VOC Exposes Beijing’s COVID-19 Coverup

As the coronavirus began spreading rapidly across the globe in March, VOC mobilized to assess the information coming out of China and the World Health Organization (WHO).

At a critical moment for public discourse around China’s role in unleashing the pandemic, VOC released its findings in a situation brief on April 10 called “The Coronavirus Coverup,” exposing the Chinese Communist Party’s systematic campaign of deception and propaganda—and its manipulation of the WHO—during the early stages of the outbreak.

Our report included a detailed timeline contrasting the CCP’s claims with the reality that led to the global pandemic. It ended with six policy recommendations for US officials to take immediate action to combat Beijing’s lies and hold it accountable.

Among the report’s shocking findings were that Chinese authorities:

- knew of the virus’s severity as early as November 2019 yet muzzled early warnings from doctors on the ground;
- denied human-to-human transmission despite full knowledge it was occurring;
- allowed super-spreader events like Lunar New Year celebrations to go ahead;
- banned domestic travel from Wuhan while allowing international travel out of Wuhan to places like Italy and the US;
- bought up and stockpiled quality medical supplies and personal protective equipment, while selling or “donating” largely defective Chinese-made supplies to countries like Czechia and Spain;
- conducted a global propaganda and misinformation campaign to cover up the true origins and nature of the virus.

Throughout this prelude to the virus spreading worldwide and triggering devastating lockdowns, the WHO acted as a complicit partner in providing cover for the CCP, with its Chinese-picked Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus leading the charge.

Our report equipped American policymakers and citizens with the facts to counter the CCP’s lies, garnering more than 27,700 online views and dozens of citations in domestic and international media and news aggregators. Over the following weeks and months, we broadcast these facts in a major publicity campaign across print media, TV, and radio (see back cover), and our policy recommendations gained extensive attention from, and implementation by, major US government policymakers.

See Impact Tracker, Next Page
The US should work to suspend China from full membership in the WHO

- In April, President Trump announced a formal freeze on US funds going to the WHO.
- Throughout April, multiple members of Congress advocated for “wide-ranging” investigations into the WHO and CCP’s response to the pandemic.
- At the end of May, President Trump announced the US will formally cut ties with the WHO, noting the organization is “China-centric” and “worked with China to mislead the world when the virus was first discovered.”

The US should work toward Taiwan’s admission to the WHO as a counterbalance to the PRC

- In April, 50 Lithuanian parliamentarians and other public officials expressed support for Taiwan in the WHO membership debate.
- Secretary of State Mike Pompeo campaigned for Taiwan to be added to the World Health Organization (WHO) as an observer and denounced China for excluding Taiwan.
- In April, a group of 127 European parliamentarians expressed support for Taiwan’s inclusion in the WHO.

The US and other countries should explore taking legal action to hold the PRC accountable for economic damages and reparations

- There have been multiple US lawsuits against the Chinese government, including those by two states: Mississippi and Missouri.
- In April, Rep. Jim Banks (R-IN) was the first congressman to call on China to pay reparations for its criminal negligence which led to the spread of the virus, and he urged the US to bring the case against the CCP to the International Court of Justice.
- In April, Senator Josh Hawley (R-MO) introduced the Justice for Victims of Coronavirus Act, which would “strip China of its sovereign immunity and create a cause of action against the CCP for reckless actions like silencing whistleblowers and withholding critical information about COVID-19.”

After VOC published its situation brief “The Coronavirus Coverup: A Timeline” on April 10 exposing Beijing’s role in unleashing the pandemic—and its shameless propaganda efforts to manipulate global opinion and conceal its irresponsible behavior—we tracked the progress of our six policy recommendations in the actions of government leaders around the world. Read the Situation Brief at www.victims-of-communism.org.
The US should enact stronger sanctions on the PRC related to human rights
- In November 2019, Congress passed the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act, which imposes sanctions on CCP officials guilty of repressing human rights in Hong Kong.
- On May 28, Congress passed the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act, which calls for financial sanctions and visa bans on Chinese officials guilty of persecuting Uyghurs.
- In June 2020, the Republican Study Committee released a new report, including VOC research contributions, titled “National Security Strategy: Strengthening America & Countering Global Threats.” The report detailed the heaviest proposed sanctions on China to date.

