



VOLUME 22 • ISSUE 9 • MAY 13, 2022

IN THIS ISSUE:

**China’s New Global Security Initiative: Power Play?**

*By John S. Van Oudenaren* .....pp. 1-6

**Xi Jinping Revives Pro-market Policies to Bolster Economy Ahead of 20th Party Congress**

*By Willy Wo-Lap Lam*.....pp. 7-10

**Future Global Policeman? The Growing Extraterritorial Reach of PRC Law Enforcement**

*By Martin Purbrick* .....pp. 11-15

**Powering the PLA Abroad: How the Chinese Military Might Fuel Its Overseas Presence**

*By Nathan Beauchamp-Mustafaga* .....pp. 16-27

**Another Potemkin Visit? Rethinking the UN Human Rights Chief’s Upcoming Trip to Xinjiang**

*By Christelle Genoud* .....pp. 28-32

\*\*\*

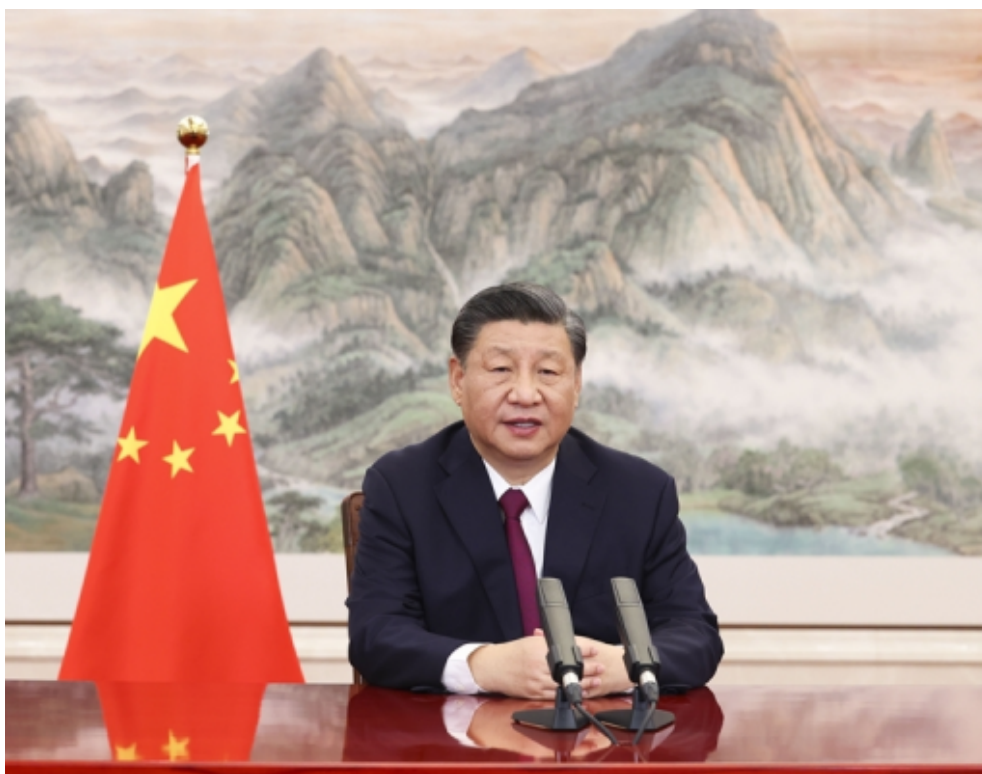
**China’s New Global Security Initiative: Power Play?**

*By John S. Van Oudenaren*

At the opening ceremony of the annual Boao Forum, President Xi Jinping announced that the People’s Republic of China (PRC) will establish a new “Global Security Initiative” (全球安全倡议, *quanqiu anquan huiyi*) to “promote the common security of the world” (*Xinhua*, April 21). In his remarks, Xi invoked the principle of “indivisible security” (安全不可分割, *anquan buke fenge*) as integral to building a “balanced, sustainable and effective” international security architecture. The concept of “indivisible security” is a relic of the Cold War era Helsinki Accords (1975) that has become a core principle of contemporary Russian foreign policy under

President Vladimir Putin. The Kremlin frequently cites the principle to press its case that the U.S. and its European allies are obligated not to strengthen their “own security at the expense of the security of other countries” ([TASS](#), February 15). In practice, however, Moscow’s calls for “indivisible security” are used to justify its opposition to both NATO’s active presence in Central and Eastern Europe, and any moves by states on Russia’s periphery to deepen relations with NATO or the European Union ([Eurasia Daily Monitor](#), January 18).

Since the onset of the Ukraine crisis late last year, the principle of “indivisible security” has become increasingly prevalent in China’s official rhetoric concerning European security in particular, and international security in general ([Xinhuanet](#), May 9). When queried about the newly launched PRC-led Global Security Initiative (GSI), U.S. State Department Spokesperson Ned Price was quick to link the initiative to Russia, observing that “we have continued to see the PRC parrot some of what we have heard coming from the Kremlin” and this “apparently applies to the concept of indivisible security.” He also noted that Russia and the PRC challenge and “in certain instances seek to tear down and even destroy” the current “rules-based international order,” which the U.S. is committed to preserving ([U.S. Department of State](#), April 21).



(Image: Chinese President Xi Jinping addresses the annual Boao Forum on April 21, Source: FMPRC)

### **Nebulous By Design?**

Xi’s appropriation of the concept of “indivisible security” from Putin’s Russia is redolent of China’s past calls for “inclusive security” in the Asia-Pacific region ([CGTN](#), February 19, 2017). The concept also accords with core concepts in the PRC’s contemporary foreign policy canon: “mutual benefit and win-win cooperation”, conducting foreign relations based on “extensive consultation, joint construction and global sharing”, and pursuing a “community with a shared future for mankind” ([People.cn](#), February 17; [PRC Ministry of Foreign](#)

[Affairs \(FMPRC\)](#), December 18, 2021). International reaction to Xi's announcement of the new GSI was muted with Western media quick to note its lack of specificity. [1] It is worth noting that many observers were similarly underwhelmed by the rollout of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in late 2013. This is in part because these initiatives are characterized by phrases such as “mutual benefit and win-win [cooperation]” (互利 共赢, *huli gongying*) that have specific connotations in the lexicon of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and Xi Jinping Thought, but which can sometimes strike external audiences as empty slogans ([People.cn](#), April 24; [Guangming Daily](#), February 24; [Qiushi](#), July 21, 2021).

The initial nebulosity of GSI reflects the PRC's preferred approach to international diplomacy. Rather than commit to formal bilateral or multilateral treaty alliances, China prefers to maintain a hierarchical network of strategic partnerships. In order to provide coherence and leverage these bilateral partnerships, Beijing has established an array of multilateral regional groups including the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Forum on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), the 16+1 forum with Central and Eastern Europe Countries, and the China-Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) Forum ([China Brief](#), December 3, 2021). The GSI extends these efforts by providing a military complement to China's transnational geo-economic initiatives (e.g. the Global Development Initiative, BRI), which could eventually provide a security framework for China's regional and bilateral partnerships.

However, as the GSI is grounded primarily in opposition to the U.S., rather than any positive vision for global security affairs, it is likely to struggle to attract the same level of participation as China's economic and regional diplomacy initiatives. As a result, the group risks becoming a coterie of authoritarian and semi-authoritarian states motivated by shared antipathy toward the U.S. A key litmus test of whether the GSI can avoid this fate is if it can attract states that have sought to tread a middle-ground in US-China competition such as Malaysia, Indonesia, the United Arab Emirates and others.

### **Bloc versus Bloc**

Xi's decision to launch a global security grouping is the culmination of a shift away from the reactive and defensive approach that characterized the PRC's approach to world politics in the 1990s and 2000s, wherein Beijing vigorously asserted its interests and principles vis-à-vis the U.S. and other major powers, but nevertheless largely eschewed any pretensions to global leadership. Under Xi, the PRC has abandoned this Dengist- “hide and bide” approach, and has sought to become a leading voice in all aspects of human affairs, including global security, which has long been the purview of the U.S., and to a lesser extent, Russia ([Straits Times](#), May 9). Nevertheless, the current PRC leadership's motivation to develop China into an international leader derives more from Xi's embrace of strategic competition with the U.S. than it does from any proactive vision for global affairs. In many ways, China's advancement of alternatives to the prevailing international system amounts to a sophisticated effort to insulate the CCP system from external geopolitical threats, the U.S. above all, and to buy time to pursue Xi's domestic vision of achieving national rejuvenation by mid-century.

This intense focus on the U.S. was reflected in Xi's Boao Forum address. Xi stipulated that GSI will promote common global security through “six commitments” (六个坚持, *liu ge jianchi*), most of which amount to implicit criticisms of U.S. international leadership ([CCTV](#), April 22). The six commitments are as follows:

- 1) Adhere to the vision of “common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, and joint cooperation to advance world peace and security”
- 2) Remain committed to mutual respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states, and respect for different countries’ independent development paths
- 3) Follow the principles of the UN Charter, reject the Cold War mentality, oppose unilateralism and confrontation between rival blocs
- 4) Respect the legitimate security concerns of all nations, uphold the principle of indivisible security and build a balanced, effective international security architecture that does not center on only one country’s insecurities
- 5) Seek to always resolve differences through dialogue, oppose double standards, “long-arm jurisdiction” or unilateral sanctions
- 6) Insist on joint coordination to manage traditional and non-traditional security challenges, cooperation on shared regional and global challenges such as terrorism, cybersecurity and climate change

The six commitments reiterate longstanding Chinese foreign policy principles such as non-interference and respect for national sovereignty ([CGTN](#), April 23). However, the primary theme (albeit an implicit one) is contrasting the virtuosity of China as a champion of genuine multilateralism and inclusive security, with the perfidy of the U.S, which is cast as a fading but reckless hegemon animated by a unilateral “Cold War mentality.” In this telling, the U.S. is the primary culprit for the currently imbalanced international security architecture that neglects the “legitimate security” interests of many countries including major powers like China and Russia.

