

THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE STRATEGIC COMPETITION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY

Inside China's Strategy to Reshape the United Nations



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recent years, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has grown its influence within the United Nations (UN). The PRC's campaign undermines both the UN as an institution and America's interests and values. The Select Committee investigated how China's growing influence alters the UN's operations and structure, uncovering a myriad of ways in which the PRC manipulates the UN system to subtly, yet effectively, promote and integrate China's national objectives. The PRC's influence stems from an increase of both monetary contributions and Chinese nationals working as UN personnel. China is not simply participating in or driving initiatives at the UN; it is exploiting that participation to shape the UN to serve the ends of the Chinese Communist Party.

The Trump Administration has begun addressing the bloated bureaucracy of and Chinese influence within the UN with a series of "tough love" reforms. For too long, the United States was the largest contributor at the UN but failed to demand reform. Under President Trump and U.S. Ambassador to the UN Mike Waltz, reforms within the UN have already started to generate progress toward a narrower, mission-driven UN.

Through a review of Chinese language reports, media articles and investigations, PRC government documents, academic literature, and UN data, the Select Committee determined that the PRC has waged a systematic campaign to exploit the UN and its bodies to advance its own national objectives and malign agenda. The Select Committee's investigation into the PRC's expanding influence within the UN yields the following findings.

Finding 1: The Chinese government utilizes monetary contributions to redefine UN norms to advance its own national interests. This financial weight is strategically utilized to steer UN mandates and budget discussions toward priorities aligning with Beijing's global preferences, often acting as a targeted counterbalance against the priorities of Western United Nations Security Council (UNSC) permanent members.

Finding 2: The PRC captures key bodies by securing critical positions for its personnel to advance its national objectives. The PRC government places Chinese nationals in key or high-level UN positions which closely affect China's priorities, such as positions overseeing the UN's economic development initiatives or Africa regional initiatives which directly impact key components of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The CCP can then mobilize these individuals to shape UN decision-making to align with China's national interests.

Finding 3: The PRC strategically deploys its troops within the UN peacekeeping structure to regions of economic and strategic interest as a means of exerting hard power while ostensibly operating under the UN flag. The targeted deployment of Chinese Peace Keeping Operations (PKOs) reveals a

sophisticated strategy where Chinese soft power is converted into hard power. China is subtly deploying its combat power in volatile areas to secure its national interests, all while operating under the guise of multilateral legitimacy of the UN, thereby minimizing the public scrutiny associated with unilateral military intervention.

Finding 4: The CCP uses Government-Organized Non-Governmental Organizations (GONGOs) as a method of injecting PRC political influence within the UN system. Genuine civil society stakeholders can play a critical role in helping realize some of the worthy aspirations of the UN. Yet not all organizations accredited by this body are truly representative of legitimate NGO voices. The CCP uses GONGOs to infiltrate this mechanism to advance China's interests, sometimes through fraudulent and criminal means.

BACKGROUND

The PRC views the UN as a key platform to advance its vision of international governance. Through fanning the UN as the sole source of legitimacy, the PRC utilizes the platform to benefit the PRC. This emphasis is reflected in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' "China's Position Paper on Cooperation with the United Nations," which states:

China firmly maintains that there is only one system in the world, namely the international system with the United Nations at its core; only one order, namely the international order based on international law; and only one set of rules, namely the basic norms of international relations based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.¹

Here, Beijing frames the UN as the primary source of global political legitimacy. Beijing's approach seeks to use sustained engagement within the UN system to advance its political agenda abroad.

Central to Beijing's UN strategy is the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) United Front system, a key mechanism through which the Party seeks to shape political environments and cultivate influence abroad.² The PRC's 2021 release of "Regulations on the United Front Work of the Communist Party of China" explicitly mandates the coordination of "overseas United Front work" to serve China's "national rejuvenation" and "development interests."³ Through mobilizing a "Great United Front" of state actors, diaspora organizations, and "friendly" international figures, Beijing promotes its "Community with a Shared Future for Mankind" [人类命运共同体]⁴ within the UN framework.⁵ This concept serves as a blueprint to shift the international order away from Western-led liberal norms toward a "multipolar" [多极化] system that accommodates the CCP's authoritarian governance model and prioritizes state sovereignty over universal human rights.⁶

The effectiveness of the PRC's strategy relies on the intentional blurring of Party and State lines. As noted in a Wilson Center study, United Front Work Department personnel are often assigned to diplomatic roles within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁷ This practice reflects a broader pattern within the CCP where personnel often hold positions spanning multiple agencies.⁸ This approach allows the CCP to project its influence across multiple agencies, ensuring its ideological mandates are integrated into the UN system.

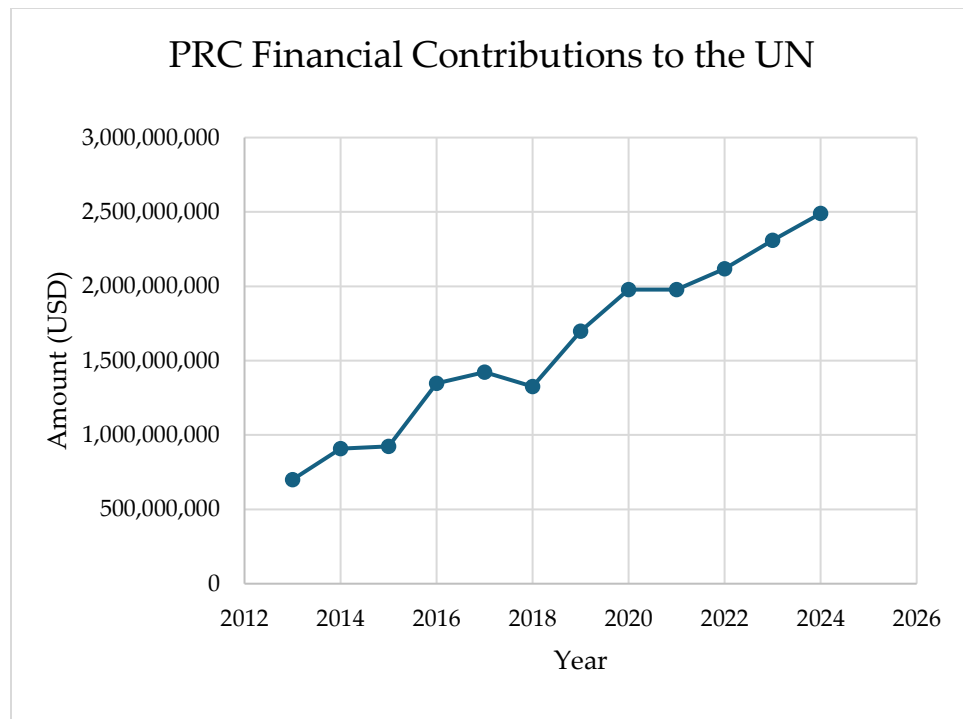
The PRC's emphasis on multilateralism is not trying to bolster the existing international order. Rather, the PRC seeks to put forward the UN as the sole source of legitimacy at the same time as it usurps the UN as a tool for the PRC's national agenda.

