Canadian Coalition on Human Rights in China

& AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CANADA

HARASSMENT AND INTIMIDATION

OF INDIVIDUALS IN CANADA WORKING ON CHINA-RELATED ACTIVISM

03 April 2017

SENSITIVE INFORMATION (PLEASE DO NOT CIRCULATE WIDELY)

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Contents

I. Overview

For many years, Tibetan-Canadians, Uighur-Canadians, Falun Gong practitioners, and activists working on China-related human rights issues, have suffered from what appears to be an organized campaign of harassment and intimidation. Amnesty International Canada, in conjunction with the Canadian Coalition on Human Rights in China, has conducted research into abuses faced by Canadian groups and individuals. This research does not purport to be an exhaustive list of all incidents, but instead provides examples of the multiple kinds of abuses that have been reported.

Although it is difficult to attribute many incidents to Chinese authorities, credible reports of an organized and sustained pattern of harassment and intimidation are consistent with allegations that they are part of a coordinated Chinese government-sponsored campaign to target certain groups and individuals outside of China opposed to Chinese government policies.

II. Methodology

The research for this report took place from October 2016 to March 2017. Amnesty International Canada arranged a series of interviews in coordination with members of the Canadian Coalition on Human Rights in China, a coalition of Canada-based civil society organizations with a specific focus on Canada's foreign policy with China. Amnesty International Canada interviewed, either in person or through telephone or other remote means, 17 individuals who had had personal experience with intimidation or harassment in Canada. This report also refers to open source materials and to a report prepared for Amnesty International Canada and the Canada Tibet Committee by the Citizen's Lab, an interdisciplinary lab based at the Munk School of Global Affairs at the University of Toronto.

Amnesty International Canada has compiled this evidence and organized it into categories of harassment and intimidation. The research does not purport to be an exhaustive look at all incidents in Canada but instead highlights representative incidents reported by member organizations of Canadian Coalition on Human Rights in China, as well as other individuals and organizations closely associated with this coalition.

In this report, Amnesty International Canada refers to individuals by name when they have consented to being identified during interviews or when their anecdotes have previously been reported publicly. In many of the cases highlighted in this report, Chinese authorities cannot be directly implicated. Yet, despite the anecdotal and inclusive nature of many experiences, Amnesty International Canada considers that the scale and consistency of many reports of rights violations to be consistent with a coordinated, Chinese state-sponsored campaign to target certain political, ethnic, and spiritual groups considered to be opposed to Chinese government interests.

III. The Geopolitical Political Context

The Chinese government has long pursued a strategy of extending political and cultural influence abroad under the auspices of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office and the United Front Work Department (UFWD). The UFWD is a Chinese government agency that had an important strategic role in the early years of the rule of former Chinese Chairman Mao by engaging in outreach to groups that did not form part of the traditional base of the Chinese Communist Party.[1] In recent years, the agency has reportedly evolved to target a more expansive list of groups both inside and outside of China. In addition to its work within China, the UFWD engages with not only Chinese emigrants and non-nationals of Chinese origin, but also other foreign nationals whom the agency attempts to persuade to adopt positions consistent with Chinese government policies.[2] The Overseas Chinese Affairs Office, an office of the State Council, is another government body charged with outreach to Chinese communities located abroad and whose stated objectives include enhancing "the unity and friendship in the overseas Chinese communities".[3]

In Canada, these goals of projecting "soft power" abroad have led Chinese authorities to allegedly exert influence on elected officials, foreign media, and education to promote political positions consistent with Chinese government policies.[4] The apparent existence of a coordinated campaign to target certain activist groups and ethnic and spiritual minorities deemed hostile to the Chinese government appears to be a complementary initiative aiming to stifle alternative viewpoints and discourage movements that do not accept certain official Chinese government policies. The combination of efforts aiming to promote pro-government policies and an apparent campaign to target dissident groups has led had a significant chilling effect on human rights activism in Canada and interfered with many Canadian citizens and residents of Canada's rights to freedom of conscience, expression, and association.

IV. Types of Harassment and Intimidation

In Canada, Tibetan-Canadians, Uighur-Canadians, Falun Gong practitioners, and activists working on China-related human rights issues have long alleged that Chinese authorities have conducted a campaign of harassment and intimidation against them. Amnesty International

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[1] Gerry Root, "The United Front in an Age of Shared Destiny" in The China Story, *Yearbook 2014*, https://www.thechinastory.org/yearbooks/yearbook-2014/forum-begging-to-differ/the-united-front-in-an-age-of-shared-destiny/ .

[2] *Ibid*.

[3] Gov.cn, Factfile: Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council, <http://www.gov.cn/english//2005-10/03/content_74290.htm>.

[4] See Appendix A for an overview of media reports on Chinese government influence in these three areas.

Canada found credible reports of Canadians and residents of Canada being subjected to a wide range of rights violations consistent with allegations that Chinese authorities have been engaging in a systematic campaign of harassment and intimidation against these groups. Three former Chinese officials, Jiyan Zhang[5], Chen Yonglin[6], and Hao Fengjun[7], have made public such allegations after defecting from the Chinese government and claiming refugee status. According to an *Epoch Times* report, Hao Fengjun provided corroboration for his account by leaking a

[5] After claiming refugee status in Canada, Jiyan Zhang, a Falun Gong practitioner and former Chinese diplomat, alleged that a unit of 12 embassy officials follows and reports on groups including Falun Gong, Uighurs, and Tibetans. See Alex Dobrota, "China asks Ottawa to reject claimant", CBC News, 31 March 2007 (Last Updated 13 March 2009), http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/china-asks-ottawa-to-reject-claimant/article682163/ ; Charlie Gillis, "Beijing is always watching", *Maclean's*, 14 May 2007, https://uyghuramerican.org/article/beijing-always-watching.html.

[6] Chen Yonglin is a former Chinese diplomat who left his position at the Sydney Consulate-General who claimed political asylum in Australia in 2005. In an affidavit filed in a case before the Supreme Court of British Columbia, he stated that his tasks while serving as Second Secretary and later First Secretary of the Chinese Consulate-General in Australia included "[m]onitoring and collecting the information about the 'five poisonous groups' including the Falun Gong, the Democracy Activists, the Taiwan Independence activists, the Tibetans and the Uygurs in Australia, and those Australians who sympathize or support the 'five poisonous groups' and taking counter-actions against these targets". He also claimed to have been a member of the "Special Anti-Falun Gong Working Group", which he alleges exists "in all Chinese missions around the world where there exist Falun Gong practitioners". See Affidavit of Chen Yonglin filed in *City of Vancouver v. Zhang*, 2008 BCSC 875.

[7] Hao Fengjun claimed asylum in Australia in February 2005 and gave media interviews after Chen Yonglin's allegations were first reported. Fengjun claimed to have previously been a member of a special section of the "610 office", a special unit of the Chinese Public Security Bureau focussed on Falun Gong. He claimed that documents that he saw through his work indicated that China operates a counter-Falun Gong intelligence network that includes over 1,000 spies in Canada: a figure that he estimated surpassed the number of anti-Falun Gong spies in the United States, Australia, or New Zealand. He indicated that China recruited Canadians of Chinese origin to collect intelligence on Falun Gong practitioners, in addition to dispatching "professional" agents from China and enlisting visiting businesspeople and students. He claimed that most of these spies are located in Toronto and Vancouver and engage in harassment and intimidation that includes tapping phones of Falun Gong practitioners. He alleged that the information collected is sent to the 610 office in Tianjin City, China. Both Australian and Canadian governments indicated that they were taking his allegations seriously. See CNN, "Second defector backs spy claims", 7 June 2005, http://www.cnn.com/2005/WORLD/asiapcf/06/07/australia.china.diplomat/ ; Phil Han & Jeff Sallot, "China has 1,000 spies in Canada", *Globe and Mail*, 15 June 2005 (Last Updated 17 March 2009), <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/china-has-1000-spies-in-canada/article18229894/> ; Jeff Sallot, "Ottawa will act against China's spies", *Globe and Mail*, 17 June 2005 (Last Updated 07 April 2009), <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/ottawa-will-act-against-chinas-spies/article20423404/.

