

# 2021 VOC ANNUAL REPORT



VICTIMS OF COMMUNISM  
MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

## VISION

A world free from the false hope of communism.

## MISSION

To educate future generations about the ideology, history,  
and legacy of communism.

## OBJECTIVE

Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation (VOC) is an educational, research, and human rights nonprofit organization devoted to commemorating the more than 100 million victims of communism around the world and to pursuing the freedom of those still living under totalitarian regimes.





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# A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

2021 marked the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Soviet Union, a triumphant time in history that led millions of people to regain their independence.

However, 30 years after this pivotal moment, millions of people worldwide—one-fifth of the world's population—still live under communist tyranny.

Today, the Chinese Communist Party is responsible for genocide against Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities, the Venezuelan people face massive food shortages under Nicolás Maduro's regime, and Cuba is jailing artists and forcing its medical doctors to "serve" in foreign lands under the guise of humanitarian aid.

Looking back on history, and looking at the world today, makes our team at the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation all the more grateful for the worldwide support of our mission. The past century has seen more than 100 million victims of communism, all who are crying out: "Remember Us." And we respond to these victims saying: *We remember you as we advance the fight for freedom over communism.*

It is in this spirit that we will open the Victims of Communism Museum in Washington, D.C. in 2022. This Museum will give a voice to the voiceless by presenting the difficult truths about the bloodiest ideology humankind has ever constructed.

**We must never forget the victims of communism.**



A blue ink signature of Edwin J. Feulner.

Edwin J. Feulner, Ph.D.  
Chairman



A blue ink signature of Ambassador Andrew Bremberg.

Ambassador Andrew Bremberg  
President and CEO



## 2021 IMPACT: BY THE NUMBERS

In 2021, we  
published:

**8**

Special Reports

**1**

Book

**5**

Educational Articles

**12**

Fact Sheets

**9**

New Educational  
Videos

We launched:

**2**

New Newsletters

The VOC Daily Digest  
and  
The China Debrief

Online, VOC made an impression  
across various platforms:

**51,000**

Twitter Followers

**40,000**

Facebook Followers

**146,000**

VOC Website Visits

**1,075,000**

Video Views

**16,325,000**

Impressions on Social Media

Our experts made an  
impact in the media:

**23**

TV, Radio, Written, and  
Podcast Interviews

**2**

Congressional  
Testimonies

**4**

Op-Eds

**30**

Blog Posts

Our in-person and online events  
educated thousands:

**41**

Events

**21,856**

Event Attendees

# EDUCATION





# Victims of Communism Museum

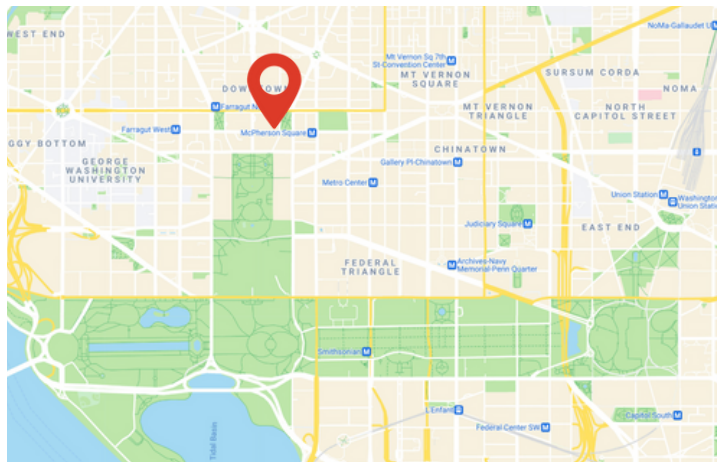
Opening in the Spring of 2022, the Victims of Communism Museum will educate visitors about the history and horrors of communism. Because the United States has served as a beacon of hope and safe haven to many fleeing Communist tyranny, we chose a location two blocks from the White House in the heart of Washington, D.C.



**We must never forget the victims of communism.**

The Museum's three main galleries will feature the detailed history of communism and the heroic struggles of those who resisted it, as well as showcase temporary exhibits in cooperation with partner organizations to spotlight particular moments and individuals of the last century. It will have the capacity to host school groups and private events in our educational center.

**Victims of Communism Museum**  
**900 15th Street NW, Washington D.C. 20005**





Visitors to the Museum will be shown an introductory film that documents the heartbreaking reality and the horrific crimes of communism, along with the real-life stories of the heroes who have resisted this deadly ideology—preparing them for the three main galleries.



Visitors will learn that communism did not bring about the victory of the working class, nor “peace, land, and bread.” Communism brought instead starvation, deprivation, imprisonment, and murder of over 100 million men, women, and children. Museum visitors will also witness the long and arduous struggle for freedom—that continues to this day—against communism.



The “Conditions Under Communism” digital interactive allows visitors to experience the life changing decisions those who fought against communism faced, and the struggles of those fighting today still experience, through a series of interactive exhibits. Visitors will follow the journey of freedom fighters in East Germany, Cuba, and North Korea.







## New Witness Project Episode Premieres

### ELIDA DAKOLI

On August 10, VOC released a new Witness Project episode detailing the story of Albanian pianist, Elida Dakoli, and her family.

As a child in Albania, Elida was persecuted due to her family's pro-democracy ties. Both sides of her family were targeted by Albanian dictator Enver Hoxha's communist regime due to their outright support of democracy. Her passion for music started at age six and her parents were determined to not let the communist oppression of their family harm Elida's independent spirit. Elida's natural talent and her resolve to fight against all odds to train in piano allowed her to persevere.