Finding 1: The Chinese Government Utilizes Monetary Contributions to Redefine UN Norms to Advance its Own National Interests.

"While fulfilling obligations to pay dues, China emphasizes converting fiscal obligations into institutional rights, continuously raising China's standing in relevant international organizations and its influence and discourse power in international affairs, in order to effectively safeguard national interests."

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China

China's financial contributions to the UN have increased over the past two decades, fundamentally reshaping both the UN's funding model and China's role within the organization. As the second-largest contributor,⁹ China now holds substantial financial influence at a time when the UN is grappling with chronic liquidity crises and declining engagement from traditional donors.¹⁰ Increased financial dominance can translate into greater sway over the UN's ability to function, maintain independence, and carry out its mandate.¹¹ Through this, Beijing converts financial resources into diplomatic leverage by shaping agendas, undermining scrutiny of its domestic policies, and redefining the norms of multilateral governance. The following chart illustrates the PRC's financial contributions more than doubling between 2013 and 2024.



Source: UN System Chief Executive Board for Coordination, Revenue by Government Donor (last accessed Mar. 16, 2026), available at <https://unsceb.org/fs-revenue-government-donor>.

The chart includes all monetary contributions to the UN paid by China, including assessed contributions, revenue from other activities, voluntary core (un-earmarked), and voluntary non-core (earmarked) contributions.

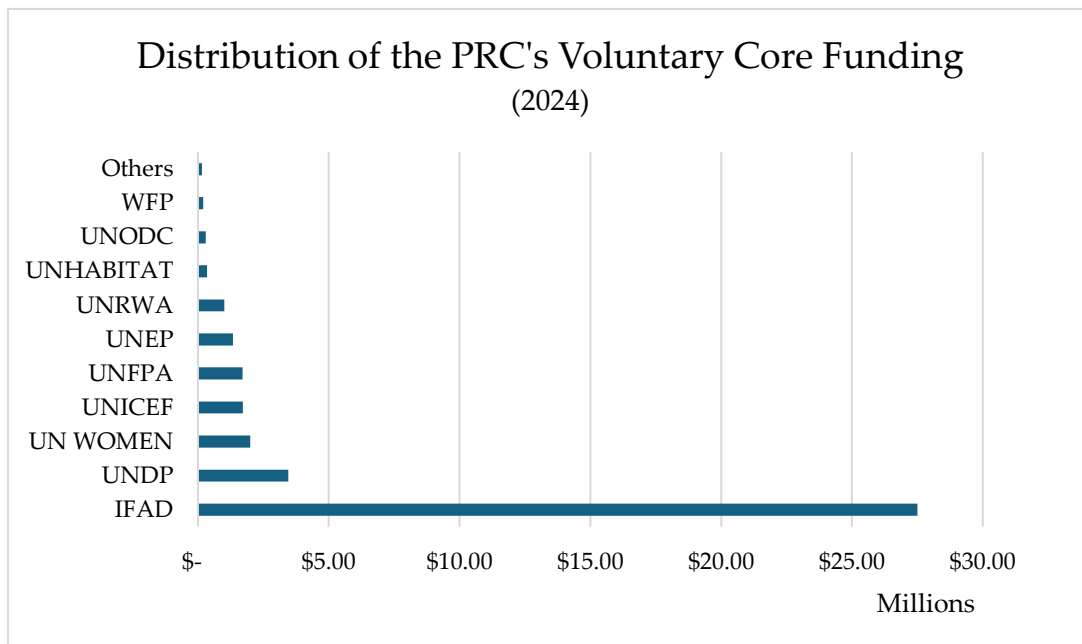
The PRC's increased contributions reflect how Beijing's assessed contributions – mandatory payments determined by the UN's "capacity to pay" formula¹² – have risen alongside its economic expansion. China's share of the UN regular budget increased from 2.053% in 2006 to 20.004% in 2026, second behind the United States at 22%.¹³ Chinese officials frame this expanded financial role as evidence of Beijing's position as a "builder of world peace" and a "defender of international order."¹⁴ This rhetoric not only allows China to advertise itself as a major multilateral partner supporting the international order, but also allows it to subtly influence the multilateral system to its advantage.

Historically, the PRC has touted itself as a supporter of the UN through its financial contributions. Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hua Chunying publicly admonished UN member countries, including the U.S., for failing to pay dues on time in 2020.¹⁵ However, UN data shows that U.S. contributions tower well-above the PRC's. In 2024, the PRC's total assessed contributions, voluntary core contributions, voluntary non-core contributions, and revenue from other activity totaled \$2.48 billion.¹⁶ The United States contributed a total of \$14.26 billion,¹⁷ 5.7 times higher than China's total contributions.

China's rising financial contributions within the UN, however, have equipped Beijing with new power to withhold and delay payments to gain political concessions. For example, in 2023, UN departments were forced to

impose a hiring freeze after a liquidity crisis disrupted operations and temporarily stalled human rights investigations.¹⁸ Observers attributed Beijing's delay as deliberate after it failed to block funding for human rights inquiries in Sudan, Ukraine, and other states at the UN General Assembly's Fifth Committee in 2023.¹⁹ By leveraging financial pressure, Beijing successfully stalled investigations it opposed. This deferment of payments that are necessary to the functionality of the UN showcases a strategy of financial weaponization to gain influence over political narratives central to its national interests.

Aside from its assessed baseline contributions, the PRC also uses voluntary core contributions to influence UN agencies, specifically the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), as a method to both achieve global recognition and advance its own economic gain. As shown in the chart below, the PRC's overall voluntary core contributions are relatively modest compared to other major powers in the UN with a notable exception – its contributions to the IFAD. In 2024, China contributed \$27.49 million to the IFAD's voluntary core contributions, almost eight times more than its contribution to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), China's second-highest voluntary contribution.²⁰ The IFAD partners with governments and other actors to provide grants and concessional, low-interest loans to developing countries to address critical needs and support rural communities.²¹



Source: UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, *Revenue by Government Donor* (last accessed Mar. 14, 2026), available at <https://unsceb.org/fs-revenue-government-donor>.