Chinese intelligence report containing detailed personal information on Canadian citizen and Falun Gong practitioner Jillian Ye.[8]

A. Cyber Attacks

Multiple individuals involved in China-related activism have reported instances of digital harassment, most notably through receiving inordinately large numbers of emails with attachments containing malware. Certain digital attacks reveal a high level of sophistication and a deliberate attempt to target or impersonate specific activists, with multiple activists from different communities reporting having received emails from senders who had impersonated an acquaintance to trick them into opening an attachment containing malware.

Since 2008, the Citizen Lab, an interdisciplinary lab based at the Munk School of Global Affairs at the University of Toronto, has conducted research on cyber-attacks on the Tibetan-Canadian community. According to a summary of the Citizen Lab's research provided to Amnesty International Canada and the Canada Tibet Committee, Tibetan groups have been "systematically targeted by malware-enabled espionage operations that aim to compromise their communications for the purpose of performing surveillance".[9] The Citizen Lab's research indicates that Tibetan groups appear to be targeted as a community, often receiving the same malware, and in certain instances attackers attempted to try to trick certain Tibetan groups into targeting another Tibetan group.[10]

The Citizen Lab's research indicates that civil society organizations working on human rights issues in Tibet and China appear to be targeted by the same campaigns that have targeted government and industry. Despite the difficulty of attributing malware campaigns, the Citizen Lab found that:

> In one of the cases, research from the Citizen Lab linked a malware campaign that targeted a Tibetan-Canadian to APT1 -- a group identified by security company Mandiant and the US Department of Justice as being linked to the People's Liberation Army of the People's Republic of China.[11]

The Citizen Lab's research indicates that some of the malware received by Tibetan organizations serve surveillance purposes. A email sent to Tibetan groups in 2012 claimed to be from a prominent Tibetan and contained attachments infected with malware that would render an

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[8] Jason Loftus, "Chinese Spies Targeted Toronto Woman", *Epoch Times*, 19 June 2005, available: <http://www.clearwisdom.net/html/articles/2005/6/19/62014p.html>. ("The document, obtained by *The Epoch Times* this week, entitled "Intelligence 274(2003), series nkf03292" and dated September 1, 2004, detailed Ye's plans to start a communications company. At that time, Ye says, she had not even started the company, but had only talked about the idea privately").

[9] Appendix B, p. 1.

[10] Appendix B, p. 4.

[11] Appendix B, p. 1.

infected computer susceptible to having its "keystrokes logged, its file directories and contents listed, as well as allowing the operator to remotely execute commands".[12]

Activists interviewed by Amnesty International Canada have indicated that other communities working on China-related issues have also been targeted by digital campaigns seeking to compromise private data or discredit activists. Human rights activist [redacted] (better known as [redacted]) described having her computer hacked, and digital images of her subsequently transposed onto pornographic photos on Chinese-language sites apparently based in Canada. A documentary broadcast on the Chinese state-sponsored television channel China Central Television reportedly contained a six-second clip depicting a programming tool used to target Falun Gong affiliated websites.[13]

Grace Wollensack, a representative of Falun Dafa Association of Canada, told Amnesty International Canada that starting around in 2010, unknown individuals have impersonated Falun Gong practitioners and sent emails to Ministers and large numbers of Federal MPs in an apparent effort to discredit them. Certain MPs have suspected these emails to be fraudulent messages and have forwarded them to Wollensack. Amnesty International reviewed seven messages that had been sent between 12 May 2015 and January 2017. Certain emails contain strange and sometimes threatening messages. For example, emails from 12 May 2015 and 14 May 2015 insult former MPs Jason Kenney and Stephen Woodworth for not attending a Falun Gong celebration and state that a forthcoming event was the last chance for him to be "saved." In a 13 April 2016 email provided to Amnesty International, a picture of the Honourable David Anderson was copied onto an attached image that contained a subtitle that "David Anderson Supports Falun Gong".[14]

B. Phone Harassment

Multiple activists have reported being harassed by telephone. For example, one Uighur activist received numerous anonymous phone calls, including death threats. These calls ceased when he became less active in activism around Uighur rights. Since 1999, [redacted], a Falun Gong practitioner, has described receiving multiple phone calls, in which his interlocutor would not speak but played pre-recorded hateful messages. In 2005, the *Globe and Mail* reported that Falun Gong practitioner and Ottawa resident Lucy Zhou received phone calls at home. Some of

[12] Appendix B, p. 7

[13] Robert McMillan & Michael Kan, "China Hacking Video Shows Glimpse of Falun Gong Attack Tool", PCWorld from IDG, 23 August 2011, <http://www.pcworld.com/article/238655/china_hacking_video_shows_glimpse_of_falun_gong_attack_tool.html>.

[14] The email chain provided to Amnesty International indicates that this message was apparently taken seriously, as the Honourable David Anderson's Executive Assistant forwarded this email to the RCMP and indicated that she would be informing the person that they "will be taking legal action if anything is published with Mr. Anderson's name, picture and or endorsement on it".

the calls featured pre-recorded messages denouncing the Falun Gong movement, but others were phone calls from an anonymous male caller who appeared to know the details of her recent travels.[15] Human rights activist and author [redacted] told Amnesty International Canada that in 2014 her phone number was placed on escort service websites, leading to her receiving unwanted phone calls.

C. Distributing Hate Propaganda

In response to a 25 April 2003 letter from Falun Gong practitioner Joel Chipkar that appeared in the *Toronto Star* accusing the government of covering up information on the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Pan Xinchun, the Chinese Deputy Consul-General in Toronto published a response letter in the same newspaper that included the allegation that Chipkar was a member of a "sinister cult".[16] The Ontario Superior Court subsequently found him liable for defamation in a default judgment.[17]

Grace Wollensack, a representative of Falun Dafa Association of Canada told Amnesty International Canada that there has long been an organized campaign to spread hateful print materials relating to Falun Dafa. She said that these materials used to be distributed directly by consular officials. However, after 2005 when the Hate Crimes Unit of the Edmonton police identified materials distributed by staff of the Chinese Consulate in Calgary as being in violation of hate crime provisions of the *Criminal Code of Canada*, anti-Falun Dafa materials continued to be distributed anonymously.

Pro-democracy activists with the Federation for a Democratic China (FDC) have told Amnesty International Canada that they have been involuntarily added to an email listserv and regularly receive emails that have included defamatory statements on activists based in Canada.

[redacted] told Amnesty that she has long been the subject of a campaign to slander and discredit her and the FDC through defamatory websites.[18] According to her, a man named XingYang Zhang appeared almost every day from November 2015-April 2016 at Parliament Hill, holding a poster with a photo of her accompanied with text describing her as a Chinese

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[15] Jeff Salot, "Ottawa reassures over spooky Falun Gong tale", *Globe and Mail*, 16 June 2005 (Last Updated 17 March 2009), http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/ottawa-reassures-over-spooky-falun-gong-tale/article18229895/.

[16] Falun Dafa Minghui, "Deputy Consul General of China in Toronto Found Guilty of Libel", 05 February 2004, http://www.clearwisdom.net/emh/articles/2004/2/5/44809p.html; Chris Lackner, "Court seeks diplomat's assets", *Globe and Mail*, 29 July 2004 (Last Updated 18 March 2009), <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/court-seeks-diplomats-assets/article1001773/>.

[17] *Ibid*.

[18] See also [redacted]

government spy.[19] After [redacted] reported Zhang's activities to the police, he launched a civil suit against her for $10 million at the Ontario Superior Court. In the 07 April 2016 statement of claim for this lawsuit, a copy of which is uploaded onto Zhang's Twitter account, he makes a number of improbable claims, including that [redacted] was responsible for kidnapping him in the United States and killing his wife's cousin in a car accident in China.[20]

D. In-Person Monitoring of People in Canada

Certain individuals have reported being personally monitored by individuals located in Canada, often through the Chinese Embassy's influence over Chinese students and academic associations. Amnesty International Canada spoke with [redacted], a Falun Gong practitioner, who said that in 2005 during a visit to Ottawa by the Chinese President, she participated in demonstrations against Chinese government policies. She said that around this time, she received an email on her University of Ottawa student email account from the then-Vice President of the University of Ottawa Chinese Student Association. In this email he informed her that the Chinese Student Association operated under the guidance of the Embassy of China in Ottawa and that they were monitoring her activities. She arranged to meet this student at the student centre, but he didn't appear.

