



CHINA REFORM MONITOR

The American Foreign Policy Council's Review of  
P.R.C. Government Actions and U.S. Policy

# China Reform Monitor No. 1471

July 29, 2021 Joshua Eisenman

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## CHINESE HUMAN WASTE DUMPING ENDANGERS SOUTH CHINA SEA ECOSYSTEM

Satellite images over the last five years show that hundreds of Chinese vessels have dumped human waste in a disputed area of the South China Sea known as Union Banks, causing algae blooms that have severely damaged fish stocks and coral reefs. "The hundreds of ships that are anchored in the Spratlys are dumping raw sewage onto the reefs they are occupying. When the ships don't move, the poop piles up. This is a catastrophe of epic proportions, and we are close to the point of no return," said Liz Derr at Similarity Inc., a satellite imagery analysis firm. Derr warned that because schools of fish, including migratory tuna, breed in the reefs, the pollution is causing fish stocks to plummet in offshore areas, which are key local food sources. (*Los Angeles Times*, July 12, 2021)

## FIRMS OPERATING IN XINJIANG AT "HIGH RISK" OF VIOLATING LAW, U.S. WARNS

The State Department, Treasury Department, Commerce Department, Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Trade Representative and Labor Department have issued a joint warning to U.S. firms with supply chains and investments in Xinjiang that they run a "high risk" of violating U.S. forced labor laws. "Given the severity and extent of these abuses, including widespread, state-sponsored forced labor and intrusive surveillance taking place amid ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang, businesses and individuals that do not exit supply chains, ventures, and/or investments connected to Xinjiang could run a high risk of violating U.S. law," the advisory says. The U.S. federal agencies called on businesses to engage in "heightened due diligence" on four types of deals in Xinjiang: assisting or investing in the development of surveillance tools, especially genetic collection and analysis; sourcing labor or goods connected to forced labor in Xinjiang; supplying U.S. commodities, software and technology to entities involved in surveillance or forced labor; and aiding in the construction and operation of internment camps or manufacturing facilities that subject minority groups to forced labor.

There exists at least 20 industries that use forced labor in Xinjiang. They include agriculture, cell phones, cleaning supplies, construction, cotton, electronics, extractives, hair accessories and wigs, food processing factories, footwear, gloves, hospitality services, metallurgical grade silicon, noodles, printing products, renewable energy, stevia, sugar, textiles and toys. (Axios, July 13, 2021)

## JAPAN WARNS OF CHINA THREAT AND "SENSE OF CRISIS" IN TAIWAN STRAIT

Tokyo has issued an unusually blunt warning regarding China's threat to Taiwan in its annual defense white paper. "Stabilizing the situation surrounding Taiwan is important for Japan's security and the stability of the international community. It is necessary that we pay close attention to the situation with a sense of crisis more than ever before," the study said. "The overall military balance between China and Taiwan is tilting to China's favor, and the gap appears to be growing year by year." Earlier this month, Japan's deputy prime minister and finance minister, Taro Aso, said that Japan and the U.S. should cooperate to defend Taiwan. In response, China's Foreign Ministry spokesman criticized Aso's "extremely wrong and irresponsible" statements and, in a reference to Japan's colonization of the island from 1937-1945, said "some [Japanese] politicians are still coveting Taiwan." (*New York Times*, July 13, 2021)

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Concerns in Tokyo have grown as Beijing has ramped up its rhetoric and military presence around Taiwan, which is close to Okinawa. In April, President Biden and Prime Minister Suga both referenced "the importance of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait." Tokyo has also donated COVID-19 vaccines to Taiwan, and strengthened domestic laws to reduce Chinese influence in the country's economy.]

### **U.S. SENATE PASSES BILL TO BAN ALL PRODUCTS MADE IN XINJIANG**

The U.S. Senate has passed the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, a bipartisan bill to ban all products made in Xinjiang from the U.S. market. Senators Marco Rubio (FL-R) and Jeff Merkley (OR-D) introduced the legislation, which they said would send the message to Beijing "and any international company that profits from forced labor in Xinjiang is clear: no more." Their joint statement added that the U.S. would "not turn a blind eye" to China's "crimes against humanity," nor "allow corporations a free pass to profit from those horrific abuses." Merkley said that Uyghurs in Xinjiang "are being forced into labor, tortured, imprisoned, forcibly sterilized, and pressured to abandon their religious and cultural practices. No American corporation should profit from these abuses. No American consumers should be inadvertently purchasing products from slave labor." The Biden administration has beefed up sanctions against Beijing and blacklisted companies and officials tied to the genocide. This bill, which Nike, Coca-Cola and other companies oppose, would help secure U.S. supply chains. (*National Review*, July 14, 2021)

### **CHINA URGES EFFORTS TO OPPOSE AMERICAN "INTERNET HEGEMONY"**

China has called on the international community to expose and reject what it has termed as U.S. efforts to jeopardize global cybersecurity and undermine international rules. "The U.S. is the biggest threat to global cybersecurity," said Wang Wenbin, a foreign ministry spokesperson, adding that the U.S. uses its technology to spy on its own people and people around the world, steal data, and infringe on privacy. That the U.S. is cracking down on other countries' companies in the name of "protecting cybersecurity" only exposes its intention to suppress competitors and preserve its internet hegemony, Wang noted. "We urge the international community to jointly expose and resist the U.S.' actions that undermine global cybersecurity and international rules," Wang said, citing Microsoft Vice President Tom Burt's June 30th Congressional testimony that in each of the last five years U.S. law enforcement has issued 2400-3500 confidential orders to the company to obtain access to user data. (*Global Times*, July 5, 2021)