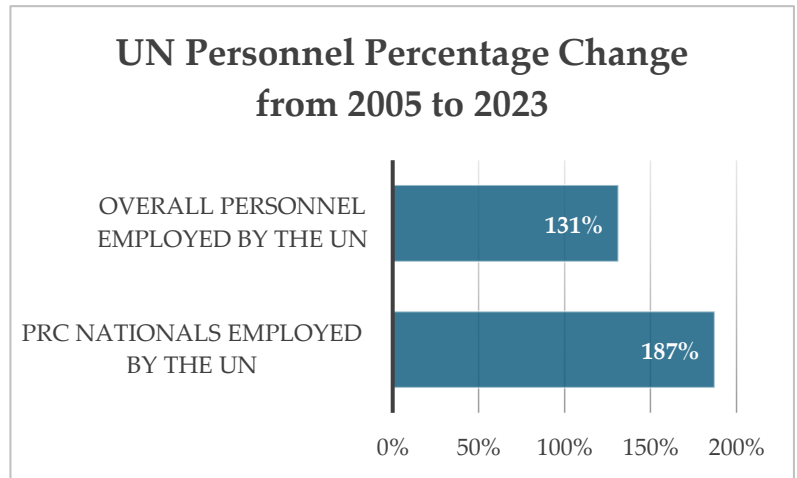
China likely increased its contributions to the IFAD more than any other UN body in part because the institution links financial contributions to internal governance influence, providing donors with greater political sway in decision-making processes. Unlike many UN organizations where all members have equal voting power, the IFAD awards a country voting shares directly proportional to the total contributions paid.²² As of July 2025, the IFAD reported China as the sixth largest donor and the highest by far among so-called “developing countries,” pledging \$87 million, or 5.54% of IFAD’s \$1.44 billion budget for the 2025-2027 funding period.²³ This status as a major contributor ensures the PRC remains eligible for the IFAD’s lending programs, a status it would otherwise risk losing as its economy matures. Thus, by investing in the IFAD, Beijing can shape IFAD policies and programs in ways that help safeguard and advance its economic interests.

As of March 2026, the IFAD reported China had donated a cumulative total of \$361.69 million in core contributions and \$12.12 million in supplementary contributions since joining the IFAD in 1981.²⁴ During this same period, China received about \$1.31 billion in preferential financing from the IFAD,²⁵ meaning China receives \$3.51 mainly in favorable loans for every dollar it invested. China, which gained Upper-Middle-Income Country status in 2010 and holds vast domestic financial capacity,²⁶ diverts essential financial resources from the IFAD away from poorer nations. China’s strategy delivers enormous financial gains for the PRC’s rural development at a relatively low cost to the Chinese government.

The PRC’s contributions to IFAD are investments, not charity. IFAD funding to the PRC directly advances development of rural regions in the PRC and advances China’s key national priorities, such as China’s Rural Revitalization strategy [乡村振兴].²⁷ In a manner similar to China’s insistence that it is both an economic powerhouse and a “developing nation,” the CCP uses China’s relationship with the IFAD to claim its position as a “defender of the international order”²⁸ while also serving as a leading recipient of financial aid from that same order. The PRC’s contributions to the IFAD illustrate how financial weight can be strategically utilized to steer UN mandates and budget discussions toward priorities aligning with Beijing’s global preferences. The PRC’s actions serve as a counterbalance to the priorities of Western permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

Finding 2: The PRC Captures Key Bodies by Securing Critical Positions for its Personnel to Advance its National Objectives.

Attempting to advertise itself as a “responsible major country,”²⁹ the PRC significantly increased its UN personnel over the last 20 years. This is a deliberate effort to transform UN decision-making and operations to support China’s own national agenda. Between 2005 and 2023, the number of Chinese nationals employed by the UN and UN agencies grew about 187%, increasing from 579 to 1,664.³⁰ The expansion of Chinese personnel numbers – facilitated through regular UN hiring practices, nomination of “independent expert holders,” and the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) program – allows China to subsidize access to international positions and extend its influence across UN institutions.³¹ By portraying this expansion of personnel as a demonstration of China’s commitment to global responsibility, China seeks to put forward a public image as a promoter of stability and multilateral cooperation while using its personnel to advance political, economic, and governance priorities serving its own strategic interests.



Source: UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination. Secretariat, Personnel Statistics: Data as at 31 December 2004 : Note / by the CEB Secretariat at 9 & 55 (Sept. 26, 2005), available at <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/562883?ln=en&v=pdf> and UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination. Secretariat, Personnel Statistics, Data as at 31 December 2024 : Note / by the CEB Secretariat at 1 & 92 (Aug. 31, 2025), available at <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4095474?ln=en&v=pdf>.

In parallel with its financial contributions, China has strategically placed its nationals in senior UN positions, with appointments represented in the chart on the right. These placements are notably concentrated in regions where Beijing has significant strategic interests, particularly relating to China's interest in the Global South as well as its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).³² By placing Chinese nationals in high-level UN positions involving key components of BRI, namely economic development and the Global South, the Chinese government gains the ability to mobilize these individuals to shape UN decision-making to align with China's national interests. Moreover, the PRC has headed 4 of the 15 major UN specialized agencies in 2021, securing its position as the country with the most nationals placed in high level positions.³³

The PRC has already mobilized Chinese nationals in high-level UN positions to exploit its influence over the UN system. Qu Dongyu's leadership of the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)³⁴ has been plagued with controversy since his election in 2019. During Qu's election, China allegedly pressured voters from developing countries to photograph their ballots to document their votes.³⁵ Once in office, Qu controversially postponed an independent investigation of the FAO. The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), an independent oversight body of the UN,³⁶ announced its intention

Name	Position	UN Agency / Entity
Junhua LI	Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs	UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
Juwang ZHU	Director of the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government and Officer in Charge of the Division for Sustainable Development Goals	Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
Wenyan YANG	Chief of the Global Dialogue for Social Development Branch in the Division for Inclusive Social Development	Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
Haitian LU	Head of the Capacity Development Programme Management Office (CDPMO)	Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
Xiaolan FU	Board Member, UN High-level Advisory Board (HLAB-III) on Economic and Social Affairs	Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
Hanqin XUE	Judge	International Court of Justice (ICJ)
Haoliang XU	UN Under-Secretary-General and UNDP Associate Administrator	UN Development Program (UNDP)
Jian LIU	Director of Early Warning and Assessment Division	United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)
Dongyu QU	Director-General	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
Guoqi WU	Associate Vice-President, Corporate Services Department	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
Wei WANG	Chief Partnership Officer, South-South and Triangular Cooperation and Global Engagement, Special Adviser to the President	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
Bin HAO	Assistant Director-General for Corporate Services	International Labor Organization (ILO)
Xiaojie ZHANG	Director, Conference Division	International Maritime Organization (IMO)
Ciyong ZOU	Deputy to the Director General and the Managing Director of the Directorate of Technical Cooperation and Sustainable Industrial Development	United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
Dr. Ailan LI	Assistant Director-General, Universal Health Coverage, Healthier Populations	World Health Organization (WHO)
Binying WANG	Deputy Director General - Brands and Designs Sector	World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
Shijun LIU	UN Tourism Executive Director	United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

Source: U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, *People's Republic of China (PRC) Representation in International Organizations* (last updated May 2025), available at <https://www.uscc.gov/research/prc-international-organizations>.

to evaluate Qu's FAO reforms.³⁷ Although the evaluation had already begun, Qu requested that it be postponed until 2024, prompting the JIU to suspend its review until then—well into Qu's second term.³⁸ Qu is also a documented member of the CCP, having joined the party in 1986.³⁹