A Canadian professor told Amnesty International Canada that he has been subject to a long campaign of harassment and intimidation by Chinese officials attempting to monitor his activities in Canada. He said that his administrative assistant has been contacted by Chinese people asking for information on him, and he has personally been approached by members of the Xinhua News Agency, as well as Chinese individuals who had infiltrated an organization of which he is a member. He also said that colleagues have warned him that the staff of the Confucius Institute at his university have been asked for information on his activities by the Chinese Consulate. Recently, his university's Chinese Faculty Association has reportedly received funding from the Chinese Consulate, and he suspects that this support may be predicated on information sharing.

According to this Canadian professor, his house was monitored by two people in a car who finally left only after being personally confronted by his wife. Similarly, [redacted], a Uighur-Canadian activist reported that his house was monitored at night by three Chinese men in a black

[19] Although it is not possible to know whether this individual was affiliated with the Chinese government, she believes that the fact that he was able to appear on a daily basis suggests he was receiving independent financial support.

[20] See https://twitter.com/chinaspyatph?lang=en . The statement of claim appears at least in part designed to discredit [redacted] among Canadian and international officials, as it was also addressed to the Governor General; the Prime Minister; all members of Parliament; all senators; the RCMP; CSIS; the ambassadors to the US, Australia, and Italy; the UN Human Rights Council; and "Other Human Rights Organization".

SUV. After complaining to CSIS and the Department of Foreign Affairs, he moved to a condominium where there is 24-hour surveillance.[21]

E. Harassment at Demonstrations

Activists have reported being exposed to harassment and intimidation during demonstrations against Chinese government policies. Amnesty International Canada spoke with activists from Students for a Free Tibet Canada who stated that consular employees took their photos during two demonstrations in 2013-2014 at the Chinese consulate in Toronto. They believe these photos may have been intended to place them on a Chinese-government "blacklist" and prevent their obtaining visas. A video uploaded to YouTube of demonstrations in Ottawa on 10 March 2017 on the occasion of Tibetan National Uprising Day shows images of officials taking photographs with captions indicating that Chinese Embassy officials recorded the protests.[22]

Multiple activists have indicated that pro-government, counter-demonstrations have been orchestrated to intimidate activists demonstrating against Chinese government policies. The Chinese government has apparently used its influence over Chinese students in Canada, many of whom receive Chinese government funding, to ensure that pro-government demonstrations are well attended. Amnesty International Canada has obtained English translations of a transcribed undercover video of a talk allegedly given by Liu Shaohua, First Secretary of the Education Section of the Chinese Embassy on 18 June 2010 to Chinese government-sponsored students. According to the transcript, Liu detailed arrangements, including providing food and accommodations, to be made for students participating in pro-Chinese government counterdemonstrations at Parliament Hill coinciding with demonstrations against Chinese government policies at the time of President Hu Jintao's visit to Canada.

According to this transcript, Liu stressed the importance of the pro-government protests by describing them as a "a battle that relates to defending the reputation of our Motherland". In addressing the students in Ottawa, Liu stated that they will not be alone, and that all state-sponsored students in Toronto will attend and that over 100 people from Montreal have been "mobilized". Amnesty International was also provided with an English translation of a transcript of a video recording of a speech allegedly given at the same gathering by Yuan Pinghua, a visiting scholar at the University of Ottawa English Department. According to the transcript, Yuan used similar incendiary, warlike imagery stating ". . .this is like waging fight [*sic*]. So today we are mobilizing for battle, having all of you take responsibility and raise your guard, raise your guard."

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[21] See Charlie Gillis, "Beijing is always watching", *Maclean's*, 14 May 2007, available at: https://uyghuramerican.org/article/beijing-always-watching.html.

[22]Tibetan National Uprising Day, 10 March ,2017, Ottawa, Canada, published 13 March 2017, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPo91MOYQ70&feature=youtu.be.

Although the transcripts indicate that the speakers urged students to not engage in physical contact with Falun Gong protesters, anti-government demonstrators reported instances of physical and verbal abuse over the course of the demonstrations that lasted three days. In the aftermath of the pro-government counterdemonstration, a coalition of activists working on China-related issues wrote to then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lawrence Cannon, requesting that [redacted] be declared *persona non grata*. In this 31 July 2010 letter, the authors allege that on multiple occasions during the demonstrations pro-Chinese government demonstrators covered Falun Gong banners with red flags and pushed Falun Gong practitioners away. They also allege that one Falun Gong practitioner was hit on the head. The letter's authors state that ultimately the police intervened to order the pro-government demonstrators to stay at their own protest site. It is unclear whether the Canadian government undertook any diplomatic initiatives following receipt of this letter.

Activists from Students for a Free Tibet Canada also reported confrontations with pro-government counterdemonstrators during a 2014 demonstration attended by them and Falun Gong practitioners at the Confucius Institute in Toronto. According to these activists, a police caution tape separating them from pro-government counter-demonstrators was cut, and they found themselves face-to-face with counter-demonstrators who screamed at them. In this heated confrontation, one pro-government counterdemonstrator reportedly put his finger on the chest of one of the activists' chests.

Pro-Tibetan activists have reported physical confrontations with Chinese officials during demonstrations. During a 2014 protest in Toronto against the screening of a Chinese government film called "Glorius Tibet", pro-Tibetan activists were reportedly assaulted by Chinese security officers.[23]

[redacted], a Falun Gong practitioner, told Amnesty International Canada that during a demonstration during the summer of 2002, he parked his vehicle opposite the Chinese Embassy and later returned to find a rear door window broken.

F. Harassment of Canadians in China

Activists working in Canada on China-related issues have reported being targeted for questioning by Chinese police upon visiting China. [redacted], a Uighur Canadian in Montreal, told Amnesty International Canada that after returning to China to visit relatives, he was questioned by Chinese police on Uighur activism. He believed that the Chinese police appeared to have information that seemingly could come only from members of the Uighur community in Montreal. The Chinese police asked him to spy on other Uighurs and subsequently attempted to contact him by phone. After ignoring the phone calls, they finally stopped trying to contact him.

[23] See Phuntsok Yangchen, "Tibetans protesting China propaganda event in Toronto manhandled", Phaylul.com, 06 November 2014, http://www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=35447.

[redacted]'s experience does not appear to be an isolated incident, and other members of the Uighur-Canadian community have also reported being questioned by Chinese authorities and pressured into informing on Uighur activism in Canada.[24] [redacted] indicated that one of the primary motivating factors for many Uighur-Canadian informants has been the fear of losing the ability to obtain visas to visit China.[25] He also noted that the allegedly widespread infiltration of the Uighur-Canadian community in Canada has led to a climate of fear and distrust and has had a chilling effect on activism.

According to Grace Wollensack, a representative of Falun Dafa Association of Canada, most Falun Gong practitioners in Canada have refrained from visiting China in recent years out of fear of persecution. However, in the early 2000s, multiple Canadian practitioners of Falun Gong were reportedly detained or refused entry by China.[26] Amnesty International Canada spoke with [redacted], a Falun Gong practitioner who visited China [redacted] in 2000. During this trip she said she received a phone call at the hotel at which she was staying to ask her to come to the lobby. She described being blindfolded, taken to an office and subsequently interrogated for an eight hour period about Falun Gong activities in Vancouver before being brought back to the hotel in the morning. She told Amnesty International Canada that she was monitored by one or two cars for the rest of the trip. After returning to Canada, she said that her supervisor told her that Chinese consular officials had contacted him to claim that she was a dangerous person and request that her employment be terminated. She also reported that she was later refused a visa to travel to China, and her family members in China were visited by security agents.

G. Harassment of Family Members in China

Chinese authorities have reportedly harassed and intimidated relatives in China as a means of pressuring Canada-based individuals to curtail their activism. In addition to proving devastating to the individuals concerned, these attacks on relatives in China raise significant concerns of a "chilling effect" on freedom of expression in Canada.

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[24] See Craig Offman, *Globe and Mail*, "Uyghur-Canadians say Chinese officials detained, blackmailed them", 22 April 2015, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/uyghur-canadians-say-chinese-officials-detained-blackmailed-them/article24056142/.

[25] Other communities have also reported being denied visas by the Chinese government. According to Grace Wollensack, a representative of Falun Dafa Association of Canada, multiple Falun Gong practitioners have also been prevented from renewing their passports by Chinese consular officials.