Beijing has frequently emphasized the need to abandon the selective multilateralism that characterizes U.S. foreign policy in favor of “true multilateralism” ([China Brief](#), April 29). In doing so, the PRC aligns with the Kremlin’s perspective that the primary driver of the ongoing Ukraine conflict is the supposed threat to Russian security from NATO enlargement ([Moscow Times](#), February 2). For example, in his remarks on implementing the GSI, Foreign Minister Wang Yi calls for “practicing true multilateralism” to counteract “attempts to stoke confrontation and division along ideological lines, forge “small cliques”, undermine the international order in the name of preserving so-called “rules”, and put the world under the shadow of a “new Cold War” ([People.cn](#), April 24). Beijing has long explicitly criticized Washington for building “closed and exclusive cliques,” and its lingering “Cold War mentality” ([China Brief](#), October 22). These criticisms escalated with the announcement of the Australia-UK- US agreement (AUKUS) last fall, and intensified still further with Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February. For example, when asked about the U.S. role in the Ukraine conflict, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian alleged that “the moves of the US-led NATO have escalated the tension between Russia and Ukraine to the breaking point” ([FMPRC](#), April 12). He stated that the U.S. “is obsessed with drawing ideological lines when forming closed and exclusive cliques,” and that its “real agenda is to prolong US’ hegemony and power politics.”

Despite Beijing's claims that the GSI seeks to advance "common security" and is not based on zero-sum geopolitical calculations, much of the initiative appears predicated on countering both U.S. influence in the international system, and undermining the premise of NATO, and the emerging network of minilateral security groupings in the Indo-Pacific region, particularly the QUAD and AUKUS.

## **Conclusion**

The timing of Xi's recent GSI-launch is curious as it coincides with efforts underway since last fall to achieve a modest reset in relations with the U.S. In a critical political year wherein Xi is seeking to consolidate his hold on power at the upcoming 20<sup>th</sup> Party Congress this fall, Beijing has emphasized economic stability above all else ([China Brief](#), March 7). However, the Chinese economy faces serious headwinds due to global recessionary pressures, and the high costs imposed by continued adherence to its strict zero-COVID strategy. In order to counteract these drags, Xi has temporarily overseen a loosening of restrictions on private firms, and sought to lower barriers to economic interaction with the U.S. For example, financial officials recently indicated progress in negotiations with U.S. regulators to increase financial transparency of firms listed on U.S. exchanges, which may help forestall further delisting of Chinese companies ([China Brief](#), May 5).

In February, the PRC organized several commemorations of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of President Nixon's 1972 trip to China and the signing of the Shanghai Communique, which paved the way for the eventual normalization of relations. At a gala hosted by the Nixon Foundation, PRC Ambassador Qin Gang exclaimed that despite major differences, "our common interests have never been as extensive as today" ([FMPRC](#), February 25). The National Committee on U.S.-China Relations (NCUSCR) hosted an 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration headlined by former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger ([NCUSCR](#), February 24). Nevertheless, no serving U.S. official spoke at the festivities to mark the Nixon visit's anniversary, which received far more coverage in China than it did in the U.S. ([Xinhua](#), February 28). In fact, Washington was so unenthusiastic about the milestone that the State Department did not issue a press release on the anniversary of the Shanghai Communique ([Taipei Times](#), March 17). By contrast, the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Nixon's visit in 2012 saw a flurry of high-level, official U.S. engagement as then Vice President Joe Biden used the occasion to host then Vice President Xi Jinping on a visit to the U.S. ([PRC Embassy in the U.S.](#), February 15, 2012).

The limited momentum that Beijing achieved in its half-hearted push to improve ties with Washington quickly dissipated in late February as Washington and Beijing staked out opposing positions on Ukraine. In the context of these already fraught relations, the GSI's framing and borrowing from the Kremlin's foreign policy lexicon is likely to be interpreted in Washington as another signal that Beijing remains fundamentally oriented not toward cooperation, but strategic rivalry with America.

*John S. Van Oudenaren is Editor-in-Chief of China Brief. For any comments, queries, or submissions, please reach out to him at: [cbeditor@jamestown.org](mailto:cbeditor@jamestown.org).*

**Notes**

[1] See for example: Kevin Yao and Yew Lun Tian, “China's Xi proposes 'global security initiative', without giving details,” Reuters, April 21, <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/chinas-xi-says-unilateral-sanctions-will-not-work-2022-04-21/>

Matt Young, “China’s president Xi Jinping appears in rare speech with cryptic messages,” [news.com.au](https://www.news.com.au), April 21

\*\*\*

## Xi Jinping Revives Pro-market Policies to Bolster Economy Ahead of 20th Party Congress

By Willy Wo-Lap Lam



(Image: People test a virtual reality simulation at the China Hi-Tech Fair in Shenzhen, Guangdong province last December.; Source: CAS)

### Introduction

Are President Xi Jinping's recent turn to liberalized measures on technology firms and his commitment to using infrastructure projects to boost the economy an indication that the supreme leader has adopted a relatively pro-market approach to policymaking? At a late April Politburo meeting, Xi, who is also General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), said that Beijing would promote the "healthy development" of the internet platform economy through "normalizing control over the tech sector," and that specific measures would be taken to boost high technology industries, especially information technology (IT) conglomerates. Xi has also stopped mentioning the goal of "common prosperity," which has been used as a pretext to squeeze tycoons running multi-billion-dollar technology giants ([CCTV.com](http://CCTV.com), May 2; [SCMP](http://SCMP), April 29). At the same time, Xi is pulling out all the stops to ensure that this year's GDP growth target of 5.5 percent is reached. The "core of the CCP leadership" has emphasized that the Chinese economy must

expand at a higher rate than that of the United States in order to demonstrate “the superiority of the Chinese system” ([Deutsche Welle Chinese](#), April 27; [Radio French International](#), April 27).

Apart from factors such as the massive COVID-19 outbreak in major cities including Shanghai and Beijing, the Chinese economy has suffered from snarled logistics, faltering manufacturing output and lagging consumer spending. Also significant are “self-inflicted wounds” such as President Xi’s decision to suppress the ambitious expansion of IT giants such as the Alibaba’s Ant Group and Didi Chuxing; private education companies; and video game producers. Alibaba and Tencent, China’s two biggest e-commerce firms, were hit with billions of yuan worth of fines late last year for allegedly failing to observe market regulations. Several IT tycoons including Ma Yun and Ma Huateng were obliged to donate billions of yuan to state coffers ([SCMP](#), November 21, 2021; [VOA Chinese](#), October 1, 2021). A number of Chinese companies listed on the New York Stock Exchange and Nasdaq were told to quit the U.S. market to avoid possible “leakage of state secrets.” Children have been forbidden from playing video games for over three hours a week ([Xinhuanet](#), September 2). These strictures have wiped out more than \$2 trillion from the valuations of technology conglomerates. Xi has also adopted a tit for tat approach toward Washington’s decision to bar American businesses from investing in Chinese companies with links to the military and intelligence ([BusinessTimes.com.sg](#), March 19; [Global Times](#), March 8).

### **A Policy U-Turn**

Last month, Xi protégé and economic advisor Liu He first announced the government’s policy shift concerning technology firms. Politburo member and Vice Premier Liu said at a high-level financial conference on March 16 that the regulatory storm over technology firms would soon subside. Liu also urged transparency for new regulations, including anti-trust measures. He added that “policymakers must be cautious when implementing rules that might hurt the market” Liu’s statement spurred a temporary rally in the Shanghai and Hong Kong stock markets ([Xinhua](#), March 16; [News.china.com](#), March 16). In early May, the People’s Bank of China also indicated it would introduce “normalized supervision [over platform IT firms] and bolster the sector’s healthy development” ([Caixinglobal.com](#), May 5).

President Xi has also devised multi-pronged tactics to boost the economy. These include lowering interest and mortgage rates as well as the reserve requirements for banks. Spending coupons worth 500 million yuan were recently made available to Shenzhen residents ([Nanfang Daily](#), April 24). Above all, Xi has indicated an ambitious program to boost infrastructure development with priority allocated to the telecommunications, electricity, waterworks, transport and energy sectors. Given the possibility of economic decoupling between China and the U.S.-led Western alliance – particularly in the IT sector – a multi-billion yuan budget is being earmarked for cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence, quantum computing, microchips and logistics ([Caixinglobal.com](#), April 30). An official media statement averred that the government would prioritize “speeding up infrastructure building in the information and internet areas” ([Enorth.com.cn](#), April 29; [Xinhua](#), April 26). However, as Beijing has for the past decade relied on government capital injections in infrastructure projects to maintain high growth rates, the administration has to alleviate both Chinese and foreign stakeholders’ concerns that investment in public works and advanced technology will not spurn wastefulness of resources, or further overload a national debt load that is equivalent to at least three times China’s GDP ([M.jiamin.com](#), April 14).



### **Conflicting Signals**

In his speech at the annual Boao Forum last month, Xi noted that China would continue its open-door policy and boost economic links with different countries in order to “build a community of common destiny” ([China.gov.cn](http://China.gov.cn), April 21). Yet, given the heated strategic competition between China on the one hand, and the U.S. and its European and Asian allies on the other, it is difficult to envision breakthroughs in areas such as foreign trade and investment. However, relatively reform-minded financial officials recently hinted that progress was expected to be made in negotiations with U.S. regulators regarding boosting the transparency of the accounts and financial statements of Chinese companies listed in the U.S. This could help limit the number of Chinese firms barred from entering U.S. markets ([VOA Chinese](http://VOA.Chinese), May 3, [BBC Chinese](http://BBC.Chinese), April 7). Equally significant is that in a late April press briefing, the usually hawkish Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian emphasized the long-standing goodwill between Chinese and Americans. “The friendship between the peoples of both countries is the fountainhead and important basis for the development of bilateral relations,” he said ([MFA](http://MFA), April 29). This is an apparent indication that given Washington’s disapproval of Beijing’s support for the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Xi leadership is anxious to prevent anti-Chinese feelings in America from harming economic relations with the U.S. and its allies.

There are, however, conflicting signals that suggest that Xi is making these concessions mainly to jack up a flagging economy in the run-up to the pivotal 20th Party Congress this autumn. The supreme leader is expected to seek the approval of the 2,000-odd congress delegates to approve his bid to become “leader for life” ([Radio Free Asia](http://Radio Free Asia), April 27; [Central News Agency](http://Central News Agency), April 27). For example, Xi stated at a Politburo study session in late April that due to the deepening of reform, different types of capital are allowed to co-exist in socialist China. These include state capital, the capital of collectives, private capital, foreign capital and firms with mixed capital components. However, he doubled down on strict *jianguan* (supervision and management) of capital as essential to ensure fair competition, forestall bubbles, and prevent unfair “distribution of the interests of capital.” Xi advocated a system of “red and green lights” to ensure that only capital that is amenable to party-state control is allowed into the socialist economy ([Gov.cn](http://Gov.cn), April 30; [Finance.sina.com](http://Finance.sina.com), April 30). This insistence on stiff ideological standards seems to signal that high-tech multinationals like Alibaba and Tencent, which are deemed China’s most successful enterprises, will continue to be controlled by party cells that Xi has installed in their upper echelons.