Today, Elida is a classical pianist whose career has flourished worldwide.

**Watch All Witness Project  
Episodes on YouTube:**  
[youtube.com/vocvideos](https://youtube.com/vocvideos)

VOC's Witness Project is an award-winning video series telling the stories of men and women who have seen the brutal effects of communism firsthand. These short documentaries give a human face to the staggering number of victims—more than 100 million in 100 years—and help viewers grasp the human cost of socialism and communism. Witness Project episodes have been viewed hundreds of thousands of times on social media and screened at dozens of public events across the U.S. and internationally.



# Florida Governor Ron DeSantis Signs Victims of Communism Education Bill

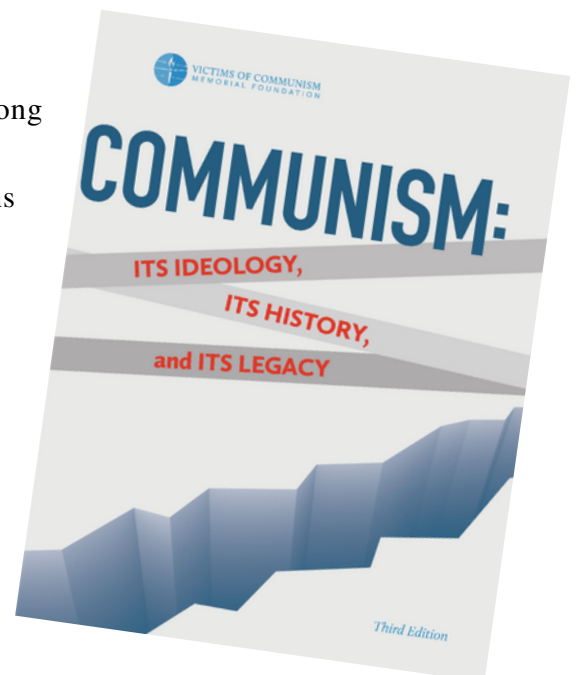


On June 22, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis signed into law a bill requiring that all Florida schools teach their students about the crimes of communist regimes. The legislation, which was championed by VOC and passed in both the Florida House of Representatives and Florida Senate in April 2021, requires schools to include in their curriculum a comparative discussion of the political ideologies of communism and totalitarianism with the principles of freedom and democracy essential to the founding principles of the United States.

During the signing ceremony, Governor DeSantis noted the importance of having students graduate high school with a strong foundation and understanding of the evils of communism and totalitarian ideologies that have been responsible for the deaths of over 100 million people in the past century.

**"Why would somebody flee across shark infested waters, say, leaving from Cuba, to come to southern Florida? Why would people leave a place like Vietnam? Why would people leave these countries and risk their life to be able to come here. It's important that students understand that."**

*—Governor Ron DeSantis*





# National Teachers Seminar

From July 18-24, VOC hosted our sixth annual National Seminar for Middle and High School Educators where teachers from public, private, charter, and home schools gathered virtually for training. Each educator learned how to effectively use and teach VOC's middle and high school curriculum. The Seminar blends scholarly lectures, peer discussions, teaching techniques, biographical films, live witness testimonials, and dissident interviews to create a one of a kind training program not offered anywhere else in the U.S.



Some of the outstanding witnesses of communism our educators heard from were: **Rushan Abbas** whose sister is one of the nearly one million Uyghurs being held captive in China; **Orlando Luis Pardo Lazo**, a Cuban writer who is an outspoken critic of the Castro regime and its latest successor, the Díaz-Canel regime; **Daniel Di Martino**, a Venezuelan who suffered under the brutal Chavez and Maduro regime's socialist policies; and **Channy Chhi Laux** who survived the Khmer Rouge's Cambodian genocide as a young teenager.

VOC has educated over 500 teachers from 42 U.S. states and six countries. These alumni will return to their classrooms equipped with the educational tools to teach students about the every present dangers and crimes of communism.

# VOC Seminar Alumni Teaches Students and Citizens About the Perils of Communism



One of our seminar alumni, Kerri Flynn, a high school history teacher in Union, MO, and an active volunteer of the Victims of Communism – St. Louis Commission, facilitated a teacher workshop in Springfield, MO. Nearly 60 Springfield residents joined VOC-STL to learn more about Marxist theory, understand the history of communism, and to draw comparisons between the lives of those living under communist tyranny in Cuba and China, and various groups and political supporters of socialism and communism here in the United States.

Flynn's students have been exposed to the realities of communist theory and its deadly impact on the lives of millions through her human rights and genocide courses. One of her students, Maci, said she learned that communism creates a "society in which goods are no longer owned by individuals, they are owned by the community."

Another student, Isaac, explained that a communist government "controls everything and attempts to make everyone equal. It does poorly because it becomes very corrupt," and another student, Megan, now knows that under communism, "all property and money belong to the government."

**"The National Seminar really developed my knowledge on communism and how it has been, and is still being used, to subjugate people and deprive them of their human rights. I use the information and skills I gained at the seminar in my classroom and in presentations for other teachers, to help educate others about the dangers of communism."**

*—Kerri Flynn, High School Human Rights and Genocide Teacher in Union, MO*



# Educating Globally Through Webinars

VOC hosted dozens of online events—in both English and Spanish—over the course of 2021 in an effort to reach the widest audience possible to educate people of all ages about the perils of communism.