[26] CBC News, "Montreal woman, Falun Gong member believed arrested in China", 25 May 2001, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal-woman-falun-gong-member-believed-arrested-in-china-1.289247 (In describing the arrest of Zhu Ying, the CBC noted at the time that she "is the fifth known Canadian resident to be detained or turned away by China, apparently because of their links to a movement China considers dangerous and subversive").

Anastasia Lin, the Canadian winner of the 2015 Miss World Pageant, has reported that her father has been threatened by security officers in China in an attempt to stop her from continuing her human rights activism.[27] [redacted], a Falun Gong practitioner in Vancouver, told Amnesty International Canada that every year since 2006, Chinese security agents have visited her brother in China in order to inquire on her activities and ask if she is planning on returning to China, and she believes that Chinese officials in Canada have been monitoring her activities.[28] Similarly, Amnesty International Canada spoke with [redacted], a Uighur-Canadian activist whose elderly mother has been harassed in China by the police on multiple occasions due to his activism.[29] [redacted] told Amnesty International Canada that his mother's home has been raided multiple times, and she has also been brought in for police questioning over his activism. Since September 2015, he has been unable to contact any of his family members in China, and the phone line is cut whenever he attempts to reach them.

Amnesty International Canada also spoke with a pro-democracy activist, [redacted], who fled in 2011 to Canada, where he rented a room from a well-known activist with the Federation for a Democratic China (FDC) and continued to participate in activism in favour of human rights in China and Tibet. He told Amnesty International Canada that in October 2012, a Chinese security agent first approached his wife, who resides in China. According to [redacted], the agent informed her that he was aware of her husband's participation in pro-Tibetan activism and requested information on the Tibetan community.

[redacted] told Amnesty International Canada that Chinese authorities have continued to apply pressure on his China-based relatives to force him into curtailing his activism and informing on other activists. He recounted that, starting in 2013, state security agents have repeatedly approached his sister, demanding that he desist from his activism and report on the activities of an FDC member, and threatening to cancel her visa to China and force her to return to Canada, where she had previously resided. [redacted] also told Amnesty International Canada that Chinese authorities have resorted to new means to pressure his wife. Notably, in 2015, she told him that she received a visit from officials claiming to be staff from a court, but who lacked uniforms and identification documents. These officials apparently claimed without justification that there was a mortgage on her residence and threatened to take possession of the property.

[redacted] believed that one of the ways Chinese authorities initially monitored his activities was through someone whom he suspects was a Chinese government informant and who rented a room

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[27] James Griffiths, "Barred from China and silenced in the US, this beauty queen isn't backing down", CNN, 10 January 2017, http://www.cnn.com/2017/01/09/asia/miss-world-anastasia-lin-china/.

[28] She told Amnesty International Canada that in 2009 or 2010 while practicing Falun Gong early in the morning in front of a public library in Vancouver, people in a vehicle took her photo and videotaped her, in what she believed to be a reconnaissance operation.

[29] [redacted]'s relatives' experiences have been a subject of Canadian press reports. See Charlie Gillis, "Beijing is always watching", *Maclean's*, 14 May 2007, https://uyghuramerican.org/article/beijing-always-watching.html.

from his landlord in Canada over multiple years. He also suspects that during a 2012 visit of the Dalai Lama to Canada, photos of him taken by pro-government counter-demonstrators may have been intended for reconnaissance purposes.

In other instances, Chinese officials appear to have targeted family members of Canada-based activists in attempt to pressure them to return to China, as in the case of [redacted], the wife of [redacted]: a Chinese human rights activist who, after being accepted by Canada as a government-assisted refugee, was deported from Thailand to China to face trumped-up human trafficking charges.[30] [redacted], who was subsequently resettled to Canada with her daughter, told Amnesty International Canada that since arriving in Canada, she has been subjected to a campaign aiming to pressure her to return to China. Chinese security agents came to her parents', sister's, and other relatives' homes and demanded that they urge [redacted] to return to China, threatening unspecified consequences in case she refused. The agents claimed the [redacted] was hostile and was being assisted by forces hostile to the Chinese government, possibly in reference to her activism with the FDC. [redacted] has since severed contacts with her relatives in an attempt to minimize harm to them.

Subsequently, on the one year anniversary of her husband's arrest, [redacted] received the first of five or six phone calls from a man purporting to be a Chinese businessman in Cambodia. This man told her that it reflected poorly on China that she and her daughter had come to Canada as refugees and promised that her husband's sentence would be reduced or the charges dropped if she returned. This man last called on 2 January 2017 and he played a recording of her husband's voice describing the human rights situation in China as having improved. She said that her husband's voice was recognizable but there was much noise in the background, suggesting that the recording may have been doctored.[31]

According to a *Globe and Mail* report, similar tactics are being employed against Xie Weidong, a former judge of the Supreme People's Court, who moved to Canada in 2014 and has been outspokenly critical of the Chinese judicial system. Four months after his sister was detained, Xie Weidong's son was similarly detained in China ostensibly under suspicion of embezzlement.[32]

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[30] [redacted]

[31] It is also possible that the recording was obtained under duress. According to [redacted], she has only seen her husband once since his arrest, on a China Central Television video, and his face appeared swollen and he moved slowly, leading her to conclude that he had been tortured while in custody.

[32] Nathan VanderKlippe, "Guilty by association: China targets relatives of dissident exiled in Canada", *Globe and Mail*, 11 January 2017, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/china-targeting-relatives-of-exiled-dissident-accused-of-embezzlement/article33573911/.

H. Interference with Freedom of Assembly and Media

Falun Gong activists have claimed that the Chinese authorities exercise political influence in a variety of ways to undermine practitioners' ability to exercise their freedom of expression and assembly in Canada. For example, in 2008, a Falun Dafa-associated marching band was initially denied permission at the last minute to participate in an opening ceremony of the Ottawa Tulip Festival: a decision that practitioners attribute to demands from the Chinese Embassy, one of the sponsors of the festival.[33] Similarly, support by Tourism Calgary and Travel Alberta for a dance performance depicting the persecution of Falun Gong was withdrawn apparently following pressure by the Chinese Consul General.[34] The Falun Dafa Association of Canada provided Amnesty International Canada with a copy of a letter from Chinese Consul-General Yang Qiang to Ken McRae, the former Mayor of Port Alberni, British Columbia. In this 15 May 2008 letter, which McRae subsequently forwarded to the Falun Dafa Association of Canada, Qiang describes Falun Gong as a "cult" and urges McRae to not support or attend Falun Gong events.

Chinese embassy officials have also allegedly sought to interfere with the operations of certain media outlets that feature content critical of Chinese state policies. Amnesty International Canada obtained a copy of a 30 April 2008 letter from an executive at the New Tang Dynasty TV Canda (NTDTV), addressed to the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Maxime Bernier. In this letter, NTDTV complained that the Chinese Embassy had sought to deny the channel's licensing in Canada. Attached to the letter is a document that is purported to be a hand-written note in Chinese provided by Jiyan Zhang, the wife of a Chinese diplomat who defected and claimed refugee status in Canada. The document allegedly describes a plan to contact the Canadian Cable Telecommunications Association, Rogers Cable Inc., and the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Committee to attempt to derail NTDTV's licensing in Canada.

Epoch Times, a newspaper that often publishes content critical of Chinese policies, has also reportedly been subjected to a campaign of intimidation and harassment. Amnesty International Canada was provided with a copy of a report from 2012, in which the newspaper summarized incidents of intimidation and harassment occurring between 2007 and 2011. In this report, employees of the newspaper reported multiple attempts to interfere with their operations:

- Reporters have been denied access to various press conferences and Chinese community events in Canada where Chinese officials are in attendance.

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[33] See Robert de Konnick, "Falun Gong accuses festival of censorship after band pulled", *Ottawa Citizen*, 06 May 2008, <https://www.pressreader.com/canada/ottawa-citizen/20080506/281517926853015>; Katie Daubs, "Falun Gong gets apology from Tulip Festival", *Ottawa Citizen*, 14 May 2008, https://www.pressreader.com/canada/ottawa-citizen/20080514/282003258161524.

[34] CBC News, "Dance troupe alleges Chinese interference in Alberta visit", 23 April 2008, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/dance-troupe-alleges-chinese-interference-in-alberta-visit-1.731774 ("In an e-mail obtained by the Canadian Press, a Travel Alberta official said the government agency was forced to cancel plans to help the group after it was contacted by the Chinese consulate in Calgary").