### **Toward Self-Reliance?**

Even more significant than Xi’s emphasis on tight capital management is his concept of building a “united national market” (全国统一大市场, *quanguo tongyi dashichang*) in the name of eliminating bureaucratic red tape and clamping down on provincial protectionism. Last month, a statement by the CCP Central Committee and the State Council declared that a united national market should be forged to curb artificially demarcated regional markets and to “open up key blockades which limit [national] economic circulation.” The document added that Beijing “must speed up the construction of a fully open and nationally united market [in the interest of] fair competition and full transparency” ([CCTV.com](http://CCTV.com), April 12; [Gov.cn](http://Gov.cn), April 10). While the Xi leadership has claimed that this new idea advances reform, it stresses the need for “highly efficient regulation.” Moreover, the national market concept dovetails with Beijing’s earlier theory of “internal

circulation” (国内大循环, *guonei daxuanhuan*). Internal circulation is seen as laying the groundwork for self-reliance should further decoupling between the Chinese and U.S. markets occur ([Radio French International](#), January 6; [HK.finance.yahoo](#), January 4). It is understood that in accordance with Xi’s oft-repeated dictum of *dingceng shezhi* (“top-level design”), the concepts of internal circulation and a united national market could provide further opportunities for party leadership to enforce state plans and curtail decentralized decision-making. By contrast, centrifugalism was tolerated by the great architect of reform, Deng Xiaoping, in order to boost market forces in the economy.

Critics of Xi have also zeroed in on the supreme leader’s insistence on adhering to the zero-tolerance COVID policy in Shanghai and many other cities as indications of his administration’s propensity to exert control over the daily lives of citizens. Tighter party control has also extended to the villages in an apparent attempt to fulfill Xi’s orders to lessen the country’s dependence on wheat and grain imports. In a late March article, Xi noted that “the party’s topmost priority is to ensure [the success of] work regarding agriculture, farmers and rural areas” and that the “entire effort of the whole party and society should be pushing forward the revitalization of villages” ([Gov.cn](#), March 31). A recent Ministry of Agriculture edict on rural work development stipulated that annual grain production must not fall below 650 billion kg. The document underscored the need to “strengthen the quality and safety (levels) of the country’s agricultural produce.” It introduced the concept of so-called “grid control” (网格管理, *wangge guanli*) of villages. Under this arrangement rural districts, like urban areas, would be divided into “grids” where state-security and police personnel are assigned to ensure that the activities of farmers accord with party-state requirements ([MOA.Gov.cn](#), March 1; [Xinhua](#), February 22).

## Conclusion

A Xinhua readout of a late April Politburo meeting underscored the imperative of “the prevention of the pandemic, the stabilization of the economy and the safety of development.” It noted that due to a number of factors including the spread of COVID-19 and the Ukraine crisis, “the complexity, severity and uncertainty [of the economy] has risen... [and all parties] should stabilize growth, employment and price levels.” Echoing statements made earlier by Xi, the Politburo warned that cadres of all levels must beware of “black swan and grey rhino events” – a reference to unanticipated calamities as well as crises that are obvious but overlooked ([Xinhua](#), April 30; [People’s Daily](#), April 30). The relatively open-minded policies tolerated by Xi particularly toward technology firms provide an indication of the extent to which the supreme leader is willing to acquiesce to more market-oriented measures. However, Xi’s deep-seated preference for party-state control of both economic and political activities, could mean that rigid supervision of the polity is revived after he attains a third term in office at the 20th Party Congress later this year.

*Dr. Willy Wo-Lap Lam is a Senior Fellow at The Jamestown Foundation and a regular contributor to China Brief. He is an Adjunct Professor in the History Department and Master’s Program in Global Political Economy at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He is the author of six books on China, including Chinese Politics in the Era of Xi Jinping (2015). His latest book, The Fight for China’s Future, was released by Routledge Publishing in 2020.*

## Future Global Policeman? The Growing Extraterritorial Reach of PRC Law Enforcement

*By Martin Purbrick*



(Image: Chinese police officers aboard a patrol boat on the Mekong River, source: [China Daily](#))

### Introduction

The recently signed security agreement between the Solomon Islands and the People's Republic of China (PRC), along with the support of Chinese police to the Solomon Islands government to suppress social unrest in November 2021, highlight the increasing international deployment of PRC law enforcement ([China Daily](#), April 2). This deployment follows several decades of expanding PRC international law enforcement activity, which is intended for extraterritorial enforcement action, seeking the return of fugitives, and as part of China's engagement with other countries.

The 2021 violence in the capital, Honiara, led to destruction in the local Chinatown and the subsequent deployment of Chinese police officers, who have previously provided equipment and training to the Solomon Islands. The China Police Liaison Team is led by Zhang Guangbo, an officer of the rank of Commissioner third class, who stated that the deployment is intended to protect the safety of Chinese communities in the Solomon Islands as well as to contribute to the overall stability in the islands ([Embassy of the PRC in the Solomon Islands](#), March 4). There has been considerable unease in wider region over the expanded deployment of Chinese police officers to the Solomon Islands. The governments of Australia, Japan, and the United States have all criticized the security pact, and have raised concerns that the deployment of Chinese police officers could lead to a future military presence. Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Marise Payne stated on March 25 that "Australia is aware of the proposed draft Security Cooperation agreement between China and Solomon Islands...We would be particularly concerned by any actions that undermine the stability and security of our region, including the establishment of a permanent presence such as a military base" ([Australian Ministry for](#)

[Foreign Affairs](#), March 2022). In response to these concerns, the Solomon Islands High Commissioner to Australia has said that if Chinese police officers were called on for assistance they would be under the command of the Royal Solomon Islands Police and stated that “We will try and do our best in terms of dealing with them to make sure that what is happening in other countries where, like Hong Kong, doesn’t happen in our country” ([Solomon Times](#), 6 May 2022).

The Chinese police deployment to the Solomon Islands is part of the PRC’s efforts to develop closer ties with the Pacific Islands through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which is described as “a reflection of the indomitable spirit of the Chinese people and the symbiotic relationship with the Communist Party of China (CPC) that they can help Pacific nations in their sustainable development goals” ([National Development and Reform Commission](#), July 27, 2021). However, these official statements neglect to note that the influence of the PRC agencies is not necessarily welcomed by ethnic Chinese in the Solomon Islands, many of whom are from families that have resided there for generations and who became Christians during British colonial rule. Most importantly, the presence of PRC police is likely to grow as part of efforts to ensure that the Solomon Islands does not reverse its September 2019 decision to switch diplomatic recognition of the Republic of China (Taiwan) for China, which ended 36 years of diplomatic relations with Taiwan.

As the PRC has expanded its economic power through the BRI, it has also exported criminality, including online fraud, online gambling, human trafficking (for slavery and prostitution), animal or animal parts trafficking (for use in traditional Chinese medicine), and money laundering ([China Brief](#), March 25). This growing regional Chinese organized crime problem has led PRC law enforcement agencies to expand their operations outside of their national borders and increase collaboration with police in other Asian countries.

PRC overseas law enforcement operates in three main areas: enforcement action against crime in neighboring countries that affect citizens living abroad or within China; the overseas “Fox Hunt” search and apprehension of suspects wanted for crimes in the PRC, most often corruption; and finally, the pursuit of political dissidents or opponents of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

### **Crime Affecting Chinese Citizens Overseas**

Crime affecting Chinese citizens in neighboring countries is illustrated by the People’s Armed Police (PAP) joint armed patrols along the Mekong River. These patrols, which occur outside of China’s borders with police forces from Laos, Myanmar, and Thailand, have been underway since 2011. In March, these countries undertook the 115<sup>th</sup> joint Mekong River patrol involving 81 officers sailing over 680 kilometers, and including two Chinese law enforcement vessels from Yunnan Province ([Ministry of Public Security](#), March 29). The deployment of PAP patrols has created a “pax sinica” on the Mekong River, which is important for PRC economic interests in neighboring countries ([Asian Affairs](#), February 15, 2018).

The Mekong River is a vital geostrategic waterway for cross-border shipping as it runs through China, Myanmar, Laos, and Thailand, but the area suffers from significant crime including drug smuggling, arms trafficking, and piracy. In October 2011, the discovery of two deserted Chinese cargo ships carrying 920,000 amphetamine pills and the murder of 13 Chinese crew members triggered greater action by the PRC authorities. The culprit for these acts of murder and piracy was “Naw Kham,” an ethnic Burmese former officer

in the Mong Tai Army of the late warlord Khun Sa, and his 60 to 100 gunmen known as the “Hawngleuk militia” based in eastern Shan State. The group patrolled the Mekong on speedboats trafficking drugs, and committing robbery, kidnapping, and murder without being interdicted by Myanmar, Laos, and Thailand authorities ([The Irrawaddy](#), October 13, 2011).

Authorities targeted Naw Kham and his gang with Chinese and Lao police officers raiding locations in Laos, leading to his arrest in April 2012 ([The Irrawaddy](#), May 11, 2012). Following his arrest, Naw Kham and his associates were sent to China and tried in Kunming, where they were convicted of the murder of the 13 Chinese sailors on the Mekong River, which highlighted the influence of Chinese authorities vis-à-vis its neighbors. In March 2013, Naw Kham and his colleagues were executed in Kunming by lethal injection, showing that the reach of PRC law enforcement is not only long, but also deadly ([China Daily](#), March 1, 2013).

### **Overseas Crime Targeting Chinese Citizens in the PRC**

In recent years, Chinese organized crime groups have exploited the PRC’s international economic expansion to increase their overseas presence ([China Brief](#), March 25). This has driven PRC law enforcement agencies to pursue Chinese criminals in other jurisdictions. Key areas of this transnational organized crime include gambling and fraud targeting PRC citizens inside China. In April, authorities reported that in the past year they have destroyed 2,500 gambling platforms and over 1,900 illegal payment platforms and underground banks. These included criminal groups with revenue of over 1.6 billion yuan (\$251 million) in Jilin and Heilongjiang Provinces, and 15 billion yuan (\$2.3 billion) in Chongqing, Sichuan Province ([Ministry of Public Security](#), April 1, 2022).