Former Under-Secretary-General of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Wu Hongbo, also received public scrutiny for failing to uphold the impartiality of the UN during his tenure. In 2017, Wu reportedly expelled Dolkun Isa, a Uyghur activist, from a UN forum even though he was an invited delegate.⁴⁰ In defense of his actions, Wu reportedly told Chinese state television that "we have to strongly defend the motherland's interests."⁴¹

Perhaps the most glaring instance of abuse of power is that of former International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) Secretary General Fang Liu. In 2016, Liu was accused of postponing investigations into a team of ICAO employees' handling of a cyberattack linked to Emissary Panda, a China-affiliated hacking group.⁴² The employees, who were all a part of the ICAO's information and communications technology (ICT) team, were found to have concealed the cyberattack's source, scale, and impact on the organization.⁴³ Neither Liu nor the ICT team faced immediate consequences for the mishandling of the cyberattack.⁴⁴ Furthermore, Liu is a documented member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) National Committee,⁴⁵ a body of the United Front.

The case of ICAO further reveals evidence to suggest a coordinated effort by the CCP to influence the UN. At the time of the attack, the ICAO's ICT team was led by Kuang Chi "James" Wan.⁴⁶ While Wan was later fired from the ICAO in 2021, he was arrested in 2023 by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation for his involvement in a different crime.⁴⁷ Wan and another individual described as "a special advisor to Chinese President Xi Jinping" were indicted for leading a scheme assisting the PRC in selling \$1.54 billion worth of Tengden TB-001 combat drones as well as missiles to Libyan militants between 2019 and 2023.⁴⁸ This timeframe reveals Wan participated in the scheme assisting the PRC while still employed by the ICAO.

The cases of Qu, Liu, and Wu exemplify the ways in which the CCP use high-level staff as a channel to inject PRC ideology within the UN system. When Qu, Liu, and Wu accepted their positions within the UN, they were all required to pledge their unwavering loyalty to the UN and, as stipulated by the UN ethics office, must "not to seek or accept instructions in regard to the performance of [their] duties from any Government or other source external to the Organization."⁴⁹ By acting in the interests of the CCP, these individuals showcased a clear violation of their sworn duty of undivided loyalty to the UN, compromising both the organization's reputation and its operational integrity.

The placement of Chinese nationals in both high-level and entry-level UN positions impacts the functioning of the UN and its agencies. In 2017, the UN General Assembly adopted two draft resolutions on preventing an arms race in outer space and incorporated China's concept of a "community of shared future for mankind,"⁵⁰ an idea central to Xi Jinping's foreign policy objectives.⁵¹ While seemingly modest, the inclusion of this ideology reflects a broader trend of incremental influence in which the CCP gradually injects its vision of how diplomacy should be defined in the future. Moreover, a 2024 academic study revealed a correlation between pro-China sentiment among UN leadership and an influx in language reflecting Beijing's viewpoints in official reports.⁵² This pattern demonstrates Beijing's calculated strategy of securing gradual influence to reshape global discourse and extend its influence throughout the UN.

Finding 3: The PRC Strategically Deploys its Troops within the UN Peacekeeping Structure to Regions of Economic and Strategic Interest as a Means of Exerting Hard Power While Ostensibly Operating Under the UN Flag.

China's high-level personnel placements and its significant monetary contributions to the UN allow the CCP to influence the placement of its UN peacekeeping troops. This results from China being both the largest troop-contributing country among the UNSC's five permanent members and the second-largest financial contributor to the UN budget.⁵³ China's position gives it leverage to ensure UN peacekeeping operations align with its national security goals as seen in its 2015 Military Strategy White Paper [《中国的军事战略》白皮书].⁵⁴ This white paper formally prioritized the protection of its "Overseas Interests Zones" [海外利益攸关区].⁵⁵ These zones include those which cover "overseas energy resources, strategic corridor security, and safety of overseas institutions, personnel, and assets," as a core task for the People's Liberation Army (PLA).⁵⁶

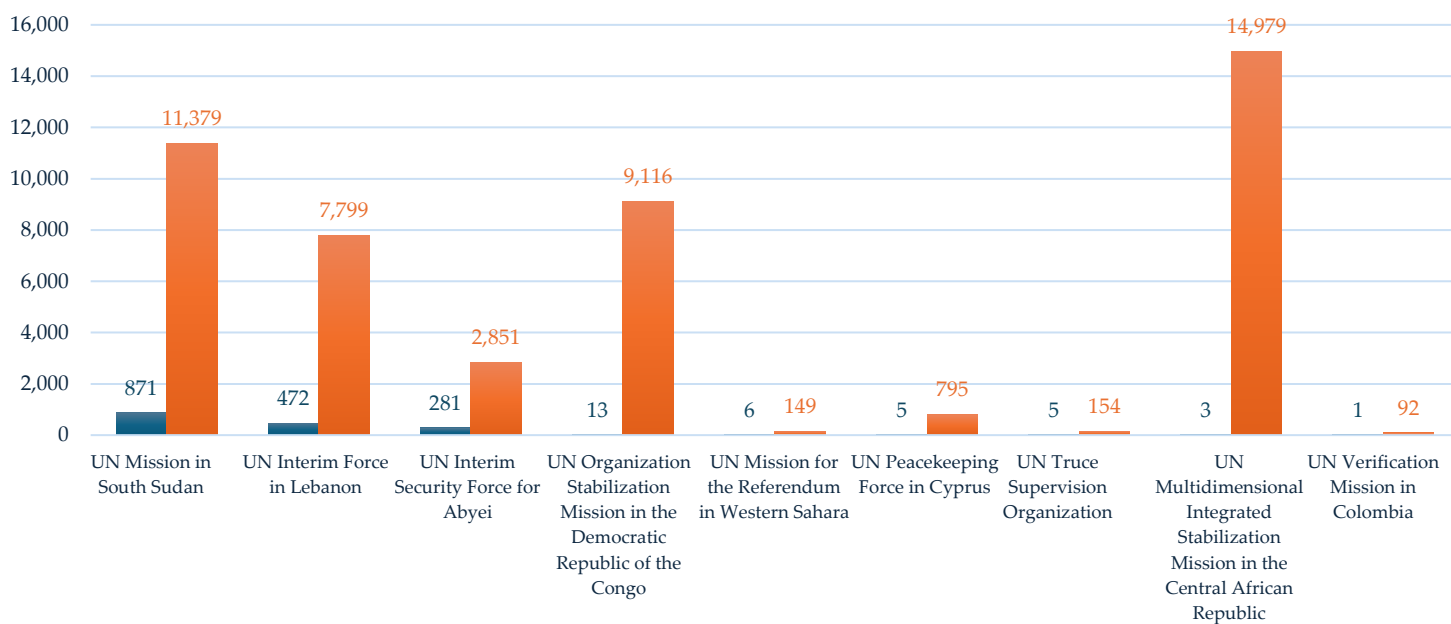
This prioritization influences China's approach to UN Peacekeeping Operations. In 2008, UNSC Resolution 1851 legally authorized and expanded the authority of states to use naval vessels to combat piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia.⁵⁷ Between 2008 and 2024, the PLA Daily reported that the Chinese navy has carried out numerous naval escort missions with more than 1,600 round trips made by over 150 Chinese naval vessels.⁵⁸ A senior PLA Colonel from the General Staff Operations Department stated that these naval escort missions were a part of its strategy to protect overseas national interests.⁵⁹ Notably, the routes of these naval deployments closely align with the locations where the majority of Chinese UN peacekeeping troops are stationed – Eastern Africa.