- Various businesses in Canada have stopped advertising with the newspaper after reportedly receiving threatening phone calls. Some of the advertisers reportedly told *Epoch Times* that the calls came from anonymous individuals that advertisers believed were affiliated with the Chinese consulate because they made threatening insinuations that the advertiser might be on a Chinese visa "blacklist". Other advertisers reported that the phone calls came from the Executive Chairman of the National Congress of Chinese-Canadians: an organization the report describes as a "front organization" for the Chinese government.
- The owners of multiple commercial establishments in Canada stopped distributing the newspaper and when asked why by *Epoch Times* reporters, the owners described having been visited by Chinese consular officials.

Amnesty International Canada spoke in February 2017 with a representative of *Epoch Times* who confirmed that the newspaper continues to be subjected to a campaign by Chinese consular officials aimed at interfering with their newspaper and that the most common form of intimidation in recent years has been denying access to various Chinese cultural events where consular officials are in attendance.

V. Conclusion and Recommendations for actions by the Canadian government

As outlined above, Tibetan-Canadians, Uighur-Canadians, Falun Gong practitioners, and pro-democracy and other activists working on China-related human rights issues have long suffered from a variety of kinds of harassment and intimidation, whose scope appears to be consistent with a state-sponsored campaign. Because of the multidimensional nature of these abuses, individual complaints to law enforcement are often ineffective at addressing the root causes of the violations. Where action is taken to successfully remedy one kind of human rights abuse, activists are often still subjected to other forms of harassment and intimidation, suggesting a need for a more coordinated and comprehensive approach to addressing this problem. In order to better secure the rights of these individuals, Canada should consider undertaking the following initiatives:

- Create a stand-alone complaint mechanism or "hotline" in order to:
    - collect data to better understand patterns of abuse and facilitate the development of a more coordinated, inter-departmental response to instances of harassment and intimidation; and
    - take appropriate action on individual complaints, including
        - referral to law enforcement in the event of possible criminal activity;
        - referral to relevant ethics bodies and ombudspersons in the event of inappropriate behaviour by government officials and public servants; and

        - declaring select Chinese diplomats *persona non grata* if evidence substantiates allegations of involvement in harassment and intimidation.

    The complaint mechanism should incorporate procedural fairness guarantees whereby the complainant is kept apprised of the status of the complaint and the reasons for any action or inaction.

- Pursue high-level diplomatic engagement with Chinese authorities to:
    - raise credible, individual cases of harassment or intimidation with Chinese embassy officials;
    - raise concerns regarding the overall issue of harassment.[35] Should Canada decide to raise this issue in high-level diplomacy, discussions should include not only concerns over cyber-attacks aimed at private industry or the government, but should also include concerns over cyber and non-cyber harassment of civil society organizations and Canadians; and
    - press for an end to state-sponsored harassment and intimidation as part of any possible future trade agreement talks.

[35] NB: Instances of cyber attacks in the US may have diminished after former US President Obama discussed the issue directly with Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2015. See Julie Hirschfield Davis & David E. Sanger, "Obama and Xi Jinping of China Agree to Steps on Cybertheft", *New York Times*, 25 September 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/26/world/asia/xi-jinping-white-house.html?_r=0.

Appendix A: Reports of Chinese Government "Soft Power" Projection in Canada

Canadian media have long reported on Chinese government initiatives to project influence or "soft power" in Canada. These reports suggest that the three primary means of achieving these goals are through exerting influence on elected officials, media, and education.

I. Exerting Influence on Elected Officials.

The Chinese government's efforts to promote its political views and interests have taken a variety of forms in Canada. Particularly controversial are multiple reports that Chinese authorities have allegedly attempted to curry favour with politicians.[36] In 2010, former CSIS Director Richard Fadden claimed in a speech at the Royal Canadian Military Institute and later rebroadcast on CBC's *The National* that there were multiple municipal politicians in British Columbia and ministers in at least two provinces whom he believed to be under "at least the general influence of a foreign government:"[37] allegations with which other intelligence community members appear to have agreed.[38] Upon being prompted for more details in a follow-up interview on *The National*, Fadden declined to directly implicate China. However, he stated that "there were a few stories in the media a couple of months ago, and I wouldn't say those stories are entirely incorrect, and the country that you've mentioned [China], I believe was mentioned in those stories".[39] The *Toronto Star* later claimed to have obtained a four-page memorandum prepared by Fadden for Canada's former Minister of Public Safety. According to the *Toronto Star*, Fadden detailed the methods used by foreign governments to influence Canada's political process that include:

intelligence-gathering operations, trying to control ethnic communities, targeting and recruiting federal government employees in order to obtain "classified information related to Canadian

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[36] See e.g. Craig Offman, "Ontario minister Michael Chan defends China's human-rights record", *Globe and Mail*, 08 June 2016 (Last Updated 09 June 2016), http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/ontario-minister-defends-chinas-human-rights-record/article30363435/.

[37] CBC, *The National*, Interview with Richard Fadden, Uploaded 23 June 2010, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xdnMuxTv1M.

[38] Michel Juneau-Katsuya, former head of Asia Pacific Affairs for CSIS, was quoted as saying "[t]here is direct evidence that there is much more than just lobbying. There is evidence that CSIS has collected that B.C. officials had been compromised, sometimes with their knowledge, occasionally without their knowledge". See John Paul Tasker, "Richard Fadden, Stephen Harper's top national security adviser, is retiring", CBC News, 31 March 2016, http://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/richard-fadden-security-advisor-retires-1.3514346.

[39] CBC, *The National*, Interview with Richard Fadden, Uploaded 23 June 2010, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xdnMuxTv1M.

public policy or sensitive technology" and building relationships with politicians by giving them support that they hope will turn into "a favourable disposition towards their interests".[40]

After announcing his retirement, in a 04 April 2016 interview for CBC's *As It Happens*, Richard Fadden elaborated further on the kinds of political influence multiple countries, including China, exert in Canada. When asked how widespread "recruiting people on the inside" was, he replied "it depends what you mean by recruiting people on the inside. I mean you can do this sort of thing through any number of ways starting from, you know, normal diplomatic discourse through the use of the media, you know encouraging people to develop friendly relations, and you can also try and do it covertly".[41] In this interview, he declined to comment on the degree to which China had infiltrated the Canadian government, citing the classified nature of the information.[42] Fadden claimed that some of the means the Chinese government uses to influence governments in Canada are "acceptable", whereas others are not and also suggested that it was not entirely certain whether certain officials are conscious of the extent to which they are advancing another state's interest.[43]

II. Exerting Influence on Foreign Media

Chinese government support for journalists has been alleged to be connected with goals of political infiltration. A former Chinese intelligence officer for China's Ministry of State Security, Li Fengzi, reportedly warned that Canada should be concerned about relationships between politicians and journalists from China, stating that China employed agents in Chinese news agencies and that "senior politicians are always the No. 1 targets".[44]

China has also reportedly attempted to influence media narratives outside of China by exerting influence overseas through supporting or indirectly owning media sympathetic to government policies. A 2015 Reuters investigation identified in 14 countries at least 33 radio stations whose organizational structure concealed that their majority shareholder was the state-run China Radio

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[40] Joanna Smith, "Memo names politicians feared under foreign influence", *Toronto Star*, 15 October 2010, https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2010/10/15/memo_names_politicians_feared_under_foreign_influence.html.

[41] CBC, *As It Happens*, 04 April 2016, http://www.cbc.ca/radio/asithappens/richard-fadden-on-as-it-happens-1.3520406.

[42] *Ibid*.

[43] *Ibid*.

[44] Steven Chase, "Chinese ex-spy warns Canada about how Beijing targets politicians", *Globe and Mail*, 30 November 2011 (Last Updated 06 September 2012), <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/chinese-ex-spy-warns-canada-about-how-beijing-targets-politicians/article547580>.