Over the past decade, the PRC has also been plagued by telecommunications and cyber fraud, perpetrated by Chinese gangs operating across Asia. Six of the ten alleged masterminds of telecom and cyber fraud who established bases in the Philippines, Cambodia, and Myanmar, allegedly recruited gang members from the PRC to solicit people in China for fraudulent investments and gambling ([Ministry of Public Security](#), October 24, 2020). For China, the extent of economic loss from telecommunications fraud is huge, reportedly amounting to 35.37 billion yuan (\$5.5 billion) in 2020 ([Ministry of Public Security](#), June 22, 2021).

Law enforcement action against Chinese criminals overseas does not even have to involve leaving the country. The Public Security Bureau (PSB) in multiple provinces reportedly threatened fugitives in Myanmar that they would suspend pensions and medical coverage of their relatives in the PRC if they did not voluntarily return home to face trial ([Reuters](#), June 2021).

### **Corruption – “Fox Hunt” and “Sky Net”**

The PRC’s huge economic growth over the past two decades has resulted in systematic corruption and a large number of fugitives from justice. At the onset of General Secretary Xi Jinping’s tenure (2012-), the Ministry of Public Security launched “Fox Hunt” (猎狐, *lie hu*) for Chinese fugitives wanted for corruption. The driver of the “Fox Hunt” operations was the huge number of fugitive officials facing corruption charges as a result of Xi’s anti-corruption campaign. From 2012-2014, around 18,000 officials reportedly fled overseas taking over 800

billion yuan (\$125 billion) with them, largely to Asia Pacific countries with large Chinese communities ([China Daily](#), November 12, 2014).

Launched in 2015, “Sky Net” (天网, *tian wang*) involved a division of labor among multiple agencies. The State Supervisory Commission led the international pursuit of fugitives and stolen goods for duty-related crimes. The Ministry of Public Security carried out the “Fox Hunting” special operation to track down officials in hiding abroad. The People’s Bank of China, together with the Ministry of Public Security, worked to target offshore companies and underground banks that transfer illicit money overseas. Finally, the Supreme People’s Court and the Supreme People’s Procuratorate undertook judicial action against those apprehended for crimes ([Central Commission for Discipline Inspection](#), March 3).

Both “Fox Hunt” and “Sky Net” are problematic for several reasons. First, the conviction rate for criminal charges in the PRC is reported to be 99.9 percent and only 30 percent of defendants are represented by lawyers, indicating insufficient legal protections for individuals and no presumption of innocence until proven guilty. The presumption of guilt is even greater in cases concerning politics, for instance, trials of dissidents. Countries with a system that provides legal rights for all individuals have great difficulty extraditing suspects to the PRC. This leads to the second problem, which is that many of the fugitives wanted by the PRC authorities may also be subject to politically-related arrest.

By 2015, the PRC had signed extradition treaties with 39 countries, judicial assistance treaties with 52 countries, and agreements for cooperation with 91 countries. In addition, the PRC had entered police cooperation with 189 countries and sent 62 police liaison officers to 36 Chinese embassies in 31 countries ([China Daily](#), March 20, 2015). However, some countries where fugitives may have fled have either avoided signing extradition agreements with the PRC or have rescinded them following the introduction of the National Security Law to Hong Kong in 2020. These include Australia, Canada, Germany, Finland, Ireland, the Netherlands, the UK, and the United States.

The lack of formal extradition arrangements with so many countries has forced the PRC authorities to use alternative means to apprehend fugitives. “Persuasion” has become a common tactic, which human rights groups have called “involuntary returns.” Such returns are achieved by threats against family members in the PRC, directly approaching and intimidating the fugitive overseas, or outright kidnapping ([Safeguard Defenders](#), January 18). Involuntary returns of Chinese nationals to the PRC comprise a mix of genuine criminal fugitives, officials who have fallen out of favor with the CCP leadership, and others pursued for their religious or political beliefs. The latter includes Falun Gong practitioners, Uyghurs from Xinjiang, Tibetans, and more recently, protesters from Hong Kong. The resultant lack of clarity regarding which cases relate to genuine criminality is worsened by the involvement of multiple PRC government agencies.

In January 2017, Chinese billionaire Xiao Jianhua, founder of the Tomorrow Group, was taken by a group of people from the Four Seasons Hotel in Hong Kong and has not been seen in public since ([South China Morning Post \(SCMP\)](#), January 31, 2017). There were multiple unconfirmed reports that Xiao may have been abducted by Ministry of State Security officers, possibly because of his close financial connections to senior PRC leaders. Similar concerns were raised in late 2015, when five Hong Kong booksellers linked to the Hong Kong publisher Mighty House, known for selling books critical of China’s leaders, disappeared and were later found to have

been held by PRC authorities. All five later appeared in Mainland China and were reported as being under investigation for illegally delivering banned books to customers across the border. Swedish national Gui Minhai, the owner of the publishing house, was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment for “illegally providing intelligence to overseas entities.” One of the imprisoned booksellers later claimed that his confession was coerced ([SCMP](#), June 21, 2020).

## **Conclusion**

The systematic international pursuit of fugitives by PRC authorities since 2014 shows a determination to apprehend corrupt officials, political critics, and political opponents. Legal channels for extradition have narrowed as a result of the reticence of many governments to have formal return of suspects to face the legal system in the PRC. The result has been a widening of extraterritorial activities by the PRC authorities, employing coercion, rendition, and even kidnapping to ensure repatriation of suspects. As the economic and political influence of the PRC expands, it is likely that the extraterritorial work of its law enforcement and state security agencies will rise as well. The growing deployment of PRC law enforcement officers to other countries also raises the question of whether China may become the world’s policeman in the near future.

*Martin Purbrick is a writer, analyst, and consultant. He spent over 32 years in Asia working in the Royal Hong Kong Police serving in Special Branch and the Criminal Intelligence Bureau, followed by senior leadership roles managing financial crime risk with several major companies.*

## Powering the PLA Abroad: How the Chinese Military Might Fuel Its Overseas Presence

*By Nathan Beauchamp-Mustafaga*



(Image: PLA Soldiers observe a water tank heated by solar energy, **Source:** People's Daily Online)

### Introduction

The establishment of China's first official overseas military base in Djibouti in 2017 set the precedent for People's Liberation Army (PLA) units to be permanently stationed abroad. Many foreign analysts assume that China will continue expanding its overseas military presence, most likely through a mix of adding new bases and leveraging dual-use ports. The 2021 U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) report on the Chinese military lists "Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, United Arab Emirates, Kenya, Seychelles, Tanzania, Angola, and Tajikistan" as locations where Beijing is "pursuing additional military facilities to support naval, air, ground, cyber, and space power projection" ([DoD](#), November 3, 2021). China faces many challenges in establishing and sustaining a more global military presence, but one overlooked yet fundamental consideration is the energy resources necessary to fuel its international military presence and operations. This article explores PLA research concerning potential challenges of overseas energy supplies and one perhaps surprising solution: renewable energy.

### It's Hard to Find Friends with Power to Spare

The PLA will require multiple types of power generation and storage to support operations abroad including electricity for base operations, and fuel for ships, vehicles, and perhaps aircraft. How much electricity will be needed appears unaddressed, although at least some parts of the PLA do research fuel requirements for specific operations. [1] While renewable energy ostensibly has a tenuous link with overseas bases, some in



the PLA view it as a reasonable (if not wholly sufficient) response to China's well-known predicament. In a world where the U.S. has been the dominant global power for 70 years, most of the advantageous locations for overseas military bases have already been taken, such as in developed countries like Germany and Japan. There is also an irony that Beijing's desire to secure its overseas energy imports is one of the main drivers of the PLA's push abroad, yet China may find it difficult to actually power these new bases ([PRC State Council Information Office \(SCIO\)](#), July 24, 2019).

Most potential host nations of PLA bases lack abundant power capabilities that China could tap into. This challenge is repeatedly highlighted by Zheng Chongwei (郑崇伟), a PLA researcher who is on a one-man quest to convince others in the PLA that renewable energy could be useful for military bases abroad along the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Explaining the challenges of power generation at far flung locales, Zheng wrote in 2018, "On the whole, the total electricity consumption in the areas along the 'Belt and Road' is only 61 percent of the world average. The penetration rate of rural electricity in Bangladesh is only 40 percent, and the penetration rate of urban and rural electricity in Sri Lanka is 80 percent and 40 percent, respectively." [2]

Another added complication is how to protect these power generation and storage facilities, since at least some PLA researchers believe these foreign bases may actually be used operationally in wartime (and thus attacked by adversaries).

There are many ways that China could address insufficient energy infrastructure in potential future overseas base locations. The simplest solution would be to access the host nation's existing oil pipelines and power grid. However, if that is insufficient, as is the case in several potential future base locations, then China will have to either improve local oil supply and power production overall, or import fuel and produce its own power inside the base. Although electrical power generation is one key component of the BRI, there is no evidence this is directly intended to facilitate Chinese military access. Most BRI energy projects are in the oil/gas and coal sectors, but renewable and nuclear energy projects are also included ([China Brief](#), April 29; [Center for Strategic and International Studies](#), 2021).

