. Years ago, we received testimony and read it aloud, and that person was brutally retaliated against for doing so. Again, this is the regime that most Americans still don't have a sense is barbaric. It uses torture as a means pervasively against its own people and certainly against religious believers. But if you think it should go in, without objection, it will be made a part of the record.

Mr. FU. Yes.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Fu follows:]

Written Testimony by Dr. Bob Fu
Founder and President of ChinaAid

Hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs by the Subcommittee on Africa, Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations

Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2255

Date: Thursday, September 27, 2018

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Subject: China's War on Christianity and Other Religious Faiths

An overview of China's religious policy and religious persecution before and after the 19th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 2017

(Featuring Christianity and Christians)

I. The overall circumstances and characteristics of religious policy and religious persecution

1. Two prominent changes to the church-and-state relations

1). The change from "predominantly friends" to "either enemies or friends" and "both enemies and friends"

If 2016 marked the CCP's core principle for managing religious affairs changing from Jiang Zemin's "active guidance of religion and socialism to mutually adapt" to Xi Jinping's "persistently following the path of religious Sinicization,"—with the key word of religious policies changing from "socialism" to Sinicization—the new Regulations on Religious Affairs, promoted in 2017 by the State Council, are action plans to implement "religious Sinicization," and the statements about the management of religion iterated in the report of the CCP's 19th National Congress clearly defined the CCP's political views about religion in Xi's era. These statements are placed in the congressional report's two sections about "the United Front" and "national security." In the context of "solidifying and developing the Patriotic United Front" in the "United Front" section of the report, we see "comprehensively implementing CCP's basic principles about religious work, adhering to the Sinicization of religion in China and actively guiding religion to adapt to socialist society." In the context of "effectively defending national security" in the "national security" section of the report, we see "imperviously preventing and resolutely attacking all kinds of religious extremism." Since China often persecutes commonplace, peaceful religious activities as "religious extremism," this indicates that the CCP has taken the importance of religious issues from the level of being a target of the "United Front" to the level of "national security" after the 19th National Congress. This changes communities from being "predominantly friends," which originated in Deng Xiaoping's "Reform and Opening-up" era, to being "either enemies or friends" or "both enemies and friends."

2). The CCP controls religion: ideology matches practice

In Deng Xiaoping's era, the CCP's management of religion was nominally conducted through the State Administration of Religious Affairs, which is affiliated with the State Council, although it was known to all that religion was actually controlled by the CCP. According to the CCP's Central Committee's Plan for Deepening the CCP's and the State's Organizational Reform, released after the Two Sessions (i.e. the National People's Congress and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference) in 2018, the State Administration of Religious Affairs, which was previously affiliated with the State Council, merged into the United Front Work Department. The department in charge of religious affairs being separated from the government's State Council and its direct subordination to the CCP's United Front Work Department indicate that the atheistic CCP has abandoned its previous way of managing religion from behind the scenes and has taken the front stage to control religion directly and openly.

2. The establishment of the National Joint Meeting of Religious Groups

On October 10, 2016, a meeting was held at the State Administration for Religious Affairs to announce the establishment of the National Joint Meeting of Religious Groups, which was intended to discuss and communicate about issues related to relationships between religions and to create an interfaith dialogue model with Chinese characteristics.

On May 31, 2018, the 5th conference of the National Joint Meeting of Religious Groups was held to study the amendments of the Constitution of China. At the conference, attendees were urged to relentlessly promote the Sinicization of religion and see "sincerely upholding the CCP's leadership, voluntarily accepting the CCP's leadership, and unwaveringly defending the CCP's leadership" as a necessary requirement and automatic behavior to show their reverence for the Constitution. The conference also emphasized closely uniting the leaders of religious communities and religious adherents around the CCP's leadership team, centered around Xi Jinping.

On July 31, 2018, the 6th conference of the National Joint Meeting of Religious Groups was held, at which the proposition was raised that China's national flag should be hung at religious activity sites.

3. Characteristics of religious policy and persecution through the lens of the new Regulations on Religious Affairs

Released on August 26, 2017, the new Regulations on Religious Affairs took effect on February 1, 2018.

The biggest change to the new Regulations is the public entry of the political and ideological term "socialism": the insertion of "actively guiding religion to adapt to socialist society" into Article 4, Part 1, and the insertion of "practicing the socialist core values" into Article 4, Part 2.

In comparing the old Regulations, the Draft for Approval, and the new Regulations, one can see that China's government's organizational involvement in the management of religion expanded from governments and agencies of a certain level to including nearly all levels of

government's involvement to various extents and nearly all agencies' involvement within their scope of responsibility.

Articles about the internet were added to the new Regulations for the first time. According to the new Regulations, online religious information services will be subject to two types of control of a different nature: on one hand, regular, industry-related management and coordination will be performed by the State Administration of Religious Affairs; on the other hand, more detailed and complicated approval/disapproval, administrative penalties, and criminal charges from law enforcement agencies will be implemented collaboratively by the CCP's Internet Security and Information Leadership Group Office (also known as National Internet Information Office) and state organs in charge of publication and electronic communications.

The scope of "outlawing and cracking down" has expanded from "proclaiming religious extremism" to "proclaiming, supporting and funding religious extremism."

To authorized religion, political favors are offered and the administrative control over personnel, money, and properties is used to tame it completely and turn it into the government's instrument.

Articles regarding administrative penalty in the new Regulations will be used as grounds to justify punishment for unauthorized religion, which will mostly be financial punishment, including confiscation of money, and fines. Criminal law articles regarding religion are nearly all customized for unauthorized religion.

All in all, as far as the main content of the new Regulations goes, all religion, whether authorized or unauthorized, will be given certain labels by the Chinese government. For Islam, they are separatism, radicalism, or terrorism. For Tibetan Buddhism, it is separatism. For Christianity and Catholicism, it is infiltration. For Buddhism and Daoism, it is commercialization. Both authorized and unauthorized religious entities will face new dilemmas, though in different forms, but the prospects may be the same. The CCP intends to gain complete control over authorized religion and tame it while disuniting and dismantling unauthorized religion to gain control over it, or attacking and destroying it if it cannot be controlled.

1) Strictest controls ever regarding the registration of religious activity sites

Solely addressing religious activity sites, chapter 4 of the new Regulations on Religious Affairs is mainly concerned with government-sponsored (authorized) religions' "temples, churches, and other designated religious activity sites," and also mentions non-government-sponsored (unauthorized) religion.

A. Mainly concerned with government-sponsored (authorized) religions' "temples, churches and other fixed locations for religious activities"

The new Regulations prescribe the requirements for setting up religious activity sites.

To set up religious activity sites, religious groups are to submit an application to the religious affairs department of the county-level people's government. The establishment of temples and

churches must be reviewed and approved by the religious affairs department of the provincial, autonomous region, or directly-governed municipality people's government.

After religious activity sites have been approved for preparations and completed construction, they shall apply for registration with the religious affairs department of the county-level people's government for that area and receive a "Religious Activity Site Registration Certificate." Religious activity sites, meeting the requirements for legality, may register as legal with the civil affairs departments upon the after obtaining the consent of a local religious group and reporting to the religious affairs department of a county-level People's Government for review.

Religious activity sites will accept the guidance, supervision, and inspection of relevant departments of the local people's government regarding the management of personnel, finances, assets, accounting, security, fire protection, protection of relics, health and disease prevention, and so forth.

Religious affairs departments shall conduct oversight and inspections of religious activity sites' compliance with laws, regulations, and rules; the establishment and implementation of site management systems; the modification of registration matters, etc.

Reconstruction or construction of new buildings in religious activity sites shall be done after approval by the religious affairs department of a local people's government at the county level or above, and which will then handle plans, construction, and other formalities.

B. Management and control of temporary religious activity sites: interpretation of the latest "Management Methods for the Review and Approval of Temporary Religious Activity Sites"

Temporary religious activity sites are commonly perceived as targeting non-government-sponsored religion, particularly Christianity. In reality, the *Management Methods for the Review and Approval of Temporary Religious Activity Sites* intends to bring non-government-sponsored religion, especially Christian house churches, into the Three-Self Church system.

According to Article 35 of the new *Regulations on Religious Affairs*, "Where religious citizens need to regularly conduct collective religious activities, but don't possess the conditions for applying to set up religious activity sites, a representative of the religious citizens is to submit an application to the religious affairs department of the county-level people's government, and after the religious affairs department for the county-level people's government solicits the opinions of local religious groups and township-level people's governments, it may designate a temporary activity site for them." On Feb. 22, 2018, the State Administration for Religious Affairs issued the *Management Methods for the Review and Approval of Temporary Religious Activity Sites*, laying out specific regulations on the implementation agency, application conditions, paperwork required, application procedure, timeline for processing applications, the management of temporary religious activity sites, and so forth.

According to Article 5, a place applying for becoming a temporary religious activity site shall meet the following conditions:(1) There are a certain number of religious citizens that need to participate in collective religious activities on a regular basis;(2) There is no place for religious activities or temporary place for activities of the same religion in the surrounding area; (3) There

are religious citizen representatives in compliance with Article 4 of these Measures;(4) There is a legal house that satisfies the safety requirements and is suitable for carrying out collective religious activities;(5) It does not hinder the normal production, study, and life among other surrounding entities, schools, and residents. The "certain number" in clause 1 shall be decided by the religious affairs department of the provincial, autonomous region, or directly-governed municipality People's Governments.

Article 6 requires applicants to fill out the Application Form for Temporary Religious Activity Sites (with the *Temporary Religious Site Application Form* attached) and also to submit the following paperwork: 1) Religious citizen representative's ID and household registration certificate or residential permit; 2) A copy of the ID, residential address, and signature of religious citizens participating in collective religious activities; 3) Paperwork verifying property ownership or utilization rights for the designated temporary religious activity site, and paperwork verifying that the location satisfies the safety requirements; 4) A written statement signed by all believing citizen representatives to promise that activities at the temporary sites will comply with laws, regulations, and rules, will not hinder the normal production, study, and life among other surrounding entities, schools, and residents, and will accept management from the district's and county people's government's religious affairs departments, as well as the township government and Villagers'/Residents' Committee.

Article 6 also requires "believing citizen representatives to regularly update the township government on their activities and financial management."

Article 13 states that "religious groups are obligated to supervise the activities at the religious activity sites, and activities at temporary activity sites are subject to the direction of religious groups."

2) Controlling the selection and training methods of religious clergy

Chapter 5 of the new Regulations on Religious Affairs is about religious clergy. Article 36 states, "Upon affirmation by a religious group and reporting to the religious affairs department of a people's government at the county level or above to be filed for the record, religious professionals may engage in professional religious activities ... Those who have not obtained or have lost religious professional credentials, must not engage in activity as religious professionals."

Article 41 in Chapter VI says, "Non-religious groups, non-religious schools, non-religious activity sites, or non-designated temporary activity sites must not hold religious activities, must not accept religious donations. Non-religious groups, non-religious schools, and non-religious activity sites must not carry out religious training and must not organize citizens leaving the country to participate in religious training, meetings, activities and so forth."

On June 11, 2018, citing Article 36, the Chang'an District Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau in Shijiahzhuang, Hebei, sent a letter to the Shijiazhuang parish and the local Catholic Patriotic Commission to propose removing Priest Sun Linghui from his position on the grounds that, as the chief priest of Tangu Catholic Church in Shijiazhuang's Chang'an district, Sun took believers on a pilgrimage across the provincial border and went to Shanxi province.

4. The CCP's Central Committee's No.1 Document mentions "religion" for the first time.

On Feb. 4, 2018, the CCP's Central Committee's No. 1 Document mentions "intensifying the attack on illegal religious activities and the infiltration of overseas forces in rural areas and preventing the utilization of religion to interfere with public affairs in rural areas."

II. Policy about Christianity and persecution methods

1. Align Christianity with the CCP's ideology, assimilate and alienate Christianity in the name of "Sinicization"

1) Develop and launch "The Five-Year Plan about the Sinicization of Christianity"

On July 13, 2017, the TSPM and CCC held a seminary on "The Five-Year Plan about the Sinicization of Christianity" and how to promote Sinicization.

On March 27-28, 2018, the TSPM and CCC held a meeting in Nanjing, Jiangsu, to launch the "Plan Outline of the Five-Year Plan (2018-2022) on Promoting the Sinicization of Christianity" and the preaching team for theological construction. The "Plan Outline" is composed of four parts, i.e. Overview, Main Tasks, Plan for the Crucial Work, and Organization and Implementation, and proposes "cultivating and implementing the socialist core values; championing the Sinicization of Christianity." The "Plan Outline" made it clear that the "Sinicization of Christianity" means to change "Christianity in China" into "Chinese Christianity," emphasizing that "the heart and soul of Christianity's Sinicization is to Sinicize the Christian theology," and even proposing to "re-translate the Bible or re-write biblical commentaries." The "Plan Outline" also advocates for "incorporating the Chinese elements into church worship services, hymns and songs, clergy attire, and the architectural style of church buildings." This includes "editing and publishing worship songs with Chinese characteristics and promoting the Sinicization of worship music", "using uniquely Chinese art forms, such as Chinese painting, calligraphy, inscription, and paper-cutting to express the Christian faith", and "encouraging churches to blend in style with Chinese architecture or local architectural style", etc. The "Plan Outline" was submitted by the chairman and president of the TSPM and CCC to the national TSPM and CCC's Standing Committee meeting for consideration. The national religious affairs bureau will supervise it, the national TSPM and CCC will organize and implement it, and every province, autonomous region, and municipality's TSPM and CCC, seminaries, and churches will cooperate with it.

2). Emphasizing religious schools' adherence to the path of operating schools with Chinese characteristics

In early December 2017, the State Administration of Religious Affairs held a seminar in Nanjing, Jiangsu, with religious schools and institutes to make action plans for the operation of religious schools and institutes. At this meeting, agencies in charge of religious, work as well as religious schools and institutes of all levels, were required to carefully study and implement the key messages of the CCP's 19th National Congress, implement Xi Jinping's speech in religious work, implement in detail the central government's policies and action plans for religious work, implement the new Regulations on Religious Affairs, adhere to the path of operating schools with Chinese characteristics, and take measures to improve the skills of managing religious schools and institutes in the "new era."

The meeting also emphasized "adhering to the Sinicization of religion, cultivating a team of faculty members in religious schools who are politically reliable, academically established, morally acclaimed, and can step up to play a role in critical times; strengthening the construction of textbooks, faculty and funding, and curriculum to foster intellects and talents who can actively guide religion to adapt to socialism."

3) Christian logos and symbols removed across the nation; campaigns of "inserting socialist core values and knowledge of law into classrooms" conducted to promote the transformation of "belief in religion" into "belief in the CCP"

Activities include: demolishing the cross and replacing it with the national flag, campaigning to bring core socialist values into churches, hanging posters about core socialist values and Xi Jinping's portrait, setting up the CCP organization in churches and having the congregation sing revolutionary songs, and putting up the sign at the church entrance that says "Obey the Party, Follow the Party."

In 2017, Three-Self Churches in Anhui, Shandong, and Zhejiang launched activities to bring core socialist values and knowledge of law into classrooms. In late March 2017, a church in Gaozuo Town, Suining, Jiangsu, started the movement of "bringing newspapers into churches," offering newspaper racks to the five churches in the administrative region for the display of *Suining Today* (weekend edition) and other CCP newspapers and publications to propagandize the CCP's policies and core socialist values. In November 2017, in the name of "assisting religion," the local government in Yugan County, Shangrao, Jiangxi province, forced Christians to remove the Christian folk artwork hanging on the walls of their homes and replace them with Xi Jinping's portraits, thereby promoting the transformation of "belief in religion" into "belief in the CCP."

Since February 2018, many prefectures and townships in Henan province received a notice banning Chinese New Year door banners with Christian messages. According to believers from Luogang Prefecture, Ninling County, Shangqiu, Henan province, the posters and banners proclaiming Christian messages on their doors were removed or painted over with black paint by village officials.

On the wall of the annex building of Jesus Church in Shanghai's Pudong District, the content of "core socialist values" was written.

On March 31, the Pingdingshan's Lushan County Religious Affairs Bureau's personnel gathered church evangelists to study the new Regulations on Religious Affairs, demanding all churches in the county to hang the national flag, and they established the "religion office" in every prefecture and township to manage religion, even down to the villages.

Since May 2018, portraits of Jesus have been forbidden in Jiangxi and Henan provinces, and even the word "Immanuel" on the walls of some Christians' homes was removed.

In mid-August 2018, priests in Cangzhou Parish questioned the authorities in an open letter about their practice of posting the CCP's rules and regulations in churches without consulting with the parish's bishops, priests, and church congregations, and the practice of setting up an "in-church instruction team" in churches.

At a church concert held on August 11 in Yueqing, Zhejiang, many revolutionary songs were performed.

4) House churches required to join Three-Self Churches

In July 2017, the religious affairs departments in Nanyang, Henan,asked more than 20,000 house church members registered with the government to join Three-Self Churches.

According to some believers, Tanghe is a pilot site in Henan province, and starting from February 1 of this year, the Tanghe County government has asked all house church members to register with the Three-Self Churches and disband all house churches.

2. Systematic investigation of Christian house churches to pave the way for outlawing house churches entirely

In some regions, door-by-door investigation and onsite visits from neighborhood to neighborhood and from village to village were conducted to screen privately set-up Christian meeting places.