International (CRI).[45] These radio stations are divided into three networks in the North American, European, and Asia-Pacific regions with equivalent corporate structures.[46] Among the radio stations listed in the investigation is CHMB in Vancouver.[47]

A number of other ostensibly independent news sources in Canada appear to have strong ties to the Chinese government, although suspicions of direct Chinese government support remain unsubstantiated. The former editor-in-chief of the Toronto-based Chinese Canadian Post, Helen Wang, claimed to have been fired after the newspaper received complaints from the Chinese consulate in Toronto and pro-Chinese-government groups after she published an article critical of Ontario cabinet minister Michael Chan.[48] The Toronto-based Chinese Canadian Post was formerly run by David Lim, the executive director of the National Congress of Chinese-Canadians (NCCM), an organization that has been described as a "front organization"[49] for the Chinese government.[50] David Lim is reportedly also an executive of the Confederation of Toronto Chinese Canadian Organizations (CTCCO), and Wei Chengyi, president of the CTCCO, allegedly succeeded David Lim as president of the newspaper, although he denies this allegation.[51] Critics of the CTCCO have alleged ties to the Chinese consulate; however, the honorary chair of the consulate has denied supporting the organization.[52]

Helen Wang is not the only Chinese-Canadian journalist to have reported experiencing negative repercussions for publishing content critical of Chinese government policies. Gao Bingchen was a columnist for the Burnaby, B.C.-based *Global Chinese Press* until the newspaper terminated his

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[45] Koh Gui Qing & John Shiffman, "Beijing's covert radio network airs China-friendly news across Washington, and the world", *Reuters*, 2 November 2015, http://www.reuters.com/investigates/special-report/china-radio/ .

[46] *Ibid*.

[47] *Ibid.*

[48] Craig Offman, "Chinese Canadian Post editor says she was fired over Chan critique", *Globe and Mail*, 05 August 2015 (Updated 23 February 2016), http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/chinese-canadian-post-editor-says-she-was-fired-over-chan-critique/article25855965/ .

[49] Former Chinese diplomat Chen Yonglin has described this organization in these terms, although the NCCC has apparently rejected claims of being under the direction of the Chinese government. See Craig Offman and Steven Chase, "Canada fields controversial delegate in China trip", *Globe and Mail*, 07 November 2014, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/canada-fields-controversial-delegate-in-china-trip/article21490971/.

[50] Omid Ghoreishi, "Firing of Toronto Editor Shows Inner Workings of Chinese Media in Canada", *Epoch Times*, 13 August 2015 http://www.theepochtimes.com/n3/1717624-firing-of-toronto-editor-shows-inner-workings-of-chinese-media-in-canada/.

[51] *Ibid*.

[52] Craig Offman, "Chinese Canadian Post editor says she was fired over Chan critique", *Globe and Mail*, 05 August 2015 (Last Updated 23 February 2016), http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/chinese-canadian-post-editor-says-she-was-fired-over-chan-critique/article25855965/.

column. The decision came after he wrote a piece critical of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, who had criticised a Canadian journalist for asking former Minister of Foreign Affairs Stéphane Dion about China's human rights record.[53] When Toronto-area journalist Xin Feng published an article critical of Foreign Minister Wang Yi for 51.ca, a popular Chinese language site in Canada, she reported receiving death threats in the comment section.[54] The pervasive influence of a pro-Chinese government narrative has created a culture of self-censorship that has prevailed over much of the Chinese-Canadian community, and certain individuals have found themselves isolated after publishing works critical of the Chinese government.[55]

III. Exerting Influence through Education

Another way that China has asserted influence, or "soft power", in Canada has been through forging partnerships with educational institutes, most notably through the establishment of language and cultural schools called Confucius Institutes at universities and Confucius Classrooms in secondary institutions. These institutes and classrooms are administered by Hanban, an agency of the Ministry of Education, but the UFWD is also involved.[56] The Hanban website places the number of Confucius Institutes in Canada at 12 and the number of Confucius classrooms at 35.[57] Although the Confucius Institutes do not explicitly teach politics, they have nonetheless generated controversy in Canada for allegedly promoting a worldview consistent with Chinese government policies.[58] They have also faced criticism for discriminatory hiring practices,

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[53] Craig Hoffman & Nathan Vanderklippe, "Columnist's firing at B.C.-based Chinese paper stirs press-freedom concerns", *Globe and Mail*, 20 June 2016, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/columnists-firing-at-bc-based-chinese-paper-stirs-press-freedom-concerns/article30533263/.

[54] *Ibid*.

[55] Emily Parker, "Censors Without Borders", *New York Times*, 14 May 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/05/16/books/review/Parker-t.html?mtrref=undefined> (relating the experience of Chinese-Canadian author Denise Chong, who published a book about an activist during the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests. A Chinese language television station subsequently cancelled an interview with her and a Canadian nonprofit economic development organization downplayed its association with the book).

[56] Colin Freeze, James Bradshaw & Mark MacKinnon, "Canadian universities, colleges confront questions about Chinese ties", *Globe and Mail*, 19 June 2012 (Last Updated 10 October 2012), <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/are-schools-too-eager-to-forge-chinese-ties/article4353705/?cmpid=rss1>;

[57] Hanban, "About Confucius Institute/Classroom", http://english.hanban.org/node_10971.htm.

[58] Colin Freeze, James Bradshaw & Mark MacKinnon, "Canadian universities, colleges confront questions about Chinese ties", *Globe and Mail*, 19 June 2012 (Last Updated 10 October 2012), <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/are-schools-too-eager-to-forge-chinese-ties/article4353705/?cmpid=rss1>; Alex Ballingall, "Why the fuss over Confucius Institutes?", *Maclean's*, 25 June 2012, http://www.macleans.ca/education/uniandcollege/why-the-fuss-over-confucius-institutes/.

with McMaster University deciding in 2013 to not renew its contract with its Confucius Institute after a former instructor at the institute filed a complaint at the Ontario Human Rights Commission for allegedly being forced to sign a contract barring her from practising Falun Gong.[59]

[59] Samantha Craggs, "McMaster cuts Chinese institute, worried by discrimination", CBC, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/news/mcmaster-cuts-chinese-institute-worried-by-discrimination-1.1321862.

Summary

This document provides a high level summary of research conducted by the Citizen Lab (Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto) on malware-enabled espionage operations that target the Tibetan community. The overview highlights two cases of Tibetan-Canadian organizations and individuals being targeted by these operations. These cases are examples of the pervasive threat that the Tibetan community has faced for over a decade. In one of the cases, research from the Citizen Lab linked a malware campaign that targeted a Tibetan-Canadian to APT1 -- a group identified by security company Mandiant and the US Department of Justice as being linked to the People's Liberation Army of the People's Republic of China.

About the Citizen Lab

Since 2001, the Citizen Lab at the Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto has researched and documented information controls that impact the openness and security of the Internet and threaten human rights. The Citizen Lab has developed a mixed methods approach to research, combining technical, legal and policy analyses with intensive field research that has produced a series of evidence-based studies on information security from a civil society perspective.

Our work has been regularly featured on the front pages of world media, and has spurred several high profile advocacy campaigns and public litigation cases at global, regional, and national levels. The Citizen Lab has been acknowledged with several awards, including the MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions (2014), the Advancement of Intellectual Freedom in Canada Award (2013), the Press Freedom Award (2011), and the Vox Libera Award (2010). In 2013, Professor Ronald J. Deibert, Citizen Lab's founder and director, was appointed to the Order of Ontario and awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee medal, for being "among the first to recognize and take measures to mitigate growing threats to communications rights, openness and security worldwide."

Tibetan groups are systematically targeted by malware-enabled espionage operations that aim to compromise their communications for the purpose of performing surveillance.

For over a decade, the Tibetan diaspora has experienced persistent cyber espionage campaigns targeting that their communications.[1] These operations are

[1] See for example, Horenbeeck, M., "Cyber attacks against Tibetan communities," March 21, 2008, https://isc.sans.edu/diary/Cyber+attacks+against+Tibetan+communities/4176

not isolated incidents or generic threats (i.e., the equivalent of spam or conventional cyber crime) but systematic and targeted attempts, organized as "campaigns", to continuously attempt to compromise targeted individuals and organizations for political reasons, and gain access to their private communications.

Since 2008, the Citizen Lab has been conducting detailed studies on espionage operations against the Tibetan diaspora community, including groups and individuals based in Canada. The following sections summarize some of the Citizen Lab's major reports and findings.