The US should cooperate with other countries to have an independent investigation into the outbreak of the virus in Wuhan
- Australia and the EU are supporting a resolution to review the origins and spread of the virus. The resolution has the support of 116 countries at the WHO.
- In April, US intelligence agencies confirmed that they are investigating whether the virus emerged from a Chinese lab.
- The CIA has dismissed China’s officially released infection numbers and are conducting an investigation to find the true totals.

The White House should form an interagency office to deal with CCP propaganda
- In May, House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) announced the creation of the China Task Force, a group comprising 15 GOP members of Congress whose goal is to formulate legislative solutions on how to combat the propaganda of the CCP.
The “Understanding China” online event series aims to help Americans understand the nature of the People’s Republic of China, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and key issues in US-China relations.

The CCP’s 21st Century Slavery
Dr. Adrian Zenz, VOC China Studies Senior Research Fellow
The Chinese Communist Party has long tried to downplay or outright deny evidence of systematic oppression of Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in Xinjiang Province. VOC expert Dr. Adrian Zenz has scoured open-source Chinese documents to find and detail these atrocities. This episode features some of Dr. Zenz’s latest research into evidence of forced labor in Xinjiang.

“Western consumers are increasingly participating in funding this business of oppression, making it sustainable in the long term.”

Revolution of our Time
Jillian Melchior, Wall Street Journal
Melchior details her firsthand experience as a reporter in Hong Kong covering the pro-democracy protests during the critical summer of 2019, when more than two million people, over 25% of the city’s population, poured onto the streets to brave tear gas and water cannon in defiance of Beijing’s proposed extradition law.

“One thing the [protestors] realized as the summer [of 2019] went on was that this was not Tiananmen Square: it was a more insidious, slow-motion crackdown.”

Never Keeping Silent
“Mother Mushroom,” Vietnamese blogger and dissident
Nguyễn Ngọc Như Quỳnh, known by her pen name “Mother Mushroom,” is a Vietnamese blogger and dissident who gained prominence in 2016 for criticizing her government’s mismanagement of the Formosa steel plant toxic spill. Arrested in October 2016 while trying to visit a political prisoner, she staged a hunger strike after being denied legal representation. She was released two years later, after an international pressure campaign.

“My work as an activist is not yet done. While I was in the US last year and able to speak freely, there were still over 200 journalists held as political prisoners in Vietnam.”

Cuba in Splinters
Orlando Luis Pardo Lazo, Cuban photographer and dissident
Lazo was born in Havana, Cuba, and graduated from the University of Havana with a degree in biochemistry. An outspoken critic of the Castro regime, he was arrested three times by Cuba’s political police. In 2013, he fled to the US and since then has been giving lectures on social activism, civil society, Cuban literature, and state censorship.

“Some people say that communism works in theory but not in practice. But in fact the theory works—it has just taken the lives of millions of people to prove it.”

Voices for Freedom” highlights the powerful stories of today’s heroic dissidents. From escaping North Korea, to defying Venezuela’s Nicolás Maduro, to surviving torture as political prisoners, they share their stories of life under communism and how they survived and continue to combat communist regimes.
"It's really a parasitic relationship between the Cuban regime and the Maduro regime, so much so that it makes them virtually indistinguishable."

Rosa María Payá, Cuban Human Rights Activist

Payá describes the lackluster hygiene and medical attention given to the Cuban people during the pandemic, and how outside humanitarian efforts to aid those suffering have been targeted by the Cuban regime.

“While the number of people infected with COVID-19 increased, the repression of the dictatorship also increased: people being beaten in the streets, arrested, having their cell phones seized.”

Karl Marx and His Legacy
Dr. A. James McAdams, Professor of International Affairs, Notre Dame University

Dr. McAdams describes the legacy of the Communist Manifesto, along with the flaws and ambiguities which make it a failed political philosophy. Dr. McAdams also contrasts Marx’s underlying views on the nature of revolutions to how they actually occur.

“All revolutions involve violence….A revolution is about totally overthrowing any existing form of protection, existing social organizations, and modes of consciousness.”