### **PLA Research on Renewable Energy for Overseas Locations**

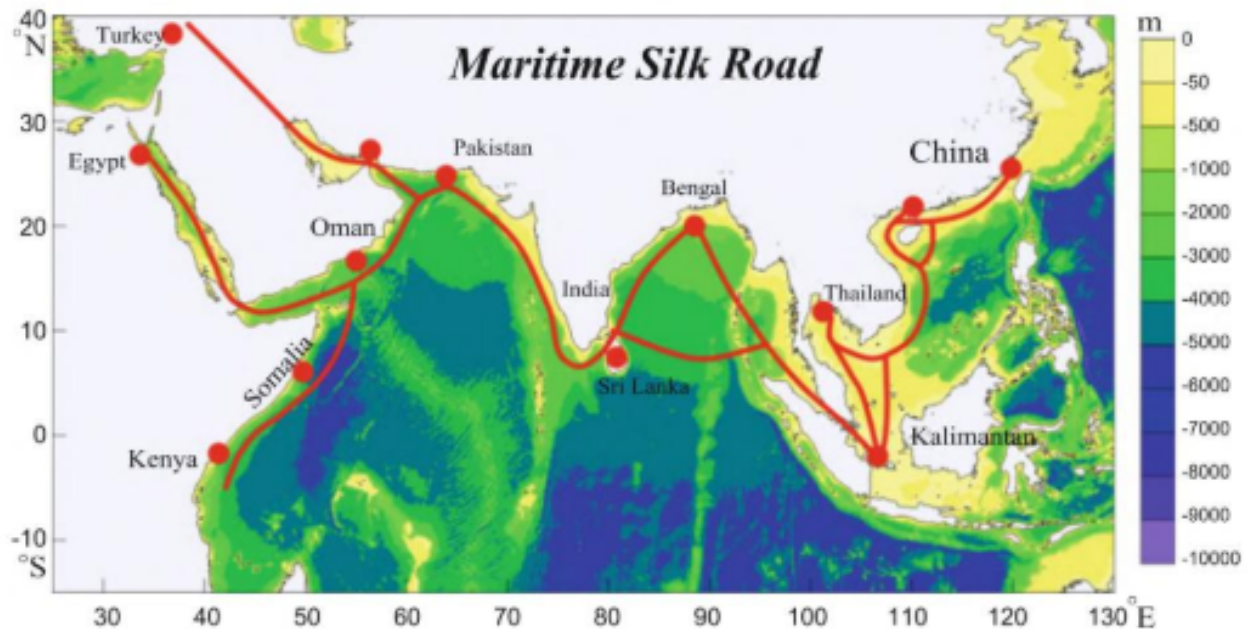
To tackle this problem of how the PLA can supply energy to far-flung, energy-insecure locations, Zheng Chongwei has conducted a highly specialized research effort since at least 2011, with an apparent focus on supporting Chinese military expansion abroad. He began researching the South China Sea in 2011, notably before island building began, shifted to researching the BRI by 2015, and in 2016, was already researching the military aspects of renewable energy prospects of Gwadar, Pakistan as a "key node" (关键节点, *guanjian jiedian*) of the BRI. [3]

Zheng is affiliated with an array of technical research institutions, both military and civilian, and has received a similar mix of government funding for his research. He was educated at the PLA National University of Defense Technology's (NUDT) College of Meteorology and Oceanography (previously under the PLA University of Science and Technology), but also lists affiliations with the Lushun Naval Support Base for the Northern Theater Command Navy (Unit 92538) and the Dalian Naval Academy's Navigation Department. Beyond the

PLA, Zheng lists affiliations with the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) Institute of Atmospheric Physics' State Key Laboratory of Numerical Modeling for Atmospheric Sciences and Geophysical Fluid Dynamics, East China Normal University's State Key Laboratory of Estuarine and Coastal Research, and the Ocean University of China's Shandong Provincial Key Laboratory of Ocean Engineering. His research has been funded by grants from the Chinese National Science Foundation, the National Key Basic Research Program of China (973 program), the Ministry of Science and Technology's National Key Research and Development Program, CAS's Knowledge Innovation Project, and provincial governments.

Much of Zheng's recent research centers on "strategic strongpoints" (战略支点, *zhanlue zhidian*), which are defined as being able to "provide support for overseas military operations or act as a forward base for deploying military forces overseas" ([The Science of Military Strategy](#), December 2013). According to U.S. analysts, "China's strategic strongpoint model integrates China's various commercial and strategic interests, facilitating Chinese trade and investment with the host country while also helping the PLA establish a network of supply, logistics, and intelligence hubs across the Indian Ocean and beyond" ([China Maritime Studies Institute \(CMSI\)](#), 2020). Zheng does not make clear if his vision for strategic strongpoints is dedicated military bases or dual-use ports, but he has referenced "key nodes" as including "ocean bases" (海洋基地, *haiyang jidi*). [4] While Zheng is not the most authoritative source on the purpose of "strategic strongpoints," he is perhaps the most prolific and explicit about their true purpose for the PLA.

**Figure 1. Zheng's View of Strategic Strongpoints Along the Maritime Silk Road**



Source: Zheng Chongwei et al., *21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road: A Peaceful Way Forward* (Singapore: Springer Oceanography, 2018), 2.

However, Zheng is not the only PLA researcher exploring how to power China's future overseas bases. Chen Rongjiang (陈荣江), a researcher at the PLA National Defense University (NDU), assessed the military

applications of very small modular (nuclear) reactors (vSMRs) in 2020. [5] Pointing to the U.S. military's research on the topic, he argued that the PLA is increasingly likely to be called upon for overseas military operations but its ability to execute will be challenged by host countries' "power infrastructure conditions." One solution, in Chen's view, is to utilize vSMR "to realize the autonomy, safety and efficiency of energy support for overseas military operations."

### **Clear Military Applications for Renewable Energy**

Zheng proposes the PLA use renewable energy for its military presence abroad to "achieve self-sufficiency in electricity." Zheng explains this solution in the context of the South China Sea, stating "the strategic strongpoint is usually based on remote islands far away from the mainland, where electricity and fresh water are extremely scarce, and traditional diesel power generation can easily damage the fragile ecology of islands and reefs." [6] Zheng's writings on the role of renewable energy in the PLA's expansion abroad mostly focus on solar, wind, and wave energy.

Zheng frames his research as for civilian purposes related to BRI, but in reality, he is focused on charting the PLA's overseas presence. Putting aside any ancillary civilian applications, his work on renewable energy serves the PLA's planned overseas expansion for two major reasons. First, Zheng has been one of the clearest PLA writers on the importance of "strategic strongpoints" and the geographic focus of his research overlaps well with his declared map of strongpoints. Suggesting this is more than just a coincidence, Zheng's research on the applications of renewable energy for overseas strategic strongpoints clearly follows the same analytic model he used to analyze the South China Sea ahead of the development of PLA bases there, and in retrospect, was likely to have been in support of PLA planning. [7]

Second, Zheng's usually neutral language occasionally reveals clear military applications for renewable energy. Zheng often frames renewable energy in the context of "improving the quality of life for local residents," and titled his first book *21st Century Maritime Silk Road: A Peaceful Way Forward*. However, he has hinted at another value: concealment from enemy forces, a trick learned from the U.S. In a 2016 article, he explains "wave energy [波浪能, *bolang neng*] has good concealment for military applications: the wave energy device is on the surface of the sea and is not easily surveilled by the enemy, and the concealment is better than wind energy [风能, *feng neng*] and solar energy [太阳能, *taiyang neng*] devices; AUV and UUVs can be charged, enhancing their endurance and concealment capabilities. [Moreover,] the wave energy device is also hard to destroy: scattering them widely across key sea areas can effectively avoid being completely destroyed by the enemy during the war and ensure an uninterrupted supply of electricity." He later added that charging submarines via wave energy "enhances their endurance and covert penetration." Zheng has also noted the value of strategic strongpoints for intelligence collection abroad. [8]

Even Zheng's broader work on the hydrological environment is ultimately intended for military use, unsurprising given his employer. For example, his research assesses the impact of waves on the accuracy of ship-launched missiles, submarine concealment, mining, carrier air operations, and amphibious landings. As he explained in one article, "When the waves are large, it will affect the ship's landing, the transfer of the landing force, and the landing force's grabbing the Wei. [...] The landing of Normandy on the whole was a success on the whole, but

the heavy wind and waves caused the loss of a large number of ships, tanks, and personnel.” [9] However, discussions of renewable energy’s military applications for strategic strongpoints are not found in his English language publications. Clearly, even otherwise apparently benign studies by PLA researchers can, unsurprisingly, be intended for military use.

## **Two Key Locations**

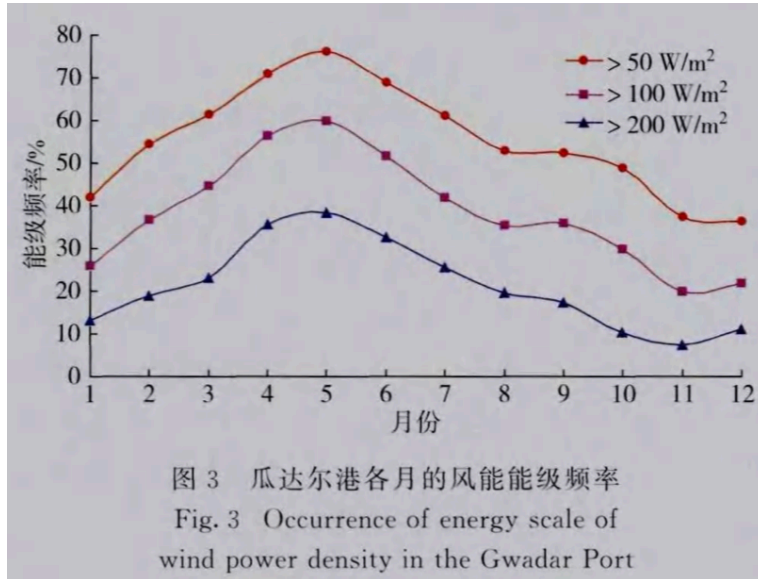
Zheng’s geographic focus on renewable energy is intriguing, although it certainly does not guarantee future Chinese overseas basing. Overall, Zheng states repeatedly that he is most interested in the South China Sea and Northern Indian Ocean regions, following the heart of BRI’s maritime component, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road.

The Chinese military has indeed embraced renewable energy for some overseas bases, though it is difficult to definitively credit this to Zheng. At least one of China’s reclaimed features in the South China Sea, Johnson Reef, has had solar panels since at least 2017 ([CSIS](#), February 24, 2017; [JHU APL](#), 2020). A People’s Armed Police garrison in Tajikistan, which hosts Chinese forces for counter-terrorism missions focused on Afghanistan, is outfitted with solar panels ([The Print](#), February 22, 2019). This suggests that PLA research into renewable energy for military basing abroad, such as Zheng’s, may have some value in understanding where future facilities could be established.

Pakistan is the biggest focus of Zheng’s research, with 24 articles from 2011 to 2020 mentioning the country or Gwadar port, including two specifically on wind energy in Gwadar. [10] In one 2015 article, Zheng explains that “Gwadar Port is a key node on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Maritime Silk Road,” and hopes that his research will “effectively improve the survivability [生存能力, *shengcun nengli*] and sustainable development capabilities of remote islands, deep seas, and important ports.” Zheng’s analysis provides detailed technical data for estimated wind energy production by month (see Figure 2), based on European meteorological data. China already has some renewable energy projects in Pakistan under BRI’s China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), but nothing near Gwadar, which announced in November 2019 that a German company was building a solar power plant in the city ([The News](#), November 1, 2019). Although Pakistan appears promising, Zheng concluded in 2020 that the most promising Indian Ocean locations for wind energy are Somalia and Sri Lanka.