China's expanding participation in UN peacekeeping missions reflects a coordinated effort to advance its national interests, strengthen its military presence abroad, and increase influence in geopolitically important regions. As of January 2026, China has deployed 1,659 peacekeeping operations (PKO) personnel, mainly to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA).⁶⁰ This complements the PRC's broader footprint in Eastern Africa, which includes its first formal overseas military base in Djibouti,⁶¹ as well as China's Belt and Road Initiative, which prioritizes expansion into developing countries.⁶² Beyond their immediate peacekeeping duties, deployments can provide PLA personnel with opportunities to gather intelligence on host states and other nations' UN contingents, enhancing China's situational awareness and influence in key regions.⁶³ These deployments likely serve multiple purposes: ensuring the security of Chinese investments, gaining operational experience for the PLA, and placing personnel in regions of geopolitical importance.

Deployment under the UN flag serves as a low-risk mechanism for securing soft power influence and military intelligence. The UN Peacekeeping's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is the binding agreement between the UN and a member state where both parties agree on the administrative, logistical, and financial arrangements that define how personnel, equipment, and services are provided and managed for the deployment.⁶⁴ China likely maximizes its influence during the negotiation process to deploy Chinese nationals to its "overseas interest zones." At a time when the organization sometimes faces a shortage of PKO personnel,⁶⁵ China's status as a permanent member of the UNSC acts as a negotiation multiplier, enabling it to exert influence across multiple layers of the UN simultaneously: policy formulation in the UNSC, budgetary determination in the General Assembly, and operational execution via the DPO and the mission headquarters. Thus, Beijing can ensure its PKO personnel are deployed to regions key to its political and economic interests, an advantage unavailable to other major PKO contributors who are not permanently on the UNSC.

Deployment of Chinese PKO personnel in 2025

■ Chinese PKOs ■ All PKOs



Source: United Nations Peacekeeping, Contribution of Uniformed Personnel to UN by Mission, Country, and Personnel Type at 7 (December 31, 2025) available at https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/04_country_contributions_detailed_by_mission_93_december_2025.pdf.

While the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) is the largest UN peacekeeping operation, with approximately 14,979 uniformed personnel, Chinese peacekeepers constitute only a small share of the mission's overall force.⁶⁶ By contrast, the primary concentration of PRC peacekeeping personnel is deployed to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). As illustrated in the graph above, roughly 871 Chinese nationals serve within UNMISS out of a total deployment of 11,379 personnel, making it the principal location of China's peacekeeping presence within the UN system. Chinese peacekeeping deployments to UNMISS illustrate the broader strategic considerations shaping Beijing's participation in UN operations. South Sudan serves as a critical location to China. Approximately 70% of South Sudan's oil in 2014, produced largely by Chinese state-owned giants Sinopec and PetroChina, is exported to China.⁶⁷ South Sudan's civil war began in 2013, disrupting oil production and placing China's massive state investments at risk. Soon after, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi announced the deployment of approximately 350 PKO personnel to UNMISS.⁶⁸ South Sudan's then-Government Spokesperson for President Salva Kiir, Ateny Wek Ateny, reportedly stated that UN PKO personnel are authorized to "use all necessary means" and are "ready to fight back if civilians and oil field facilities are attacked."⁶⁹

In May 2025, China's Ministry of National Defense of the PRC reported that one of its PKO engineering units rehabilitated a crucial road connecting Tonj to Romich in Warrap State, South Sudan, touting itself as an active player in advancing the UN's humanitarian agenda.⁷⁰ By enhancing mobility within Warrap State, a region bordering Unity State where Sinopec and PetroChina operate, this targeted project helps to indirectly reduce localized conflict, thereby lowering the operational risks for foreign investors in these oil companies. This pattern of deployment, highly intertwined with China's national economic interests, allows the PRC to conceal its use of force to protect its own economic assets and instead present it as committed to the UN's peacekeeping efforts.

The targeted deployment of Chinese PKOs in South Sudan reveals a sophisticated strategy of converting Chinese soft power into hard power. China uses non-military tools, including its \$1 billion Peace and Development Trust Fund, its placement as the second highest economic contributor to the UN, its permanent UNSC seat, and the placement of Chinese nationals in high-level UN positions, such as the position of Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (Political) for UNMISS, to construct a public image of goodwill and dedication to multilateralism. However, China uses this political and financial cachet within the UN as a mechanism to deploy its combat power in volatile areas to secure its national interests, all while operating under the guise of the multilateral legitimacy of the UN.

Finding 4: The CCP uses Government-Organized Non-Governmental Organizations (GONGOs) as a Method of Injecting PRC Political Influence Within the UN System.

To advance its political goals, the CCP mobilizes organizations that it controls and have consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), a UN body. The ECOSOC aims to advance economic, social, and environmental considerations of sustainable development.⁷¹ To achieve this, the ECOSOC grants special consultative status to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that tend to be smaller or more recently established and have a special competence in, and are concerned specifically with, fields related to the ECOSOC's activities. As of December 2022, there are at least 134⁷² of these "NGOs" from the PRC with consultative statuses at the ECOSOC Committee.⁷³ Given China's Marxist-Leninist political system, a significant portion of these organizations are in fact government-controlled or directed entities: (Government-Organized Non-Governmental Organizations or GONGOs).⁷⁴ Even more troubling is the fact that many of these organizations conceal their direct ties to the CCP or to organizations affiliated with the CCP's influence and intelligence apparatuses. According to an investigation conducted by the Select Committee, several dozens of these

organizations with consultative statuses are either directly or indirectly affiliated with the Chinese Communist Party's United Front system.