Lenin and the Bolshevik Revolution
Dr. Sean McMeekin, Professor, Bard College

Dr. McMeekin explains the origins and history of the Russian Revolution, as well as the nature of communist revolutions throughout history. He argues that Lenin stirred revolutionary fervor by currying favor with the Russian army, converting it into a revolutionary force ready to crush his enemies.

“In nearly every country where communism was tried … it followed either a world war or a civil war.”

The Cuban Threat in Latin America
Carrie Filpetti, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, US State Department

Filpetti details the Cuban regime’s attempts to destabilize the Caribbean and Central America through disinformation campaigns, to violate the sovereignty of Venezuela and other Latin American countries, and to promulgate misinformation about COVID-19.

“It’s really a parasitic relationship between the Cuban regime and the Maduro regime, so much so that it makes them virtually indistinguishable.”

The Root of the Evil
Rosa María Payá, Cuban Human Rights Activist

Payá describes the lackluster hygiene and medical attention given to the Cuban people during the pandemic, and how outside humanitarian efforts to aid those suffering have been targeted by the Cuban regime.

“While the number of people infected with COVID-19 increased, the repression of the dictatorship also increased: people being beaten in the streets, arrested, having their cell phones seized.”

Watch all our online events: YouTube.com/VOCvideos
Exposing Human Trafficking in Cuba’s Medical Missions

On December 18, 2019 in partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Organization of American States (OAS), VOC hosted an event titled “The Dark Reality behind the Cuban Medical Missions,” exposing the vast corruption and human rights violations that underpin the Cuban regime’s so-called medical diplomacy—its practice of sending thousands of doctors overseas on “healthcare missions,” supposedly to foster international goodwill. In fact, a growing body of evidence and testimonies demonstrate that the program systematically exploits Cuban doctors in a manner consistent with human trafficking—and earns Havana $11 billion a year.

Held at the OAS in Washington, DC, the event convened top experts, human rights leaders, government officials, and Cuban dissidents to expose and counter this human trafficking scheme. The event also featured harrowing personal testimony from two brave witnesses, Dania Cao Quintero and Ramona Matos Rodríguez, who defected from the Cuban doctor program to tell their stories to the world.

Speakers included Luis Almagro, Secretary General of the OAS; Marion Smith, VOC’s Executive Director; Carrie Filipetti, the State Department’s Deputy Assistant Secretary for Cuba and Venezuela; Amb. Carlos Trujillo, Permanent Representative of the United States to the OAS; Dr. Carlos Ponce, VOC’s Director of Latin America Programs; John Barsa, Acting Deputy Administrator of USAID’s Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean; Javier Larrondo, President of Prisoners Defenders, a human rights nonprofit run by Cuban exiles; Sam Dubbin, a litigant in the US case against the Pan American Health Organization; and María Werlau, Executive Director of the human rights organization Cuba Archive.

We convened top experts, human rights leaders, government officials, and Cuban dissidents to expose and counter the vast corruption and human rights violations that underpin the Cuban regime’s practice of sending thousands of doctors overseas on “healthcare missions,” supposedly to foster international goodwill.
Cuba’s Medical Missions

QUICK FACTS:
- Began in 1963 with the first mission to Algeria
- Expanded by the Castro regime during the Cold War to help break Cuba’s political isolation
- Now has over 50,000 doctors active in more than 60 countries
- Touted by Havana as “humanitarian aid” and “goodwill”
- Often praised by western politicians, such as Bernie Sanders
- Is the regime’s largest source of revenue, at over $11 billion a year

THE DARK REALITY:
- Cuban regime pockets up to 90% of doctors’ salaries
- Participating doctors coerced by authorities to join
- Many not shown their contract or told where they will be sent
- Forced to attend communist political indoctrination sessions
- Nearly 50% have their passports seized on arrival in the country they’re “serving”
- Forced to work 64 hours per week for three years
- Housed in cramped quarters; strict curfew enforced at dusk
- Separated from spouse and children; family visits banned
- Leaving the mission punishable by eight-year jail sentence
- Allowed to communicate only via state-monitored devices
- Constantly threatened by officials; families hostage in Cuba
- Forced to spy on each other, report any sign of escape plans
- Coerced to falsify official work statistics in host countries