2017

In May, the person responsible for the computerized management of Fenghuang Community in Langya District, Chuzhou, Anhui province, conducted a thorough investigation of the house church gathering places in the community and these churches' core members' activities, and registered in great detail all the information requested by the authorities.

In early June, by conducting a thorough investigation of the privately set-up Christian gathering places, the He County government in Anhui province signed a contract of responsibility, titled "Written Promises of the Person Responsible for Privately Set-up Christian Gathering Places," with the leaders of each church. These leaders had to fill out the "Survey on Privately Set-up Christian Gathering Places" and "Registration Form for Core Leaders of Privately Set-up Christian Gathering Places," agreeing to not receive evangelists from the outside world or host foreign believers and agreeing to keep churches' finances transparent.

Between July 24 and 26, Anhui's United Front Department and the provincial religious affairs bureau formed a "joint investigation team" to supervise province-administered cities and directly-administered counties, including the organization and development of trainings on policies, laws, and regulations centered around "separating education and religion"; making sure trainings have covered all religious clergy and sites for religious activities; investigating and gathering information about Christian gathering places; and outlawing gathering places that fail to meet the government's requirements.

On August 1, the Nanjing Municipal Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau held an all-city special meeting for the directors of the bureau to orchestrate the reform of religious work, demanding effective research and investigation of religious issues. Topics pertaining to Christianity discussed at the meeting include: making full use of the Nanjing Municipal Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau's Coordination Team for Privately Set-Up Christian Meeting Places, conducting featured research on Christianity in the rural areas, targeting management on privately set-up Christian meeting places in the rural areas according to the law, increasing the outlawing of and cracking down on illegal Christian activities, preventing the erosion caused by heresy and cults

[*Editor's note: The Chinese government uses the term "cults" more broadly than most Western countries. While officially only supposed to apply to fringe religious organizations, everyone from Christians to Falun Gong members--who are often murdered in prison for their faith--and actual cult members have been arrested cult charges*], as well as the infiltration of overseas forces into Christianity, and strictly preventing the emergence of privately set-up Christian gathering places.

In early September, Xuzhou and some other cities in Jiangsu province started to investigate house churches, collecting data on every single Christian house church and registering information about their core leaders. According to the principle of management by jurisdiction, investigation was conducted on every house church by looking into its gathering place, leader, evangelists (core members), number of attendees, sources of funding, interactions with the outside world [*Editor's note: China views religious institutions' interactions with non-Chinese people/organizations as extremely suspect, since it incorrectly presumes foreign powers are using religion to infiltrate China and overthrow the government. This has led to the unlawful persecution of Christians across the country and more than 1 million ethnic minority Muslims in Xinjiang*], and future development. Data was collected and submitted in a timely manner. The report also indicated that, based on the data-collecting results, government agents will follow the principle of "combining the methods of channeling and blocking, differentiating, categorizing and incorporating [churches] into management" to handle privately set-up Christian gathering places according to their specific conditions and will "register a batch, combine a batch, transition a batch, and outlaw a batch" to manage existing privately set-up Christian gathering places.

On September 9, the Information Registration Form for Core Leaders of Christian House Churches, used by Yitang Town in Xuzhou's jurisdiction, included name, birth date, church's name, job title, ID number, attitude towards the government, and "Information on main family members" which includes name, age, occupation, religion, and residence. In the "description" section of the form, it asks whether the church is part of an illegal organization, has a criminal record, and whether or not it is willing to leave its previous affiliated organization and join the Three-Self Church. According to some local Christians, house church leaders from other towns were also required to fill out this form.

In early December, the United Front Department of Tianjin University of Finance and Economics's Communist Party Commission issued a notice titled "Regarding the Designated Research on Christianity in Tianjin University of Finance and Economics," demanding all grassroots Communist Party Commission departments and the directly affiliated Party Secretary to fully carry out the guidelines given at the CCP's 19th National Congress; diligently implement the guidelines given by Xi Jinping in his speech at the National Conference on Religious Work; and conduct data-collection and an investigation about Christianity on the school's campus according to the "CCP State Council's Opinion Regarding Reinforcing and Improving Religious Work Under the New Circumstances", "The Opinion of the Central Government's United Front Department and the State Administration of Religious Affairs about Reinforcing the Work in Religion Under the New Circumstances," and the requirements of the Tianjin government and the Tianjin Education Commission. The scope of the required investigation includes whether students from Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan and foreign students and teachers are Christians or not; the number of believers as well as their names; whether or not evangelism occurs on the school campus and in what way it is conducted; and whether there are Christian gathering places, their locations, and the number of attendees.This notice also required grassroots Communist Party Commission departments to submit their investigation results to the Party Commission's United Front Department before Dec. 13.

2018

The religious affairs departments in Shandong, Henan, Beijing, etc., screened and investigated religious activities through schools and grassroots governments, and required citizens to fill out "The Religious Belief Information Form."

In March, the government in Hultao, Liaoning, launched a campaign called "Comprehensively Purifying the Whole City's Social and Cultural Environment in the Religious Domain and Resisting the Harmful Cultural Infiltration by Overseas Forces," during which 64 copying and printing businesses, 15 printing factories, 41 bookstores, 3 magazine and newspaper booths, 7 used books stands, and 4 churches were inspected.

On March 16, Beijing's Chaoyang District Ethnic and Religious Work Leadership Office issued a notice, labeling house churches as "privately set-up Christian gathering places" and requiring each street to screen and investigate Christian house churches in their jurisdiction, and write up reports to pave the way for "special task management."

On April 4, the Residential Committee of Pingyang Neighborhood in Anyang, Henan required people with religious beliefs to register with the Residential Committee. A local Christian believed that this requirement was meant to target Christianity because the government banned house church gatherings but put no restrictions on other religions.

On May 22, house church leaders in China's Henan and Anhui provinces consecutively received the "Application Form for Registered Religious Activity Sites," which required the person registering the church to check "V" on items that apply to the church's condition. Applicants were required to fill out this form in three copies and submit them to the management agency to be kept by the provincial, municipal, and county-level government's religious affairs departments. Information required on this form includes name of the religious activity site, type of religion, address, name of the person in charge, number of clergymen, date of birth, secular occupations, and so forth.

The governments in Wenzhou and Shaoxing, Zhejiang, conducted various inspections on religious activity sites and believers' identification. Many schools in Wenzhou started to collect information on students' religious beliefs, which involves three steps: 1) identify the students whose parents are Catholics or Christians; 2) identify the parents' names, home addresses, and where they are employed; 3) visit these parents at their homes to ask them to give up their religious beliefs. Some [authorities] pressured the parents to give up their religious beliefs through using their employers. The Zhongxin Elementary School in Pingyang County, Wenzhou, screened students about their religious beliefs, asking parents to reveal their religious beliefs.

On July 4, the Haidian District Ethnic and Religious Affairs Office in Beijing issued "Notice about Investigating Christian Gathering Places," requiring every street affairs office and township government to conduct "special task management work" on Christianity, launch a "thorough investigation," and establish a mobile work station and management system with the help of the public security bureaus, police stations, and national security protection departments. The Investigation Form about Christian Gathering Places requested information about the names of the gathering places, their addresses, information about the site, residence, landlord's name, contact information, as well information about the church's pastors, evangelists, and members. In the column of church members' information, government agents conducting the research must fill in the age range of the members, including "over 60 years old", "40-60 years of age,"

and "20-40 years of age," and provide the ratio of local residents to non-local residents. The form also asks whether this church is a religious activity site registered according to the law, whether it is willing to accept the government's and the Three-Self Church's management, whether it is not willing to accept either the Three-Self Church's management or the government's management, or whether it is not willing to accept the management of both the government or the Three-Self Church.

On June 14, a screening/investigation form about religious belief used in China's northeast region listed "reformed churches" as a "cult and heresy."

3. A new wave of forced demolitions of churches and crosses following those in Zhejiang province

2017

During July and August, the government departments of many places in Jiangxi province ordered the forced demolition of church crosses and walls, and there was enough evidence that this campaign occurred across the province.

On Sept. 20, the cross of Sheng'en Church (a church registered with the government) in Henan province's Tanghe County was demolished by the local government.

2018

Since February 1, the local governments across Henan province have been aggressively asking churches to demolish their crosses, including government-sponsored Three-Self Churches. A church leader from Yucheng County, Shangqiu, who asked to be an anonymous source of information, revealed that the government in Mangzhongqiao Prefecture, Yucheng County, summoned the leaders of seven churches for a meeting on February 8, stating that their superiors ordered that all churches' crosses should be removed. By May 2018, nearly all the churches' crosses in Ningling County, Henan, had been removed. On August 21, the cross of Tian'en Church in Qibing district, Hebi city, Henan province, was demolished by force. The cross of a Christian church in Luoyang, Henan, was removed and replaced with the national flag.

4. The installation of surveillance cameras at religious activity sites expanded to the whole nation

In early 2017, the Zhejiang provincial government's religious affairs departments sent a notice to all county-level departments in charge of managing religion, requesting that surveillance cameras be installed in Catholic churches, Protestant churches and other sites for religious activities. In 2017, nearly all the government-sponsored churches in Zhejiang province had surveillance cameras installed. In 2018, the governments in Beijing and Henan province also requested local churches to install surveillance cameras.

5. Henan government's "Nine Prohibitions" for Christians

In March 2018, the TSPM of Henan province's Xichuan County imposed 9 prohibitions on Christians, including: prohibiting minors under 18 years of age from entering church; prohibiting the CCP members from entering church unless it's required by work; prohibiting churches from

hosting preachers from [other countries] without approval by the TSPM and CCC; prohibiting conducting religious activities at religious activity sites; prohibiting conducting activities at unapproved religious activity sites; prohibiting illegally spreading religious content and pictures on the internet; prohibiting displaying signs with religious messages on the street or roadside; and prohibiting hosting trainings without obtaining the government's approval.

6. Other policies and measures

1) The Christian faith contained among citizens

Prohibitions against citizens from being Christians expanded from the CCP members and civil servants, such as soldiers, to non-CCP members and ordinary citizens, and from government institutions to non-government agencies. In August 2018, it circulated on the internet that governments in Anyang, Henan, and Ma'anshan, Anhui, forced Christians to sign a written promise to abandon their religious beliefs.

2) Limiting and resisting the spread of Christianity

Since the CCP's 19th National Congress in 2017, information about Christianity on China's major websites has all been removed, including videos and audio recordings, books, and merchandize carrying Christian messages.

In late March 2018, China's major online stores received the notice that starting from March 30, 2018, Taobao, Jingdong, and WeChat were to stop selling the Bible.

On June 15, 2018, the Good News Theaters and Gospel video websites were notified by cultural affairs departments that they would be fined and shut down.

3) Nationwide intensifying suppression of Christmas activities in 2017

Anhui: According to a notice published on December 21 by the Anqing Municipal Public Security Bureau in Anhui province, "All special and public places are not allowed to celebrate Christmas. Even creating a Christmas atmosphere—such as putting up Christmas trees, Santa Claus, wearing Christmas hats, and all other items related to Christmas—is severely restricted, and all Christmas-related activities are required to be cancelled." Anhui province's Youth League posted on its WeChat page that Christmas should be viewed as a "holiday of humiliation" by the Chinese people, because of the Western powers' historic invasion of China [*Editor's note: This refers to China's unfounded fear that Western countries are trying to infiltrate the country via religion*].

Gansu: The city of Zhangye's municipal government, administrative management office of industry and commerce, and joint law enforcement squad prohibited the display of Christmas trees in stores and shopping malls. Some stores had to put away their Christmas trees in their warehouses.

Shanghai: Elements related to Christmas were forbidden in TV shows and commercials.

Inner Mongolia: On December 22, the Education Department of Jining No. 1 Middle School issued a notice to forbid all activities related to Christmas.Christmas presents were to be confiscated upon discovery and points subsequently deducted from the character evaluation scores of the class and individual students. Appreciation of Chairman Mao Zedong's poetry was incorporated into the so-called "morality cultivation class."

Hunan: On December 11, the CCP's Hengyang Municipal Disciplinary Commission issued a warning to "prohibit CCP members and government officials from attending Christmas Eve and Christmas celebrations and parties" or having dinner parties or social gatherings on Christmas Eve and threatened "consequences" for those violating the rule. Per a notice by the Hengyang Municipal Public Security Bureau, whoever goes through the city center during Christmas time must carry an ID card. It also said that public security departments will increase manpower to inspect and patrol, and those who sell or shoot up manmade snowflakes will be subjected to heavy fines.

Liaoning: On December 11, the Youth League Committee of Liaoning province's Shenyang University of Pharmaceutical Medicine issued a "Notice Regarding Forbidding Student Organizations Across Campus from Hosting Activities Related to Christmas Eve, Christmas, and Other Western Religious Holidays," prohibiting student organizations across campus from hosting Christmas Eve or Christmas celebrations and activities.

4) House church pastors and Bible teachers disqualified from evangelistic activities

The ethnic and religious affairs office of Xining's Chengbei District ruled that the clergy running Huoquan Christian Church had not been registered through legal procedures, and the church's evangelists were not government-approved or state-ordained. As a result, Li Mutian, the pastor of the church, as well as other clergy members, were suspended from presiding over corporate religious activities.

5) House churches harassed, interrupted and shut down

Since February 2018, house churches in China have faced a new circumstance. Churches in Beijing, Shanghai, Sichuan, Guangdong, and Henan have experienced pressures from various sources, church meetings have been randomly interrupted, and believers' normal religious practices were violated and banned, which caused increasingly escalated social conflicts. On February 1, 2018, when the new Regulations on Religious Affairs took effect, local governments across Henan province began to outlaw house churches extensively and impose restrictions on Three-Self Churches, which includes installing surveillance cameras at church entrances and inside churches. On March 8, house church believers in Henan's Zhumadian, Zhoukou, and Sheqi, Nanyang, received notices consecutively from the local government officials, ordering them to stop their gatherings immediately.

House churches that refused to join the government-sponsored Three-Self Churches were harassed by the local authorities through forcing landlords to stop renting their properties to house churches, ordering believers to leave an area, or harassing and preventing believers from gathering in the name of inspecting fire control equipment.

The shutting down of house church gathering places was often conducted by multiple government departments collaboratively, which cited the reasons of "fire protection equipment

not meeting safety standards" or "neighbors' complaints about noise." Other reasons for suspending a gathering or shutting it down permanently included "the church has not registered with the government" and "it is illegal to meet in unapproved sites for religious activities."

In May, some house churches in Fujian, Jiangxi, and Guizhou received a notice from the government, ordering them to stop gathering. Since February 2018, many house churches' gathering locations in the prefectures and townships of Jinxian County, Jiangxi, were shut down, with government officials threatening believers with police custody should they continue to meet.

According to reports by believers from Luogang Prefecture in Henan province, since February 2018, the township government has banned minors under 18 years of age from attending church, gatherings of more than five people, and gatherings without a certificate issued by the government. The township government also hired people to guard the entrance of churches to prevent believers from meeting. Since February 2018, at least 100 house churches in Ningling County, Henan, were banned from gathering.

On August 1, 2018, 48 Beijing-based churches published "A joint declaration by house churches in Beijing" to proclaim their "willingness to pay any price for their Christian faith." The 48 churches are: Chengjiu Church, Shengshan Church, Anhua Church, Zaidao Church, Zion Church, Xiangquan Church, Wanmin Church, Zhongyang Church, Yanling Church, Yinuo Church, Xinshu Church, Hejia Church, Enzai Church, Guomen Church, Chenxing Church, Desheng Church, Zhongdao Church, Shangxing Church, Sheng'en Church, Hongmin Church, Putaoyuan Church, Xiluoya Church, Zonglushu Church, Shengxie'ai Church, Aizhizhou Church, Boliheng Church, Haoshoucheng Church, Aijiabei Church, Jiecaizhong Church, Xiangbaishu Church, Guoshulin Church, Ganlanshu Church, Hemujia Church, Xi'anshan Church, Shengminghe Church, Jialili Gospel Church, Dadisongge Church, Changping Baihe Church, Mingguang Zion Church, Shamojianghe Church, Shunyi Huoshui Church, Yage Gospel Church, Huaxia Christian Church, Chinese Blind People's Gospel Church, Migrant Workers' Fuxing Church, Shangshan Enlin Church, Yonglezhijia Church, and Beijing City Fuxing Church, all located in Beijing.

6) Charges not given or fabricated to arrest and try church leaders and lay believers

Criminal charges, like "deliberately divulging state secrets", "illegal business operations", "gathering a crowd to disturb social order", "organizing and utilizing cult organizations and superstition to undermine law enforcement", the "suspected crime of organizing and funding illegal gatherings" ,and "fraud" are often applied on top of imposing a fine.

7) Church leaders forbidden to travel overseas to attend religious activities

Many house church leaders were denied the issuance of a residential permit, passport, or travel permit to Hong Kong and Macau because of [supposed] non-compliance with the government's requests.

8) Harassing and restricting overseas churches' ministry in mainland China

Christians coming from overseas for ministry were taken into police custody for engaging in religious activities and illegal gatherings, asked to write a confession, asked to go to the National Security Bureau to be interrogated, and ordered to leave China right away. From May 5-15, 2018, 21 Japanese people were taken into police custody in multiple provinces, including Chongqing, Hebei, Henan, and Guizhou, and all of them were deported to Japan on June 1.

