



## **Transnational Repression Committed by Hong Kong and People's Republic of China**

House Foreign Affairs Committee  
Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission

Hearing on "Transnational Repression and the U.S. Response"

February 15, 2024 - 10 a.m.  
2247 Rayburn House Office Building

Testimony submitted by  
Frances Hui

Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong (CFHK) Foundation

Chairman McGovern, Chairman Smith, distinguished Members and all staff of the Commission, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. My name is Frances Hui. In 2021, I became the first Hong Kong activist to secure asylum in the U.S. Two years after that, the Hong Kong government placed a HK\$ 1 million bounty on me for my international advocacy.

For decades, the CCP has targeted the Hong Kong community, Uyghurs, Tibetans, Taiwanese and Chinese dissidents all around the world. The CCP, as Freedom House has indicated, is carrying out the world's most sophisticated and comprehensive campaign of transnational repression.<sup>1</sup>

I will use my time today to first describe some of my personal experiences as a target of transnational repression carried out by Beijing. Then I will conclude with some suggestions that the United States can adopt to counter the CCP's effort to silence dissent around the world.

The issue of transnational repression is a topic that is deeply personal to me.

During Hong Kong's pro-democracy movement in 2019 and 2020, I was a student studying at Emerson College in Boston. I coordinated rallies around the world in support of the movement and provided education about the situation in Hong Kong to members of Congress, allies, and the general public. During this time, I received both physical and online death threats. I also endured harassment and stalking, including being followed to my home and photographed on

---

<sup>1</sup> Written testimony by Yana Gorokhovskaia of the Freedom House (September 12, 2023). Available on <https://www.cecc.gov/sites/chinacommission.house.gov/files/documents/Yana%20Gorokhovskaia%20Testimony%20TNR%202023.pdf>



the streets; some people threatened to shoot me in the face at a rally I organized with other Hong Kongers in Boston.<sup>2</sup>

In May 2023, the Department of Justice indicted a Chinese-American citizen in Massachusetts, one of the Chinese agents who were tasked with spying on my activities, for allegedly acting as an agent of China. In the full indictment, I learned that at multiple events I organized, he took pictures and videos of me and other pro-democracy dissidents and sent them directly to Beijing officials. Other agents who assisted him had left the country before the government could act.

Last year, the Hong Kong authorities issued arrest warrants and HK\$ 1 million bounties (\$128,000) for the arrest of 13 overseas Hong Kongers — Including myself, five of the people are living in the U.S. Ever since that, the death threats I have received online have been unstoppable. Some of our immediate family members and even in-laws in Hong Kong have been detained for questioning and were used as a means to pass on threatening messages from the authorities to those of us living abroad. The CCP has long used this tactic to intimidate and silence dissidents abroad.

Transnational repression by the Hong Kong government extends beyond its own people. As Jimmy Lai's trial continues, several foreign citizens have been named as co-conspirators, including Ambassador James Cunningham, the board chair of my organization, the Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong Foundation, and a former U.S. consul general to Hong Kong. China also threatened former and the current U.S. consul generals to Hong Kong that they might be guilty of contempt of court after they voiced concerns over the city's liberties and Jimmy Lai's trial.

Two weeks ago, the Hong Kong government proposed the Article 23 legislation to target espionage, state secrets, and foreign influence. By revoking the passports of individuals under the new law, the Hong Kong government will likely abuse INTERPOL to hunt us down. It also makes it a crime to hide any information about "fugitives", meaning my family and friends will have to disclose any information about me to the police under penalty of prosecution.

CCP's acts of transnational repression violate Hong Kong's Basic Law, international treaties, the territorial sovereignty of other nations, and fundamental human rights. To counter this, a

---

<sup>2</sup> The most menacing experience happened in August 2019 when the Boston Hong Kong community organized a march from the Massachusetts State House to Boston Chinatown. Before the march, the Chinese community in the area discussed showing up to the march to attack attendees. Some even said they planned to carry firearms to shoot me in the face. At the rally, we were confronted by hundreds to a thousand Chinese mainlanders, some of whom vandalized our belongings and covered up our faces with big PRC national flags. As I returned to my home after a very intense stand-off, a Chinese man followed me to my home, and I had to call the local police twice to interrupt.



stronger, and more robust response from the U.S. is needed to define the consequences of carrying out such acts. This government should

1. Make full use of its sanction authorities to hold bad actors accountable for intimidating and threatening overseas Hong Kongers, and do so with multilateral cooperation among allies.
2. Prioritize concern for the CCP's transnational repression in any diplomatic engagements with Chinese counterparts.
3. Provide training on transnational repression for government officials, including federal, state, and local law enforcement authorities.
4. Encourage INTERPOL not to implement any requests by authoritarian regimes to target political dissidents.
5. Pass the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Offices Certification Act (H.R. 1103) to close the offices that are used by the Hong Kong and Chinese governments to monitor the activities of overseas Hong Kongers in the U.S.

I want to also thank the co-chairs for introducing the Transnational Repression Policy Act (H. R. 3654) last May which covers some of the suggestions above. The CFHK Foundation supports the legislation, and we look forward to seeing it passed into law.

As I come forward to share these personal stories of mine, I want to reaffirm to this Commission that the CCP's attempt to silence me will only become fuel to my advocacy. I will continue to speak up, to protect my community and advocate for those who are unjustly put behind bars. I appreciate the Commission's efforts to shine a light on this issue, and I look forward to working with you to address it.

#### **Suggested questions:**

1. You mentioned earlier about Hong Kong's new national security law, Article 23 legislation. Can you tell us more about that and how it will affect you and Hong Kong people living abroad?
2. Do you think the HKETO's presence in the U.S. increases the dangers to you and fellow targets of the Hong Kong government? If so, how?



3. We know what has happened to you and the rest of the people with bounties on their heads. But how has the CCP's transnational repression including the bounty affected the rest of the Hong Kong diaspora community?
4. You recently published a comprehensive report on religious freedom in Hong Kong titled "Hostile Takeover: The CCP and Hong Kong's Religious Communities," which details the CCP's effort to assert control over Hong Kong's religious sphere. Have any religious groups been under threats of transnational repression?