In November 2023, the Select Committee released its *United Front 101* memo, explaining that United Front work is “a unique blend of engagement, influence activities, and intelligence operations”⁷⁵ used by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to “shape its political environment, including to influence other countries’ policy toward the PRC and to gain access to advanced foreign technology.”⁷⁶ Furthermore, the Select Committee study found that, “The United Front policy system encompasses united front work departments at every party level; United Front elements housed in PRC government agencies, enterprises, academic institutions, and ostensibly non-government organizations; and the network of Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conferences from the central to local level.”⁷⁷

An independent analysis of these organizations granted consultative status conducted by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) similarly found that “of 106 of these NGOs [sic] from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan... 59 are closely connected to the Chinese government or the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Forty-six are led by people with roles in the government or the party. Ten accept more than 50% of their funding from the Chinese state.”⁷⁸ More troubling than the sheer number of Chinese GONGOs with this privileged status and access to the UN is the ICIJ’s finding of how these organizations’ “delegates seek to disrupt and drown out criticism of China, heaping praise on their government.”⁷⁹

GONGOs serve as conduits of CCP influence, advancing the policies and goals of the Party-State. Consultative statuses provide these organizations—and by extension the CCP—with undue access to not only ECOSOC, but also to its many subsidiary bodies. These processes include various human rights mechanisms of the UN, meetings to assist with implementation of agreements on small arms, as well as special events organized by the President of the General Assembly.⁸⁰ The Chinese Communist Party’s exploitation of this status through its proxies has enabled it to distort and misuse the consultative process to further its access, network, and malign influence over this international body.

For a full list of the organizations that have been granted consultative status, see Appendix B of this report. A truncated list of some of these NGOs and a description of their ties to the CCP United Front system are provided below:

1. Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC)

The U.S. National Counterintelligence and Security Center assessed that there are “many quasi-official entities or proxies involved in United Front work and foreign influence operations whose ties to the CCP or PRC government may be hidden or not readily apparent” and categorizes the CPAFFC as one such entity.⁸¹ The public

advisory from the U.S. counterintelligence agency further noted that “CPAFCC is entrusted by the PRC government with overseeing and developing ‘sister’ relationships between China and localities in the United States and other nations.”⁸² Seasoned Chinese diplomat Yang Wanming has chaired CPAFCC since 2023, and previous presidents of the organization have been high ranking members in the United Front apparatus.⁸³

2. Center for China & Globalization Limited (CCG)

Independent researchers have identified CCG as part of the United Front system.⁸⁴ Directly supporting the ties of CCG to the United Front, the founder and president of CCG, Dr. Henry Huiyao Wang, held and in some cases maintains affiliations in organizations that are part of the United Front system. He previously served as the vice chairman of the Western Returned Scholars Association (WRSA) from 2008-2021—an organization directly overseen by the United Front Work Department.⁸⁵ Wang has also served as, and may currently still be, an advisor to the Central United Front Work Department Advisory Group.⁸⁶ Dr. Wang was the director of at least two CCP-affiliated associations that are under the direct supervision of the United Front Work Department.⁸⁷ One of the CCG’s functions is to advance China’s global talent recruitment strategy.⁸⁸ Wang serves on the central committee of the Jiusan Society, a minor political party under the leadership of the CCP.⁸⁹

3. China Association for Science and Technology (CAST)

CAST is one of the eight major social organizations directly under the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) — the highest-level organization for the CCP’s United Front system — with responsibility for supervising and co-opting the science and technology sectors. Dr. Wan Gang is the president of CAST and previously held high-ranking government positions—most notably as Minister of the Ministry of Science and Technology from 2007 to 2018. CAST often works in concert with formal CCP-tied governmental organizations.⁹⁰ Like other United Front organizations, CAST’s influence operations involve recruitment of overseas science and technology talent.⁹¹ CAST maintains close ties with millions of Chinese scientists, engineers and other professionals working in the fields of science and technology.⁹²

4. China Federation of Internet Societies (CFIS)

While CFIS presents itself as an independent NGO, its charter underscores that it has close ties to the CCP. The organization proudly states its subservience to the CCP’s leadership.⁹³ CFIS’s stated purposes are to adhere to the “guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era” and to “promote the development of Party organizations in the industry.” The ideological dimension of the organization should not be understated. The organization professes to practice core socialist values, promotes the “spirit of patriotism,” and abides by “social morality.” CFIS serves as the CCP’s influence channel to control

the internet, working to implement Party and state guidelines, policies, and relevant laws and regulations in the digital realm.⁹⁴ It is instructive that the former Vice Minister of the Cyberspace Administration leads CFIS.⁹⁵

5. China Education Association for International Education Exchange (CEAIE)

The CEAIE is another one of the China-based organization that presents itself as a “non-profit social entity”⁹⁶ engaged in international educational exchanges, but conceals the organization’s ideological motive and its ties to the CCP from foreign audiences.⁹⁷ The linkage between CEAIE and the CCP’s United Front system is highlighted by the fact that the CEAIE president, Dr. Limin Liu, has current and prior affiliations with organizations with clear ties to the CCP’s United Front system. For example, Liu is dual hatted as the vice president of the Western Returned Scholars Association,⁹⁸ an organization subordinate to the United Front Work Department.⁹⁹ Dr. Liu previously served as a member of the CPPCC. It is not a coincidence that most other members of CEAIE’s leadership team have similar ties to the CCP’s United Front system.¹⁰⁰

6. China Ethnic Minorities’ Association for International Education Exchange (CEMAEE)

The stated purpose of the CEMAEE is to promote external exchanges and cooperation by China’s ethnic minorities by providing funds and projects that uphold equal rights.¹⁰¹ The leadership of the organization is supervised by and composed of officials from the National Ethnic Affairs Commission, which is directly under the United Front system and operates under the leadership of the CCP.¹⁰²

7. China People’s Association for Peace and Disarmament (CPAPD)

The stated purpose of CPAPD is to enhance people-to-people relations to promote disarmament, oppose arms race and war, and the prohibition of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. This is in direct contradiction to the Chinese government’s actions of engaging in the country’s largest nuclear buildup in history.¹⁰³ Interestingly, the CPAPD’s charter in Chinese indicates that it serves under the leadership of the CCP, but the English version omits this material fact. Ma Biao leads CPAPD and served as Vice Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference between 2011 and 2023.¹⁰⁴ Many members of CPAPD’s leadership are both members of the National People’s Congress and CPPCC.

8. China Society for Human Rights Studies (CSHRS)¹⁰⁵

CSHRS is purportedly an NGO that engages in international exchanges and programming in the field of human rights. CSHRS activities include organizing human rights-related panels with Chinese scholars, advocacy, research, education and training programs both domestically and internationally. Underscoring its close ties to the CCP, the regulations of the organization states that CSHRS is

managed by the Central Committee of CCP's Propaganda Department.¹⁰⁶ Notably, this material fact is omitted in English.¹⁰⁷ The organization's primary funding from the China Foundation for Human Rights Development—another organization with special consultative status—which is also managed by the CCP Central Committee's Propaganda Department.¹⁰⁸

Given the clear asymmetry of influence between significantly resourced, organized, and government-directed organizations over genuine NGOs in terms of their means to influence an agenda, allowing these GONGOs privileged access to the UN enables a massive astroturfing operation conducted in plain sight by the CCP to advance its agenda.