9) Using social policies to discriminate against Christians

The 31st and 32nd Regiment of XPCC's 2nd Division threatened to suspend retirement pensions, low-income subsidies, and mortgage loans should Christians refuse to forfeit their faith. Christians are also denied subsidies for home purchases. The XPCC's Comprehensive Management Office also demanded Christians sign a guarantee to promise "not to participate in illegal religious activities" and threatened them with the stoppage of water and electricity should they refuse to sign.

Believers reported that in August 2018, the government in Xinyu, Jiangxi, made the regulation that "low-income people will lose their low-income subsidies should they attend Christian gatherings."

III. Conclusion

The new Regulations on Religious Affairs shows a substantial regression in the Chinese government's administrative policies regarding the management of religious affairs. The CCP's policies and principles for the management of religious affairs are returning to those evident in Mao's era. Different from Mao's era, in which the goal was to "eradicate religion" organizationally, or even corporeally, through "socialist reform," the current Sinicization in order to bring religion in line with the CCP's ideology aims to eradicate the mind and soul of religion. Driven by the so-called "defense of national security" agenda, Xi's administration intends to construct a "trinitarian" model of "orientation towards political decision, all-around administrative control, and suppression with harsh laws." This is a comprehensive control system that aligns religion with socialism and the CCP's ideology in the name of Sinicization via mobilizing all governmental and political departments as well as civil groups. More specifically, the Sinicization of Christianity has advanced from the construction of theological ideas to blatant plans for Sinicization--from mere theoretic construction to the release and implementation of various policy methods.

Appendix: some persecution cases

1) **Forced demolition of churches**

Henan, Jiangsu, Shandong, Shanxi, and Hebei province in 2017

Before and after the Chinese New Year, multiple churches in the suburbs of Zhengzhou, Henan, were forcibly demolished, including Dali Christian Church in Zhengzhou's High-Tech District, Zhangzhou-based Zhanghuqiao Church, and a church under construction in Shuangmiao Village, Shangqiu, Henan province.

The gathering place of a Christian house church in Xinwei Village, Suzhou, Jiangsu province, was forcibly demolished.

The walled fence of the "Century Church," a Jiaozhou-based Christian house church affiliate in Shandong province, were forcibly demolished.

The annex buildings of a more-than-a-century-old Catholic church in Wang Village, Changzhi, Shanxi province, were forcibly demolished.

After receiving a "Notice about Stopping the Illegal Practice of Appropriating Land Designated for Railroads" issued by the Railroad Bureau's station in Bazhou, a Bazhou Christian church in Hebei province was forcibly demolished.

The Catholic Church in Zhifang Village, Xi'an, Shaanxi province, was forcibly demolished.

2018

On Jan. 9, Linfen-based Golden Lampstand Church in Shanxi province was destroyed with dynamite.

On April 28, a Christian church in Lushan Town, Henan province, faced demolition.

By July 2018, 300 year-old Catholic churches in Shandong province, which possessed legal papers and were registered with government's religious affairs departments, were demolished in the name of "city planning": Jinan-based Liangwang Catholic Church, the Catholic Church in Qianwang Village, and the Jinan-based Shilihe Catholic Church.

2) Outlawing and shutting-down churches

2017

On March 23, Huoquan Church in Xining's Chengbei District was outlawed and shut down.

On March 29, two house churches in Shangzhi, Harbin, were outlawed and shut down.

In April, a house church in Buji, Shenzhen, Guangdong province, was outlawed and shut down.

On April 23, a house church in Shanggang Town, Jiangxi province, was outlawed and shut down.

In May, a house church in Song Village, Zhumadian, Henan province, was outlawed and shut down.

On May 21, a church in Yangzi, Chuzhou, Anhui province, was outlawed and shut down.

On May 23, a church in Xijian, Chuzhou, Anhui province, was outlawed and shut down.

On November 8, a church in Longguang Village, Hefei, Anhui province, was outlawed and shut down.

In early December, the gathering place of Xinnanli Church in Jiangmen, Guangdong province, was outlawed and shut down.

On December 8, two gathering places, respectively located in Changjiang East Road, Shangqiu, and Pingtai Town, Shangqiu, where about 200 Christian college students met to worship, were outlawed and shut down.

On December 19, Donghu Church in Xining's Chengxi District was outlawed and shut down.

Before Christmas, the Shuizhong County Religious Affairs Bureau in Liaoning province shut down a house church meeting place in Jingou Village, Shahe Town.

2018

Within one week in March, authorities in Yahegong District, Nanyang, Henan, shut down 31 church gathering places. From February to March, Nanyang shut down more than 100 house churches.

On March 12, Jiamei Church, based in Xinjiang's capital city, Ürümqi, was shut down.

In mid-April, religious affairs departments in Zoucheng, Shandong, launched a city-wide raid, shutting down at least five house church gathering places. On May 13, a Christian named Yan Hengping in Guizhou province's Dafang County was banned from attending church gatherings.

At least 15 churches' crosses were demolished in Henan province, which took the brunt of the persecution. 40 churches in Xinyu, Jiangxi, alone were shut down and had their crosses demolished. Nearly 50 churches in Beijing were driven out of or forced to relocate from their gathering places, and some were even outlawed.

Gansu province: Lanzhou-based Xinming Church was shut down on August 17. Lanzhou-based Huoshui Church was shut down on May 27. From March to May, at least four Lanzhou-based churches were outlawed, and up to five churches were shut down by the authorities.

On May 22, Zhengzhou-based Gusui Church was outlawed as an "illegal religious activity site."

Based on numbers provided by believers, from June to August 2018, religious persecution occurred in a dozen of provinces and directly-administered municipalities, including Henan, Anhui, Jiangsu, Fujian, Shanxi, Jiangxi, Gansu, Guangdong, Sichuan, Liaoning, Beijing, Shanghai, and Chongqing, victimizing some famous churches such as Zion Church in Beijing, Early Rain Covenant Church in Chengdu, Guangzhou's Bible Reformed Church, and Xiamen's Shangli Church and Maizhong Private School.

On August 23, the main campus of Zion Church, Beijing's biggest house church, and its six subsidiary locations were shut down due to being forced to relocate by the government.

Zhongxin Church in Siyang County, Suqian, Jiangsu province, released a prayer letter to the public on August 23, revealing that the church was facing forced demolition.

On August 24, a Christian gathering place in Room 1206 of the Xiandai Building in Nanjing's Qinhuai District was shut down. On the same day, a house church in Guangcheng District, Zhengzhou, Henan, was shut down.

3) Cases of arrest and sentencing

Pastor Cao "John" Sanqiang was sentenced to seven-years' imprisonment [*Editor's note: Pastor Cao is a legal resident of North Carolina whose wife and children are American citizens. He was arrested on a fabricated "organizing illegal border crossings" charge*].

In the Yunnan Religious Case, about 10 Christians were sentenced to prison terms, with the longest being 13 years.

Pastor Su Tianfu of the Guiyang-based Huoshi Church in Guizhou province was sentenced to one year in prison with two years' reprieve, and a six-month residential surveillance.

Chen Shixin, a house church pastor in Anhui province, was sentenced to three years in prison.

Cui Tai, Assistant Bishop of the Catholic Church's Xuanhua Parish in Zhangjiakou, Hebei, was secretly detained.

On March 26, 2018, Bishop Guo Xijin of Mindong Parish in Fujian province was taken into police custody, as well as Priest Xu, who was the secretary of the parish.

Recommendations:

1. Besides the current prisoners of conscience list, U.S. Congress and the Administration should set up a "Religious Persecutors Watch List" for sanction candidates.
2. Members of Congress should target a particular persecutor in corresponding to his or her adopted name of the POC.
3. The DOS and the Treasury Department should list more names of high rank officials responsible for severe and systematic religious persecution, as defined by the USCIRF, for sanctions.
4. The U.S. should consider incremental sanctions against those provinces or cities where the most serious persecution has been occurring.
5. U.S. businesses with ties in China should be encouraged to take measures to adopt policies for its social and ethical responsibilities of advancing religious freedom instead of enabling the persecutors.

Mr. SMITH. I would like to now yield to Dr. Tom Farr.

STATEMENT OF THOMAS FARR, PH.D., PRESIDENT, RELIGIOUS FREEDOM INSTITUTE

Mr. FARR. Chairman Smith, Mr. Suozzi, thank you for holding this hearing, for inviting me here, and for being here yourselves. It is an honor to be here to meet Dr. Dorjee for the first time and to be with my old friend Bob Fu, Bob makes me angry every time I listen to him. Not at him, but at what he is talking about.

The current assault on religion in China under President Xi Jinping is the most comprehensive assault on religion since the Cultural Revolution. Xi's policy intensifies a long-existing government strategy to undermine a major threat to the authority of the Communist State; namely, that religion is a source of authority and an object of fidelity greater than the state. This characteristic of religion has always been anathema to totalitarian and authoritarian despots and to majoritarian democracies. Most religions, by their nature, limit the power of the secular state, which is why our Founders put it as the first of the Bill of Rights.

President Xi's intensification of China's anti-religion policy includes a renewed effort to alter the fundamental nature of certain religions. One is Islam, as practiced by the Uyghurs in Xinjang Province. As we have heard today, the Chinese have recently targeted the Uyghurs for an almost genocide-like transformation and/or elimination. Another is Tibetan Buddhism, the object for decades of a brutal Chinese strategy of persecution. A third is Roman Catholicism whose distinctive teachings on human rights and religious freedom pose a particular obstacle to the Communist State and to the impoverished Marxist-Leninist understanding of human nature and human dignity.

Xi's policy presents a major challenge to American international religious freedom policy. Since Congress passed the International Religious Freedom Act 20 years ago, our policy has consisted primarily of episodic human rights dialogs, annual reports on, and rhetorical denunciations of, Beijing's periodic harsh crackdowns, and imposing mild and largely ineffective sanctions. None of this has had much impact on religious minorities or Chinese policy.

Mr. Chairman, I support the imposition of targeted sanctions on Chinese officials or entities that sell surveillance equipment, but I want to do more. Overall, existing U.S. religious freedom policy simply hasn't worked, and it is unlikely to work, in my view, in the face of this systematic, fierce crackdown on religion.

It is time to try a different approach that goes as close as possible to the root of the problem. Congress and the State Department should work together to develop an all-of-government U.S. diplomatic strategy, not only to show them, as the chairman says that we are serious with targeted sanctions, but to persuade Beijing of an empirically verifiable proposition; namely, that Chinese minority religions, including its Catholics, are not inclined to challenge the government's political power, but that, given the opportunity, they would further China's domestic interests in ways the government desperately needs, and that no entity other than religious communities can provide.

If the Chinese government viewed religious communities as useful elements of their society, and simply left them alone, those communities would very likely make substantial contributions to addressing domestic problems that are of great concern to Chairman Xi and the Politiburo. For example, the fragility of China's economic growth and its social harmony, China's moral decline and increase in corruption, the threat of violent religious extremism, and a huge and growing need to care for China's poor, its sick and desperate population, its orphans, its victims of natural disasters, the aged, and the dying.

A revised U.S. strategy emphasizing these themes would not be entirely new. As Director of the State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom, I participated in talks with the Chinese in which we made some of these arguments. They have been remade on occasion in recent years. But these arguments have been seen by the Chinese as mere assertions, talking points, made episodically by one office of the U.S. State Department, and largely ignored by other American officials. Equally important, they have not been accompanied by systemic, objective empirical evidence.

To have a chance to succeed, a "Chinese interest" strategy must be an element of virtually all official U.S. interactions with China at all levels, and it would need to be fact-based. You can't fool people about this stuff—nobody, the Chinese, the Indians, nobody. It needs to be fact-based, and it needs to be an element of virtually all U.S. interactions with China at all levels. And it should be conveyed within a bilateral permanent institution such as a U.S.-China Working Group on Religion that would remove the ad hoc nature of past efforts.

Such a U.S. strategy would not be expensive—important to say in Congress—although it would require new training of diplomats and the kind of diplomatic energy and will that does seem to be present under this Secretary of State and especially under Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom Sam Brownback. I do want to say that I think his predecessor, Ambassador David Saperstein, laid the groundwork for what I am talking about.

Finally, a word about Vatican diplomacy. I am concerned that the recent Sino-Vatican provisional agreement will not improve the lot of Catholics in China. Nor will it improve the status of religious freedom for non-Catholic religious communities. Rather, it runs the risk of harming religious freedom in China for everyone, as well as inadvertently encouraging China's policy of altering the fundamental nature of Catholic witness. In my humble opinion as a Catholic, and as a long-term advocate for religious freedom for everyone, the Vatican's charism is to support that Catholic witness in China, as Pope-Saint John Paul II did in Communist Poland, not to abet its manipulation by a ruthless Chinese Communist regime.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Farr follows:]

The Assault on Religion in China and What To Do About It

Testimony Before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations, September 27, 2018

Thomas F. Farr*

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Bass, and members of the sub-committee, thank you for holding this important hearing and inviting me to give my views on (1) the status of religious freedom in China, especially that of Catholics, (2) what Congress and American diplomacy can do that is not now being done, and (3) last week's Provisional Sino-Vatican agreement.

The Bottom Line

The current assault on religion in China under President Xi Jinping is the most comprehensive attempt to manipulate and control religious communities since the Cultural Revolution. Xi's policy should be seen as a particularly troubling aspect of the global crisis in religious freedom, one in which over three-quarters of the world's people live in nations where religion is highly, or very highly, restricted. China is one of those nations.

Within China, Xi's policy intensifies a decades-long government strategy of undermining a major threat to the authority of the communist state – namely, that religion is a source of authority, and an object of fidelity, that is greater than the state. This characteristic of religion has always been anathema to totalitarian and authoritarian despots, and to majoritarian democracies. Most religions, by their nature, limit the power of the secular state, which is a major reason why the American Founders put religious freedom at the beginning of our Bill of Rights.

President Xi's intensification of China's anti-religion policy includes a renewed effort to alter the fundamental nature of certain religions. One is Islam as practiced by the Uighurs in Xinjang Province, which the Chinese have recently targeted for almost genocide-like transformation or elimination. Another is Tibetan Buddhism, the object for decades of a brutal Chinese strategy of persecution. A third is Roman Catholicism, whose distinctive teachings on human rights and religious freedom pose a particular obstacle to the Chinese state, and to the impoverished Marxist-Leninist understanding of human nature and human dignity.

Xi's policy presents a major challenge to U.S. international religious freedom policy, which has to date had little impact in China. For twenty years that policy has played a bit part in the "grand strategy" of liberalization – the idea that China can be induced into the "rules-based" liberal international order under American leadership. To the extent such a strategy ever made sense, it now seems fatally flawed in the face of Xi's aggressive political and religious policies.

Thomas F. Farr is President of the Religious Freedom Institute. As an American diplomat, Farr was the first Director of the State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom (1999-2003). He was an associate professor at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service (2007-18), and Director of the Religious Freedom Project at Georgetown's Berkley Center (2011-18).

Since Congress passed the International Religious Freedom Act twenty years ago, U.S. religious freedom policy in China has consisted largely of episodic human rights dialogues, annual reports on and rhetorical denunciations of Beijing's periodic, harsh crackdowns, and imposing mild and ineffective sanctions. None of this has had much impact on religious minorities, or Chinese government policy.

It is possible that stiffer sanctions would help, and arguments for them should be considered – especially sanctions targeted at individual Chinese officials. But on balance I believe sanctions are unlikely to change China's newly-energized anti-religion policy, or help besieged religious minorities. Unilateral sanctions have rarely been an effective diplomatic tool, and they are even less likely to be effective in China in the midst of our current dispute over tariffs.

Overall, U.S. religious freedom policy hasn't worked in China, and is unlikely to work in the face of Xi's systematic crackdown on religion. It is time to try a different approach. Congress and the State Department should work together to develop an all-of-government U.S. diplomatic strategy to persuade Beijing of an empirically verifiable proposition, namely, that China's minority religions, including its Catholics, are not inclined to challenge the government's political power, but that, given the opportunity, they would further China's domestic well-being.

If the Chinese government viewed religious communities as valued elements of society and simply left them alone, those communities would very likely make substantial contributions to addressing domestic problems that are of great concern to Xi and the Politiburo: the fragility of China's economic growth and social harmony; its moral decline and increase in corruption; the threat of violent religious extremism, and a huge and growing need to care for China's poor, orphans, victims of natural disasters, the aged, and the dying.

A revised US strategy emphasizing these themes would not be entirely new. As director of the State Department's office of international religious freedom, I participated in talks with the Chinese in which we made some of these arguments. They have been re-made on occasion in recent years. But these arguments have been seen by the Chinese as mere assertions, talking points made episodically by one office of the State Department, and largely ignored by other American officials. Equally important, they have not been accompanied by systemic, objective, empirical evidence.[1]

To have a chance to succeed, a "Chinese interests" strategy must be an element of virtually all official U.S. interactions with China, at all levels, and it should be fact-based. It should be conveyed within a bilateral, permanent institution, such as a U.S.-China working group on religion, that would remove the ad-hoc nature of past efforts.

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[1] For a sampling of this evidence see: Brian J. Grimm, Greg Clark, and Robert Edward Snyder. (2014) "Is Religious Freedom Good for Business: A Conceptual and Economic Analysis," Interdisciplinary *Journal of Research on Religion*, Vol. 10. Monica Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy Samuel Shah, *God's Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011). Thomas Farr, *World of Faith and Freedom: Why International Religious Liberty is Vital to American National Security* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). Nilay Saiya. (2015) The religious freedom peace, *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 19:3, 369-382. Nilay Saiya and Anthony Scime. (2015) "Explaining Religious Terrorism: A Data-mined Analysis," *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, Vol. 32:5, 487-512.