## *Recognizing the Importance of Dissident Art*



VOC hosted a webinar with Chinese-Australian political cartoonist, artist, and rights activist "**Badiucao**" about the importance of dissident art. Badiucao is constantly aware of the danger he is in by creating art that criticizes the CCP. His grandparents were filmmakers who were persecuted and killed by the same government for their films. For his safety, he published his work anonymously and kept his identity a secret. Three years ago,

his identity was revealed to the CCP and since then he has received death threats. Badiucao refuses to let the CCP intimidate him and continues to publish his work.

## *Live Not By Lies Book Talk*

VOC hosted a webinar with **Rod Dreher** about his book, *Live Not by Lies*, hosted by Dr. F. Flagg Taylor IV. In *Live Not By Lies*, Dreher amplifies the alarm sounded by the brave men and women who fought totalitarianism. He explains how the totalitarianism facing us today is based less on overt violence and more on psychological manipulation. He tells the stories of modern-day dissidents—clergy, laity, martyrs, and confessors from the Soviet Union and the captive nations of Europe—who offer practical advice for how to identify and resist totalitarianism in our time. Following the model offered by a prophetic World War II-era pastor who prepared believers in his Eastern European to endure the coming of communism, *Live Not By Lies* teaches American Christians a method for resistance.



## *A Christmas Eve Escape Story*



**Peter Wolf** joined us for an installment of our "Communism and the World" webinar series to recount his life growing up in communist East Germany and his harrowing escape on Christmas Eve 1960. He graduated from the University of Illinois in 1973, where he studied physics and math. Working as an engineer until 1985, Peter then realized his American Dream, starting his own successful business (PhotoCrazy, Inc.), owning a home, and raising a family in a free society. His story has been chronicled in a book and a play by Paul Cooper, both entitled "Because I Can."

## *Forced Organ Harvesting in China and Actions to Stop This Cold Genocide*

VOC co-hosted an event with the **Committee on Present Danger: China, End Transplant Abuse Coalition**, and the **World Organization to Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong** about forced organ harvesting. The practice of forcibly taking organs from prisoners of conscience as a means of punishment and to raise revenue for the government continues in China. This webinar brought together a panel of experts, investigators, and witnesses on the issue of forced organ harvesting who provided updates on related investigation and had a discussion on global efforts that can be taken to end forced organ harvesting in China.







## St. Louis Commission Continues Local Education

The Victims of Communism – St. Louis Commission (VOC-STL)—comprised of local VOC volunteers who are committed to helping educate their community about the perils of communism and to highlighting the stories of local witnesses of communism—exhibited at this year’s Great Homeschool Convention. Hosted each year in multiple locations across the country, the convention draws thousands of families together for three days of learning with top speakers, one-on-one sessions, workshops, and resource sharing.

This year, VOC-STL leaders and volunteers staffed the event and promoted the use of VOC’s middle and high school curriculum, *Communism: Its Ideology, Its History, and Its Legacy*, which was enthusiastically received as a new essential teaching resource by homeschool families in St. Louis.

**“Our educational outreach committee has a number of homeschoolers who have begun using the VOC curriculum and actively sharing it with their peers and with the leadership of different homeschool networks in the area. It was energizing to speak with so many parents and their children who are familiar with the history of communism and its victims, who agree that many of our schools fail to fully teach this history.”**

*—Kim McGrath, VOC-STL Director*

On November 6, VOC-STL commemorated Victims of Communism Memorial Day with a screening of short documentary films along with powerful interviews with local residents who have lived under communism.

More than 100 people joined the commission's annual event, held this year at the historic Chase Park Plaza Cinema, to learn facts about the history of communism along with personal testimonies from Cuba, China, Poland, and Venezuela. Speakers included the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Poland in St. Louis, Dr. Wojciech L. Golik, and VOC-STL specialists Orlando Luis Pardo Lazo, Karen Tian, Dr. Juan Torres, and Sam Geng.

Local residents from across the state found the interactive presentation to be educational and emotional as they listened to men and women tell their stories of struggle and survival. Alisha Truemper, a St. Louis native who has recently gotten involved with the commission, found the event to be shockingly and deeply disturbing.

**"The section on China was particularly moving because I hadn't heard of all the different groups like the Falun Dafa practitioners who were being persecuted by the CCP. It's a clear warning of how bad life could become for my family as Christians."**

*—Alisha Truemper, St. Louis native and VOC-STL volunteer*





# 14th Annual Roll Call of Nations Wreath Laying Ceremony & Presentation of the Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom



On June 11, representatives from 15 embassies, 3 delegations, and 41 ethnic and human rights organizations gathered together in person and virtually with leaders of the VOC for the 14th annual Roll Call of Nations Wreath Laying Ceremony & Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom Presentation at the Victims of Communism Memorial.

This year, we presented our **Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom to Jimmy Lai**, a prominent Hong Kong entrepreneur and long-time pro-democracy activist, who was a leader of Hong Kong's 2014 Umbrella Movement and was accused and tried for his involvement in the 2019-2020 pro-democracy movement.



REUTERS / Alamy Stock Photo



The Honorable William McGurn, columnist for *The Wall Street Journal*, former speechwriter for President George W. Bush, and godfather of Jimmy Lai, accepted the award from VOC Board Chairman Dr. Edwin Feulner, on Mr. Lai's behalf.