It is quite easy to guess why Zheng is interested in Gwadar, a longtime contender for a future PLA base, which also has limited energy availability ([DoD](#), 2018). Per a 2020 CMSI report: “Power shortages are the norm in Pakistan, especially in Gwadar, where severe outages—as long as 20 hours per day—are not unusual. Since 1999, all of Gwadar’s electricity has been imported from Iran. There is great demand for stable power that must be met before any more ambitious development can be carried out” ([CMSI](#), 2020). In response, “Power generation is thus among the key Chinese projects around Gwadar,” in line with Pakistani priorities and power generation projects’ central role in CPEC. So far, there is no evidence this power generation is directly intended to support a PLA presence, but it would be convenient.

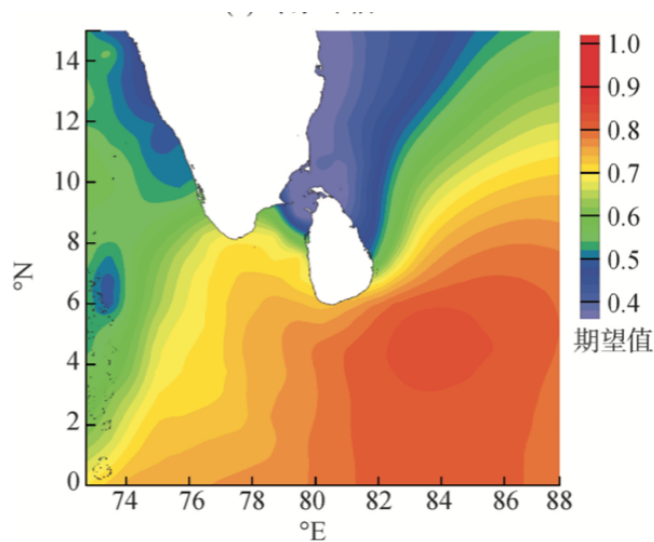
**Figure 2: Estimated Wind Energy Production Per Month in Gwadar**



Source: Zheng Chongwei and Li Chongyin [李崇银], “Analysis of Wind Energy Resource in the Pakistan's Gwadar Port” [巴基斯坦瓜达尔港的风能资源评估], *Journal of Xiamen University (Natural Science)* [厦门大学学报(自然科学版)] 55:2, 2015, 210-215.

To the south, Zheng has focused on Sri Lanka, with 21 articles from 2011 to 2020 mentioning the country, including two articles on its wave energy prospects. In one 2018 article, “21st Century Silk Road: Wave Energy Evaluation and Decision and Proposal of the Sri Lankan Waters” Zheng explains that “Sri Lanka is located near the center of the main channel of the Indian Ocean and is one of the key nodes of the Maritime Silk Road.” He argued his research would “provide scientific and technological support to assist decision-making to move out into the deep blue sea [迈向深蓝, *mai xiang shen lan*],” a phrased occasionally used by the PLA Navy to denote its global ambitions, and would be “beneficial to enhancing the survivability of the strategic strongpoints” by making them self-sufficient for freshwater and electricity. In another article, Zheng specifically observes that for wave energy, the best locations are along Sri Lanka’s southeast coast for the natural winds coming off the Indian Ocean, followed by the south and southwest, with the northern parts the worst (see figure 3). [11]

**Figure 3: Wave Energy Patterns Around Sri Lanka**



(c) 可利用率主导

Source: Zheng Chongwei and Li Chongyin, “Overview of site selection difficulties for marine new energy power plant and suggestions: wave energy case study” [关于海洋新能源选址的难点及对策建议: 以波浪能为例], *Journal of Harbin Engineering University* [哈尔滨工程大学学报] 39:2, 2018, 200-206.

## Conclusion

Zheng’s research presents some intriguing potential implications for China’s military presence abroad and considerations for foreign open-source research about the Chinese military.

First, Zheng’s research offers an alternative vision for China’s future overseas presence, though it is unclear whether the PLA specifically or China broadly will actually pursue large-scale renewable energy at overseas bases. There is already much Western discussion that China does not have to follow the U.S. model for overseas presence, and generally presumes less reliance on larger overseas bases ([U.S. NDU](#), October 1, 2014). However, Zheng’s research suggests the PLA could potentially also pursue a different vision for energy generation, reducing reliance on fossil fuels in favor of renewable energy. Perhaps this could even entail a future PLA deployment of electric autonomous unmanned vehicles, which raises the question: what would this mean for a future conflict if they were quieter than China’s current submarines? ([FAS](#), November 21, 2009).

Second, while I argue Zheng’s research provides some insights into the PLA’s interest in future basing locations, the development and specific locations of future overseas bases is still very much up for debate. First and foremost, basing decisions will ultimately be made by the host nation at the request of China’s leadership, which will be informed by the PLA. Second, as an individual expert, Zheng is admittedly not an authoritative source on PLA thinking by traditional analytic standards. However, he may represent at least one stream of PLA thinking and reflect some amount of internal planning, as his earlier writings on South China Sea islands suggest he may be involved in, or at least have access to, internal PLA planning. The most relevant part of Zheng’s research is his emphasis on specific locations—Pakistan and Sri Lanka—that likely reflect prevailing assumptions within parts of the PLA about potential locations. Finally, Zheng’s explicit linkage of the BRI, strategic strongpoints, PLA presence abroad, and a warfighting value further clarifies at least one forward-

leaning view within the PLA. In the end, Zheng's analysis appears geared toward identifying locations along the BRI with strategic value, since it includes some ports where the PLA can't expect access such as Diego Garcia and India, meaning it is likely for others in the PLA to decide what to do with this information.

Third, Zheng is a useful case study for considering the future of open-source PLA research. From a methodological point of view, if a PLA researcher screams into the void, does it matter? Zheng is basically the only PLA researcher working on renewable energy for the PLA presence abroad. [12] However, with so little authoritative information available with details about Chinese intentions and planning for the PLA presence abroad, researchers should take greater advantage of this type of voluminous but otherwise obscure, technical, and too-often overlooked publicly available writings by the Chinese military.

Looking forward, Zheng appears to believe his research will become more in demand as he looks to scale his research with big data, including publishing a dataset for the Maritime Silk Road. Foreign analysts should keep a keen eye on these locations as potential sites for future PLA presence in some form, including renewable energy investments. [13]

*Nathan Beauchamp-Mustafaga is an Associate Policy Researcher at the nonprofit, nonpartisan RAND Corporation. The views expressed are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of RAND, its sponsors, or the U.S. government. He thanks Kristen Gunness and Cristina Garafola for their feedback on earlier drafts.*

*Editor's Note:* This piece exceeds the standard length of a normal *China Brief* article, but has been included in this issue due to timeliness and reader interest.

[1] Based on a review of PLA research on overseas basing. For an example of PLA Air Force (PLAAF) modeling efforts to estimate, and then optimize, bomber strike package fuel consumption, see: Cui Lijie [崔利杰] et al., "Route Optimization of AAR in Long Range Operational System Based on MPGA" [基于多种群遗传算法的远程作战体系加油路途优化], *Fire Command and Command Control* [火力与指挥控制], June 2017, 88-92.

[2] Figures on electricity usage in BRI countries are from Zheng Chongwei [郑崇伟], "Energy Predicament and Countermeasures on Key Junctions of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road" [21 世纪海上丝绸之路: 关键节点的 能源困境及应对], *Pacific Journal* [太平洋学报] 26:7, July 2018, 71-78. For Chinese researchers' concern over threats to overseas bases, see Wu Biao [吴飏] et al., "Research on safety and protection of overseas support bases Chinese" [海外保障基地安全与防护问题研究], *Protective Engineering* [防护工程] 40:1, 2018, 1-6.

[3] Zheng Chongwei, "Wave Energy and Other Renewable Energy Resources in South China Sea: Advantages and Disadvantages" [南海波浪能资源与其他清洁能源的优缺点比较研究], *Journal of Subtropical Resources and Environment* [亚热带资源与环境学报] 6:3, 2011, 76-81. For focused work on South China Sea construction, see: Zheng Chongwei and Li Chongyin [李崇银], "Development of the Islands and Reefs in the South China Sea: Wind Climate and Wave Climate Analysis" [中国南海岛礁建设:重点岛礁的风候、波候特征分析], *Periodical of Ocean University of China* [中国海洋大学学报(自然科学版)] 45:9, 2015, 1-6; Zheng Chongwei and Li Chongyin, "Development of the Islands and Reefs in the South China Sea: Wind Power and Wave Power Generation" [中国南海岛礁建设:风力发电、海浪发电], *Periodical of Ocean University of China* [中国海洋大学学报(自然科学版)] 45:9, 2015, 7-14; Zheng Chongwei et al., "Wind climate analysis under the demand of reef runway construction" [岛礁跑道设计中的风候特征分析], *Marine Forecasts* [海洋预报] 34:4, 2017, 52-57. For early global view, see: Zheng Chongwei, Analysis of Wind Energy Resources in Global Sea Areas [全球海域风能资源储量分析], *Sino-Global Energy* [中外能源] 16:7, 2011, 37-41; Zheng Chongwei and Pan Jing [潘静], "Wind Energy Resources Assessment in Global Ocean" [全球海域风能资源评估及等级区划], *Journal of Natural Resources* [自然资源学报] 27:3, 2012, 364-371.

For work on Maritime Silk Road, see, among others,: Zheng Chongwei et al., "A series of studies on marine environmental characteristics of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road" [经略21世纪海上丝路之海洋环境特征系列研究], *Ocean Development and Management* [海洋开发与管理] 32:7, 2015, 4-9; Zheng Chongwei et al., "Strategy of the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road: On the Important Routes, Crucial Nodes and Characteristics of Ports" [经略21世纪海上丝路:重要航线、节点及港口特征], *Ocean Development and Management* [海洋开发与管理] 33:1, January 2016, 4-13.

[4] Zheng, "Energy Predicament," 2018, 71-78.

[5] Chen Rongjiang [陈荣江], "Application History and Enlightenment of Very Small Modular Reactor for Land Battlefield Energy Supply" [微型模块化反应堆陆战场能源保障应用历程及启示], *Strategic Study of CAE* [中国工程科学] 22:1, 2020, 146-152.