Even if successful, such a revised U.S. policy would not produce religious freedom in China, But it would be a major step toward the kind of religious tolerance that would reduce human suffering more effectively than past and current U.S. policy, and improve U.S.-China relations. It would not be expensive, although it would require new training of diplomats and the kind of diplomatic energy and will that seems to be present under Secretary Pompeo and Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom Sam Brownback.

Finally, with respect to Vatican diplomacy, I am concerned that the recent Sino-Vatican Provisional Agreement will not improve the lot of Catholics in China, much less the status of religious freedom for non-Catholic religious communities. Rather, it runs the risk of harming religious freedom in China, as well as inadvertently encouraging China's policy of altering the fundamental nature of Catholic witness. In my humble opinion as a Catholic, and an advocate for religious freedom, the Vatican's charism is to support that witness, as Pope Saint John Paul II did in Communist Poland.

To Set the Stage: a Brief Historical Overview of Catholicism in China

The earliest Christians in China appeared in the 7th century, but the church was not permanently established. A semi-permanent Catholic presence began in the 13th century with the arrival of the first of several Franciscan priests, the building of the first Roman Catholic church, and the installation of the first Catholic bishop.

After three centuries of Catholic growth and retrenchment, the Protestant Reformation in Europe led to the creation of the Society of Jesus -- the Jesuits. This new Catholic order evangelized worldwide, and reached China by the late 16th century. In 1601 Matteo Ricci installed a Jesuit mission, which established Catholicism in China, notwithstanding periodic, fierce resistance by Chinese emperors. In 1724 all Christianity was banned by the Qing dynasty, but by the dawn of the 19th century an estimated 200,000 Chinese Catholics remained. With the entry of the Western powers into China, their numbers increased, as did the numbers of Protestant missionaries and conversions to Christianity. During the 19th and 20th centuries Christianity became associated with Western imperialism, a perception that lasts to this day and, although the vast majority of Christian clergy and lay adherents are indigenous Chinese citizens, continues to fuel persecution.

Throughout these centuries, Catholics in China encountered versions of what we are seeing today from the Chinese communist government, that is, the assertion that Catholicism is incompatible with Chinese culture and must either be rooted out or adapted in ways that would change its fundamental nature.

The triumph of Mao and the Communist Revolution in 1949 led to an attempt, natural to totalitarian regimes, either to absorb all religion into communist ideology or to destroy it. The new Peoples' Republic expelled the papal representative and in 1951 broke relations with the Holy See. The next decade witnessed brutal treatment of Catholics, Protestants, and other religious groups.

But by the 1960s, China's policy of taming religion was, like its economic policy, clearly failing. In 1966, Mao proclaimed that Chinese communism, like Soviet communism, had become too

"revisionist," and he initiated the Cultural Revolution. The new revolution would, in his words, "sweep away all the monsters and demons" that opposed his brand of communism. For the next ten years the Red Guards mounted a sustained and brutal attack on anyone or any group seen as a threat, and that included the Chinese Catholic Church.

While most of the official records of those devastating years were destroyed by Mao's successors, we know from survivors the terrible contours of what happened to Catholics and other religious groups. Churches were desecrated, looted and turned into factories and storerooms. Priests and nuns were tortured, murdered (some were burned alive), and imprisoned in labor camps. Lay Christians were paraded in their towns and villages with cylindrical hats detailing their "crimes." Millions of Chinese citizens died terrible deaths during the Cultural Revolution, including by starvation. Tens of millions were brutalized, their lives and families destroyed. The clergy and faithful of the Catholic Church were among them.

But the Cultural Revolution merely confirmed what Stalin and Hitler had already proven -- religion cannot be destroyed by totalitarianism. The powerful need for religion is in the DNA of men, women, and children. Grudgingly acknowledging this reality, Mao's successors condemned the excesses of the Cultural Revolution and adopted a new strategy on religion – one that continues to this day.

The religion policies of Chinese leaders from Deng Xiaoping, who succeeded Mao in the 1970s, to President Xi Jinping today have been variations on a theme: religion is by its nature a threat to the Communist Party and the rule of the Politburo. While Mao proved that a policy of eliminating religion is unrealistic, his successors have constantly experimented in finding the "correct" way to control, co-opt, and absorb religion into the communist state.

Contemporary Chinese Religion Policy

Ten years ago I wrote a book on U.S. international religious freedom policy that contained a chapter on China.[2] Re-reading that chapter confirmed for me that not much has changed. If you were to graph China's religion policies since the 1970s, you would see ups and downs as new Chinese leaders adapted policies to achieve the objective of control.

Not all Chinese policy involves overt repression of religion. Since the Cultural Revolution China's leaders have periodically supported religious groups perceived to be capable of consolidating Beijing's absolute power. Former Chinese leaders Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, for example, praised Chinese (non-Tibetan) Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism as the "traditional cultures" of China. Xi Jinping has exhorted adherents of those religions to help reverse China's moral decline.

Clearly those three groups pose a lesser threat to Communist rule than do the Uighur Muslims, Tibetan Buddhists, and Christians. For the moment at least, it is the latter three religious communities that are the objects of continuing repression, especially the Uighurs. The Muslims of Xinjiang province are being subjected to a massive anti-Uighur and anti-Muslim campaign that is staggering in its sweep and totalitarian sophistication, in effect a

[2] Farr, *World of Faith and Freedom*, pp 273-307.

21st century version of the Cultural Revolution. Its goal is to destroy a minority religion associated with a particular ethnic group. But this time the policy is not being carried out by the open savagery of Red Guards. Rather, the agent is Stalinist-era informers, periodic crackdowns to warn the population, and "reeducation" of Muslims to change their belief. In recent years hundreds of "re-education" camps have been established, run by Chinese officials trained in "transformation" of inmates from adherents of Islam to devotees of Chinese communism. Hundreds of thousands of Uighur Muslims are incarcerated in these camps.

The lesson of China's anti-Uighur campaign is this: when it discerns a threat to the absolute control of its citizens, as it does with Uighur or Tibetan separatism, Beijing remains capable of the kind of systematic, brutal repression of religious and ethnic minorities exhibited by the 20th century totalitarians, repression that today is routine practice across China's eastern border in North Korea. We should not deceive ourselves about Beijing's capacity for reverting to Mao's policies on religion, nor the negative impact it would have on long-term American interests.

At present, however, Xi's Uighur policy is merely the most visible and inhumane aspect of his implementation of China's long-term strategy of manipulating and controlling religion. There are many elements of that strategy, but let me focus on three. First, Xi is tightening central government control over the national bureaucracy responsible for managing religion. Second, he is returning to and reemphasizing a traditional Communist theme: prevent Chinese youth from being exposed to religion in ways that Beijing cannot monitor. Third, he is refining oppressive policies designed to control the other religions perceived as a threat, namely the Tibetan Buddhists, Protestants, and Catholics.

Making SARA More Accountable to the Politburo. The bureaucracy that has carried out China's religion policy since the 1950s is the State Administration for Religious Affairs, SARA, and its predecessor, the Religious Affairs Bureau. This huge state agency, staffed in the early years by former members of the Red Army, has long been charged with controlling religion at the local and provincial level. National SARA officials are also given the responsibility of meeting with foreign officials. I met with former SARA director Ye Xiaowen in China, and was present during some of his trips to the United States, where his job was to assure Americans that religious freedom was not in danger in China.

President Xi Jinping has decided to bring SARA nearer the Politburo by incorporating it into the United Front Work Department, a communist bureaucracy historically charged with controlling China's ethnic minorities. This move is more than an adjustment of the wiring diagram. It is part of an overall tightening of government authority over civil society, especially its growing religious elements. In its latest Report on International Religious Freedom (for 2017), the State Department estimates that there are between 70 and 90 million Christians in China, about 12 million of them Catholics. The growth of Chinese Christianity, especially through conversions to Protestant denominations, is of great concern to the Chinese. Purdue sociologist and China expert Fenggang Yang predicts that within a generation China will be the largest Christian nation in the world. Other religions are growing as well. Moving SARA closer to the Politburo ensures increased monitoring and control over the perceived threat posed by religion's growth in China.

Fear of Religious Education. Like other elements of Xi's intensified policy, religious education has long been under the microscope of the Chinese bureaucracy. One of SARA's responsibilities has been to minimize the perceived danger that religious education might lead to resistance among China's religious citizens. U.S. religious freedom diplomacy has made some attempt to address the resulting violations of parental rights. In 2002, Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom John Hanford reported to Congress an assurance by SARA Director Ye Xiaowen that parents were in fact free to teach religion to their children. There was a half-truth in Ye's assurance: parents could teach their children surreptitiously, but the consequences of being caught conveying, for example, core Catholic doctrine on issues such as religious freedom for all, the equal dignity of all persons created in the image and likeness of God, or the evil of abortion, were severe.

The threat posed by such teachings is one reason for Xi's crackdown on religious education in China, in particular his policy of the "Sinocization" of religious education. Under this policy, no child under 18 may attend religious services, or any kind of religious event. No one under 18 may receive religious education of any kind from anyone. Further, each Chinese religious community is responsible for ensuring its teachings – to the young and to everyone else -- are compatible with "the socialist society," and are supportive of the leadership of the Communist party.

For Chinese Catholics, the government-controlled body charged with carrying out such policies is the so-called Catholic Patriotic Association. Following Xi's instructions, it has drafted a detailed implementation document, which contains the following passage:

"The [Catholic] Church will regard promotion and education on core values of socialism as a basic requirement for adhering to the Sinicization of Catholicism. It will guide clerics and Catholics to foster and maintain correct views on history and the nation and strengthen community awareness."

Of course, the "core values of socialism" as practiced in China are exceedingly difficult to square with the core values of Catholicism. The Jesuit magazine *America* has noted correctly that Xi's religious education policy "strikes at the very heart and future of the Catholic and other Christian churches, as well as that of other religions. It is an issue of utmost concern for Catholics in China who see it as an attempt by the communist authorities … to prevent young people from being educated or growing up in the faith."[3]

Precisely so. It is worth asking how the Vatican's diplomatic rapprochement with the Chinese government will avoid making this problem worse, in part by appearing to abandon those Chinese Catholics, including bishops and priests, who bravely speak out against religious persecution and on behalf of religious freedom and human dignity. I will return to this subject shortly.

[3] Gerard O'Connell, "Pope Francis to Chinese Catholics: the Church is Praying for You in the Midst of Difficulties," America Magazine, May 23, 2018; accessed at https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2018/05/23/pope-francis-chinese-catholics-church-praying-you-midst-difficulties

Systematic Government Oppression. Finally, let me catalogue briefly some of the outrages that have afflicted religious groups other than the Uighur Muslims as part of Xi's policy. We are seeing increased destruction of houses of worship, including the bulldozing of churches, mosques, and Tibetan Buddhist schools and temples. Chinese officials are increasing their monitoring of the internet, including, and especially, religious content. We are seeing close monitoring and control of contributions to religious groups, the outlawing of proselytism, and the unjust imprisonment of priests, pastors, monks, nuns, and lay religious people.

None of this is new, but it is now occurring as part of a broad and carefully planned national strategy with many moving parts. It is dangerous for the religious minorities of China, and dangerous for American interests.

How U.S. Diplomacy Has Addressed Chinese Religion Policy

Let me turn to the question of how the United States has addressed China's religion policies in the past.

At the level of geopolitics and grand strategy, Xi's crackdowns on religion and other liberties in China has undermined, perhaps fatally, the hope that China can be induced into the "liberal international order" under American leadership. The evidence that trade and investment, accompanied by people-to-people exchanges, can make China more liberal is rapidly disappearing.

U.S. religious freedom policy in China has played a decidedly small part in the grand strategy of liberalizing China. Chinese communist religion policy has always constituted an assault on fundamental human rights. It has caused vast human suffering and consistent violations of the most basic of rights, including the rights of conscience, the right to be free of torture, unjust imprisonment, and other assaults on human dignity, and the right of religious freedom as laid out in international law, including Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (which China has signed but not ratified).

Many on this committee have spoken out consistently and publicly about China's violations of religious freedom, as have some senior U.S. diplomats. The recent report on China by the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom is pointed in its criticisms, as is the China chapter of the State Department's latest Report on International Religious Freedom. The unprecedented Ministerial to Advance International Religious Freedom, convened in July by Secretary Pompeo and run by Ambassador at Large Sam Brownback, produced a statement on China that is very strong.

Such statements and reports will always be important – they give hope to the victims of persecution, and keep a public spotlight on what the Chinese government is doing to its religious minorities even as it seeks to buttress its strategic and moral standing in the eyes of the world. But it is difficult to argue that U.S. policies over the past two decades have had a positive impact on China's religion policy, or the fate of its religious minorities. U.S. religious freedom policies have doubtless failed in part because virtually all efforts to liberalize China have failed. China's single-minded determination to recover its status as a world power have left little room for the freedom of its citizens or the development of civil society.

The United States must never abandon the call for China to accept its legal and moral obligations to the norms of human freedom and dignity. U.S. reports, denunciations, and dialogues have on occasion had the laudable result of freeing a religious prisoner, or removing a family from harm's way. These must continue. Every U.S. president has raised the issue of persecution with his Chinese counterpart, and every Secretary of State with China's foreign minister. These too must continue. Indeed, it must happen with greater frequency. But we cannot forget that raising the issue – even at the highest levels -- is not the same thing as solving the problem.

Under the International Religious Freedom Act, the U.S. has for twenty years imposed restrictions on the sale of crowd control equipment. That restriction has had absolutely no effect, and other broad sanctions are likely to fail. Sanctions on individual Chinese officials should be considered, but are unlikely to change China's anti-religion policy in any appreciable way.

All in all, China's renewed attempt to absorb its religious communities, or drive them from any role in public life, provides a rationale, and perhaps a new opportunity, for changes in U.S. religious freedom diplomacy. I will return to that subject shortly.

The Justice Department

Unfortunately, the U.S. failure to address religious persecution in China with success is not limited to our foreign policy. The Justice Department has also taken positions that threaten to undermine the strong protections that Congress has provided for those suffering religious persecution abroad. In a recent case, *Ting Xue v. Sessions*, the United States Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit held, at the Department's urging, that a Chinese Christian lacked a "well-founded fear of persecution" within the meaning of the asylum laws even though his decision to attend an unregistered house church had led to his being arrested, beaten, jailed for three days and four nights, forced to pay a major fine, required to take reeducation classes, and warned not to attend illegal church meetings.

The immigration judge denied Ting Xue's asylum petition, saying his fears of future persecution "do[] not amount to more than a restriction on [his] liberty and *thus do[] not rise to the level of persecution* [emphasis added]." The Board of Immigration Appeals affirmed, as did the Tenth Circuit, holding that the "level of harassment" Xue experienced was not "persecution" under the asylum laws. Xue petitioned for certiorari in the U.S. Supreme Court, and thankfully the Solicitor General, perhaps recognizing the absurdity of this result, settled his case. Ting Xue and his family are now living peacefully and productively in the United States.

In the Tenth Circuit, however, *it remains the law that asylum applicants do not have a well-founded fear of religious persecution if they are "free" to practice their faith in secret.* This view essentially reduces freedom of religion to the private, interior freedom of belief and worship, not the freedom of religious exercise enshrined in our Constitution and laws. It also conflicts with the view of at least three other federal circuits. As the Seventh Circuit powerfully put it in one case: "Christians living in the Roman Empire before Constantine made Christianity the empire's official religion faced little risk of being thrown to the lions if they practiced their religion in secret. It certainly doesn't follow that Rome did not persecute Christians, or that a Christian who

failed to conceal his faith would be acting 'unreasonably.'" *Muhur v. Ashcroft*, 355 F.3d 958, 960 (7th Cir. 2004).

A group of interested lawyers and scholars including myself have been encouraging Attorney General Sessions to use his statutory authority under the immigration law to address this problem, and to make clear that one may suffer persecution even if "free" to practice one's faith alone and in private. That view is far more consistent with the protection that our nation has historically accorded to our "first freedom."

I would submit that the impoverished view of religious freedom as mere "freedom to believe and worship" has taken hold among some in our foreign policy establishment as well, and plays some role in the highly-rhetorical and largely ineffective international religious freedom practices adopted by the State Department over the past two decades. It is difficult to mount an effective strategy to advance religious freedom in China, or anywhere else, if you believe it to be primarily a private right of belief and worship, with no legitimate role in public affairs.

A Revised U.S. International Religious Freedom Policy

A revised and more effective U.S. religious freedom strategy would not abandon the quest for freedom in China. Nor would it jettison the need for reports, or the possibility of additional sanctions. But it would nest U.S. policy in a different logic, designed to counter the natural communist suspicion of all religion, while at the same time presenting evidence-based self-interest arguments that might appeal to the practical strain in Chinese communism. After the Cultural Revolution, Deng Xiaoping decided to unleash capitalism within China by declaring "to get rich is glorious." The result has been decades of economic growth, but it is not enough. Huge levels of poverty remain, and a constant goal of Beijing is to sustain China's economic growth.

A U.S. self-interest argument to China would contain the following propositions: the growth of religion and religious communities is natural and inevitable in all societies. This is why Mao's policy failed, and why religious affiliation is growing in China. Efforts to kill or blunt its growth are impractical and self-defeating. Religious persecution will only retard economic development, increase social instability, and feed violent religious extremism. On the other hand, the accommodation of religious groups will benefit China's economy and increase social harmony and stability.