**"You have to remember that Jimmy is a man who has willingly exchanged the life of a multimillionaire for that of a Chinese dissident. He chose handcuffs and chains when he could have easily fled abroad to one of his many residences. And he did so in solidarity with the nameless thousands of his Hong Kongers who have been arrested simply for demanding what we in the free world too often take for granted."**

*—The Honorable William McGurn, former speechwriter for George W. Bush & Godfather of Jimmy Lai*





# RESEARCH



# Chinese Communist Party "Threatened" by VOC

On March 2, VOC's Director and Senior Research Fellow in China Studies, Dr. Adrian Zenz, released a groundbreaking report. This report presented new evidence of crimes against humanity perpetrated by the Chinese government against ethnic minority laborers. The CCP forcibly transferred these ethnic minority laborers from their home region of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region to other regions as part of a state-run scheme to forcibly uproot them, assimilate them, and reduce their population density.

This report followed Dr. Zenz's previous investigations in December 2020 demonstrating the widespread use of forced labor in China's cotton-picking industry targeting Uyghur Muslims and other minorities in Xinjiang. Shortly following the publication of the December report, on January 13 the United States government announced a full and total ban on Xinjiang cotton and tomato products.



Dr. Adrian Zenz,  
Senior Research Fellow in China Studies

On January 19, the U.S. Department of State issued a determination that the atrocities in Xinjiang be classified as genocide. On March 15, the Chinese Communist Party announced it would sue Dr. Adrian Zenz in its latest attempt to cover up its crimes against Uyghur Muslims and other religious minorities in Xinjiang.

**"The excess surplus population that somehow has to be dealt with, and labour transfers as a means to reduce the concentration of those workers in their own heartlands is, in my opinion, the most stunning admission of this report."**

*—Dr. Adrian Zenz in BBC*

**1,600,000**

**rural surplus laborers  
across Xinjiang are at  
risk of being forced  
into labor transfers.**





# Leaked Documents Link Xi Jinping with Uyghur Genocide

On December 13, VOC's Dr. Adrian Zenz—commissioned by the Uyghur Tribunal, an independent UK-based people's tribunal established to investigate "ongoing atrocities and possible Genocide" against the Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other Turkic Muslim Populations—released leaked documents from the People's Republic of China, now known as the "**Xinjiang Papers**." This collection of documents confirms that Chinese leader, Xi Jinping, is behind nearly every aspect of the government's systematic attempt to exterminate the Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minorities in Xinjiang, including the use of internment camps, coercive labor, parent-child separation, intrusive surveillance, and forced sterilization.

"It's a historic day for the Uyghurs...This is the first time that there has been a genocide determination that really explains...the exact evidence, and the legal reasoning behind it."

—Dr. Adrian Zenz in Radio Free Asia

Dr. Zenz's research has galvanized the international community and has provided credible evidence needed for major policy actions, including the US government's genocide determination and subsequent ban on Xinjiang cotton in early 2021. Following Dr. Zenz's release and analysis of the "Xinjiang Papers," the Uyghur Tribunal delivered its judgment that Beijing's minority policies in Xinjiang constitute genocide, and that the Chinese central government, including Xi Jinping, are responsible.



As VOC's groundbreaking "Xinjiang Papers" report and the news of the Uyghur Tribunal findings spread across global media generating increased public outrage and awareness, VOC, along with Uyghur and human rights allies in the Coalition to End Forced Labour in the Uyghur Region, engaged human rights allies to educate key Members of Congress on the Uyghur issue and to encourage passage of the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act.

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**S. 65**

## **AN ACT**

To ensure that goods made with forced labor in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China do not enter the United States market, and for other purposes.



## **Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act Signed Into Law by President Joe Biden**

On December 14, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the **Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act**, with the U.S. Senate following on December 16. Despite heavy opposition from many of the most powerful corporations, **President Biden signed the bill into law on December 23**. This bill imposes limits on goods produced in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and imposes sanctions related to forced labor.

In addition to this landmark bill, the U.S. government also announced a diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics making it clear that the Chinese Communist Party's atrocities against the Uyghurs have consequences. The UK, Canada, Australia, Estonia, Lithuania, and Japan, and a number of other governments, also joined in issuing a diplomatic boycott of the Games.







## VOC Hosts Second Annual Polish Studies Conference

On November 19, VOC hosted its second annual Polish Studies Conference, "The End(s) of Communism: Paths to De-Communization in the Former Eastern Bloc." The event brought together scholars, international affairs experts, and freedom supporters from across the world to discuss the collapse of communism across Central and Eastern Europe in 1989 and the negotiated power-sharing agreements that developed in its wake. The Conference was the project of Dr. Chelsea Michta, 2020-2021 Research Fellow in Polish Studies.

Renowned Polish dissident, professor of mathematics, and former member of the European Parliament, Dr. Janusz Onyszkiewicz, delivered the keynote address. He shared stories of his involvement in the landmark 1968 demonstrations and strikes for freedom of speech and how he was an organizer for the Solidarity trade union movement in 1980. Imprisoned for over a year following the introduction of martial law on December 13, 1981, Dr. Onyszkiewicz went on to serve as Solidarity's national spokesman until 1989, and later as a member of Poland's National Executive.

This program was generously sponsored by the Polish National Foundation.



# VOC Polish Studies Fellow Presents Research on the Katyn Forest Massacre

Each year, VOC hosts research fellows as part of our Polish Studies Program. Dr. Monika Brzozowska-Pasieka, 2020-2021 VOC Senior Research Fellow in Polish Studies, conducted research on the Katyn Forest Massacre and produced her findings in a set of five published articles, which included a focus on the massacre as the first genocide of WWII and on the victims of the massacre, which included one woman and 65 children.