[6] Zheng Chongwei, "21<sup>st</sup> Century Silk Road: Wave Energy Evaluation and Decision and Proposal of the Sri Lankan Waters" [21世纪海上丝绸之路!斯里兰卡海域的波浪能评估及决策建议], *Journal of Harbin Engineering University* [哈尔滨工程大学学报] 39:4, April 2018, 614-621; Zheng, "Energy Predicament," 2018, 71-78; Zheng Chongwei and Li Chongyin, "Evaluation of new marine energy for the Maritime Silk Road



from the perspective of maritime power” [“海洋强国视野下的“海上丝绸之路”海洋新能源评估”], *Journal of Harbin Engineering University* [哈尔滨工程大学学报] 41:2, February 2020, 175-183.

This is not to say that all of his research has clear military applications. See: Zheng Chongwei, Li Chongyin, and Xu Jianjun, “Micro-scale classification of offshore wind energy resource: A case study of the New Zealand,” *Journal of Cleaner Production*, July 2019, 226.

[7] For example, see: Zheng Chongwei et al., “Wind climate analysis under the demand of reef runway construction” [岛礁跑道设计中的风候特征分析], *Marine Forecast* [海洋预报] 34:4, 2017, 52-57; Zheng Chongwei and Li Chongyin [李崇银], “Development of the Islands and Reefs in the South China Sea: Wind Power and Wave Power Generation” [中国南海岛礁建设:风力发电、海浪发电], *Periodical of Ocean University of China* [中国海洋大学学报(自然科学版)] 45:9, 2015, 7-14.

[8] For a reference to benefiting locals, see: See: Zheng, “Energy Predicament,” 2018; Zheng Chongwei and Li Chongyin, “Overview of site selection difficulties for marine new energy power plant and suggestions: wave energy case study” [关于海洋新能源选址的难点及对策建议:以波浪能为例], *Journal of Harbin Engineering University* 39:2, 2018, 200-206. For one of Zheng’s English language books, see: Zheng Chongwei, Xiao Ziniu, Zhou Wen, Chen Xiaobin, and Xuan Chen, *21st Century Maritime Silk Road: A Peaceful Way Forward*, Germany: Springer Oceanography, 2018.

For lesson learned from the United States, see: Zheng Chongwei, “Prospects of Wave Energy and Wind Energy Resources” [波浪能, 海上风能资源开发前景展望], *Journal of Subtropical Resources and Environment* [亚热带资源与环境学报] 8:4, 2013, 40-46.

For research on advantages of wave over solar or wind energy for concealment, see: Zheng Chongwei and Li Chongyin [李崇银], “Review on the global ocean wave energy resource” [全球海域波浪能资源评估的研究进展], *Marine Forecasts* [海洋预报] 33:3, 2016, 76-88. For research on submersibles and wave energy, see: Zheng Chongwei and Li Chongyin, “Overview of site selection difficulties for marine new energy power plant and suggestions: wave energy case study” [关于海洋新能源选址的难点及对策建议:以波浪能为例], *Journal of Harbin Engineering University* [哈尔滨工程大学学报] 39:2, 2018, 200-206; Zheng, “Energy Predicament,” 2018. For a broader explanation of the military value of the maritime hydrographic environment co-authored by Zheng, see: Zhang Jiangquan [张江泉] et al., “Analysis on the characteristics of marine hydrological elements such as wind, waves and currents in the Yellow Sea and Bohai Sea” [黄渤海风、浪、流等海洋水文要素特征分析], *Technology Information* [科技资讯], 2013.

For research on the value of strategic strong points see Zheng Chongwei et al., “The Strategy of Maritime Silk Road in the 21st Century: Construction of Strategic Strong Points,” Proceedings from the 8th Maritime Power Strategy Forum [第八届海洋强国战略论坛文集], October 21, 2016. The author thanks Conor Kennedy for this point.

[9] For quote, see: Zheng Chongwei, “Comprehensive application and intensive construction of ocean waves,” [海浪综合应用与集约化建设], *Ocean Development and Management* [海洋开发与管理] 31:9, 2014, 44-53. For broader discussion, see: Zhang et al., “Analysis on the characteristics,” 2013. For more, see: Zheng and Li, “Evaluation of new marine energy,” 2020, 175-183. His 2018 book also references “Helicopters, carrier-based aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles.” See: Zheng Chongwei et al., *21st Century Maritime Silk Road: A Peaceful Way Forward*, Germany: Springer Oceanography, 2018, 121. For English publications on the Indian Ocean, see: Yang Shaobo et al., “10-Year Wind and Wave Energy Assessment in the North Indian Ocean,” *Energies* 2019 (12); Zheng Chongwei et al., “Diffusion Characteristics of Swells in the North Indian Ocean,” *Journal of Ocean University of China* 19:3, 2020, 479-488. For more, see: [https://webofknowledge.com/author/record/791457,34981993?lang=en\\_US](https://webofknowledge.com/author/record/791457,34981993?lang=en_US).

[10] Information on Zheng’s research on Pakistan derived from the following sources: Author’s count of CNKI data. See: Zheng and Li, “Analysis of Wind Energy Resource,” 2015, 210-215; Zheng Chongwei, Gao Yue [高悦], and Chen Xuan [陈璇], “Climatic Long Term Trend and Prediction of the Wind Energy Resource in the Gwadar Port” [巴基斯坦瓜达尔港风能资源的历史变化趋势及预测], *Acta Scientiarum Naturalium Universitatis Pekinensis* [北京大学学报(自然科学版)] 53:4, 2017, 617-626; Zheng and Li, “Analysis of Wind Energy Resource,” 2015, 210-215. For similar analysis, see his 2018 NUDT PHD dissertation: Zheng Chongwei, “Analysis of Wave Energy and Offshore Wind Energy Resources” [海上可再生能（波浪能、风能）资源利用的理论研究], PhD Dissertation for PLA National University of Defense Technology, 2018.

[11] Information on Zheng’s research on Sri Lanka derived from the following sources: Zheng and Li, “Evaluation of new marine energy,” 2020, 175-183; Zheng and Li, “Overview of site selection,” 2018; (and 2018 quote from) Zheng, “21<sup>st</sup> Century Silk Road: Wave Energy Evaluation and Decision and Proposal of the Sri Lankan Waters” [21世纪海上丝绸之路!斯里兰卡海域的波浪能评估及决策建议], *Journal of Harbin Engineering University* 39:4, April 2018, 614-621.

[12] For writings by PLA scholars other than Zheng on overseas basing and renewable energy, see - Chen Rongjiang, “Application History of Very Small Modular Reactor for Land Battlefield Energy Supply,” 2020; Liu Donghua [刘东华], “Characteristics and thinking of marine environmental protection in the new era,” [新时代海洋环境保障特点与思考], *China Scitechnology Business* [科技中国] June 2020, 18-21.

[13] For Zheng’s big data research see: Zheng Chongwei and Li Chongyin, “21st Century Maritime Silk Road: Big Data Construction of New Marine Resources: Wave Energy as a Case Study” [21世纪海上丝绸之路：

海洋新能源大数据建设研究], *Ocean Development and Management* [海洋开发与管理] 34:12, 2017, 61-65; Zheng Chongwei, "Temporal-spatial characteristics dataset of offshore wind energy resource for the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road" [21世纪海上丝绸之路"风能资源时空特征数据集], *China Scientific Data* [中国科学数据] 5:4, December 2020, 106-119.

## Another Potemkin Visit? Rethinking the UN Human Rights Chief's Upcoming Trip to Xinjiang

*By Christelle Genoud*



(Image: Paramilitary police watch a woman and children in Urumqi, Xinjiang, Source: RFA)

### Introduction

In March, United Nations (UN) High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet announced an agreement with China for a May visit, which includes access to Xinjiang. The exact date for the visit has yet to be determined, but recent reports indicate it is due to take place before the end of this month, which will make Bachelet the first UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to visit China in 17 years ([China Daily](#), May 11). Negotiations were stalled for years with Bachelet first indicating intent to report on Xinjiang in a 2018 request for unhindered access to “all regions of China” ([Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights \(OHCHR\)](#), September 10, 2018). At the end of April, a UN advance team arrived in Guangzhou to quarantine before traveling to Xinjiang to lay the groundwork for Bachelet’s visit ([South China Morning Post \(SCMP\)](#), April 25).

### Unrealistic Expectations?

Expectations are high as Bachelet has refrained from publicly expressing strong concern about China’s human rights record. She has still yet to release her highly anticipated report on grave human rights violations in Xinjiang. The delay is suspected to be due to political pressure from China, which demanded that the report’s publication be deferred until after the Beijing Winter Olympics in February ([SCMP](#), January 22). [1] In contrast, her predecessor, former High Commissioner Zeid Raad Al Hussein, renounced a second mandate in order to avoid having to “bend the knee in supplication” before the Security Council’s members, including China, which

he had criticized for its poor human rights record ([People's Daily](#), February 17, 2016). The visit also follows an unprecedented call from over 50 Special Procedures, the Human Rights Council's independent experts, for "renewed attention on the human rights situation in the country, particularly in light of the moves against the people of the Hong Kong SAR, minorities of the Xinjiang Autonomous Region, the Tibet Autonomous Region, and human rights defenders across the country" ([OHCHR](#), June 26, 2020). In addition, negotiations for a Xinjiang visit by the Ambassadors of the European Union member states in China have also been stalled for several years and various joint statements, mainly from Western countries, have called for a visit with unfettered access to the region ([SCMP](#), March 17, 2021; [Xinhua](#) February 21, 2021; [Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Germany to the UN](#), October 6, 2020).