Organizations from the PRC that have been granted consultative status have been involved in criminal proceedings touching on a range of nefarious crimes such as financial fraud and corruption—assisted by the access that their special status with the UN grants them. For example, the China Energy Fund Committee (CEFC), which was granted Special Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council, in 2011,¹⁰⁹ is an organization that experts have referred to as a “political warfare platform affiliated with GPD [General Political Department] and the CCP propaganda and ideology system.”¹¹⁰ In 2019, CEFC's Deputy Chairman and Secretary General, He Zhiping, was found guilty and sentenced to three years in prison for his role in a multi-year, multimillion-dollar scheme to bribe top officials of Chad and Uganda in exchange for business advantages for CEFC China Energy Company Limited.¹¹¹

Genuine civil society stakeholders can play a critical role in helping realize some of the worthy aspirations of the UN. Yet not all organizations accredited by this body are truly representative of legitimate NGO voices. Instead, the CCP is attempting to use this avenue platform to advance the Chinese government's interests, or worse yet, fraudulent and criminal activities. Allowing GONGOs from the PRC with consultative statuses that are intended to be reserved for genuine civil society is not only a violation of the rules of the UN and the ECOSOC, but it is also a breach of trust and seriously undermines those organizations whose work does provide important contributions.

Recommendations

The PRC's approach to the UN and its affiliated agencies reflects a fundamentally different interpretation of global governance from the United States and the West. To achieve its objectives, China is leveraging its increased financial contributions, military personnel presence, and infiltration of the NGO sector to entrench and expand its influence within the UN's structure from the top down. The following recommendations outline steps to ensure greater transparency of CCP malign activities at the UN.

Policy Recommendation 1: The United States government should continue pressing the United Nations to return to its core principles of the United Nations Charter of preventing and resolving disputes. Reforms should rein in bureaucratic bloat, pare back mission creep, and end efforts to advance polarized ideological projects that stray from the UN's mandate. This should include ensuring peacekeeping missions have clear mandates and remain focused on peacekeeping rather than nation-building. At the same time, Washington must also actively promote and strengthen American leadership within standard-setting UN bodies that have increasingly come under the sway of China to ensure that American voices play a leading role in shaping global standards.

Policy Recommendation 2: The United States should continue ongoing efforts to hold the UN system accountable in instances where it has been coopted to undermine U.S. and allied interests – including by China – as reflected in Executive Order 14199 and its implementation. The United States should demand greater accountability and transparency across the UN system by confronting antisemitic bias as well as dismantling compromised bodies such as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

Policy Recommendation 3: The United States government should consider paying those of its contributions to the United Nations that are in arrears as appropriate to strategically expand its influence at the United Nations, while continuing to counter China's baseless argument that United States financial engagement at the United Nations is insufficient. Both U.S. assessed and voluntary contributions to the UN must emphasize alignment with United States national security interests, defend against efforts to constrain American sovereignty, and incorporate strengthened oversight and accountability measures.

Policy Recommendation 4: The United States should also lead a coordinated effort to reassess China's status as a "developing country" status across numerous UN agencies. Specifically, the United States should work with allies and partners to push for updated criteria within UN agencies that more accurately reflect China's economic capabilities, ensuring that advanced economies do not retain developing-country privileges.

Policy Recommendation 5: Congress should require the Secretary of State and the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to submit annually

to relevant congressional committees a comprehensive report on the People's Republic of China's actions and attempts to place Chinese nationals in leadership positions at the United Nations and its affiliated agencies, a detailed assessment of financial contributions to the United Nations by China, peacekeeping operations and police training programs, and a list of organizations from the PRC (i.e., China, Hong Kong, Macau) that have consultative status with UN ECOSOC and those that have links to the CCP's United Front system.

Policy Recommendation 6: The Secretary of State should direct the State Department to develop and implement a strategy to counter China's influence over UN bodies and processes, leveraging the Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel (MSP) or another appropriate unit at the Department. Specifically, the required strategy should address China's exploitation and misuse of consultative status with ECOSOC, independent experts, and mandate holders at the UN for undue influence.

APPENDIX A – Budgetary Evaluation Form for the PRC’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Project Performance Objectives Table (Fiscal Year 2025)

Project Name		Pay peacekeeping contributions			
Regulatory Authority and Code		[114] Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Implementing Unit	Ministry of Foreign Affairs headquarters	
Project Funds (Ten Thousand Yuan)	Total annual funds:		870, 053. 70		Execution Rate Score (10)
	Among Them: Financial Allocations		717, 200. 00		
	Last Year's Carryover		152, 750. 42		
	Other funds		103. 28		
年度	Annual Overall Goals				
目标					
Performance Indicators	1. According to the work plan, pay the membership fees of international organizations that our country has joined in a timely and full manner. 2. Reflect our country's active support for relevant international organizations through the payment of membership fees, demonstrate the image of a responsible major country that actively undertakes international responsibilities and obligations, and gradually enhance our country's discourse power and influence.				
	Level 1 Indicator	Level 2 Indicator	Level 3 Indicator	Indicator Value	分值 (90)
	Output Indicator	Quantity Indicators	Number of times contributions to UN peacekeeping missions were paid	≥12 times	24
		Quality Indicators	The discourse power over the allocation of resources for peacekeeping operations	Continuously strengthen	6
	Benefit Indicator	Ensure that I do not lose my General Assembly voting rights due to arrears in peacekeeping contributions		I have voting rights at the UN General Assembly	20
		Social Benefit Indicator	Influence on the United Nations' peace and security field	Gradually improve	30
Satisfaction Indicator	Satisfaction Indicator	The United Nations expressed its gratitude to me for fully paying the assessed contributions.	≥1 time	10	

Ministry of Foreign Affairs [外交部], Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2025 Departmental Budget [外交部 2025 年部门预算] (2025), available at https://web.archive.org/web/20250809212025/https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/wjfb_673085/zfxgk_674865/gknrlb/cwxx/ysjs/202503/P020250326535361276602.pdf.

APPENDIX B

PRC Organizations with UN Consultative Status¹¹²

List of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council as of 31 December 2022

General Consultative Status¹¹³

1. Asian Legal Resource Centre General 1998
2. China NGO Network for International Exchanges (CNIE) General 2008
3. Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries General 2001
4. United Nations Association of China General 2000 DPI

Special Consultative Status

5. All China Women's Federation Special 1995
6. All China Youth Federation (ACFY) WSSD
7. All-China Environment Federation Special 2009
8. Amity Foundation Special 2014
9. Asian Consultancy on Tobacco Control Limited Special 2012
10. Beijing Changier Education Foundation Special 2019
11. Beijing Chaoyang District Yongxu Global Environmental Institute Special 2022
12. Beijing Children's Legal Aid and Research Center Special 2011
13. Beijing Crafts Council Special 2019
14. Beijing E-Share Civil Society Information Center Special 2023
15. Beijing Global Talent Exchange Association Special 2022
16. Beijing Greenovation Institute for Public Welfare Development Special 2021
17. Beijing Guangming Charity Foundation Special 2019
18. Beijing International Exchange Association Special 2023
19. Beijing NGO Association for International Exchanges Special 2016
20. Beijing Pengmen International Trade Co., Ltd Special 2021
21. Beijing Zhicheng Migrant Workers' Legal Aid and Research Center Special 2011
22. Bishop Dennis Ng Victory Ministries Foundation Limited Special 2021
23. Center for China & Globalization Limited Special 2018
24. Center for Community Development Studies WSSD
25. Center for Energy & Environmental Policy Research Rio+20