## *Who Were the Victims of the Katyn Massacre?*

Many people don't realize that the first genocide of WWII took place in 1940 and is known as the Katyn Forest Massacre, a series of mass executions of over 22,000 Poles. The victims were the accomplished men and women of the Polish intelligentsia (and their children) and are estimated to have represented 44 different professions.

## *Katyn was not just a Massacre—it was a Genocide*

Reading the historical description of the Katyn Forest Massacre, one cannot avoid calling this event a genocide, or at least part of a genocide of Poles. The Katyn Massacre was very well prepared. It was a Soviet crime that included the persecution and murder of Poles, the deportation of whole groups of Poles to the USSR and the methodical confiscation, devastation, looting, and plunder of the property left behind by its victims. All later violence was not a by-product of the genocide but rather an integral part of systematic Soviet efforts to erase the Poles.



Dr. Monika Brzozowska-Pasieka  
Senior Research Fellow in Polish Studies





# Seventh Annual China Forum Conference

On October 27, VOC held its seventh annual China Forum bringing together scholars, international affairs experts, and policymakers to participate in hard-hitting discussions about the increasingly aggressive nature of the People's Republic of China, the CCP, and key issues in U.S.-China relations. **This year's China Forum was viewed by an in-person and virtual audience of over 4,000 people who heard from the world's leading experts on China and the ruling Communist Party.**

Since 2014, VOC has provided a unique platform to educate American leaders and engage in honest discussion about the immediate danger posed to the world by the CCP. This year's China Forum featured panels on the use of Chinese technology in U.S. markets, China's murderous ethnic policies, the growing tension on multiple fronts between the U.S. and China, Uyghur forced labor, and the CCP's manipulation of international finance.



The keynote address was given by Dr. Michael Pillsbury, Senior Fellow and Director for Chinese Strategy at the Hudson Institute. During the Reagan administration, Pillsbury served as the Assistant Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Planning and was responsible for implementation of the "Reagan Doctrine."

He has held former posts as a defense policy adviser, high-ranking government official, and is the author of numerous books and reports on China, including *The Hundred Year Marathon: China's Secret Strategy to Replace America as the Global Superpower*.

**"China has been managing us brilliantly, while we, the U.S. government, have not been understanding what China is up to."**

—Dr. Michael Pillsbury

# HUMAN RIGHTS





# VOC Spurs Elimination of Cuban Medical Brigades Program in Uruguay

This September, VOC applauded the Uruguayan government for eliminating its years-long contract with the Cuban Medical Brigades program—Cuba’s so-called “humanitarian diplomacy” scheme which forces Cuban doctors and nurses to work as slave laborers in other countries in order to generate billions in much-needed foreign currency for Cuba’s communist regime and to serve as propagandists and spies.

VOC's Director and Senior Fellow in Latin American Programs, Dr. Carlos Ponce, along with our partners and allies, including Cuba Archive and Global Liberty Alliance (GLA), made significant progress in **exposing how the Cuban Medical Brigades are actually a form of human trafficking and forced labor schemes by the Cuban government.**



Cuba's dictatorial government "hires out" their country's doctors, nurses, and other trained medical professionals to "serve" in 67 foreign countries. Cuban medical teams are forced to turn over their salaries to the Cuban government—keeping only pennies on the dollar. Doctors are also forced to turn in their passport upon arrival to a foreign country and are forced to gather intelligence on people in their host countries for the Cuban regime, while their families are held back in Cuba as human collateral so the doctors don't defect.

VOC advocated for taking legal action to alert the Uruguayan government to stop the abuse of Cuban doctors, nurses, and other trained medical professionals forced into servitude under the guise of providing humanitarian medical care.

**How much money does the Cuban regime make from its international medical brigades?**

*According to testimonies and investigations of human rights organizations, the Cuban state keeps 70% to 90% of the salary of its medical workers.*



## Premiere Art Exhibition about Cuba and Venezuela

VOC's Latin American Programs hosted two contemporary art exhibitions on Cuba and Venezuela —“The Veil of Silence” and “Venezuela Resists, Images of a Tragedy”—on November 2, 2021, at the Art Museum of the Americas of the Organization of American States in Washington D.C. These two exhibitions expose the tragic human rights abuses that occur in Venezuela and Cuba.

The Cuban artist Eliecer Márquez Duany, known artistically as “El Funky,” a member of the San Isidro Movement and winner of a Latin Grammy award, was among the special guests that spoke about his song “Homeland and Life” (Patria y Vida), which transmits the nostalgia and economic difficulties that many Cubans face, including food shortages.

**"[This song] has struck a chord with all Cubans and all people that live under the yoke of communism. I feel proud to have contributed my experience and to tell what I have lived in my own flesh in Cuba. This song has been more than a cry of hope, it has been a battle hymn with which many Cubans identify."**