RECENT COUNTERACTIONS:
- US State Department declared the scheme “human trafficking”
- Brazil cancelled its Cuban medical mission and denounced it as “slave labor”
- Defectors filed federal lawsuit against enabler entity PAHO
- Detailed claim filed with the International Criminal Court
VOC ‘Karakax’ Report Casts New Light on Xinjiang

On February 18, VOC’s China Studies Senior Research Fellow Dr. Adrian Zenz released his latest research into Beijing’s Uyghur internment campaign at a policy briefing on Capitol Hill. Dr. Zenz exposed the inner workings of forced labor camps in Xinjiang, using leaked Chinese documents called the “Karakax List”—named after a regional hotbed of Uyghur oppression in southwest Xinjiang and providing the strongest evidence to date that Beijing is actively persecuting Uyghurs for normal cultural practices and religious beliefs.

Dr. Zenz’s research showed that specific reasons given for the internment of 311 individuals included “being related to a person of faith,” “having an unauthorized pregnancy,” and the blanket category of “untrustworthy.” Taken together, Zenz’s research reveals the ideological and administrative mechanics of a system designed for cultural genocide.

Dr. Zenz’s findings were cited in more than 21 outlets, including the Associated Press, BBC News, Deutsche Welle, the Financial Times, Le Monde, and VICE. He also conducted interviews with BBC Newshour and CNN Newsroom, and in total reached more than 422 million people.

In response, China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement publicly condemning Dr. Zenz’s research, saying his efforts are “doomed to fail.” Chinese state-run media outlets Global Times and China Daily said “he is just up to his old tricks again” and trying to “make trouble for China.”

Dr. Zenz outlines the latest evidence of Beijing’s persecution of Uyghurs for engaging in normal cultural and religious practices, at a VOC report launch event on Capitol Hill.

Dr. Zenz on CNN Newsroom presents the evidence of forced labor camps in Xinjiang.
In March, VOC released a report presenting the evidence of forced organ harvesting in China, including new primary research and data analysis by China Studies Research Fellow Matthew Robertson examining the signs of organ trafficking and exposing the falsification of official datasets, thus challenging international complacency on the topic. VOC co-hosted a policy forum on Capitol Hill presenting the research with the International Coalition to End Transplant Abuse in China (ETAC) and Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP), with a special video address from Sir Geoffrey Nice QC, a former Barrister who led the prosecution of Slobodan Milošević for war crimes in the former Yugoslavia at the International Criminal Court.

Other panelists included Chinese law specialist Prof. Donald C. Clarke, VOC China Studies Research Fellow Ethan Gutmann, Executive Director of ETAC Susie Hughes, Vice Chair of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom Nadine Maenza, Falun Gong practitioner and survivor of Chinese labor camps Yu Ming, and former Uyghur detainee in Chinese “political re-education” camps Mihrigul Tursun.

Sir Geoffrey Nice QC chaired the China Tribunal in 2018-19, determining that forced organ harvesting in China has long been occurring on a “substantial scale.”

“Governments and any who interact in any substantial way with the PRC ... should now recognise that they are, to the extent revealed above, interacting with a criminal state.”
— China Tribunal Final Judgment
On February 24, VOC hosted a panel discussing China’s economic dishonesty and US policy solutions to push back against the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Though China is the world’s second-largest economy, the CCP still ludicrously claims the status of a “developing nation” in the World Bank, thus allowing it to receive funds that should instead go to countries that actually need them. Even worse, loan documents suggest the CCP has been using some of these funds to build “re-education camps” in Xinjiang as part of its cultural genocide campaign against Uyghurs. Featured participants included Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA), Founding Director of Southern California Commercial Spaceflight Initiative Dr. Greg Autry, Founder and CIO of Hayman Capital Management Kyle Bass, and the CEO of Open Technology Fund, Libby Liu.

Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA) explains how legislation he has introduced would push US representatives to the World Bank to make China no longer able to claim “developing nation” status and also make China ineligible for future loans from the World Bank.

