



## China Reform Monitor No. 1407

February 26, 2020 **Joshua Eisenman**

**Related Categories:** Democracy and Governance; Human Rights and Humanitarian Issues; Intelligence and Counterintelligence; International Economics and Trade; Science and Technology; Africa; China; Europe

### U.S. DESIGNATES CHINA'S OFFICIAL MEDIA OUTLETS AS STATE AGENTS

The State Department has informed China that its top five official news agencies — Xinhua, CGTN, China Radio International, *China Daily*, and *People's Daily* — will be treated as foreign government officials, subject to similar rules as its diplomats in the U.S. The new rules require the five to report to the State Department the names, personal details and turnover of their staff, as well as any property they own or lease in the U.S. U.S. officials said the five Chinese news organizations are "part and parcel of the PRC propaganda apparatus," but insisted the new designation would not impede their ability to report and broadcast. "China has long masked intelligence operations with journalistic credentials," said Jonathan Turley, a law professor at George Washington University. In its 2017 report, the Congressionally-mandated U.S.-China Economic & Security Review Commission warned that "Chinese intelligence-gathering and information-warfare efforts are known to involve staff of Chinese state-run media organizations." (*New York Times*, February 18, 2020)

### NORWAY: CHINA HAS ACQUIRED OUR SPACE TECHNOLOGY

China's intelligence services have obtained highly advanced technology from Norway, according to "Focus 2020", a new threat assessment by the Norwegian Intelligence Service (E-Tjenesten). The report lists Norway's space research facilities as among the main targets for China's intelligence services seeking to acquire advanced technology with military applications. The head of Norway's intelligence service, Lieutenant General Morten Haga Lunde, said: "With growing interest in the Arctic, we believe that China will continue to influence the situation, even in our proximity." He said that the Andoya Space Centre, one of Norway's most advanced facilities, has had numerous penetration attempts. "We notice that the interest and awareness of our sector is only getting bigger, even when it comes to penetration attempts," said Odd Roger Enoksen, the Andoya Space Centre's Managing Director. Norway's Globus II radar, the world's most advanced for tracking satellites, is critical for U.S. space exploration. (*Space Daily*, February 13, 2020).

### GERMANY STOPS SHORT OF HUAWEI 5G BAN

After months of debate, lawmakers from Germany's ruling coalition have decided not to ban Huawei from participating in the country's 5G mobile networks. Instead, lawmakers supported a 4-page policy paper written to assuage the concerns of those who see Huawei as a national security threat. The document distinguishes between access, transport, and sensitive core networks, thus allowing Huawei to handle components in various parts of the 5G network. However, the study warns: "Equipment makers can only be trusted if they verifiably fulfill a clearly defined security catalogue that rules out any influence from a foreign state on our 5G infrastructure. State actors with sufficient resources can infiltrate the network of any equipment maker. Even with comprehensive technical checks, security risks cannot be eliminated completely - they can at best be minimized." (Reuters, February 11, 2020)

### AUSSIES RIP UK COUNTERPARTS FOR GIVING HUAWEI ACCESS TO "FIVE EYES"

UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab was dressed down by Australian Labor MP and Deputy Intelligence Committee Chair Anthony Byrne during his recent visit to Canberra. In a closed-door meeting with Raab, which also included UK High Commissioner Vicki Treadell, the chair of Parliament's Intelligence Committee, MP Andrew Hastie, and Foreign Affairs Committee Chair Senator David Fawcett, Byrne told the Brits: "How would you feel if the Russians laid down infrastructure in your own networks? That's how we feel about Huawei." Raab's visit took place soon after Britain became the first of the "five-eyes" intelligence allies to ignore U.S. warnings and allowed Huawei to help build its 5G wireless networks. He sought to reassure members of Australia's Federal Parliament's Intelligence and Foreign Affairs Committees that London's decision on Huawei would not impact on its ability to share sensitive information. (ABC, February 14, 2020)

## **CHINA KEEPS KENYA, DJIBOUTI GUESSING ON SECURITY COUNCIL SEAT**

At the end of his annual African tour, which included Djibouti, Eritrea, Zimbabwe and Egypt, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi made an unexpected stopover in Mombasa, Kenya. There he met privately with Foreign Secretary Monica Juma to clarify comments made by special envoy Wang Yong, who reportedly said: "We firmly support the reforms of the UN Security Council and believe that Kenya will help increase the voice of African countries at the council." Beijing later said there was a problem with translation, and had Kenya's State House scrub the statement from its website. A few days before, in Djibouti, Wang Yi had met with President Ismail Guelleh and – at least according to Guelleh's office – promised to back Djibouti's bid for the UNSC seat in question. An anonymous PRC official has clarified the conflicting comments: "We support reforms at the UN and always want the voice of developing nations to be heard. But we are not choosing between Kenya and Djibouti." (*The Daily Nation*, January 12, 2020)