SUPPORTING HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS AND LOCAL CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS

HRIC conducted individual casework to support human rights defenders in China. HRIC also supported several domestic Chinese groups in calling upon the Chinese government to engage in a reassessment of the democracy movement of 1989 and to move toward greater democratic reforms.

In May, HRIC submitted one updated case and two new detention cases to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, which will be reviewed within the next few months. In late August, another submission was made with three new cases to the Working Group’s September 2005 session.

HRIC conducted individual casework to support human rights in China. Governments and UN treaty bodies also use HRIC’s reports and briefings as helpful monitoring tools in evaluating China’s implementation record and performance.

JUNE 4TH ADVOCACY
As a member of the Greater June 4th Memorial Committee, HRIC’s New York office helped to organize events on the night of June 3 in front of the Chinese embassy to commemorate the 16th anniversary of the June 4th crackdown. Approximately 200 people, including many

HRIC’s Web sites: A Network for Activism and Accountability

MOBILIZING SUPPORT FOR THE TIANANMEN MOTHERS
Fill the Square (www.fillthesquare.org)—Online Petition
- HRIC provides technical support for this online petition, mobilizing individuals and organizations worldwide to amplify the Tianamen Mothers’ demands for accountability for the June 4th crackdown.
- Over 40 percent of the signatures come from mainland China.

BUILDING AN ARCHIVE FOR THE FUTURE
June 4th (www.64memo.org)—Multimedia Archive
- Expanded to hold more than 3,900 photos; over fourteen hours of video; over six hours of audio; more than 47,000 entries, articles and memoirs describing the 1989 crackdown; more than 5,000 journal report articles.
- The archive has more than 26,000 regular subscribers. From May–July, the Web site had 14.9 million hits, 14 percent of which came through proxy servers.

PROVIDING A VIRTUAL CIVIL SPACE FOR DISCUSSION AND DEBATE
Ren Yu Ren Quan (www.renyurenquan.org)—Monthly Journal & Archive
- Publishes in-depth analyses, research papers, current events commentaries, theoretical discussions and law reviews.
- 26 of the 30 articles published from May–July were submitted by mainland Chinese authors on issues such as torture and corruption in China, internet censorship and China’s unsound legal system.

DELIVERING UNCENSORED FLOWS OF INFORMATION
Huaxia Dianzi Bao (www.huaxiabao.org)—Weekly E-mail Newsletter & Archive
- Majority of contributors and readers are mainland Chinese Internet users.
Structuring the arguments that the Chinese government has used to justify the crackdown against the democracy movement.

**GOVERNMENT OUTREACH AND COOPERATION**

As an affiliated NGO with the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), HRIC participated in the European Union-China Human Rights dialogue seminar in Beijing from June 20–22. Sharon Hom delivered a presentation on the international legal framework for protections for freedom of expression. As the first overseas Chinese human rights organization to participate directly in a dialogue with the Chinese government inside the country, HRIC viewed this as a positive step towards greater openness on the part of the Chinese government. Unfortunately, at the end of the two-day seminar, Sharon was subjected to a five-hour incident with Chinese state security agents. This attempt to harass and intimidate a member of an official EU delegation reflects the uneven nature of reforms in China: while China is increasingly active in the international arena, its repressive domestic state security apparatus continues to trump human rights progress.

On July 21, Sharon Hom attended the Worldwide Labor Officers’ Conference hosted by the U.S. Department of State, where she participated on a panel focusing on worker rights in China. In her presentation, Sharon discussed: windows of opportunity for improving China’s labor rights conditions; the development of trade, labor and human rights cross-linkages; a growing interest in corporate social responsibility in China; and the rise of its civil society. She also described the new challenges facing China and emphasized the need for an independent trade union, the gap between the implementation of labor laws and actual conditions, repression of labor activists, and China’s strict control of information.

**ACADEMIC AND CORPORATE OUTREACH**

Sharon Hom was the keynote luncheon speaker on June 17 at Northeastern University School of Law’s consultation, “Realizing Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights: Communities, Courts, and the Academy.” The conference brought together leading judges, lawyers, academics and activists from around the world to discuss the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights and the implications of globalization for human rights.

Sharon presented China both as a case study and a cautionary tale, and explained the methods by which HRIC’s program work deals with human rights mechanisms, trade, and technology.

Prior to the Fortune Global Forum, held in Beijing in May, HRIC initiated a briefing for a group of editors from Time and Fortune magazines on the intersections between current human rights issues, China’s economic growth and corporate social responsibility. The forum is an annual event that brings together business, political and academic leaders around the theme of maximizing business opportunities in Asia. Professors Andrew Nathan and Jerome Cohen provided current political analysis on China, while Sharon Hom gave an overview of pressing economic, social and human rights challenges, China’s architecture of information control as it relates to journalists and news readers, and specific opportunities for foreign corporations to advance human rights in China.

A growing trend in China legal studies is the inclusion of human rights issues in course curriculum. HRIC’s reports and publications have been increasingly adopted as course readings by law professors at Harvard University, Columbia University, Cornell University, Syracuse University and University of California-Berkeley.

**MEDIA AND PRESS WORK**

President Liu Qing, executive director Sharon Hom and research director Nicolas Becquelin fielded numerous print and radio interviews, and HRIC was quoted in more than 100 media outlets around the world.