Tracking GhostNet: Investigating a Cyber Espionage Network

In 2009, the Citizen Lab released a foundational report "*Tracking GhostNet: Investigating a Cyber Espionage Network*", which analyzed and reported breaches of computer networks at the Private Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Central Tibetan Administration (Tibetan Government-in-Exile), and Tibetan NGOs.[2]

Following an intensive set of field investigations, including at the Private Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Central Tibetan Administration, Tibetan missions in London, Brussels and New York, and at a Tibetan rights NGO, the Citizen Lab identified a network of computers compromised with malicious software. The network, which we dubbed "GhostNet", consisted of 1,295 infected computers in 103 countries, including many computers located on the networks of international organizations (e.g. NATO, ASEAN), Ministries of Foreign Affairs (e.g. Iran, Indonesia) and embassies (e.g. India, South Korea).

The investigation identified socially-engineered emails purporting to be from Tibetan groups, which contained malicious attachments that if executed would have compromised the recipient's computer. A computer compromised by this malware would be under the full control of the operator, who would have access to files stored on the computer, as well as access to the computer's microphone and webcam.

By observing the traffic sent and received by compromised computers, the Citizen Lab was able to identify the command-and-control infrastructure used by the espionage network. While it was not possible to definitively identify who was ultimately responsible for this network, the infected computers we examined communicated with IP addresses in a range assigned to Hainan Telecom in Hainan, China, which is home to the Lingshui signals intelligence facility and the Third Technical Department of the People's Liberation Army. Furthermore the

[2] Information Warfare Monitor, "Tracking GhostNet: Investigating a Cyber Espionage Network" (Information Warfare Monitor, Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON, 2009), http://www.scribd.com/doc/13731776/Tracking-GhostNet-Investigating-a-Cyber-Espionage-Network

targets that were compromised all have geopolitical value to interests of the government of China. While these connections are interesting the report was unable to conclusively determine attribution behind the attack. However, what was clear is that the goal of this operation was political espionage against highly sensitive targets.

This report served as the first documented example of the targeting of the Tibetan community by a politically-motivated espionage network that also targeted governments and other high-profile assets around the world.

Shadows in the Cloud: An investigation into cyber espionage 2.0

The Citizen Lab followed up the Tracking Ghostnet report with a second report, entitled "*Shadows in the Cloud: An investigation into cyber espionage 2.0*."[3] That report started by exploring one of the indicators described in the GhostNet report but which was an entirely separate malware-enabled espionage operation that had also compromised computers at the Private Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. In Shadows in the Cloud, we discovered another network of compromised government, business, and academic computer systems in India, the Private Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and the United Nations as well as numerous other institutions, including the Embassy of Pakistan in the United States. As part of our investigation, we recovered 1,500 letters sent from the Dalai Lama's office between January and November 2009 that were exfiltrated by the operators of the campaign and uploaded to their command and control infrastructure (to which we had access because of the operators' poor security). As with the Ghostnet report, we were unable to definitively attribute the operators of the Shadows campaign to the government of China. However, an independent researcher who further investigated some of the data we published was able to connect an email of one of the operators of the campaign to apartments in Chengdu, which can be interpreted to mean one of the following: the Chinese government seeded the campaign; the Chinese government disguised the campaign as a privateering operation; the campaign was indeed a private operation run without the knowledge or consent of the Chinese government; or that the privateering operation shared intelligence with the Chinese government for profit or other benefit.[4] With the available evidence it is not possible to conclusively assess the validity of these hypotheses individually. However, as with GhostNet it is clear that the objective of this operation was political espionage and again we see Tibetan organizations targeted along with high profile government institutions.

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[3] Information Warfare Monitor, "Shadows in the Cloud" An investigation into cyber espionage 2.0." (Information Warfare Monitor, Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON, 2010), http://www.nartv.org/mirror/shadows-in-the-cloud.pdf

[4] Dark Visitor, "Hunting the Ghostnet Hacker," http://www.thedarkvisitor.com/2009/04/hunting-the-ghostnet-hacker

Communities @ Risk: Targeted Digital Threats Against Civil Society

In 2014, the Citizen Lab published a report, entitled "*Communities @ Risk: Targeted Digital Threats Against Civil Society*[5]" which examined targeted malware enabled espionage operations against civil society organizations. The study, the first of its kind, involved 10 civil society organizations (CSOs) that enrolled as study subjects over a period of four years. The participating CSOs shared emails and attachments suspected of containing malicious software, network traffic, and other data with Citizen Lab researchers, who undertook confidential, detailed analysis. We also paid site visits to the participating CSOs, and interviewed them about their perceptions and the impacts of the operations on their work. Data from both the technical and contextual aspects of the research informed the report's main findings.

Of the 10 CSOs enrolled in our study, 8 focus on issues specifically related to China: 5 were human rights organizations or news organizations focused on Tibet (some of which maintain offices in Canada), one was a human rights organization focused on rights and social justice issues related to China, and one was an independent news organization focused on China. All of these groups operate outside of mainland China.

The investigation found that the groups in our study were persistently targeted by malware operations that attempted to compromise their private communications. Targeted individuals and groups frequently received suspicious emails, which included attached files that our analysis found to be malicious. These emails often exhibited a high degree of social engineering: the emails spoofed individuals and organizations in an attempt to convince the target that the email was legitimate, and referred to relevant topics and events in order to draw the attention of the target. It is likely that attackers conducted some form of preliminary reconnaissance to develop their social engineering, perhaps drawing on social media and other open source information. In some cases attackers used confidential information drawn from internal group communications as leverage, suggesting that some member of the group had already had their communications security compromised.

These groups are often targeted as a community: in many cases we studied, multiple Tibet-related groups received the same malicious emails, while in other cases the attackers attempted to spoof one of our study participants in an effort to target another.

[5] Citizen Lab, "Communities @ Risk: Targeted Digital Threats Against Civil Society," Citizen Lab Report No. 48, November 2014, https://targetedthreats.net/

Attribution of malware operations remains complex, as it is not always possible to definitively link an action (such as the sending of malware) to the perpetrator. However distinct campaigns can be identified through cluster analysis that groups attackers by common malware, development patterns, shared technical infrastructure, social engineering tactics, and other indicators.

The report showed civil society organizations working on issues related to human rights in China and Tibet are targeted by the same campaigns that target government, industry and other civil society groups around the globe.

"APT 1," a cyber espionage group allegedly connected to the People's Liberation Army, Targets Tibetan-Canadian

In one of the operations that we disclosed in the "*Communities @ Risk"* report, a Tibetan-Canadian was targeted by a group known as "APT1", a threat actor known to have targeted numerous government and Fortune 500 companies. APT1 was identified by security firm Mandiant to allegedly be the 2nd Bureau of the People's Liberation Army General Staff Department's 3rd Department, which is most commonly known by its Military Unit Cover Designator as Unit 61398.[6] Five officers from this military unit were charged by the United States Department of Justice with economic espionage offences in 2014.[7]

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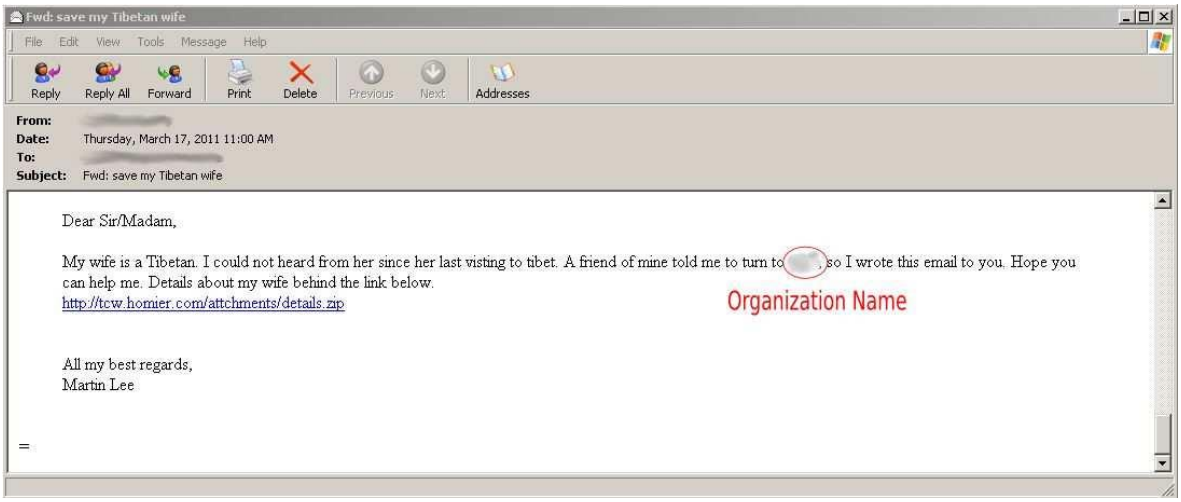
[6] Mandiant, "APT1: Exposing one of China's cyber espionage units," February 18, 2013, http://intelreport.mandiant.com/Mandiant_APT1_Report.pdf

[7] United States Department of Justice, "U.S. Charges Five Chinese Military Hackers for Cyber Espionage Against U.S. Corporations and a Labor Organization for Commercial Advantage," May 19, 2014, http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/us-charges-five-chinese-military-hackers-cyber-espionage-against-us-corporations-and-labor

The targeting of the Tibetan-Canadian took the form of an email that mentioned the targeted organization by name and contained a personal appeal that asked the recipient to click a link for more information.