As noted, elements of this argument have been used episodically by some U.S. officials. But the full argument should now be employed consistently by all U.S. officials, supported by empirical research, encouraged by U.S. funded programs, and institutionalized in a permanent U.S.-China bilateral working group on religion.

I believe that the diplomatic stars are aligned for a new strategy based on self-interest arguments. The current Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, Sam Brownback, with the crucial support of the Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, and of Vice President Mike Pence, appears to be willing and able to take on new ideas and programs. Ambassador Brownback has spoken publicly about the empirical evidence that religious freedom encourages economic

development, and that it helps undermine violent religious extremism.[4] His predecessor, Ambassador David Saperstein, laid the groundwork for a new approach like this.

In short, we have the evidence and, perhaps for the first time, the diplomatic will to undertake a new strategy that stands a chance of actually reducing religious persecution in China. With Congress' urging and help, the administration can and should develop an all-of-government strategy to convince Beijing of an empirically verifiable proposition, namely, that China's minority religions, including its Catholics, cannot challenge the government's political power, but can make substantial contributions to Chinese interests if the government would permit them. Chinese interests to be served include sustained economic growth, addressing China's moral decline and pervasive corruption; support for China's poor, orphans, victims of natural disaster, aged, and dying, and overall social harmony.

Here are the key sectors where the new policy could be developed, and a description of the bilateral institution where it could be implemented.

The Economy, Education, and Civil Society

Economic activity is clearly a major engine of Chinese policies, both domestic and international. If Chinese authorities became interested in the growth of its religious communities as an economic asset and a driver of modernization, rather than a source of social and political instability, they would be far more open to arguments against persecution. For example, if they perceived unregulated Protestant house churches as factories for the social habits that yield economic productivity, they might reassess the role of the Three Self Movement as a means of controlling and repressing Protestant groups. The religion-economy connection could work to the advantage of other religious groups as well.

The logic of China's self-interest could also be applied in the realm of religious education, tapping into the Confucian view of education as the highest rung on the prestige ladder. If the Chinese became interested in religious education as a way to reinforce the attitudes and virtues that yield moral behavior, counter corruption, and encourage economically productive behavior, they might look very differently at their policies. A change in Chinese attitudes on education would implicate much more than youth. It would also raise questions about the treatment of "unofficial" or underground religious communities, the building of houses of worship, the training of clergy, and the involvement of religious people in government.

The huge and growing need in China for social services and moral renewal provides another opportunity for making the case that religion is good for China. The problems are enormous: infectious diseases from leprosy to AIDS, increasing numbers of elderly people without

[4] For a sampling of the evidence, see Monica Duffy Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy Samuel Shah, eds., *God's Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton & Compony, 2011); Brian J. Grim and Roger Finke, *The Price of Freedom Denied: Religious Persecution and Conflict in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Nilay Saiya. "The Religious Freedom Peace," *International Journal of Human Rights* 19:3, 369-382; Nilay Saiya and Anthony Scime, "Explaining Religious Terrorism: A Data-mined Analysis," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 26 (2014): 487-512.

resources, continuing abject poverty for tens of millions of people, environmental degradation, massive migrations into cities and homelessness, the breakdown of the family, moral degeneracy, and more. China's "one-child" policy, brutally implemented for decades, has produced a looming demographic catastrophe, including a shortage of women because female babies were aborted far more often than males.

Religious communities around the world are uniquely positioned to deal with such problems, and to deliver the services that government cannot. China is no different.

The Law

China's self-understanding is grounded in the rule of law, not in the democratic sense, in which law restricts the power of government and protects individual rights, but in the sense of defining and protecting the interests of the nation from the top down, i.e., by the actions of the government. Implicit in the Chinese view of law is an understanding of the state that is highly collectivist and paternalistic. As economic development continues to create a middle class and a civil society of voluntary associations, it is possible that this view of law may begin to shift. But for the foreseeable future, particularly given President Xi's new policies, religion will be managed in China through the laws that are intended to regulate, control and, if necessary, suppress.

Working within that framework, U.S. diplomacy should systematize what are now ad hoc and inconsistent efforts on the part of various organizations inside China to encourage legal reform. The U.S. should encourage these disparate programs, some of which are U.S.-funded but many of which are not, towards employing the law for the benefit of religious groups. For example, legal programs should target local and provincial officials who, in the course of crackdowns on religious groups, are guilty of corruption by abusing laws and regulations now on the books. U.S. grants should encourage NGOs to train and support cadres of Chinese defense attorneys who are experts in existing legal codes, and who can defend in Chinese courts religious groups suffering discrimination or abuse.

The Academy

The Chinese have traditionally venerated learning. When controlled religious activities became permissible after the Cultural Revolution, one result was a powerful policy need to understand better that which must be controlled. Accordingly, as Chinese institutions of higher learning developed in recent decades a natural interest in the "scientific" study of religion emerged.

Partly as a result this officially atheist nation pays more attention to religion in its universities than most other countries of the world. Chinese scholars travel the world in order to gather materials for detailed analyses of various religious traditions as they are developing in particular countries and regions.

The United States should allocate more resources to stimulate greater discourse on religion with Chinese academics. This can take many forms, all of which now exist, but – as with most things involving U.S policy on religion and religious freedom – are inconsistent. They can and should include university exchange programs of both faculty and students, cooperative empirical research on the relationship between religious freedom and political, social, economic, and intellectual development, curricula development initiatives, and discussion of the value of religious education for the common good.

A Permanent U.S- China Institution

Of supreme importance for any revised U.S. religious freedom policy is removing its ad hoc nature, institutionalizing the dialogue, and introducing empirical scholarship into the discussion. The U.S. and China should establish a permanent bilateral institution that has a chance of withstanding the ups and downs of U.S.-China relations. One vehicle to this goal would be similar to the one proposed by Ambassador at Large John Hanford in the summer of 2002: a standing bilateral working group on religion, chaired by high-level U.S. and Chinese officials. (As an aside, I note that Ambassador Hanford's proposal was met by the Chinese with interest, but was nixed in the State Department. Thus was a promising idea strangled in the crib by a diplomatic bureaucracy with a thin view of the value of religious freedom to American interests.)

The standing working group would be multilayered and interagency, drawing on government and private sectors. It would showcase the scholarship that has emerged in recent years demonstrating the negative effects of religious persecution on social harmony and economic development. More importantly, it would introduce into Chinese thinking – in a systematic, rather than episodic way – the growing empirical evidence that more religious freedom yields more economic growth, more social harmony, less violent religious extremism, better governance, and less corruption. This evidence has been produced by, among others, Georgetown University's Religious Freedom Project and the Religious Freedom Institute. The working group could make recommendations to both governments, and under its aegis could sponsor private and public programs to address religion as a matter of law and science.

Vatican Diplomacy and Chinese Catholicism

Let me end with some thoughts on the recent "Provisional Agreement" between the Vatican and China on how Roman Catholic bishops are to be appointed. Press reports indicate that, according to the agreement, Chinese Catholic bishops will now be chosen in a lengthy procedure that begins with Chinese authorities presenting the names of candidate-bishops to dioceses. Diocesan priests and lay Catholics will then vote on the candidates. The winner's name will be sent to officials in Beijing who will provide it to the Vatican, where the candidate could apparently be rejected by the Pope. Should that happen, it appears that the process would begin again.

The stated goal of the Vatican is, as the Vatican spokesman put it, that the agreement will "allow the faithful to have bishops who are in communion with Rome but at the same time recognized by Chinese authorities."

The Vatican thus hopes that the agreement will facilitate reconciliation among China's Catholics, now divided between adherents of the "official" Catholic Church, managed by the government-controlled "Catholic Patriotic Association," and those "underground" Catholics loyal to the Holy Father and the Magisterium of the Church. While the agreement does not reestablish diplomatic relations between China and the Holy See, press reports suggest that follow-on talks might include this subject. Vatican insiders also suggest that the Pope intends the agreement to open up the Church and generate many Chinese converts to Catholicism.

I confess that I am skeptical, both as a Catholic, and as an advocate for the religious freedom of all religious communities in China. Earlier this year the Vatican quite properly expressed grave concerns about China's comprehensive anti-religion policy, and its apparent goal of altering Catholicism itself.

It is certainly true that all Catholics need bishops, and that divisions over who is and who is not a licit bishop are very harmful to the faithful and to the Church. But it is also true that the two-millenia old doctrines of Petrine supremacy and apostolic succession nest the authority for consecrating bishops in one man, the successor of Peter – the Pope. The Vatican has in the past made concessions on the procedure by which bishops are approved by the Pope in order to safeguard the existence of the Church. But this apparent concession to a communist government that is already forcing fundamental alterations of Catholic doctrine and witness seems, to me at least, untimely and risky.

One contemporary comparison troubles the mind. If the reports about how new Chinese Catholic bishops are to be chosen are correct, the process resembles the way parliamentary candidates are approved in Iran. There, no one can run for parliament unless he has been vetted by a panel of theologians for fidelity to the regime. Is it likely that the Chinese government would forward to the Vatican the name of a bishop faithful to the fundamental teachings of the Catholic Church? It seems far more likely that the bishop would be chosen at a minimum for his acquiescence to the regime, if not worse.

I fear that this agreement reflects a return to the Vatican's failed Cold War "realpolitik" diplomacy of the 1960s, before it was changed by Pope John Paul II. That diplomacy failed from a want of realism about the evil of communism. It harmed the Church in parts of Eastern Europe. The post-war Vatican was not then, and is not now, a secular power capable of changing the behavior of communist governments by dint of its political diplomacy.

On the other hand, the Vatican is arguably the only authority in the world constituted precisely to address the root causes of totalitarian evil, just as Pope John Paul II did in the 1980s in cooperation with President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. The Holy See's role should be now, as it was then, to press for human rights and, especially, for religious freedom for all religious communities in China, especially the Uighur Muslims. It should demand for China's Catholics nothing less than "libertas ecclesiae," the freedom of the Church to witness to its adherents, to the public, and to the regime its teachings on human dignity and the common good (as those teachings are powerfully expressed in the Catholic document *Dignitatis Humanae*).

I sincerely hope that I am wrong. I hope there are parts of the agreement that will alleviate these concerns and others that have been expressed by faithful Catholics, in and out of China. But I do not believe the agreement as I have described it will help Catholics or the cause of religious freedom in China. The Chinese know what they are doing. The Vatican's charism, on the other hand, is not diplomacy, but witness to the truth about God and man.

Conclusion

China is a huge player on the world stage, its fate of enormous significance for international affairs and vital American interests. Among the issues that have not typically been addressed by U.S. policy makers in that context is religious freedom. Far more than a humanitarian issue, the way China handles its internal religious matters is of sufficient importance that the United States should make religious liberty a central element of its relationship with the East Asian nation.

Thank you for inviting me and hearing my views.

Mr. SMITH. Dr. Farr, thank you very much as well.

Much of what you both have recommended, we will take very seriously and see how we can turn that into initiatives and policy. In the past when we did the last IRFA bill, named after that champion Frank Wolf, your input was remarkable. So, I want to thank you for that again in crafting a bill that I think provides more tools in the toolbox for the administration and makes it more of a priority. All of government, again, was included in that, not just an isolated view.

But let me ask you a couple of questions. Dr. Fu, you mentioned Guo Xijin. And in previous hearings, we have heard Guo's daughter and Guo's wife making impassioned pleas on behalf of the father/the husband, in the case of Mrs. Guo Xijin. And I have to tell you, we tried, and continue to try, to assist the lawyers in any way we can. How does any lawyer now in China take up a religious freedom case, knowing that he or she becomes the targeted person? Guo Xijin has experienced unspeakable tortures at the hands of the Chinese dictatorship. Just mind-numbing how they mistreat and hurt their own people simply for, in his case, defending people of faith. Are there lawyers still ready, willing, and able, courageously, to step up? I mean, that is above and beyond.

Mr. FU. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your concern.

So, the rule of law, of course, in the past few years had been also rapidly deteriorating, and all the Chinese law firms now are mandated to have a Communist Party branch inside the law firm.

Mr. SMITH. When did that happen?

Mr. FU. It was just recently. I think, recently, there was a new kind of directive issued by the Ministry of Justice. So, the law firm has to establish a Party kind of group inside the law firm.

So, as you just mentioned, the kind of massive roundup since the July 9th, so-called "709" of 2015 had a training effect on many of those human rights lawyers. They were disbarred—a large number lost their license—or ended up in prison, sentenced. And so, some of them, survivors, are still—and this is the spirit of the rule of law. We are very encouraged to see that there are still—I mean, it is a lesser number, but still there are some courageous lawyers who are still waiting to take up the cases.

For instance, in Guizhou last year, on March 15th, there was a massive roundup of at least 200 house church leaders, and over 20 of them were indicted and were labeled as evil cult, based on the evidence of showing they are in possession of John Calvin's Institute of Christian Religion, The Pilgrim's Progress, The Streams in the Desert, this kind of devotional literature. And so, at least 12 of them were indicted and sentenced as many as 13 years imprisonment as leaders. So, we have seen quite a number of lawyers still, despite of the risk, still went for their defense.

Mr. SMITH. Could I just ask you on that—and I asked the previous witness about the whole idea of the State Department gathering names of people who are oppressing and persecuting. In your view—and, Dr. Farr, you might want to jump in on this one as well, or any question—are they getting ready to sanction enough people? Are the data calls going out to our FSOs, our human rights officers, our consulates, to be on the lookout for people who are repressing? Are we receiving names from human rights organizations

like your own, that they, then, put into the database and say, "Hmm, this person gets Magnitsky"? How aggressive has it been, if at all?

And if you could, we have had a series of hearings in this subcommittee on what I consider to the complicity of many of our colleges and universities, both located there and through the institutes that they establish on campuses here and around the world; soft power, if you will.

But there, are any of these universities or colleges pushing back on this latest attack on religious freedom or have they been quiet and mute?

Mr. FARR. Well, with respect to the State Department, Mr. Chairman, the answer is I don't know, but I sure hope they are. They know what the law says. They know it very well. And one hopes that they are doing precisely what you said, putting out the instructions and beginning to enter them into the databank.

I really do like the crowd that is in there now, but I have liked all of my colleagues in the Office of International Religious Freedom over 20 years. Somehow this stuff doesn't always get done. And I think in the past it has been because of the larger State Department's lethargy and inertia on this. I sense that is changing. After complaining for 20 years, I want to find something good, and I think—I hope it is changing on this, too.

Universities and colleges, I am not aware of any university or college—I hope there are; I hope I am wrong about this—who is calling attention to this issue of religious freedom for the Muslims or the Christians or the Tibetan Buddhists, or anybody else. I would love to learn I am wrong about that.

Mr. SMITH. We could write them and ask what have they said. I mean, I criticized NYU for what I considered to be their complicity in silence regarding human rights. I self-invited, and I went and I spoke at Shanghai University to NYU there. They are very nice people. I spoke about human rights, but I am not sure if anything has come of it.

There needs to be, I think, a precedence that says we are just not going to roll over, look the other way, and look askance while Chinese believers and others who are being tortured, democracy, labor leaders. When they try forming a labor union in China, it is off to the gulag.

Mr. SUOZZI. It is important to note that part of the hybrid strategies that are used by China, and others, is to take money and fund efforts in the United States at universities, fund Confucius Chairs, Confucius groups, and spread their influence in that way, and actually see what is going on here. It may be important for us to list where those locations and see what their universities are doing to actually identify Chinese human rights abuses.

I think that we make China out to be very powerful, and like this big giant, and it is. But, at the same time, it has a lot of significant weaknesses as well. China has got enormous debt. It has got serious demographic problems related to their one-child policy and the male domination of a lot of these different communities. We have to recognize that they have a lot of vulnerabilities and that they are not just this 10-foot giant that there is. And we need

to continue to identify what it is they are doing that makes them not part of the larger human conversation.

So, thank you very much for your testimony and your help on these issues.

Mr. FARR. If I could respond to that, Mr. Suozzi, on the Chinese vulnerabilities, not only the ones that you name. There is a demographic tragedy in the making because of all the males being born as a result of the one-child policy. In fact, I think it is already here in China. But the vulnerabilities that I mentioned, that religious communities in China can help solve, massive poverty still, despite all the economic growth—their fear that economic development cannot be continued. We need to be helping the Chinese to understand that their own religious communities—they are not foreign agents—can help them with some of this. Point one.

In the United States, I would say that there are entities—and I don't want to use this to talk about my own alone, but we have been doing some work, not just on China, but all the other persecutors. To go to colleges and universities in the United States, we have a project called Under Caesar's Sword, which is about persecuted Christians around the world, but we also have projects on Muslims and Tibetan Buddhists, and others, where we are just trying to inform American college students—and, by the way, their faculties and administrations—that we have got a big problem, and it affects our interests. It is a humanitarian tragedy. But it also affects our interests as a country. And whether we are religious or not has nothing to do with what is going on in this global crisis of religious freedom and the way we ought to respond to it.

So, we are making this argument around the country ourselves. But I agree with you, I think the Chinese are out there doing what they need to do. They know what they are doing. They know exactly what they are doing. I am not sure we do.