Hayman Capital Management Founder & CIO Kyle Bass, pictured here during a post-event media interview, described how China depends on foreign investments to keep its economy afloat.
Cuba’s Corruption Exposed, Broadcast to Millions of Viewers

Denouncing Communist Imperialism in Latin America

On February 7, VOC Director of Latin America Programs Dr. Carlos Ponce joined Colombian news channel NTN24 to discuss the Cuban communist regime’s corrupting and predatory influence over countries such as Venezuela and Nicaragua—including by sending its highly trained security agents to protect dictators and help them crush peaceful protests, conducting sophisticated espionage operations to spy on and arrest dissidents, and sending “medical brigades” of doctors to other countries in an ugly human trafficking scheme (see pages 6-7). One of the more popular shows in the region, NTN24 broadcasts free-to-air throughout the Western Hemisphere, reaching more than 50 million viewers in 22 countries.

The free-to-air NTN24 channel has over 50 million viewers in more than 22 countries throughout the Western Hemisphere.

VOC Director of Latin America Programs Dr. Carlos Ponce exposes Cuba’s malign influence throughout Latin America on popular Colombian news channel NTN24.

YouTube Star Hosts VOC to Expose $11 Billion Racket

On May 7, VOC co-hosted a two-hour program on the popular entertainment and culture show *Hola Ota-Ola!* to demonstrate to ordinary Cubans how their communist regime is extracting $11 billion a year from its own citizens through a corrupt human trafficking scheme called “medical missions,” sending thousands of Cuban doctors abroad where they are forced to work long hours, live in cramped quarters, endure communist indoctrination, and receive only a tiny fraction of their salary. Featured show participants included Luis Almagro, Secretary General of the Organization of American States (pictured, left); John Barsa, Administrator of USAID; María Werlau, Executive Director of Cuba Archive; and Rosa María Payá, Director of the Foundation for Panamerican Democracy. The audience was *Hola Ota-Ola!*’s largest ever, with more than 40,000 people tuning in live and over 500,000 views on YouTube and Facebook.

Luis Almagro, Secretary General of the Organization of American States, joins VOC on the popular YouTube show *Hola Ota-Ola!* to expose Cuba’s corrupt “medical missions” scheme of human trafficking, reaching hundreds of thousands of viewers.
Polish Film Festival Satirizes Absurdity of Life Under Communism

Comedy vs. Communism: A Retrospective of Polish Cult Comedies from Communist Times

On June 20-27, VOC hosted a virtual film festival entitled “Comedy vs. Communism” in partnership with the US Embassy of Poland. Organized by VOC Polish Studies Research Fellow Dr. Anna Draniewicz, who during her time at VOC explored how Polish cult films helped overthrow communism in Poland, the festival celebrated film as a tool of resistance to tyranny, and political satire as a means of beginning the process of re-establishing political liberty. Each film was followed by a Q&A session with Dr. Draniewicz, during which she answered questions arising from the films and their portrayal of the surreal life in communist Poland. More than 200 people attended the festival over the course of the week.

To our supporters . . .

Thank you! Every event, every meeting, every counter-challenge we make to communism’s horrible influence, every boost to dissident truth-telling—every bit of VOC’s work as reported in this newsletter—is made possible by the generosity of our donors who value our mission: To educate this and future generations about the ideology, history, and legacy of communism. We are grateful for your support.

Gift Match Programs

Did you know you can double the impact of your support through a gift match program? Your employer may be willing to match any donations you make in support of the Foundation. To see if your employer will match donations, please contact your employer or the VOC office at 202.629.9500.

Current participating companies:

![Apple](image)
![Boeing](image)
![ConocoPhillips](image)
![Dell](image)
![Microsoft](image)
![Pfizer](image)
![Samsung](image)

Planned Giving Options

Did you know you can support the Foundation through a bequest? If you would like to make a planned gift, you can use the following language:

“I give, devise, and bequeath to the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation in the City of Washington, DC, EIN: 52-1920858, [dollar amount, percentage, or percent of the rest, residue, and remainder of my estate] to be used for its work fulfilling its mission to educate this generation and future generations about the ideology, history, and legacy of communism.”