*—El Funky*



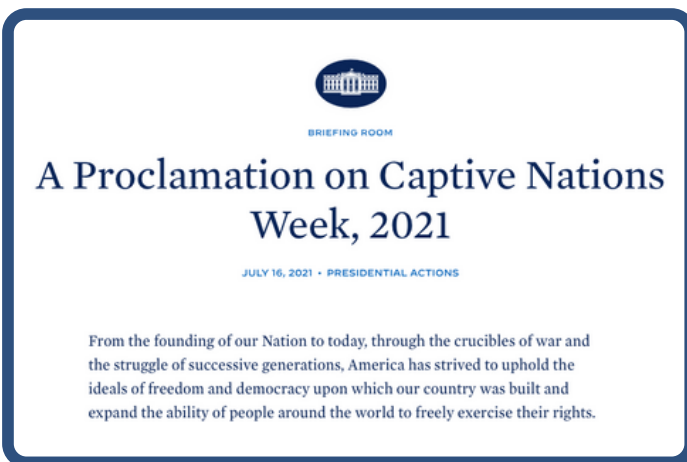


# Captive Nations Week Summit Draws Record Attendance

Since 1959, by a joint act of Congress, the third week of July is designated Captive Nations Week with a Presidential proclamation as a reminder to the world of the historical tragedies of captive nations and the preciousness of freedom. In his 2021 Captive Nations Week Proclamation, President Joe Biden said,

**"During Captive Nations Week, we recommit ourselves to those principles which form the foundation of our Nation, and to amplify the voices of courageous individuals around the world who are striving to advance the principles of human rights, justice, and the rule of law."**

VOC's Captive Nations Week Summit was viewed by an in-person and online audience of over 3,700 people who heard from witnesses of the captive nations of China, Cuba, North Korea, and Venezuela, as well as Hong Kong, and from foreign policy experts on the Czech Republic, Soviet Union, and Ukraine.





This year, VOC honored the **San Isidro Movement with our Dissident Human Rights Award**. The award was received by Omara Ruiz Urquiola on behalf of the San Isidro Movement.

Two founding members of the Movement—Maykel Castillo, a.k.a. “Osorbo,” and Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara—are currently in prison for their pro-democracy activism. Castillo, a rapper, and Alcantara, a visual artist, collaborated together on a music video promoting free speech and cultural expression in Cuba. The music video, “Patria y Vida,” which calls for a change in government, has received over 10 million views.

The song is a reaction against the communist “Patria y Muerte,” meaning “Fatherland or Death.” “Patria y Vida” has now become the rallying cry used throughout Cuba—and beyond—against dictatorial oppression. After they released the song, Cuban authorities violently attacked and arrested Castillo in his home on May 18, and Alcantara was detained on July 10.

**An audio recording of acceptance remarks by Osorbo was smuggled out of a Cuban prison and played at the Summit:**

**"This award is for more than just me; this award is for all Cubans. For all Cubans, really. All Cubans right now are ready and are tired. I, personally, want you all to know that this prize is yours, and that I share it with all of you, truly, with all my heart."**



# Belarusian Opposition Leader Visits VOC Memorial

VOC was honored to host Belarusian opposition leader, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, at the Victims of Communism Memorial during Captive Nations Week to discuss Belarus' continued struggle for democracy against the authoritarian regime in Minsk.

In her remarks at the Memorial gathering, Tsikhanouskaya said,

**"This memorial ... is in no small part dedicated to Belarusians ... Indeed, Belarusians found themselves captured in an autocratic cage. This cage is partially a legacy of communism. But the Lukashenko regime only made its walls stronger. ... But despite all the repression, despite the walls of those cells, Belarusians continue to fight."**

Belarus has been in the midst of political unrest since May 2020 against the authoritarian rule of President Alexander Lukashenko. Demonstrations started against Lukashenko, often called Europe's last dictator, when he announced his decision to run for a 6th term and subsequently arrested all opposition candidates. Amid mass public protests, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya picked up the dissident torch from her jailed husband, Sergei Tikhanovsky, and quickly became the voice of the people against the regime.

Political demonstrations intensified after exit poll results in August 2020 showed a supposed "landslide" with Lukashenko receiving 80.23% of the vote and Tsikhanouskaya receiving 9.9%. In 2020 alone, more than 33,000 peaceful protesters were arrested.

**Following the election, Ms. Tsikhanouskaya fled to Lithuania, fearing that the authoritarian regime would target her children.** On May 24, 2021, President Lukashenko signed into law a series of authoritarian amendments to further restrict future protests, requiring that all mass events be authorized by local authorities and preventing coverage by journalists.



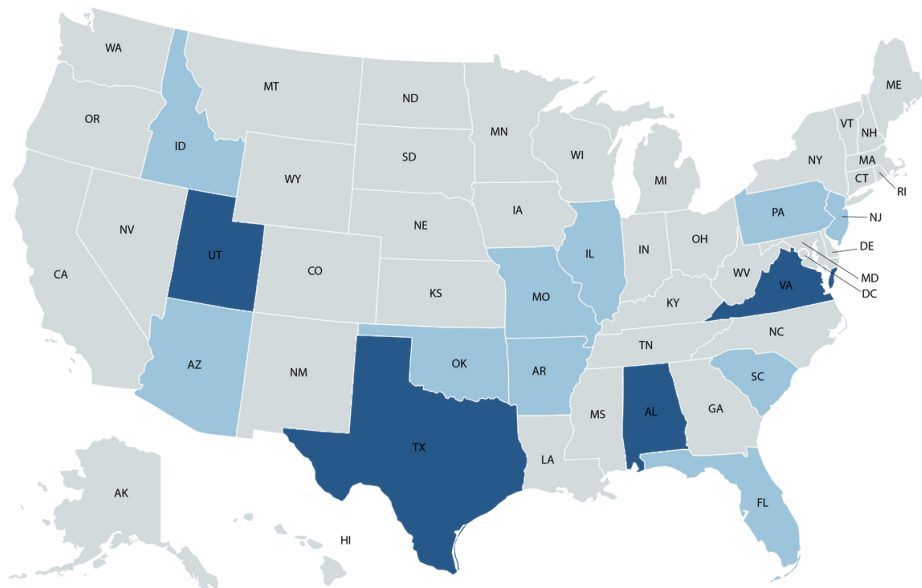
# Texas Adopts Victims of Communism Memorial Day

In May, the Texas State Legislature voted to designate November 7 as "Victims of Communism Memorial Day" in remembrance of and honoring those who have died or been persecuted under communist regimes.