Mr. SUOZZI. One of the mistakes that we make often is that we take our value system that we have and expect that other people have those values in other places. And so, we are very influenced in the United States of America and throughout the West by Judeo-Christian values. So, what is the value system of China? Is it Confucianism? What is the basis of the value system, and how does that value system look at the individual? I mean, obviously, the Communist value system is the state is much more important than the individual. So, what is the value system of China?

Mr. FU. China's current value system is basically the communism coupled with nationalism. And that is why this Confucius Institute—we have, I think, 100 of them in the United States—is not a kind of purity, academic, independent institution at all. It should really register in the Justice Department as a foreign agent because they are not only just teaching the Chinese language or culture; they are brainwashing our university students on campus who enroll in the programs by choosing not to have any impartial view, like the Tibetan issue, the Tiananmen Square, the demonstration, or the Uyghur issue, or persecution, or religious freedom at all. I mean, overall, it is a forbidden topic on the United States campus, and they are fully funded by the Chinese propaganda funding.

Mr. SUOZZI. What is they are trying to brainwash about, though? What is it they are trying to tell them?

Mr. FU. They want to tell them, basically, that China is fine and there's no persecution; and that, actually, the Communist Party is doing great. That is the perception they want to create among the academicians and the students who enroll in these programs.

So, that is, I think, as the FBI Director Wray already pointed out in his public hearing, I think this kind of Confucius Institutes have already posed a societal threat—I quote him—to the American society. I think they need to be warned and taken out, I think, if they don't correct the course.

To answer the first question about the State Department, I have firsthand experience in my dealing with the White House and the State Department over the years. At least I can testify and give them the credit to the current administration. I have seen really more proactive moments, measures, and even some unprecedented actions taken by the Trump administration than the previous administrations, both Republican and Democrat administrations, in terms of aiding those victims of the religious persecution and rescuing them. This year alone, we had, with the active support and help from this administration, we rescued five families who were in danger, and some families were rescued with the direct involvement and order by President Trump himself from the Oval Office.

And the State Department, the career diplomats, both in Beijing and here in Washington, DC, I have seen for the first time they even reach out to me, like asking us to be sponsors for those who are being targeted for persecution, I mean for rescue. That was not done before. In the past, we have to beg the bureaucracies to even pay attention on that.

So, that is some difference. I really want to give the credit. I think Secretary Pompeo made the first-ever announcement of sanctions on Iran during the Ministerial Advancement, the summit. It was also a very promising, positive step.

Mr. SMITH. This is not political. But I remember when we had the five daughters testify, each of them pleading for their fathers, including Guo Xijin's daughter. The Washington Post, Fred Hiatt, actually, did a wonderful and very incisive op-ed, signed, in The Washington Post. He is the editorial page director, but he wrote this.

And the young ladies appealed through our committee to meet with President Obama. They said, "Please, you have two daughters, Mr. President. Please, meet with us, so we can convey to you the agony that we feel over our fathers being tortured in China." We tried for over ½ year to get that meeting. And the final statement made back to my staff was, "He just doesn't have the time."—"he" being President Obama. And in my opinion, that was emblematic of what we found on just about every human rights issue vis-a-vis China and other places as well.

When it came to human trafficking—and I am the author of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 and three other additional trafficking laws—China only drew an automatic downgrade, which was done by way of law. As soon as they could put it back up to a good grade, they did.

Secretary Pompeo and this administration looked at the evidence and said, China is an egregious violator of human trafficking, sex and labor trafficking, and put them on Tier 3, which is the egregious violator category. China's government pushed back vigorously, to no avail.

CPC, we expect that to be designated, hopefully, soon, but with sanctions. And in even in the area—and you mentioned, Mr. Suozzi—on the whole area of coercive population control, for 8 years under President Obama we funded organizations that were supportive of the Chinese government's forced abortion policy, like the UN Population Fund and Marie Stopes International. This administration changed that and said, you cannot harm women and brutalize women with forced abortion, which was properly construed to be a crime against humanity at the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal, without us saying, at least we are not going to fund the organizations that are aiding and abetting those atrocities.

Across the board we see a change. My sense is it hasn't gone far enough. And we did have a good Ambassador-at-Large with Rabbi Saperstein in the last administration in the final years. I want to be completely candid and grateful to his fine work. And, of course, now we have a new Ambassador-at-Large who is doing a wonderful job. So, there is hope.

Dr. Farr, you make a great point. Xi Jinping and his cronies need to understand that people of faith make good citizens. They are problem-solvers. They are not enemies of the state. It is your secret police that is truly the enemy of the people, not the believers.

One final question, and then, Mr. Suozzi, if you want as well. But the question of how much worse can it get. I always want to know, parenthetically, in follow up to what you were saying, Dr. Fu—I have introduced H.R. 6010, which calls for an unclassified interagency report on political influence operations of the Chinese government and the Communist Party, which, of course, are one and the same. We want to know, to what extent, where, when, how. We know what they are trying to do vis-a-vis Hollywood, so that the scripts and the movies that get produced will have a benign view toward the PRC and toward the Communist Party.

We know what they are doing all over with the Confucius Institutes. We have had hearings on that. And that is growing, not diminishing, and it is worldwide. As you know on our committee, it is all over Africa; it is all over Asia; it is all over—you name the country; they are trying to use this influence peddling. And it gets really bad.

I will conclude on this one. When Chi Hoatian, the man who ordered the Tiananmen Square massacres, came and met with President Clinton, he got a 19-gun salute reception at the White House; went to the National War College because he was now secretary of defense, or the equivalent of, and got a 19-gun salute there. He went to the War College and said, "Nobody died at Tiananmen Square."

I put together a hearing in 2 days, had all these individuals, including a Time magazine correspondent, students, a People's Daily editor, who actually paid a price for trying to write about it, be-

cause they were saying nobody died; there were no tanks. And Google certainly enabled that with their showing nothing but pretty pictures of Tiananmen Square, censoring out anything that showed the bloodshed.

And this man got away with it. We had the hearing. We invited him or anybody from the Embassy to be here, but we did push back very, very hard. They do get away with the big lie employed systematically, unless there is an effort to speak truth to that power.

But how much worse can it get? That would be my final question. Xi Jinping is President for life. He is trying, in my humble opinion, to crush all religion or make it subservient to the Communist Party. How much worse can it get?

Mr. FARR. I think it can get much worse. I think, as I have said, that this is the 21st century version of the Cultural Revolution. It doesn't have the Red Guards going around beating and killing and burning people, but it is getting pretty close. We have got a Stalinesque surveillance system in the Xinjang Province with all the stuff you talked about earlier. It is almost inconceivable how far you can go with this. And so, I think it is a grave mistake for us to underestimate what is going on in China.

And I would just say—and, then, I will let Bob Fu talk—this is a humanitarian crisis, but this affects our national interests. This is not just about people being brutalized. It is that, but we have to say more than that. We have to understand this threat within our own national security apparatus, and I think that is a major, major message I would like to leave with the committee. This is a national security issue for the United States, as well as a humanitarian catastrophe.

Mr. FU. Thank you, Dr. Farr.

It is, I totally agree, a national security threat. According to a document released by a provincial Three-Self Patriotic Movement, they have a 5-year plan to sinicize the Christianity to make Christianity compatible with socialist—that is their slogan—including a plan to retranslate the Bible. And according to a latest outline, the retranslated version of the Bible would be a mixture, a summary of the Old Testament, some Buddhist literature, some Confucius teachings, and then, there is a new kind of commentary for the New Testament. So, that is how the so-called sinicization of religion would look like. I think it will get worse.

Another thing you want to point out is this American gigantic social media or high-tech companies. They should be ashamed of themselves, like Google, Facebook. In order to just dump into the Chinese market, they are actively collaborating with the Chinese police. And you have the Chinese version of the Apple Store, purposely, deliberately; take off all the VPN tools without a consent from the Chinese users, so that they cannot have the limited tools to download or to use to supplement the internet firewall.

You have, of course, Facebook already disclosed they are working, contracting with the Chinese government's own companies to give them access, unlimited access to the Chinese customers. So, these are really like deliberate aiding to this worsening persecution trend. I think they really should be ashamed of themselves.

Mr. SMITH. Dr. Farr?

Mr. FARR. Could I just add one other thing? I hear all the beeping. I don't know what it means. I don't know if it means shut up and——

Mr. SMITH. Oh, no, no, no. You have got time.

Mr. FARR. Okay. This is in my written statement, which I hope will be in the record.

Mr. SMITH. Without objection, both of your statements in their entirety will be a part of the record.

Mr. FARR. Thank you.

This goes to—maybe you won't object, Mr. Suozzi, when I bring out this issue. This goes to the problem of how we fail to understand what is going in China. I want to raise the Ting Xue asylum case. This gentleman fled China. He had been beaten, arrested, put into jail, threatened with much more severe—and it was pretty severe already—if he went again to a Chinese house church.

He made it to this country. He applied for asylum. He went before an asylum court, and the Department of Justice argued—and the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with the Department of Justice's argument—that, since he could go back to China and privately worship, in other words, worship in secret, this was not grounds for asylum in the United States. It was not grounds for a—what is the phrase?—a fear——

Mr. SMITH. Well-founded fear of persecution.

Mr. FARR. A well-founded fear of persecution. I mean, after having been beaten and put into jail, and threatened with more of this, I am not sure what a well-founded fear of persecution means in the English language.

But here we have the Department of Justice and the 10th Circuit—now, fortunately, the Department of Justice settled. But this is still the official position of the Department of Justice. With the help of former Solicitor General Ken Starr and others, we spoke to a group of over 300 asylum judges about this, and we are trying to get the attention of the Attorney General, who has the authority under the law to change this position for the Department.

I just want to raise this for the committee. I think this is a very important issue that goes to China, but not just China. It goes to what is religion and religious freedom. If religious freedom only means the right to worship in private, in secret, Saudi Arabia will give you that right. Almost every country in the world will let Tibetan Buddhists and Muslims, or anybody else, do their thing in private. That is not the meaning of religious freedom in the American system. And I think it is a disgrace that any court in this land has taken such a position.

Mr. SMITH. Well, Dr. Farr, thank you for that. We will initiate a letter——

Mr. FARR. Thank you.

Mr. SMITH [continuing]. And it will go to the Attorney General. Mr. Suozzi and I will take the lead on it. So, I thank you for that very important intervention. You would think that this would be resolved.

Anything else you would like to add before we conclude?

If not, thank you so very much. You have given us so much to act on and so many insights.

The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:49 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

Material Submitted for the Record

SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128

Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations
Christopher H. Smith (R-NJ), Chairman

September 25, 2018

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs to be held by the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations in Room 2255 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at http://www.ForeignAffairs.house.gov):

DATE: Thursday, September 27, 2018

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: China's War on Christianity and Other Religious Faiths

WITNESSES:

Panel I
Tenzin Dorjee, Ph.D.
Commissioner
U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom

Panel II
Bob Fu, Ph.D.
Founder and President
ChinaAid

Thomas Farr, Ph.D.
President
Religious Freedom Institute

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON *Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations* HEARING

Day *Thursday* **Date** *9/27/18* **Room** *2255*

Starting Time *2:04pm* **Ending Time** *3:49pm*

Recesses ____ (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____) (____to ____)

Presiding Member(s)

Chairman Smith

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session ☑
Executive (closed) Session ☐
Televised ☐

Electronically Recorded (taped) ☑
Stenographic Record ☑

TITLE OF HEARING:

China's War on Christianity and Other Religious Faiths

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. Suozzi

NON-SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: *(Mark with an * if they are not members of full committee.)*

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes ☑ **No** ☐
(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*

-Chairman Smith: A Joint Statement by Pastors: A Declaration for the Sake of the Christian Faith (3rd edition, 198 pastors)

-Chairman Smith: A Freedom House Special Report: The Battle for China's Spirit, by Sarah Cook

-Chairman Smith: Sen. Rubio, Chairman, and Rep. Smith, Cochairman, CECC letter to Sec. Ross

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
or
TIME ADJOURNED _____

Subcommittee Staff Associate

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

A Joint Statement by Pastors:

A Declaration for the Sake of the Christian Faith (3rd edition, 198 pastors)

We are a group of Chinese Christians, chosen by the Most High God to be His humble servants, serving as pastors for Christian churches throughout various towns and cities.

We believe and are obligated to teach the world that the one true and living Triune God is the Creator of the universe, of the world, and of all people. All men should worship God and not any man or thing. We believe and are obligated to teach the world that all men, from national leaders to beggars and prisoners, have sinned. They will die once and then be judged in righteousness. Apart from the grace and redemption of God, all men would eternally perish. We believe and are obligated to teach the world that the crucified and risen Jesus is the only Head of the global church, the sole Savior of all mankind, and the everlasting Ruler and supreme Judge of the universe. To all who repent and believe in Him, God will give eternal life and an eternal Kingdom.

In September, 2017, the State Council issued the new "Regulations on the Administration of Religious Affairs" and began implementing these regulations in February, 2018. Ever since then, Christian churches across China have suffered varying degrees of persecution, contempt, and misunderstanding from government departments during public worship and religious practices, including various administrative measures that attempt to alter and distort the Christian faith. Some of these violent actions are unprecedented since the end of the Cultural Revolution. These include demolishing crosses on church buildings, violently removing expressions of faith like crosses and couplets hanging on Christians' homes, forcing and threatening churches to join religious organizations controlled by the government, forcing churches to hang the national flag or to sing secular songs praising the State and political parties, banning the children of Christians from entering churches and receiving religious education, and depriving churches and believers of the right to gather freely.

We believe that these unjust actions are an abuse of government power and have led to serious conflicts between political and religious parties in Chinese society. These actions infringe on the human freedoms of religion and conscience and violate the universal rule of law. We are obligated to announce bad news to the authorities and to all of society: God hates all attempts to suppress human souls and all acts of persecution against the Christian church, and he will condemn and judge them with righteous judgment.

But we are even more obligated to proclaim good news to the authorities and to all of society: Jesus, the only begotten Son of God, the Savior and King of mankind, in order to save us sinners was killed, was buried, and rose from the dead by the power of God, destroying the power of sin and death. In His love and compassion God has prepared forgiveness and salvation for all who are willing to believe in Jesus, including Chinese people. At any time, anyone can repent from any sin, turn to Christ, fear God, obtain eternal life, and bring great blessing from God upon his family and country.

For the sake of faith and conscience, for the spiritual benefits of the authorities in China and of society as a whole, and ultimately for the glory, holiness, and righteousness of God, we make the following declaration to the Chinese government and to all of society:

- **Christian churches in China believe unconditionally that the Bible is the Word and Revelation of God.** It is the source and final authority of all righteousness, ethics, and salvation. If the will of any political party, the laws of any government, or the commands of any man directly violate the teachings of the Bible, harming men's souls and opposing the gospel proclaimed by the church, we are obligated to obey God rather than men, and we are obligated to teach all members of the church to do the same.
- **Christian churches in China are eager and determined to walk the path of the cross of Christ and are more than willing to imitate the older generation of saints who suffered and were martyred for their faith.** We are willing and obligated under any circumstance to face all government persecution, misunderstanding, and violence with peace, patience, and compassion. For when churches refuse to obey evil laws, it does not stem from any political agenda; it does not stem from resentment or hostility; it

stems only from the demands of the gospel and from a love for Chinese society.

- **Christian churches in China are willing to obey authorities in China whom God has appointed and to respect the government's authority to govern society and human conduct.** We believe and are obligated to teach all believers in the church that the authority of the government is from God and that as long as the government does not overstep the boundaries of secular power laid out in the Bible and does not interfere with or violate anything related to faith or the soul, Christians are obligated to respect the authorities, to pray fervently for their benefit, and to pray earnestly for Chinese society. For the sake of the gospel, we are willing to suffer all external losses brought about by unfair law enforcement. Out of a love for our fellow citizens, we are willing to give up all of our earthly rights.
- **For this reason, we believe and are obligated to teach all believers that all true churches in China that belong to Christ must hold to the principle of the separation of church and state and must proclaim Christ as the sole head of the church.** We declare that in matters of external conduct, churches are willing to accept lawful oversight by civil administration or other government departments as other social organizations do. But under no circumstances will we lead our churches to join a religious organization controlled by the government, to register with the religious administration department, or to accept any kind of affiliation. We also will not accept any "ban" or "fine" imposed on our churches due to our faith. For the sake of the gospel, we are prepared to bear all losses—even the loss of our freedom and our lives.