If you would like to discuss a potential planned gift, please contact Abraham Armstrong, Associate Director of Development, at abraham.armstrong@victimscommunism.org or 202.629.9500.
Albright Keynotes VOC-hosted Event Honoring Havel

On February 18, nearly 400 people packed the US Capitol Visitor Center Auditorium in Washington, DC, to attend “Václav Havel, Speaking Today,” featuring former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, singer Joan Baez (who performed at a music festival in Czechoslovakia where she helped prevent the arrest of Havel by allowing him to carry her guitar), and excerpts from the documentary “Havel Speaking, Can you Hear Me?” by director Petr Jančárek. The event, co-hosted by House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD), highlighted the late Czech President Václav Havel’s historic speech 30 years ago before a joint session of the US Congress, following the collapse of the communist regime. Havel died in 2011.

US State Department Screens Witness Project Episodes in Bulgaria

At a two-day event on December 16-17, 2019, we licensed our Witness Project episodes and had them screened at a digital storytelling event in Sofia, Bulgaria, in partnership with the US State Department and the renowned global nonprofit organization World Learning. The event’s 311 attendees from 33 countries viewed our videos in a room dedicated to illustrating stories, ideas, and values associated with the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, using digital storytelling alongside videos from several other organizations and embassies.
On June 3, VOC successfully hosted an online vigil commemorating the Tiananmen Square Massacre, despite sustaining a major DDoS cyberattack that evening, which knocked our main website offline for 15 hours. The undisrupted event was attended by more than 1,600 people, and it featured renowned China journalist Ursula Gauthier accepting our Human Rights Award on behalf of Chen Qiushi. Qiushi is the Chinese citizen-journalist who disappeared in March after his brave coverage of the virus’s spread in Wuhan and of the Hong Kong freedom protests in earlier months. Other speakers included VOC Chairman Dr. Lee Edwards, ChinaAid President Dr. Bob Fu, Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom Laureate Chen Guangcheng, Hong Kong Watch Chairman Benedict Rogers, Dialogue China Founder Dr. Dan Wang, and Citizen Power Initiatives for China Founder and President Dr. Yang Jianli.

“After having muzzled professional journalists, Beijing is now silencing the solitary voices who want to tell the truth....China is sinking into a denial of information, a denial of justice, and a denial of humanity.” – Ursula Gauthier, Journalist, L’Obs
Chen Qiushi is a Chinese lawyer, activist, and popular citizen-journalist who became widely known for providing firsthand coverage of the 2019-20 Hong Kong protests and the 2019-20 coronavirus pandemic, which included criticism of the Chinese Communist Party's response.

Journalist for the French publication L’Obs Ursula Gauthier accepts our Human Rights Award on behalf of Chen Qiushi.

Founder and Executive Director of the Chen Guangcheng Foundation and Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom Laureate Chen Guangcheng

Founder of Dialogue China and Tiananmen Square survivor Wang Dan

Chairman of Hong Kong Watch Benedict Rogers

Founder and President of ChinaAid Dr. Bob Fu

Founder and President of Citizen Power Initiatives for China and Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom Laureate Dr. Yang Jianli

VOC Honors ‘Disappeared’ Hero of Wuhan
As the effects of the pandemic set in, VOC conducted a publicity campaign across television, print media, radio, and social media to expose Beijing’s role in unleashing the virus on the world—and its shameless coverup and propaganda operations. Our campaign included an appearance on Tucker Carlson

VOC Executive Director Marion Smith joined Tucker Carlson’s top-rated primetime cable news show on March 23 to broadcast the facts about how Beijing suppressed early warnings of doctors in Wuhan, concealed critical information about the virus’s dangers from the world, then colluded with the World Health Organization to spread misinformation and lies about COVID-19’s true nature and origins.

VOC Poll Shows Most Americans Blame China for COVID-19

Poll findings released on May 13 in partnership with YouGov. Data reflects percentage (%) of total survey sample (n=1,382) who replied in an online survey with each given response. Figures have been weighted to be representative all US adults (aged 18+). Full polling results are available at: victimsofcommunism.org/poll-china-coronavirus