26. Chengmei Charity Foundation Special 2019
27. China Agricultural University Special 2023
28. China Arms Control and Disarmament Association Special 2005 ODA
29. China Association for International Science and Technology Cooperation
Special 2006
30. China Association for NGO Cooperation Special 2007 WSSD
31. China Association for Preservation and Development of Tibetan Culture
(CAPDTC) Special 2007
32. China Association for Science and Technology Special 2004
33. China Association of Non-Profit Organizations Special 2015
34. China Brazil Center for Climate Change and Energy Technology Innovation
Rio+20
35. China Care and Compassion Society Special 2004
36. China Chamber of International Commerce Special 2021
37. China Charities Aid Foundation For Children Special 2019
38. China Charity Alliance Special 2019
39. China Disabled Person's Federation Special 1998
40. China Ecological Civilization Research and Promotion Association Special
2016
41. China Economic and Social Council (CESC) WSSD
42. China Education Association for International Exchange Special 2006
- DPI
43. China Environmental Protection Foundation Special 2005 WSSD
44. China Ethnic Minorities' Association for External Exchanges Special 2022
45. China Family Planning Association Special 2005
46. China Federation of Internet Societies Special 2022
47. China Foundation for Cultural Heritage Conservation Special 2023
48. China Foundation for Human Rights Development Special 2020
49. China Foundation for Peace and Development Special 2014
50. China Foundation for Rural Development Special 2011
51. China Great Wall Society Special 2007
52. China Green Foundation Special 2003 WSSD
53. China Health Charity Foundation Special 2025
54. China International Association of Promotion of Science and Technology
Special 2025
55. China International Council for the Promotion of Multinational Corporations
Special 2006
56. China Society for Human Rights Studies (CSHRS) Special 1998
57. China Society for Promotion of the Guangcai Programme Special 2000
58. China Soong Ching Ling Foundation Special 2013
59. China Water Engineering Association Special 2018
60. China Wildlife Conservation Association WSSD
61. China Women's Development Foundation Special 2016
62. China-Africa Business Council Special 2017

63. Chinese Association for International Understanding Special 2003
WSSD DPI
64. Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament, The Special
2002 ODA
65. Chinese Society for Sustainable Development Special 2004 WSSD
66. Chinese Young Volunteers Association Special 2010
67. Chongqing Centre for Equal Social Development Special 2022
68. Chunhui Children's Foundation Special 2020
69. Civic Exchange Rio+20
70. Conservancy Association, The WSSD
71. Consortium of Institutes on Family in the Asian Region Limited Special
2021
72. East-lake Institute for Social Advancement, Wuchang District, Wuhan
Special 2024
73. Eco-Forum Global Rio+20
74. Enrich Personal Development Limited Special 2021
75. Environmental Quality Protection Foundation WSSD
76. Eye Care Foundation Special 2022
77. Finance Center for South-South Cooperation Limited Special 2017
78. Friends of the Earth - Hong Kong WSSD
79. Gerontological Society of China WSSD
80. Global Hand Special 2008
81. Global Village of Beijing WSSD
82. Golden Age Foundation Limited Special 2021
83. Grassland Cultural Protection and Development Foundation of Inner
Mongolia Special 2021
84. Haikou Better Blue Marine Ecological Protection Center Special 2025
85. Health In Action Limited Special 2017
86. Himalayan Consensus Institute Limited Rio+20
87. Hong Kong Council of Social Service, The Special 2003
88. Hong Kong Federation of Women Special 2000
89. Hong Kong Federation of Women's Centres Special 2002
90. Hong Kong Women Professionals and Entrepreneurs Association Special
2001
91. Innovation Center for Energy and Transportation Rio+20
92. International Confucian Association Special 2018
93. International Development Information Organization-DevNet Special
2015
94. International Ecological Safety Cooperative Organization Special 2011
95. International Green Economy Association Rio+20
96. International Mayor Communication Centre Limited Special 2017
97. International Probono Legal Services Association Limited Special 2022
98. Judicial Administrative Drug Rehabilitation Association of China Special
2021

- 99. Macao Youth Federation Special 2021
- 100. Nanjing World Youth Development Service Center Special 2022
- 101. National Association of Vocational Education of China Special 2010

DPI

- 102. New Sunshine Charity Foundation Special 2023
- 103. Organização das Famílias da Ásia e do Pacífico Special 2011
- 104. Panoramic Charity Foundation Special 2019
- 105. Peaceland Foundation Special 2022
- 106. Policy & Economic Alliance Caring of Earth Special 2022
- 107. Sanya Public Diplomacy Institute Special 2021
- 108. SEE Foundation Rio+20
- 109. Shaanxi Patriotic Volunteer Association Special 2021
- 110. Shandong Tongshan Public Welfare Development Centre of Children

Welfare Special 2025

- 111. Shanghai Arbitration Commission Special 2024
- 112. Shanghai New York University DPI
- 113. Shanghai Shixin Asset Management Co.Ltd Special 2025
- 114. Shanghai Songding Social Innovation Center Special 2025
- 115. Shanshui Conservation Center Rio+20
- 116. The ADM Capital Foundation Limited Rio+20
- 117. The Belt and Road International Lawyers Association Special 2024
- 118. Tianjin Eco-city Friend of Green Eco-Culture Promotion Association Special

2022

- 119. Women Who Crypto FfD
- 120. Women's General Association of Macau, The. Special 2008
- 121. World Association of Industrial and Technological Research Organizations Special 1991
- 122. World Eco-Design Organization Special 2021
- 123. World Federation of Acupuncture-Moxibustion Societies Special 2019
- 124. World Federation of Chinese Medicine Societies Special 2021
- 125. World Taoist Association Limited Special 2015
- 126. World Trade United Foundation Limited Special 2019
- 127. Wuxi Lingshan Charity Foundation Special 2022
- 128. YouChange China Social Entrepreneur Foundation Special 2019
- 129. Zhongguancun Federation of Social Organizations Special 2022
- 130. Zhongguancun Green Mine Industry Alliance Special 2023
- 131. ZHONGGUORENKOUFULIJINHUI Special 2023
- 132. 社区参与行动 Rio+20

Roster

- 133. Confederation of Asia Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry Roster 1970
- 134. China Association of Women Entrepreneurs Roster 2000 DPI

Non-governmental organizations with outstanding quadrennial reports, whose consultative status with the Council has been suspended as from 7 December 2022 in accordance with Council resolution 2008/4 and Council decision 2023/306*

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Endnotes

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