Signatories of the Joint Statement (198 people total)

First Group (August 30, 2018; 29 people):
Pastor Wang Yi (Chengdu Early Rain Covenant Church)
Pastor Yang Hua (Guiyang Living Stone Church)
Pastor Jin Mingri (Beijing Zion Church)
PastorZhang Xiaofeng, Elder Sun Yi, Elder You Guanghui (Beijing Shouwang Church Governance Committee)
Pastor Huang Xiaoning (Guangzhou Bible Reformer Church)

Pastor Dou Shaowen (Zhengzhou Conerstone Church)
Elder Zhang Chuanlei (Guiyang Renai Reformed Church)
Elder Wen Hongbin (Chengdu Xishuipang Reformed Church)
Minister Yang Xibo (Xiamen Xunsiding Church)
Minister Jiang Jianping (Foshan Olive Tree Church)
Elder Xue Honggen (Chengdu Yudu Zhuen Reformed Church)
Elder Char Changping (Chengdu Shengmingzhiquan Church)
Minister Shi Shangbiao (Zhangzhou Feilizhijia Church)
Pastor Li Tao（Kunming Endian Church）
Pastor Shen Xianfeng （Wuhan Zhongfu Chenxing Church）
Elder Tang Bohu (Shanghai Caihong Reformed Church)
Pastor Cui Quan (Shanghai Wangbang Xuanjiao Church)
Pastor Su Yaorong (Taizhou Tianfu Reformed Church)
Minister Wang Teng (Taizhou Mingdao Reformed Church)
Pastor Wang Changyi (Tiazhou Tiantai Fuyin Church)
Pastor Ji Jianyang (Tiazhou Xianju Mengen Church)
Pastor Guo Chuanyu （ChangchunLinhezhifu Reformed Church)
Pastor Li Lianmin （Shenzhen Shajing Bible Reformed Church)
Pastor Zhuang Zhiyong (Shenzhen Huaqiang Bible Reformed Church)
Pastor Chen Jingtang (Shengzhen Guifangyuan Bible Reformed Church)
Pastor Huang Lei (Wuhan Shangxiatang Church)
Pastor Zhang Yong（ChangchunYangguangzhijia Reformed Church)

Second Group (September 1, 2018, 87 people):
Pastor Gao Lijun (Wenzhou Wangkun Church)
Minister Cai Jingliang (Foshan Fangzhou Church)
Minister Xu Jianwei (Hebei Tangshan Church)
Minister Jiangtian (Chengdu Gospel Church)
Minister An Yankui (Taiyuan Xuncheng Reformed Church)
Elder Haoming (Deyang Qiuyu Qingcaodi Church)
Minister Li Zihu (Chengdu Ziuyu Enyue Church)
Minister Cheng Zhangchun (Chengdu Qiuyu Jianan Church)
Minister Cao Qingen (Chengdu Linxishu Reformed Church)
Minister Wang Tianmin (Shamen New Creation Church)
Elder Wang Zhaorong, Minister Wan Changchun (Bangbu Huoshi Reformed Church)
Pastor Li Jiale (Beijing Daohang Zhijia Church)

Pastor Huang Yizi (Wenzhou Pingyang Fengwo Church)
Pastor Lin Yage (Guiyang Mengen Church)
Pastor Wu Yiqi (Changchun Fuyin Zhiguang Reformed Church)
Minister Gu Hongfei (Beijing Aixuan Church)
Pastor Xu Zhibing (Jiangsu Guanyun Xiansi Duizhong New Church)
Pastor Peng Qiang (Chengdu Enfu Reformed Gospel Church)
Elder Zheng Zhaobei, Minister Ren Lichuan, Minister Jie Shoutuan (Chengdu Xishuipang Reformed Gospel Church)
Elder Jiang Guocheng, Elder Peng Yuan (Renshou Enhui Reformed Gospel Church)
Elder Liu Maolin (Linyi Enyue Reformed Church)
Elder Yan Xiaoxin (Rizhao Enzhao Reformed Church)
Elder Huowei (Linyi Enquan Reformed Church)
Elder Chen Shun (Linyi Enyuan Reformed Mission)
Elder Li Rongtai (Linyi Enlin Reformed Church)
Minister Yang Binchuan (Zaozhuang Zhuentang Church)
Pastor Liu Hongwei (Beijing Ganlanshan Church)
Minister Lin Hesheng (Chengdu Fanglin Church)
Minister Liu Zhiyong (Xi'an Jitaicun Cornerstone Church)
Minister Luo Ruisheng (Guangzhou Sui Guizheng Fuyin Tuanqi Huangshen Jiangdian)
Minister Ye Xinde (Fujian Zhangpu Yilin Zhijia Reformed Church)
Minister Meng Yongguang (Gansu Lanzhou Chenxing Church)
Minister Wang Zisheng (Qingdao Jimiya Church)
Minister Huang Wenyou (Hong Kong Chinese Christian Church)
Minister Chen Huizhen (Zhangzhou Longhai Shima Xincheng Church)
Pastor Liu Yang (Xi'an Xinwang Ai Church)
Minister Sun Chao (Yunnan Qujing Feila Tiefei Church)
Pastor Xu Mei (Xi'an Enquan Church)
Pastor Dong Zhi (Beijing Hemujia Church)
Brother Liang Yongen (Dalian Shien Zhen Church)
Pastor Ju Dawei (Xi'an Halleluiah Church)
Pastor Zhao Yanwei (Zhengzhou Zhongai Church)
Pastor Ren Jinbiao (Hebei Botou Shihong Grace Church)
Pastor Huang Lei (Hunan Yueyang Shipan Shisheng Jingdu Church)
Pastor Sun Hong (Jilin Shengyue Zhendao Church)
Minister Zhu Lehai (Zhangjiajie Hope Christian Church)

Pastor Zhang Qianjin (Beijing, missionary)
Pastor Gao Quanfu (Xi'an Zhiguang Church)
Pastor Guo Zhi (Dongguan Reformed gospel Church)
Minister Chen Shengda (Wenzhou Boteli Church)
Minister Wang Lanqing (Shandong Linyi Tiancheng Shengyue Church)
Pastor Guo Yijun (Beijing Endao Reformed Baptist Church)
Minister Xu Fengchuan (Anhui Fuyang Nanzhao Xingqi Faguang Church)
Minister Huang Wenguang (Shenzhen Jehovah Yile Church)
Minister Li Jianxuan (Shenzhen Thanksgiving Church)
Minister Yin Xuguang (Beijing Shijing Shanshuguang Church)
Pastor Zhou Yunfeng (Xianyang Xin Wang Ai Yangwang Church)
Minister Yang Fuli (Shijiazhuang Hongdao Church)
Teacher Cheng Chaohua (Wenzhou Shenzhou Preaching Team)
Minister Qin Shengjie (Henan Balizhuang Church)
Teacher Wang Weixin (Wenzhou Yufutang Church)
Pastor Weng Xiangkun (Wenzhou Shenzhou Preaching Team)
Pastor Huang hanxin (Wenzhou Shenzhou Preaching Team)
Minister Wang Xiao (Henan Dongguocun Church)
Pastor Zhu Jiahao (Wenzhou Shenzhou Preaching Team)
Minister Xinyi Chuandao (Datong Lirenzao Church)
Minister Zhao Lihui (Datong Lirenzao Church)
Pastor Lin Jinlian (Wenzhou Shenzhou Preaching Team)
Pastor Yan Xiaojie (Wenzhou Shangjiang Church)
Minister Chen Jiafu (Chen Dawei) (Fuzhou Boteli Reformed Church)
Pastor Du Youchang (Jingmen Ganlanshan Church)
Pastor Wang Yongcheng, Elder Feng Guangxiong (Shen Ai Shi Ren Fengshou Church)
Pastor Ruan Dawei (Zhanjiang Gengxin Church)
Minister Guan Xinyuan (Jiangsu Liyang Family Church)
Minister Zhao Ruohan (henan Xihuo Church)
Minister Sun Chanli (Hubei Shiyan Rongguang Biliya Church)
Elder Li Youhong (Chengdu Shengming Zhi Quan Church)
Elder Yan Xixia, Elder Su Bingsen, Elder Li Yingqiang, Elder Tan Defu, Minister Zhang Xudong (Chengdu Early Rain Covenant Church)

Third Group (September 5, 80 people):
Elder Wang Chunzhi, Elder Liao Yantao, Minister Lan Junan (Chengdu Enfu

Reformed Presbyterian Church)
Minister Tan Tao (Foshan Ark Church)
Minister Lang Yong'en (Dalian Enzhen Church)
Minister Chen Xianfei (Bei'an Covenant Church)
Minister You Guanda (Xiamen Dianqian Church)
Minister Li Yuanfei (Chongxing Zaidao Reformed Gospel Church)
Minister Hua Jiaquan, Minister Yang Zhenjiang (Ningbo City Grace Church)
Pastor Tan Songhua (Wuhan Cornerstone Church)
Pastor Wang Zhengron (Tianjin Shengguang Reformed Church)
Pastor Mao Zhibin, Elder Shen Ling (Shenzhen Trinity Gospel Fengshou Church)
Elder Zhang Sen (Fuyang Maizhong Reformed Church)
Minister Li Yueqing (Shangrao Yugangufu Joshua Church)
Pastor Wang Lin, Pastor Long Xiang'en, Pastor Gao Yinjia, Elder Yin Huibin, Elder Li Jianjun, Elder Jian Zhaopeng, Elder Wang Jun, Elder Ye Xiongjin, Minister Tian Yangbo, Minister Yuan Guoshen, Minister Wang Cong, Minister Qie Jiafu, Minister Chen Yong, Minister Wang Jin, Minister Zhang Kun, Minister Chen Rutan, Minister Liu Zhenbin, Minister Jiang Haiyan, Minister Yang Jun, Minister Wu Di, Minister Cui Jianguo, Minister Jin Hailan, Minister Geng Pengpeng, Minister Wu Hongfei, Administrative Secretary Zhang Yonghao (Beijing Zion Church)
Pastor Wang Desheng (Beijing Anhua Church)
Minister Song Hongtao (Handan Grace Church)
Pastor Jiang Shoudao (Shanxi Province Huairen City Shengai Church)
Pastor Liang Junpei, Pastor Zhang Dawei, Elder Bi Guoxiong (Hong Kong Christ Luxiao Church)
Minister Ren Zhongzhi (Meinan Baptist Jersualem Church)
Minister Yin Zhongfan (Guilin Canaan Church)
Minister Lv Diya (Hubei Xidu Guodu Christian Church)
Minister Yao Kun (Kunming Tianyuanli Bible Church)
Minister Li Guisheng (Henan Nanyang House Church)
Pastor Shen Wanzhong (Liaoning Dandong Yezhong Church)
Minister Qin Chenguang (Beijing Guomen Church)
Pastor Liu Yangsun (Henana Anyang Church)
Minister Guo Liwei (Fujian Fuqing Enyuzhijia Church)
Pastor Yin Jianan (Shanghai Zhongfu Christian Church)
Pastor Wang Hongzhong (Changzhi Muxuan Church)

Minister Huang Yong (Chengdu Enfu Shequ Church)
Minister Fu Jun (Chengdu Shengmingzhiquan Church)
Minister Zhong Wheng (Xinjiang Shihezi Christian Church)
Elder Yang Jianjun (Yueyangshi Panshi Bible Christian Church)
Minister Hu Huitang (Dongwan Xianming Reformed Church)
Minister Zhao Zhanghua (Qingyuan Shuguang Fuyintang Church)
Minister Tan Zuzheng (Nanning Encheng Church)
Minister Zhao Peng, Minister Xu Zhiqiang (Pixian Christian Church)
Minister Yu Peixin (Missionary, Sichuan Yibin)
Minister Hu Moxi (Zhejiang Lishui New Life Church)
Elder Yin Keshan (Linyi Enquan Reformed Church)
Elder Zhao Jianxin (Linyi Enlin Reformed Church)
Minister Li Wenzhuo (Jinan Endianzhiyue Reformed Church)
Pastor Fan Youcai (Linyi Trinity Covenant Mission)
Minister An Yaolin, Minister Yang Zhigang (Shanxi Guozhou Church)
Minister Li Minghua (Shanxi Taiyuan Qinganlan Church)
Elder Sun Dawen (Tianjin Zion Mountain Church)
Pastor Huan Manjin (Huainan Qinyulu Church)
Pastor An Xi (Beijing Gospel First Presbyterian Church)
Minister Wang Shiqiang (Yuxi Mu'en Church)
Pastor Pan Yongguang, Elder You Guangbo, Elder Xie Jianqing (Shenzhen Reformed Shengdao Church)

All pastors, elders, and ministers of Chinese churches are welcomed to co-sign the joint statement. Please include your church's abbreviation. Send emails to earlyraincovenantchurch@gmail.com.

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICA, GLOBAL HEALTH, GLOBAL HUMAN RIGHTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

A Freedom House Special Report

Freedom House

Executive Summary

The Battle for China's Spirit

A Taoist disciple joins the order without knowing when he will be admitted to priesthood. Dozens of Christians are barred from celebrating Christmas together. Tibetan monks are forced to learn reinterpretations of Buddhist doctrine during a "patriotic reeducation" session. A Uighur Muslim farmer is sentenced to nine years in prison for praying in a field. And a 45-year-old father in northeastern China dies in custody days after being detained for practicing Falun Gong.

These are a small sample of the obstacles that Chinese believers encounter when they seek to peacefully practice their faith—products of the ruling Communist Party's multifaceted apparatus of control. Combining both violent and nonviolent methods, the party's policies are designed to curb the rapid growth of religious communities and eliminate certain beliefs and practices, while also harnessing aspects of religion that could serve the regime's political and economic interests.

Since Xi Jinping took the helm of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in November 2012, the authorities have intensified many of their restrictions, resulting in an overall increase in religious persecution. But believers have responded with a surprising degree of resistance, including in faith communities that have generally enjoyed cooperative relationships with state and party officials.

This escalating cycle of repression and pushback illustrates a fundamental failure of the Chinese authorities' religious policies. Rather than checking religion's natural expansion and keeping it under political control, the CCP's rigid constraints have essentially created an enormous black market, forcing many believers to operate outside the law and to view the regime as unreasonable, unjust, or illegitimate.

The present study is a detailed examination of the dynamics of religious revival, repression, and resistance in China today, as well as their recent evolution and broader implications. The report focuses on seven communities that together account for over 350 million believers: the country's officially recognized religions—Buddhism (Chinese and Tibetan), Taoism, Catholicism, Protestantism, and Islam—as well as Falun Gong, the largest of several banned *qigong* practices, new religious movements, and quasi-Christian sects.

Under Xi Jinping's leadership, religious persecution in China has increased overall.

As China experiences a spiritual revival across a wide range of faiths, the Chinese government's religious controls have taken different forms for different localities, ethnicities, and denominations. In many parts of China, ordinary believers do not necessarily feel constrained in their ability to practice their faith, and state authorities even offer active support for certain activities.

At the other extreme, Chinese officials have banned holiday celebrations, desecrated places of worship, and employed lethal violence. Security forces across the country detain, torture, or kill believers from various faiths on a daily basis. How a group or individual is

treated depends in large part on the level of perceived threat or benefit to party interests, as well as the discretion of local officials.

Nonviolent forms of control are more prevalent, but they are also deeply offensive to many believers, directly intruding on the internal functions of religious organizations. They include vetting religious leaders for political reliability, placing limits on the number of new monastics or priests, and manipulating religious doctrine according to party priorities. Extensive surveillance, "reeducation" campaigns, and restrictions on private worship affect the spiritual lives of millions of people. And increasingly, economic reprisals and exploitation have become a source of tension and a catalyst for protests.

The Communist Party's efforts to impose its will on a wide spectrum of religious practice and thought are failing in important ways.

Under Xi, many of these practices have expanded. New legal mechanisms have codified previously informal restrictions. Crackdowns on unregistered and even state-sanctioned places of worship and religious leaders have increased, with several clerics receiving long prison terms. Constraints on children's ability to participate in religious life have multiplied. Four communities examined in this study have experienced an increase in persecution: Protestant Christians, Tibetan Buddhists, and both Uighur and Hui Muslims.

Yet there have also been a number of positive developments in unexpected quarters. Sino-Vatican relations have warmed, raising the possibility of an agreement on the appointment of Catholic bishops. Such a pact would remove a major source of division in the Chinese church. Falun Gong practitioners, though still subject to severe abuses, are experiencing reduced persecution in many locales, as top officials driving the campaign have been purged in intraparty struggles, and years of grassroots outreach by adherents and their supporters have won over some lower-level authorities.

Indeed, members of all faith communities have responded to official controls with creativity and with courage, at times scoring significant victories. Whatever the outcome of each contestation, it is clear that the CCP's efforts to impose its will on a wide spectrum of religious practice and thought are falling short or backfiring in important ways.

Religious groups, beliefs, and practices that the CCP has devoted tremendous resources to extinguishing have survived or spread, representing a remarkable failure of the party's repressive capacity. Meanwhile, official actions are generating resentment, assertiveness, and activism among populations that might previously have been apolitical and largely content with CCP rule.

The impact of these dynamics reaches far beyond the realm of religious policy alone, deeply affecting China's overall legal, social, political, and economic environment. Looking toward the future, Xi and his colleagues face a critical choice: Do they recognize their errors and loosen religious controls, or do they press ahead with a spiraling pattern of repression and resistance that might threaten the regime's long-term legitimacy and stability? Their decision will be critical in determining the ultimate cost of the ongoing battle for China's spirit.

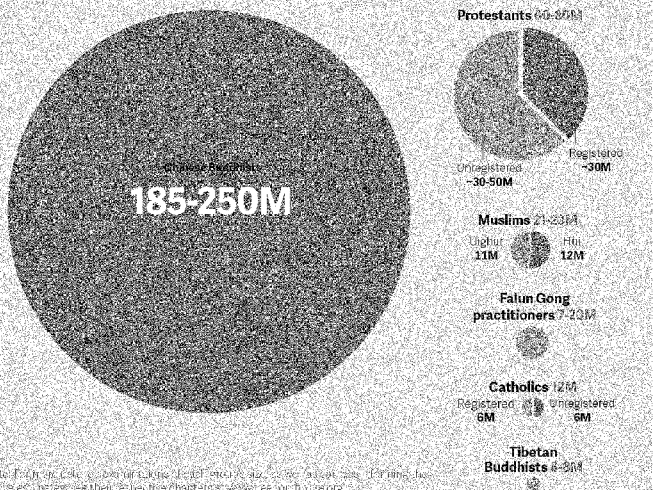
Figure 1. Spectrum of Religious Persecution

[illegible]

Figure 2. China's Religious Communities

China is home to over 350 million religious believers and hundreds of millions more who follow various folk traditions. Determining the precise size of religious communities in China is notoriously difficult, even for officially recognized groups. Government statistics exclude those who worship at unregistered temples or churches and believers under the age of 18, and many Chinese engage in a mixture of religious and folk practices. Official figures for Muslims and Tibetan Buddhists are based on ethnicity, embedding the assumption that all members of an ethnic group adhere to a particular religion. And for banned groups like Falun Gong, no contemporary official figures exist.

