



Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC)

Hearing

STOPPING THE CRIME OF ORGAN HARVESTING:
WHAT MORE MUST BE DONE?

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

10:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.

Rep. Christopher H. Smith, CECC Chair

This hearing will come to order – and it is an important hearing, one which addresses one of the most persistent, horrific human rights abuses of our time, but sadly, one which has not received the widespread attention and condemnation it deserves.

Almost two years ago, Sir Geoffry Nice testified before a hearing I chaired on forced organ harvesting in the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission.

For those that do not know, Sir Geoffrey was the lead prosecutor of Slobodan Milosevic at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. He is a serious man who engaged in a serious attempt to investigate the evidence of forced organ harvesting as the Chair of the Independent People’s Tribunal into Forced Organ Harvesting from Prisoners of Conscience in the People’s Republic of China—or, simply, the China Tribunal.

Sir Geoffrey summarized for us that day the final judgement of the China Tribunal this way —

[The Tribunal] found “unanimously and sure beyond a reasonable doubt---that in China forced organ harvesting from prisoners of conscience has been practice for a substantial period of time involving a substantial amount of victims.”

Among those victims, he said, were most certainly the most vulnerable populations—prisoners, Falun Gong practitioners, and Uyghurs.

Forced organ harvesting on an industrial scale in China is an atrocity unmatched in its wickedness—one has to go

back to the horrific crimes committed in the 20th century by Hitler, Stalin, Mao, or Pol Pot to find comparably systemic atrocities.

The numbers of those executed or their organs—some even before they are brain dead—is staggering.

Thus, the China Tribunal’s final assessment was that state sanctioned forced organ harvesting in China amounts to “Crimes Against Humanity.”

So here we are, to again contemplate an unimaginable and unacceptable crime.

- We are here again because the Chinese Communist Government is the world’s largest jailer of political prisoners and responsible for a genocide targeting Uyghurs.
- We are here again because there are those who doubt or ignored the Tribunal’s findings—pointing to the PRC’s 2015 promise to only source organs from voluntary donors, even though evidence presented by one of our witnesses here today,

Matt Robertson, demonstrates that this data has been falsified.

- We are here again because nearly one year ago, the House passed the Stop Forced Organ Harvesting Act by an overwhelming 412-2 vote, and we need the Senate to bring the bill across the finish line.

That landmark and bipartisan legislation authorizes the Secretary of State to deny passports and visas to any individuals involved in illegal organ trafficking—in China and globally.

It also mandates annual reporting by the State Department on forced organ harvesting globally, and authorizes sanctions for individuals and entities that facilitate organ harvesting.

In December, 2023 a group of civil society groups, religious freedom advocates, trade unions, bar associations, and human rights solidarity groups wrote to Senator Ben Cardin and Senator James Risch—the Chair and ranking

member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee—urging committee consideration.

They said this bill represented the “strongest legislation ever introduced by any country to combat” the “grotesque...atrocities” of illegal organ trafficking.

We await Senate action.

Since the China Tribunal’s final judgment researchers continue to investigate the Chinese Communist government and dive deep into the data on organ harvesting.

Indeed, we will hear from two of the best, Ethan Gutmann and Matt Robertson.

We will also look at how medical journals, bar associations, human rights groups, the United Nations, corporations, and U.S. state legislatures are grappling with the legal, ethical, and human rights issues associated with being complicit in forced organ harvesting.

Dr. Maya Mitalipova from MIT and Dr. Tom Oliverson, a Texas State Representative, will discuss what has been done and what more needs to be done to address the PRC’s

transplantation abuse—including the issue of “organ tourism,” which often fuels the illegal organ trafficking market.

For more than two decades, I have tried to shed light on forced organ harvesting in China. At one hearing in my subcommittee, a Chinese security official testified that he and his other security agents were executing prisoners — with doctors, of course, there, and ambulances — to harvest their organs for transplantation.

In the 1990s, Chinese doctors, nurses, security guards came forward to describe the harvesting of organs from prisoners and the political economy of organ procurement for the elite members of the Chinese Communist Party.

Today I’m announcing an initiative to seek first-hand witness information on forced organ harvesting in China.

I will be sending a letter to Secretary of State Blinken asking him to offer rewards for information from witnesses that will disrupt and deter the forced organ harvesting industry in the PRC and bring accountability to those engaged in this gruesome practice. The State Department has

programs to offer rewards for information on crimes against humanity and human trafficking.

I invite any of my colleagues to join me in signing this letter, copies which will be available for your consideration.

Silence is unacceptable—particularly from medical associations and corporations. If they remain silent, they are the most at risk of complicity in a crime against humanity.

We all bear some degree of responsibility to act. This is ongoing fight to demand transparency and justice for the victims of forced organ harvesting and other horrific human rights abuses in the PRC.

If we don't act now, many more lives will be lost.

Thank you, and I look forward to hearing your compelling testimony.