In passing H.B. 1057, led in the House by Representative Tom Oliverson and in the Senate by Senator Brandon Creighton, **Texas became the fourth state to officially recognize November 7 as "Victims of Communism Memorial Day"** to bear witness to the over 100 million who have died and countless others who suffered under communist regimes.

**"More than 100 million innocent people have been killed by communist regimes since the creation of the first communist regime on November 7th, 1917 in Russia. This is the greatest loss of human life of any event in human history, and we must not forget the horrors of communism. Just as the Holocaust memorials remind us to never again indulge the brutality of fascism, so too, this memorial serves as a sobering reminder of the empty promises of communists everywhere, and the brutal legacy of human suffering they leave."**

*—Representative Tom Oliverson (R)*



To date, Alabama, Utah, Virginia, and now Texas have passed resolutions to officially recognize November 7 as “Victims of Communism Memorial Day.” Nine other states—Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Missouri, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina—are moving to do the same.



# VOC HONORS



# Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom Laureates

*The Truman-Reagan Medal of Freedom is awarded to those who have demonstrated a lifelong commitment to freedom and democracy and opposition to communism and all other forms of tyranny.*

2021 Jimmy Lai	2010 Robert Conquest The Hon. Armando Valladares Harry Wu H.E. Emanuelis Zingeris	2002 The Hon. Philip M. Crane The Hon. Hae Yung Chung The Hon. Joseph Lieberman H.E. Viktor Orbán
2020 José Daniel Ferrer Garcia		
2019 Col. Gail S. Halvorsen, U.S.A.F. (Ret.) Tiananmen Mothers H.E. Joseph Cardinal Zen	2009 Rep. Steny Hoyer The Hon. Jack Kemp The Hon. Bishop László Tőkés The Hon. Edwin Meese III Richard Pipes, Ph.D.	2001 Vladimir Bukovsky The Hon. Jesse Helms
2018 H.E. Valdas Adamkus H.E. Sandra Kalniete, MEP H.E. Tunne Kelam, MEP Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas	2008 Midge Decter The Hon. Paula J. Dobriansky, Ph.D. The Hon. Tom Lantos The Hon. Kateryna Yushchenko	2000 Đoàn Viet Hoat, Ph.D. Col. John McKone, U.S.A.F. (Ret.) Col. Lewis Millett, U.S.A. (Ret.) The Hon. Orson Swindle Gen. Paik Sun-yup, ROKA (Ret.) Wei Jingsheng Youk Chhang
2017 H.E. Mart Laar, Ph.D. Memorial Society The Hon. Natan Sharansky	2007 William F. Buckley, Jr. The Hon. János Horváth The Hon. Henry "Scoop" Jackson The Hon. Dana Rohrabacher Tran Văn Bá	1999 Elena Bonner H.E. Philip Dimitrov Lane Kirkland H.E. Vytautas Landsbergis, Ph.D.
2016 Paul A. Goble		
2015 Chen Guangcheng Guillermo Fariñas Alexander Podrabinek	2006 Edwin J. Feulner, Ph.D. The Hon. Milada Horáková H.E. Lech Wałęsa	
2014 Mustafa Dzhemilev Myroslav Marynovych	2005 Pope Saint John Paul II The Hon. Lev E. Dobriansky Lt. Gen. Edward L. Rowny, U.S.A. (Ret.) Solidarity Free Trade Union of 1980 Anna Walentynowicz	
2013 H.E. Václav Klaus, Ph.D. Fr. Thadeus Nguyen Văn Lý Yang Jianli, Ph.D.	2004 Lockheed Martin Corporation Rep. John Shimkus Maj. Gen. John Singlaub, U.S.A. (Ret.)	
2012 The Hon. Donald Rumsfeld H.E. Stanislav Shushkevich	2003 H.E. Václav Havel National Endowment for Democracy Michael Novak	
2011 The Hon. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen H.E. Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga John C. Whitehead		



## JIMMY LAI

Jimmy Lai is a Hong Kong entrepreneur and pro-democracy activist. He founded Giordano, an Asian clothing retailer, Next Digital, a Hong Kong-listed media company, and the popular newspaper *Apple Daily*.

Lai is a prominent critic of the Chinese Communist Party. According to Lai, *The Road to Serfdom* by Friedrich Hayek inspired him to fight for freedom. His business ventures are strong depictions of his advocacy and his high-profile support for the Hong Kong pro-democracy movements has been viciously condemned by the Chinese government.

Lai was a leader of Hong Kong's 2014

Umbrella Movement and is being accused and tried for his involvement in the 2019-2020 pro-democracy movement. Following the most recent protests, Lai was arrested on suspicion of "collaborating with foreign forces," a charge Beijing was able to bring against him in the wake of a national security law imposed on Hong Kong following the unrest.

The same day of his arrest, approximately 200 Hong Kong police officers raided the offices of *Apple Daily*, seizing over 125 boxes of materials. The raid was met with high-level scrutiny — Hong Kong Journalists Association described the raid as "horrendous" and unprecedented in Hong Kong, former Hong Kong governor Chris Patten called the events "the most outrageous assault yet" on Hong Kong's press, and the head of the University of Hong Kong journalism department called the raid an "outrageous, shameful attack on press freedom."