Nevertheless, having some sense of the overall and relative size of these communities is important for understanding the nature of religious revival, repression, and resistance. The following are informed estimates for the communities examined in this study (with the exception of Taoism, for which no figures were available), drawing on official figures, public opinion surveys, academic studies, media reports, and religious groups' own reporting.



[illegible]

Figure 3. Trajectory of Religious Persecution in China across Faith Communities

Increase | Minor increase | Consistent | Minor decrease | Decrease

Religious community *Trajectory of persecution (Nov. 2012–Nov. 2016)*	Trend explanation
Protestant Christians *Increase*	Since early 2014, local authorities have intensified efforts to stem the spread of Christianity amid official rhetoric about the threat of "Western" values and the need to "Sinicize" religions. As the larger of the two main Christian denominations in China, Protestants have been particularly affected by cross-removal and church-demolition campaigns, punishment of state-sanctioned leaders, and the arrest of human rights lawyers who take up Christians' cases.
Uighur Muslims *Increase*	Controls on religion have deepened and expanded in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, where a majority of Uighur Muslims reside. Previously informal or local restrictions in Xinjiang—on issues such as religious dress—have been codified at the regional and national levels. Authorities have launched new campaigns to more closely monitor smartphone usage and force businesses to sell alcohol, while incidents of security forces opening fire on Uighur civilians have become more common.
Hui Muslims *Minor increase*	Amid growing official and public anxiety about the spread of Islam and the threat of Islamist-inspired violence, Hui Muslims have experienced some intensified restrictions and Islamophobia since November 2012. In several provinces, bans on children's religious study have been more strictly enforced, displays of halal signs restricted, and a crackdown on Salafi Hui Muslims launched.
Tibetan Buddhists *Minor increase*	President Xi Jinping has largely continued the repressive policies and campaigns of his predecessor, Hu Jintao, while deepening and expanding certain controls. New measures include punishing assistance to self-immolators, canceling previously permitted festivals, increasing intrusive restrictions on private religious practice, and more proactively manipulating Tibetan Buddhist doctrine and the selection of religious leaders.
Chinese Buddhists *Consistent*	President Xi has continued Hu-era policies, creating an environment of relatively low persecution for Chinese Buddhist practice. His actions and rhetoric portray Chinese Buddhism as an increasingly important channel for realizing the party's political and economic goals at home and abroad. In a rare occurrence, a Chinese Buddhist monk was sentenced to prison in 2016 on politically motivated charges.
Taoists *Consistent*	CCP leaders continue to view Taoism, an indigenous Chinese religion, as an attractive tool for building regime legitimacy on the basis of traditional Chinese culture and for improving relations with Taoist believers in Taiwan.
Catholics *Minor decrease*	Although some Catholic churches have been subjected to forced cross removals, relations between Beijing and the Vatican have warmed since March 2013. The two sides appear to be on the verge of a breakthrough agreement governing the appointment of bishops in China at a time when more than 40 vacancies have opened. Nevertheless, some prominent figures in the church remain skeptical about how much any deal would reduce repression of underground Catholics.
Falun Gong practitioners *Minor decrease*	Falun Gong practitioners across China continue to be subject to widespread and severe human rights violations. Nevertheless, repression appears to have declined in some locales. President Xi has offered no explicit indication of a plan to reverse the CCP's policy toward Falun Gong. But the imprisonment of former security czar Zhou Yongkang and other officials associated with the campaign as part of Xi's anticorruption drive, together with Falun Gong adherents' efforts to educate and discourage police from persecuting them, have had an impact.

Key Religious Controls (November 2012–November 2016)

#	Control	Chinese Buddhism/ Taoism	Christianity (Protestants + Catholics)[a]	Tibetan Buddhism	Islam (Uighurs)[b]	Falun Gong[c]
Total		8/24 (33%)	18/24 (75%)	22/24 (92%)	21/22 (95%)	18/18 (100%)
1	Oversight by "patriotic association"	●	●	●	●	n/a
2	Control over religious leader recruitment/training	●	●	●	●	n/a
3	Numerical limits on ordination/training	●	●	●	●	n/a
4	Closure/destruction of place of worship	●	●	●	●	n/a
5	Imprisonment of state-approved religious leader/monastic	●	●	●	●	n/a
6	Imprisonment of unofficial religious leader/monastic		●			n/a
7	Doctrinal interference/ manipulation		●	●	●	●
8	Ban of core religious tenet		●	●	●	●
9	Study of religious scriptures punished		●	●	●	●
10	Religious celebration restricted or punished		●	●	●	●
11	Imprisonment of lay believer	●	●	●	●	●
12	Imprisonment of 90+ believers		●	●	n/a	●
13	Imprisonment of 500+ believers				n/a	●
14	Detention for religious engagement online		●	●	●	●
15	Restrictions on children's participation	●	●	●	●	●
16	Political "reeducation" campaigns		●	●	●	●
17	Widespread torture			●	●	●
18	Extrajudicial killing		●	●	●	●
19	10+ extrajudicial deaths			●	●	●
20	New restrictive legal change			●	●	●
21	Restrictions on movement / passport allocation			●	●	●
22	Vilification in state media		●	●	●	●
23	Economic exploitation	●	●	●	●	●
24	Online censorship of religious communication			●	●	●

Notes:
a. In prison row, figures for Christians also include individuals held for belonging to banned quasi-Christian sects.
b. Due to "n/a," clearly clear cut, a treatment of Hui Muslims is not included here, and no assessment is made on whether 50+ or 500+ Uighurs were detained.
c. Several forms of control are not applicable to Falun Gong because it is neither a formally organized religion nor officially recognized and therefore lacks officially approved places of worship and state-appointed leaders.

Recommendations

The developments described in this report entail both costs and opportunities for Chinese society and the international community. On an almost daily basis, injuries are suffered, families are shattered, and lives are lost, but new avenues for practicing religion, reducing repression, and benefiting fellow citizens are also discovered.

Nearly one-third of China's population is affected by the Chinese Communist Party's religious policies. Within this group, an estimated 80 to 120 million believers belong to faith communities rated in this study as suffering from "high" or "very high" levels of persecution, highlighting the urgency of their plight.

As noted in the report's overview essay, the party-state's relations with religious groups have implications far beyond this particular policy area, influencing China's political, economic, and social development in critical ways. And in an increasingly interconnected world, the same dynamics have repercussions outside China's borders.

The findings of this report show that the Chinese authorities cannot make meaningful advances toward the rule of law, enhance free expression, reduce corruption, ensure social stability, or cultivate genuine interethnic harmony unless they begin to loosen their control over religion, end impunity, and release religious prisoners. Indeed, continued repression seems likely to undermine a variety of policy goals shared by the party, foreign governments, and international human rights advocates.

Meanwhile, although this study has attempted to provide a comprehensive assessment of religious revival, repression, and resistance in China, various aspects of the topic deserve further investigation.

In this context, Freedom House urges the Chinese government, foreign policymakers, international civil society and religious organizations, journalists, and researchers to promptly implement as many of the following recommendations as possible.

A. For the Chinese government

- **Adopt a more inclusive regulatory framework.** Expand the space for religious practice within the law by taking steps such as establishing legal personhood for religious venues and loosening registration rules. One possible change would be to eliminate the requirement of affiliation with a "patriotic association" so that more Christian "house churches," Buddhist and Taoist temples, and informal groups like Falun Gong can operate legally and openly.

- **Lift limitations on the practice of religion for certain populations.** Remove restrictions on children's religious participation to bring conditions in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which China has ratified. Remove restrictions on the ability of lay believers in Xinjiang and Tibetan areas, particularly government employees like civil servants and teachers, to observe the five pillars of Islam and routine elements of Tibetan Buddhist practice.

- **Reverse arbitrary decisions that significantly restrict religious space.** Several party policies regarding religion have an especially weak legal basis and have generated significant levels of repression and backlash from believers. The party should consider reversing these decisions. For example:
    - Allow Tibetans to revere the Dalai Lama as a religious figure. Cease vilifying him in state

media, conflating religious belief with political separatism, and punishing believers for possessing copies of his image or teachings.

- Repeal the ban on Falun Gong and abolish the extralegal 6-10 Office.

- Cease the campaign in Zhejiang Province to remove crosses from church buildings and permit places of worship to replace crosses that were taken down.

- Lift restrictions on believers wishing to travel to other parts of China or abroad, including for religious study or pilgrimage. End limitations on journalists' and researchers' access to sites of religious conflict, such as Uighur- and Tibetan-populated areas.

- **Release all religious prisoners.** Release from custody all individuals imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of belief and religious expression, including those documented in the Political Prisoner Database maintained by the U.S. Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) or mentioned by name in this report. When prosecuting future cases involving religious believers, grant judges greater authority to distinguish between peaceful religious practice and acts of violence.

- **Take steps to end impunity.** Encourage judges to reject evidence obtained from torture in cases involving religious violations, in accordance with broader judicial reform efforts. Investigate allegations of torture and all suspicious deaths of religious believers in custody or at the hands of security forces, and prosecute those responsible for any unlawful deaths mentioned in this report. Implement the relevant recommendations of the UN Committee Against Torture, in line with China's commitments as a party to the Convention Against Torture.

- **Cease organ transplants from prisoners.** End all organ transplants from prisoner populations and facilitate an independent international audit of organ sources to verify that the system is fully voluntary and transparent and does not victimize death-row or religious prisoners. Provide visas, freedom to travel, and access to medical files and relevant personnel to international experts investigating this issue.

B. For policymakers in the United States, Europe, and other democracies

- **Make religious freedom a priority in relations with the Chinese government.** Considering the scale and severity of violations of religious freedom and the presence of concerned coreligionists in many countries around the world, the issue is worthy of particular attention in democratic governments' interactions with Chinese officials.
    - Press the Chinese government to implement the recommendations listed above.

    - Ensure that officials at all levels of government, including the president or prime minister, and across agencies raise human rights generally and religious freedom specifically in all meetings with Chinese officials (in the United States, this should include officials from the White House, the Department of State, the Treasury Department, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and Congress).

    - Appoint religious freedom ambassadors with expertise in Chinese affairs. The Chinese government is one of the world's worst—and most extensive—violators of religious freedom, but it is also a sophisticated diplomatic interlocutor. Past performances indicate that appointees with previous experience in China are more effective in gaining access to and raising these sensitive topics with Chinese officials.

    - When raising the issue, incorporate it into discussions of other critical human rights areas (like judicial reform or free expression), address all relevant religious groups, and avoid using language that inadvertently reinforces Chinese government rhetoric justifying restrictions or vilifying believers.

- **Draw attention to abuses and their link to the national interests of other countries.**
    - Highlight the cases of specific individuals imprisoned or persecuted for their faith. Former political prisoners have consistently reported that when foreign officials raised their cases, their treatment in prison improved; in some instances they were even released after such interventions.

- Make public statements and private diplomatic demarches in a timely manner in response to events on the ground.

- Take parliamentary action, including holding hearings; delivering floor speeches; issuing press releases; sending open letters to U.S., Chinese, and other government officials; and drafting legislation.

- **Put foreign trips to good use.** Before traveling to China, foreign officials (including presidents, prime ministers, other ministers, secretaries, assistant secretaries, UN special rapporteurs, ambassadors, and legislators) should do the following:
  - Meet with Chinese religious believers who have recently fled China to hear their accounts of persecution firsthand and learn about pressing problems.

  - When preparing to meet with provincial or city-level Chinese officials, make use of publicly accessible resources to determine local conditions for religious freedom and the names of persecuted local believers. Such resources include the Freedom House map attached to this report, the CECC Political Prisoner Database, and human rights groups' individual prisoner alerts.

  - Be ready to respond forcefully if news emerges that persecution increased in the relevant region during or after the trip, as was the case for Christians surrounding the Group of 20 summit in 2016.

- **Increase penalties for violations of religious freedom.**
  - **Impose entry and property sanctions on officials** who have committed or been complicit in the abuse, torture, or persecution of religious believers. Many officials travel to the United States and Europe for personal matters and hold funds in foreign bank accounts. Penalizing perpetrators through the blocking of visas and freezing of foreign-based assets is an effective way to ensure that these individuals face some measure of justice and to deter future abusers. In many countries, including the United States, this can be done without enacting additional laws. Under the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA), for example, foreign government officials who have engaged in "particularly severe violations of religious freedom" and their spouses and children can be denied entry to the United States.

  - **Promptly delay or cancel official visits or exchanges**, with both central government and local or provincial officials, in response to egregious incidents of religious persecution.

  - For the United States government, **retain China's designation as a country of particular concern** (CPC) under the International Religious Freedom Act and **impose additional penalties available under the law**. China has been designated as a CPC—a country which "engages in or tolerates systematic, ongoing and egregious violations of religious freedom"—every year since 1999, but the executive branch has typically chosen not to impose a broad range of economic penalties available under IRFA.

- **Engage in multilateral action.**
  - **UN Human Rights Council:** Democratic countries on the council should issue a joint statement condemning the persecution of religious believers in China and worsening conditions for some groups, following the example of a recent joint statement on human rights in China more generally. Diplomatic resources should be devoted to encouraging participation by governments that may have constituencies interested in these issues but that do not typically criticize China's human rights record, including India, Indonesia, and South Korea.

  - **Interparliamentary initiatives:** Lawmakers in democratic states should undertake joint trips, coordinated resolutions, public statements, or letters on religious freedom in China.

- **Fund programs, policies, and research that will aid China's religious believers.**
  - Short-term emergency financial assistance allows religious believers to receive medical care, obtain legal counsel, leave the country, or meet other urgent needs.

  - Longer-term financial assistance is necessary for individuals forced to flee China for

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ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
SENATOR MARCO RUBIO, CHAIRMAN
REPRESENTATIVE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, COCHAIRMAN

September 12, 2018

The Honorable Wilbur Ross
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Secretary Ross:

Thank you for your response to our May 15, 2018 letter regarding controls on the sale by U.S. companies of surveillance and crime control technology for use by Chinese security forces and police. Our concerns are particularly acute as they relate to the Chinese government's pervasive surveillance and internment system targeting Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR).

We appreciated the Department making Mr. Anthony Christino, Director of the Bureau of Industry and Security's Foreign Policy Division, available to testify at a recent Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) hearing focused on the grave and deteriorating human rights situation in the XUAR.

Joining Mr. Christino on the hearing's government panel was Ambassador Kelley Currie, U.S. Representative to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, who characterized the scope of the campaign against Uyghur Muslims as "truly breathtaking" and described how "over the past year, hundreds of thousands of law-abiding Uighur citizens of China—men, women and even children—have disappeared into state custody…" Ambassador Currie focused specifically on the "highly intrusive, high-tech surveillance system in Xinjiang," which includes:

> *"thousands of surveillance cameras, including in mosques; facial recognition software; obligatory content-monitoring apps on smartphones and GPS devices on cars; widespread new police outposts with tens of thousands of newly-hired police and even Party personnel embedded in people's homes; and compulsory collection of vast biometric datasets on ethnic and religious minorities throughout the region, including DNA and blood samples, 3-D photos, iris scans, and voiceprints."*

The testimony of Ambassador Currie and other expert witnesses further underscored that the abuses occurring in the XUAR are contrary to the national security interests of the United States. U.S. companies should not be assisting in the expansion of China's systems for

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surveillance, detection, and detention, or be complicit in what are gross violations of internationally recognized human rights occurring daily in the XUAR.

While we believe that longstanding export restrictions on the sale of crime control or detection instruments or equipment to the People's Republic of China should prohibit all U.S. companies from aiding efforts to expand China's high-tech surveillance and detention of ethnic minority populations in China, we urge you to also add Chinese government and state security entities in the XUAR, and any businesses profiting from the expansion of the region's surge in security spending, to the U.S. Government's "Entity List" (Supplement 4, Part 744 of the Export Administration Regulations).

During the course of his testimony, Mr. Christino said the Commerce Department, as a result of information provided by the CECC, was reviewing whether there is sufficient evidence to justify additional end-user restrictions for XUAR police and security forces, among others. This was a welcomed acknowledgement. Given the national integration of China's state security apparatus, we believe there should also be a presumption of denial for any sale of technology or equipment that would make a direct and significant contribution to the police surveillance and detection system, including dual-use technology sold or resold to any elements of the Ministry of Public Security. In response to a question at the hearing, Mr. Christino assured the Commissioners that the Commerce Department possesses sufficient authority, within the interagency process, to make such determinations. Therefore, we respectfully request an update as to the status and anticipated timeline of this interagency process.

The U.S. government has clearly acknowledged the severity of the abuses in Xinjiang. Vice President Mike Pence and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo have both voiced public concern about these abuses and have specifically focused on the proliferation of "political reeducation" centers or camps throughout the region. Our export policy must reflect this reality.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Senator Marco Rubio
Chair

Representative Chris Smith
CoChair

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