The link was connected to a malicious file that, if opened, would compromise the target's computer and provide access to the operators. Analysis of the operation showed that the malware and network infrastructure used to control it were linked to APT1, proving the same group identified by the Mandiant and the US Department of Justice had targeted Tibetans in our study.[8]

[8] For full technical details see: Seth Hardy, "APT1's GLASSES -- Watching a Human Rights Organization," Citizen Lab, February 25, 2013, https://citizenlab.org/2013/02/apt1s-glasses-watching-a-human-rights-organization/

This case study demonstrated that espionage campaigns, like APT1, are not engaged solely in corporate espionage, but also target civil society actors. In this case, a group that the American security company Mandiant and the US Department of Justice linked to the PLA had targeted a Tibetan-Canadian.

Espionage Campaign Targeting a Tibetan-Canadian organization

In August 2013, the Citizen Lab published a report, *Surtr: Malware Family Targeting the Tibetan Community,* which described a malware campaign that had targeted Tibetan groups since November 2012.[9] The report describes a malicious email sent to a Canada-based Tibetan rights group, which purported to be from a prominent member of the Tibetan community and repurposed content from a Tibetan-Canadian group's community mailing list. The malicious email contained three Microsoft Word documents as attachments, which were infected with malicious code from the malware family that the Citizen Lab called Surtr.

A computer compromised by Surtr would be susceptible to having all of its keystrokes logged, its file directories and contents listed, as well as allowing the operator to remotely execute commands. The Citizen Lab found that some of the command-and-control infrastructure used in this campaign was used in a previous campaign also targeting the Tibetan community.

Conclusion

The Tibetan community has been persistently and systematically targeted by malware-enabled espionage operations for over a decade. Being perceived as one of the political thorns in the side of the Chinese regime means that all those sophisticated spying campaigns we often hear about targeting companies and governments in the West are ones that Tibetans have faced too. When it comes to cyber espionage, in other words, Tibetans have been canaries in the coal mine.

The research of the Citizen Lab provides the most comprehensive overview of malware operations against the Tibetan community; we have tracked these activities for 8 years. The examples provided in this document show cyber espionage is a threat that crosses borders, following the Tibetan diaspora wherever they go, including to Canada. Our research is only one small window into this widespread and growing threat, the full details of which civil society has only begun to uncover.

[9] Katie Kleemola and Seth Hardy, "Surtr: Malware Family Targeting the Tibetan Community," Citizen Lab, August 2, 2013, https://citizenlab.org/2013/08/surtr-malware-family-targeting-the-tibetan-community

Appendix A: China's Great Cannon

An item we wish to flag separate from targeted espionage but related to the potential of China's cyber activities to affect Canadians concerns a report we published in 2015 titled "China's Great Cannon."[10] In that report, we describe in detail an attack tool that we identify as separate from, but co-located with, the Great Firewall of China -- the well known backbone Internet filtering system China deploys to censor Internet traffic. The attack tool, which we called "The Great Cannon," hijacks Internet traffic to (and presumably from) individual IP addresses and repurposes them for distributed-denial-of-service (DDoS) attacks on targeted websites. Our research was prompted by DDoS attacks of this sort crippling the github pages of an NGO critical of China's Internet policies, Greatfire.org.

After extensive examination, we were able to describe in detail how the Great Cannon operates. We determined that "[t]he operational deployment of the Great Cannon represents a significant escalation in state-level information control: the normalization of widespread use of an attack tool to enforce censorship by weaponizing users. Specifically, the Cannon manipulates the traffic of 'bystander' systems outside China, silently programming their browsers to create a massive DDoS attack." It is possible that Canadian Internet users requesting content from within China could have their Internet activities repurposed for such an attack without their knowledge or consent. It is also possible that Canadian-hosted websites (e.g., those critical of China's policies) could be targeted in the future by China's Great Cannon.

While the Great Cannon was operationalized as a DDoS attack tool, our research also determined that it exhibited functionality as a "man-in-the-middle" weapon, meaning the operators could arbitrarily replace unencrypted http content with malicious content that could hijack vulnerable browsers. Similar to the NSA's QUANTUM system[11], the Great Cannon can deliver malicious exploits targeting any foreign computer that communicates with any China-based website that is not set up with the https protocol.

Appendix B: Related Citizen Lab Publications

Information Warfare Monitor, "Tracking GhostNet: Investigating a Cyber Espionage Network," 2009 http://www.nartv.org/mirror/ghostnet.pdf

Information Warfare Monitor, "Shadows in the Cloud: An investigation into cyber espionage 2.0," 2009 http://www.nartv.org/mirror/shadows-in-the-cloud.pdf

[10] Bill Marczak, et al. "China's Great Cannon," Citizen Lab, Munk School of Global Affairs, University of Toronto, April 10, 2015. https://citizenlab.org/2015/04/chinas-great-cannon/

[11] https://www.wired.com/2014/03/quantum/

Citizen Lab, “Information Operations and Tibetan Rights in the Wake of Self-Immolations: Part I,” March 9, 2012, https://citizenlab.org/2012/03/information-operations-and-tibetan-rights-in-the-wake-of-self-immolations-part-i/

Citizen Lab, “Spoofing the European Parliament,” June 20, 2012, https://citizenlab.org/2012/06/spoofing-the-european-parliament/

Citizen Lab, “Recent Observations in Tibet-Related Information Operations: Advanced Social Engineering for the Distribution of LURK Malware,” July 26, 2012, https://citizenlab.org/2012/07/recent-observations/

Seth Hardy, “APT1’s GLASSES -- Watching a Human Rights Organization,” Citizen Lab, February 25, 2013, https://citizenlab.org/2013/02/apt1s-glasses-watching-a-human-rights-organization/

Ron Deibert and Sarah McKune, “Civil Society Hung Out To Dry in Global Cyber Espionage,” CircleID, March 4, 2014, http://www.circleid.com/posts/20130304_civil_society_hung_out_to_dry_in_global_cyber_espionage/

Citizen Lab, “Permission to Spy: An Analysis of Android Malware Targeting Tibetans,” April 18, 2013, https://citizenlab.org/2013/04/permission-to-spy-an-analysis-of-android-malware-targeting-tibetans/

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Citizen Lab, “Communities @ Risk Targeted Digital Threats Against Civil Society,” November 17, 2014, https://targetedthreats.net

Katie Kleemola, Masashi Crete-Nishihata, and John Scott-Railton, “Tibetan Uprising Day Malware Attacks,” Citizen Lab, March 10 2015, https://citizenlab.org/2015/03/tibetan-uprising-day-malware-attacks

Katie Kleemola, Masashi Crete-Nishihata, and John Scott-Railton, “Targeted Attacks against Tibetan and Hong Kong Groups Exploiting CVE-2014-4114,” June 15, 2015, https://citizenlab.org/2015/06/targeted-attacks-against-tibetan-and-hong-kong-groups-exploiting-cve-2014-4114

Jakub Dalek, Masashi Crete-Nishihata, and John Scott-Railton, Shifting Tactics: Tracking changes in years-long espionage campaign against Tibetans, Citizen

Lab, March 10, 2016, https://citizenlab.org/2016/03/shifting-tactics

Adam Hulcoop, Matt Brooks, Etienne Maynier, John Scott-Railton, and Masashi Crete-Nishihata, “It’s Parliamentary: KeyBoy and the targeting of the Tibetan Community,” Citizen Lab, November 17, 2016, https://citizenlab.org/2016/11/parliament-keyboy