On April 16, 2021, Lai was sentenced to 14 months in prison, for the first of what will be seven trials for his support of democracy in Hong Kong.



# Dissident Human Rights Award Laureates

*The Dissident Human Rights Award is given to activists and dissidents of Captive Nations for their bravery in standing for human rights and freedom in the face of communist tyranny.*

2021  
Movimiento San Isidro  
Alexei Navalny

2020  
Ilham Tohti

2019  
Chen Qiushi

2018  
Mother Mushroom

2017  
Fang Zheng

2016  
Sirley Ávila León

2015  
Dolkun Isa





## MOVIMIENTO SAN ISIDRO

Movimiento San Isidro (“San Isidro Movement”) was formed in 2018 by a group of Cuban artists, journalists, and academics who staged major protests against the communist government’s increased control and sweeping censorship of artistic expression. Today, the Movement has become a channel for Cuban dissidents within and outside the Caribbean nation.



**VOC awarded the Movement its Dissident Human Rights Award in July 2021 in response to two of its founders being arrested and held unjustly in prison in Cuba for their pro-democracy activism.**

## ALEXEI NAVALNY



Alexei Navalny is a Russian opposition leader, politician, lawyer, and anti-corruption activist. He came to international prominence by organizing demonstrations, and running for office, to advocate reforms against corruption in the Russian government. Navalny has been described as “the man Vladimir Putin fears most” by *The Wall Street Journal*. Navalny is a Russian Opposition Coordination Council member, the leader of the Russia of the Future Party and the founder of the Anti-Corruption Foundation.

Navalny ran in the Moscow mayoral election in 2013, tried to run for President of Russia during the 2018 election, and has been arrested several times by Russian authorities.

**On August 20, 2020, Navalny was hospitalized in serious condition after he was poisoned with a nerve agent during a flight from Tomsk to Moscow. He was medically evacuated to Berlin and discharged on September 22. Russian prosecutors have refused to open a criminal investigation into his poisoning. On January 17, 2021, Navalny returned to Russia, where he was immediately jailed in Moscow on accusations of violating terms of a suspended jail sentence.**

# Financial Position

## FY 2020

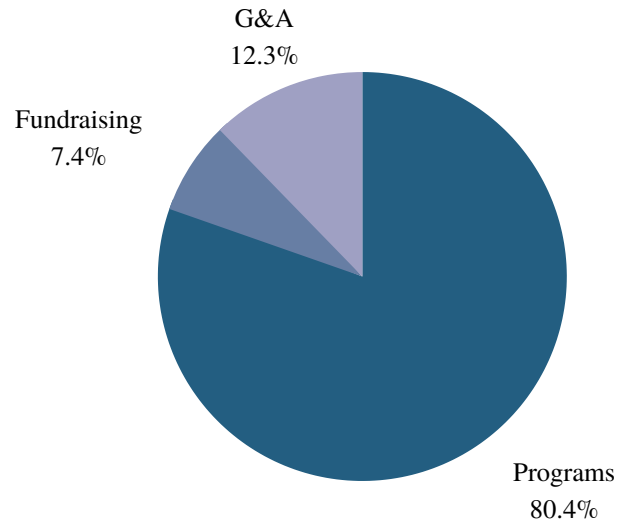
### ASSETS

Total current assets	\$3,645,289
Property and equipment, net	\$3,707,813
Other assets	\$6,855,124
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$14,208,226</b>

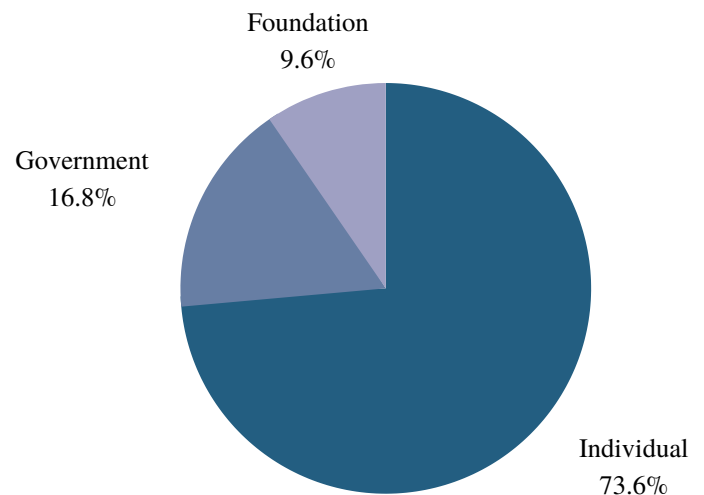
### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current liabilities	
Current liabilities	\$1,049,350
Accrued expense	\$32,473
Deferred rent & Other Liabilities	\$800,195
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>\$1,882,018</b>
Net assets	
With/Without donor restrictions	\$12,326,208
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>\$12,326,208</b>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>\$14,208,226</b>
Total revenues and support	\$5,024,062
Total expenses and losses	\$8,904,269
Change in net assets	(\$3,880,207)
Net assets, December 31, 2019	\$16,206,415
<b>Net assets, December 31, 2020</b>	<b>\$12,326,208</b>

### Total Expenses \$8,904,269



### Total Revenue \$5,024,062



*Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation's financial position is based on an independent audit for the fiscal year January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020. The Foundation is grateful for the generosity of its stakeholders.*





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# TRUTH JUSTICE MEMORY



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MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

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