**STRENGTHENING INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORKS**

HRIC raises human rights issues to the U.S. and European governments, and within multilateral fora to promote ongoing

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**HRIC Media Quotes**

**On censorship and state secrets:**

“Shi Tao’s case has raised widespread concern inside and outside of China as a classic example of the Hu Jintao regime’s relentless suppression of free speech and free press.”

—Agence France Presse, May 21, 2005

**On China’s legal system in reference to the wrongful conviction of She Xianglin:**

“The individual cases of injustice put a human face on the systemic and structural lack of protection for people’s rights.”

—ABC News International, May 25, 2005

**On Beijing police undermining the EU-China Human Rights Dialogue:**

“...it ought to remain of deep concern to the international community that a powerful economic actor such as China has a domestic culture in which state-security police can operate with such impunity.”

—Asian Wall Street Journal, July 1, 2005

**On religious repression in Xinjiang:**

“Uighurs are seen by Beijing as an ethno-nationalist threat to the Chinese state. As Islam is perceived as underpinning Uighur ethnic identity, China has taken draconian steps to smother Islam as a means of subordinating Uighur nationalist sentiment.”

—Agence France Presse, August 15, 2005

**On the establishment of squads to combat terrorism:**

“It is legitimate for China to have an anti-terror force but the problem is the context in which it is used and how you define terror.”

—Financial Times, August 18, 2005
INTERNATIONAL SCRUTINY OF THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES

Developing such constructive external pressure supports progressive domestic forces working for social, legal and democratic change within China.

UNITED NATIONS

The Committee on the Rights of the Child, which deals with monitoring the implementation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, will be reviewing China's second periodic report in September. Based on a prior written submission of suggested issues and questions for the Committee, HRIC was invited to participate at the Committee’s June 6 pre-sessional meeting in Geneva. In its oral presentation and individual meetings with experts on the Committee, HRIC focused on issues relating to groups of children in vulnerable populations, including migrants, rural poor and ethnic minorities. Following the session, HRIC prepared selected issues backgrounder on child labor, poverty, education, population policy, trafficking and cultural and religious repression. HRIC also submitted a parallel NGO report to the Committee in July, which highlighted key areas of concern followed by a series of recommendations aimed at improving both the reporting process and the implementation of the Convention in China.

NGO OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

As part of HRIC’s developing work on trade and human rights linkages, program officer Elisabeth Wickeri participated in a training and strategy session to develop the capacity of human rights NGOs in the areas of trade law, the WTO and human rights. FIDH, HRIC’s affiliate NGO, invited approximately 20 prominent U.N. officers, FIDH member NGOs and WTO representatives to assist in the training in May. Elisabeth spoke on two training panels: “WTO Compliance Mechanisms: What Possible ‘Interventions’ for NGOs?” and “WTO Accession and Human Rights.” She was also a facilitator on the closing panel, “NGO Strategies for the Hong Kong Ministerial,” which encouraged discussion on strategies to adopt in preparation of the Sixth Ministerial in Hong Kong.

From June 8–9, HRIC attended the Rights & Democracy Conference in Ottawa, which focused on the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) linkages with human rights. HRIC presented China as a national case study of MDG implementation, and highlighted the fact that although the Chinese government’s report indicates progress toward each goal, its statistics mask drastic inequalities that become evident when data is disaggregated by province, gender and ethnicity.

From July 29–August 3, Sharon Hom and HRIC Board Members Christine Loh, Han Dongfang and Robin Munro were invited to participate in the 25th annual Tällberg Forum in Tällberg, Sweden. The forum, attended by leaders from business, politics and civil society, explored creative cross-cutting frameworks for addressing urgent global and local challenges on environment, equitable development and human rights. Christine played a prominent role as a plenary panel speaker and forum facilitator. Dongfang, Robin, and Sharon spoke at a number of panels and workshops: Dongfang spoke at “Global migration—human mobility in an interconnected world,” Robin facilitated a discussion on workers, cultural issues, technology and labor markets, and Sharon spoke on “Defending Human Rights in the Globalized World.” Dongfang and Sharon also spoke on a special China panel co-chaired by Graham Watson of the European Parliament and Dean C.S. Kiang of Peking University. The panel also included China mainland journalists.

STAFF AND BOARD NOTES

HRIC would like to extend a warm welcome to our new staff members. Gao Wenqian, Managing Editor for Chinese Publications, is author of the book Zhou Enlai’s Later Years, and has more than 14 years of professional editorial experience. Paul O’Neil, Director of Finance and Operations, was a managing partner and later senior counsel in private law practice and also a tenured professor of law before joining HRIC. He brings 20 years of experience in pro bono work. Shirley Hao, Chief IT Officer, is an MIT graduate with 6 years of professional IT experience. Tina Nguyen, Development Associate, recently received her BA in International Relations from the College of William and Mary. Stephanie Wang, Law Program Officer, returns to HRIC after having finished a year-long fellowship in Beijing with the Harvard Law School Human Rights Program. Peng Hongbi, Program Assistant, has had extensive professional experience in education and publishing in Japan. HRIC also thanks Zenobia Lai for her contributions to the work of the Hong Kong office and wishes her all the best in her future endeavors.