



September 16, 2026

An open letter to Chinese Communist Party General Secretary Xi Jinping

Re: Human rights improvements ahead of September 24, 2026 visit to Washington, DC

We, the undersigned organizations dedicated to protecting and promoting human rights, democracy, and religious freedom, write on the occasion of your forthcoming visit to Washington, DC. We urge that ahead of your arrival you agree to release prisoners of conscience, pledge an end to transnational repression, and commit to critical legal reforms, among other actions. Such steps would diminish criticism around the visit of your government's human rights violations.

Since you assumed power in late 2012, our organizations have documented—and some have lived—your government's widespread, systematic human rights crimes, which violate domestic and international legal obligations. Tibetans, Uyghurs, and other communities continue to face your government's atrocity crimes designed to erase their culture, identity, and language, and their rights to free speech and fair trials. Your government's violations of Hong Kong's once-vibrant civic culture and free media, and of the rights-defense efforts undertaken by faith leaders and communities, feminists, journalists, lawyers, public health experts, and other activists across China are well-documented. Newly-imposed laws, such as the Ethnic Unity and Progress Law, stand in stark contrast to your government's obligations under international human rights law. We share United Nations human rights experts' concerns that the scope and scale of arbitrary detention across China may alone constitute crimes against humanity, and stand in solidarity with victims and survivors across the country.

We are equally concerned about your government's use of transnational repression and collective punishment to arbitrarily silence speech and limit conduct outside China. Many of the signatories to this letter have been harassed, stalked, or surveilled in the United States by Chinese government or Chinese Communist Party authorities or their proxies. Some US-based activists' family members in China have been targeted by your government in retaliation for those activists' work. We are encouraged by the US' and other governments' efforts to investigate and prosecute these blatantly extralegal activities, and we will continue to document these violations as long as is necessary.

In order to address these grave concerns, we urge that you take the following steps ahead of your visit:

- Immediately and unconditionally release prisoners of conscience, human rights defenders, and those arbitrarily detained for family members' activism, including but not limited to those with a strong connection to the US and whose release has been sought by US lawmakers: Dr. Gulshan Abbas, Ekpar Asat, Chow Hang-tung, Rahile Dawut, Ding Jiaxi, Dong Yuyu, Pastor Gao Quanfu, Gao Zhen, Gao Zhisheng, the 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Niyima, Go Sherab Gyatso, Albert Ho, Jimmy Lai, Lee Cheuk-yan, Min Zin, Ilham Tohti, Lobsang Tsering, Wang Bingzhang, Pastor Wang Yi, Yang Maodong, and the leaders of the Zion Church;
- Announce an intent to repeal or amend laws passed during your leadership that breach international human rights obligations, including but not limited to the 2020 Hong Kong National Security Law and the 2026 Ethnic Unity and Progress Law;

- Confirm that individuals outside China, including 2007 US Congressional Gold Medal recipient His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, who wish to travel to the country to reunite with family members and communities will be allowed to do so, and do so safely; and
- Publicly affirm prior to arrival in the US that all members of your delegation, and its associates based in the US, will refrain from transnational repression and collective punishment in response to acts of protests and resistance around your visit.

Absent such steps we believe your visit will only deepen global public concern about your government's intentions regarding human rights.

As advocacy organizations we are committed to working on behalf of the communities, principles, and laws that form the basis of our work, and to making recommendations for human rights progress. In this spirit we welcome an opportunity to meet directly with you on this visit. We can be reached via DCChinahumanrights2026@proton.me.

Signatories:

1. Rishat Abbas, Uyghur Academy International
2. Rushan Abbas, Campaign for Uyghurs
3. Zumretay Arkin, World Uyghur Congress
4. Beh Lih Yi, Committee to Protect Journalists
5. Aleksandra Bielakowska, Reporters Without Borders
6. Simon Billenness, No Business With Genocide
7. Annie Boyajian, Iona Advisory
8. Mark Clifford, Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong Foundation
9. Gila Cotler, Raoul Wallenberg Centre for Human Rights
10. Nadia Daar, Amnesty International USA
11. Misran Dolan, Uyghur American Association
12. Olivia Enos, Hudson Institute
13. Jamie Fly, Freedom House
14. Bob Fu, ChinaAid
15. Tencho Gyatso, International Campaign for Tibet
16. Laura Harth, Safeguard Defenders
17. Abdulhakim Idris, Center for Uyghur Studies
18. Omer Kanat, Uyghur Human Rights Project
19. Thomas Kellogg, Georgetown Center for Asian Law
20. Megan Khoo, Hong Kong Watch
21. Sophie Luo, Alliance for Citizens Rights
22. Sophie Richardson, Network of Chinese Human Rights Defenders
23. Benedict Rogers, Fortify Rights
24. Zubayra Shamseden, Network for Uyghur Rights
25. Mervyn Thomas, CSW
26. Jenny Wang, Human Rights Foundation
27. Tenzin Yangzom, International Tibet Network
28. Adrian Zenz, Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation
29. Zhou Fengsuo, Human Rights in China and Humanitarian China