The high expectations for Bachelet's trip will be difficult to fulfill given the precedent that China has set for past visits to Xinjiang by foreign officials. As Chinese state media highlights "Bachelet is not the first, and will definitely not be the last senior politician from overseas to visit this region" ([Global Times](#), March 9). Since the end of 2018, more than 1,200 officials from international organizations, diplomats, journalists and religious leaders from over 100 countries and regions have visited Xinjiang ([Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China](#), April 14, 2021). These visits are fully orchestrated tours. Foreign officials lack freedom of movement or access to the population apart from carefully chosen interlocutors. As a result, such visits have been widely used by Chinese and aligned countries' propaganda to counter criticism of China's Xinjiang policies ([Xinhua](#), April 3, 2021; [The Express Tribune](#), April 3, 2021; [People's Daily](#), February 24, 2021; [Embassy of the People's Republic of China in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan](#), 10 January, 2019). Some journalists participating in these organized tours have challenged authorities and pushed them out of the comfort zone of this well-oiled machine [2]. However, this has not changed Beijing's modus operandi that is also applied for foreign dignitaries' visits to the Tibetan Autonomous Region, which serve a similar propaganda purpose ([WION](#), November 12, 2020; [Australian Embassy China](#), August 2013). [3]

It is important to note that for UN experts visiting China, unfettered access has never genuinely been on the table. China is not among the 120 countries that have issued a standing invitation to the Special Procedures. In the last decade, despite many requests, the Chinese government has permitted only five visits in mandates with which Beijing is aligned, pertaining to rights to food, discrimination against women and girls, foreign debt, extreme poverty and care of older persons. During his 2016 visit, the former Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty, Philip Alston, faced significant impediments to executing his work as an independent expert. According to Alston: "the Government's view that it was fully responsible for determining every detail of the agenda of the visit reflects a misunderstanding of the role of special rapporteurs as independent experts" ([Human Rights Council](#), March 28, 2017). A visit by the Special Rapporteur on rights of persons with disabilities has been postponed since 2020 due to China's COVID-19 restrictions ([UN Geneva](#), 3 March, 2021). Furthermore, the High Commissioner for Human Rights has no office in Beijing due to China's refusal to allow one. These local offices normally play an important role in preparing official visits, especially in establishing contacts with human rights defenders on the ground.

Conditions are unlikely to be different for Bachelet's forthcoming Xinjiang visit. Indeed, Beijing has repeated that it would only allow for a 'friendly visit' by the High Commissioner aimed at 'promoting exchanges and cooperation', and not 'a so-called 'investigation' with presumption of guilt' ([PRC Permanent Mission to the UN in Geneva](#), December 10, 2021). While Bachelet is welcomed to visit Xinjiang, as "all unbiased foreigners" are,

China expects that her office will "respect the sovereignty of all countries as well as the rights and development path independently chosen by countries in light of their national conditions" ([Global Times](#), February 28). Furthermore, Bachelet has already noted that 'preparations will have to account for COVID-19 regulations' ([People's Daily](#), March 9). China is currently experiencing a peak of COVID-19 infections, which has only intensified the already highly restrictive measures implemented under the 'zero-Covid' policy. Shanghai is struggling to get out of a prolonged lockdown and Beijing striving to avoid a full shutdown. Considering the Chinese government's record of instrumentalizing the pandemic, among other public health and safety issues to close sensitive areas, this requirement will certainly have an impact on Bachelet's visit ([China Highlights](#), March 3). Notably, it remains unclear why Beijing has agreed to allow the High Commissioner's visit to the country to go forward at this particular moment, and Bachelet has not provided any indication that she has attained unhindered access to Xinjiang, but that appears unlikely, especially as Beijing has signaled no turnaround in its policies. For example, on a recent Xinjiang inspection tour, Politburo Standing Committee member Wang Yang stressed the need for greater Sinicization of Islam ([Center for Advanced China Research](#), March 18).

### **Bachelet's Visit is Political: Time to Talk Human Rights Politics**

Considering the obstacles and inflated expectations, how can Bachelet's visit still make a difference? The visit takes place in the context of escalating tensions between China and a number of Western countries that are critical human rights record. In response, Beijing has accused the U.S. and other countries of politicizing human rights ([China Brief](#), March 25). The Chinese Foreign Ministry has already stated that it strongly "rejects political tactics" surrounding the visit and opposes "certain countries' use of this event for political manipulation" ([Global Times](#), March 9). Chinese state media has followed suit on blaming the politicization of human rights for the current situation. For example, an editorial in the *Global Times* asserts that "even if there are no Xinjiang-related issues, the US and some Western countries will fabricate other rumors to constantly smear China. In essence, these countries use human rights as a pretext to interfere in other countries' internal affairs out of geopolitical purposes. They are seeking hegemony in the name of human rights" ([Global Times](#), March 9, 2022). Simultaneously, Beijing will certainly attempt to showcase "a beautiful, open, confident and richly-endowed Xinjiang that enjoys stable development, solidarity and harmony" and that is "at its golden time with the most rapid and stable development in history" ([PRC Permanent Mission at the UN in Geneva](#), March 2, 2020). China's accusations of Western politicization of human rights are clearly intended to deflect any kind of criticism of its record in Xinjiang, Tibet and elsewhere. However, instead of ignoring the political dimension of human rights, Bachelet can address the political dynamics surrounding her visit by being transparent on pressures related to the publication of her report and her to visit China.

The obstacles to obtain unfettered access for Bachelet's visit to Xinjiang illustrates the various challenges that China poses to the post-1945 human rights regime. [4] In recent years, China has increasingly called into question key principles on which this regime is based, and has instead promoted alternate concepts such as "win-win cooperation in human rights" and "people-centered development" ([State Council](#), August 12, 2021; [Xinhua](#), March 24, 2021). While these efforts have been interpreted as China working to weaken the conventional, post-1945 understanding of human rights, it is necessary to recall that this understanding has been contentious from its very inception. In particular, contributions from Marxist and leftist trends on the limits of human rights as articulated in the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Right have been dispensed in favor

of a human rights project that aligns with “the morals of the market”. [5] This historical background has specific resonance in the current context in which China continues to identify itself with “Marxist human rights” ([State Council](#), June 24, 2021). Certainly, China’s concept of Marxist human rights is not without contradictions as well as instrumentalization, particularly following the 1979 Economic Reforms and debates about how to qualify China’s political economy. [6] Nevertheless, the difficulties that the High Commissioner for Human Rights is currently facing are an example of the persistent questioning of the legitimacy of a human rights regime that is seen as static, and shaped by power struggles at this particular historical juncture. [7]

The risks of politicizing human rights should not prevent us from acknowledging the contentiousness of the concept. Bachelet has the opportunity to engage with politicization in order to ensure that the interests of the Uyghur minority remain the focal point of her visit. For example, in the report following her visit, an assessment of the dynamics of negotiations that have surrounded it would shed light on practices that only serve national interests. Furthermore, it would be interesting to reflect on the expectations of countries calling for the High Commissioner’s visit to Xinjiang while knowing the heavy precedent of Potemkin visits, and to consider what these countries have done themselves to ensure the coherence of their human rights policy. Bachelet can also acknowledge Xinjiang’s development while stressing that material well-being, and economic, social and cultural rights are not equivalent [8]. She can also condemn China’s gross human rights violations while simultaneously conceding how partial the human rights advocacy of certain countries is. There is no silver bullet to solve the tensions between human rights claim to universality and how profoundly political they are. But as Bachelet’s chances to get unfettered access are not high, she can still tackle political reasons that made such access impossible by engaging on these issues.

*Christelle Genoud is Research Associate at King’s College London, where she works on the project Academic freedom, globalised scholarship and the rise of authoritarian China. Previously, she served as Human Security Advisor at the Embassy of Switzerland in Beijing, where she was in charge of the human rights portfolio. She has worked on human rights for the United Nations, NGOs, and academia, at headquarters and in the field in Colombia, Palestine, and Honduras. She holds a PhD on finance and human rights from the University of Lausanne and a Master in Asian Studies from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva.*

## Notes

[1] On the day Bachelet announced an agreement with the Chinese government has been reached for a visit, nearly 200 NGOs wrote an open letter arguing that the release of the report would “send a message to victims and perpetrators alike that no state, no matter how powerful, is above international law or the robust independent scrutiny of your office.” See “Open letter to UN High Commissioner for Human Rights: OHCHR report on grave human rights violations in Xinjiang can wait no longer,” March 8, 2022, <https://ishr.ch/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Open-letter-re-OHCHR-Xinjiang-report1.pdf>

Some NGOs have stated that for Bachelet’s visit to be meaningful, it is crucial that she publishes her report on grave human rights violations in Xinjiang beforehand. See “What to expect from the UN Human Rights Office’s

visit to China?" SWI, <https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/what-to-expect-from-the-un-human-rights-office-s-visit-to-china-/47453300>

In addition, a call from human rights NGOs spelling out core minimum conditions for the visit to be credible includes the statement: "Release the OHCHR report on serious human rights violations in Xinjiang, the Uyghur region, promptly and ahead of her visit to China, and brief the Human Rights Council on its contents, as a matter of urgency. This will assist to ensure that negotiations regarding a visit cannot be used as a tactic to further unacceptably delay the release of a critical report and will also assist to ensure that any subsequent visit to China is substantive and meaningful." See "UN High Commissioner must uphold principled and coherent response to China's human rights crisis," Human Rights Watch, April 19, 2022, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/04/19/un-high-commissioner-must-uphold-principled-and-coherent-response-chinas-human>

[2] See "Inside China's 'thought transformation' camps," BBC News, June 18, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wmld2ZP3h0c>.

[3] For a discussion on the dynamics around visiting Tibet as an official see: "Visiting Tibet: A conversation with Christelle Genoud", a "Tibet Talk" conference by International Campaign for Tibet Europe, December 1, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zVORz4p9Q4>

[4] See Rana Siu Inboden, *China and the International Human Rights Regime: 1982-2017* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2021); Rosemary Foot, *China, the UN, and Human Protection: Beliefs, Power, Image* (Oxford, UK: Oxford Scholarship Online, 2020); Sophie Richardson, "China's Influence on the Global Human Rights System: Assessing China's Growing Role in the World," *Brookings Institution*, September 2020, [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/FP\\_20200914\\_china\\_human\\_rights\\_richardson.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/FP_20200914_china_human_rights_richardson.pdf).

[5] See Mark Goodale, *Reinventing human rights* (California: Stanford University Press, 2022); Jessica Whyte, *The Morals of the Market. Human Rights and the Rise of Neoliberalism*, New York: Verso, 2019).

[6] See "Chinese State Capitalism: Diagnosis and Prognosis," CSIS, October 7, 2021, <https://www.csis.org/events/chinese-state-capitalism-diagnosis-and-prognosis-report-launch>

[7] For more explanation on the contingency of the post-1945 human rights regime, see Lynn Hunt, *Inventing Human Rights: A History* (New York W.W. Norton and Company Press: 2007); Mark Goodale, *Reinventing human rights* (California: Stanford University Press, 2022); Steven L.B. Jensen, *The Making of International Human Rights* (Cambridge University Press: 2016).

[8] See the report of the former Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty, Philip Alson, following his visit to China: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G17/076/79/PDF/G1707679.pdf?OpenElement>; and Eva Pils, *Human Rights in China: A Social Practice in the Shadows of Authoritarianism* (Polity:2017).