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WEBINAR

GLOBAL CHINA: EXAMINING CHINA'S APPROACH
TO GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AND NORMS

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Welcome and Opening Remarks:

SUZANNE MALONEY
Vice President and Director, Foreign Policy
The Brookings Institution

Conversation:

MODERATOR: PATRICK QUIRK
Senior Director, Center for Global Impact, International Republican Institute
Nonresident Fellow, Foreign Policy, The Brookings Institution

JEFFREY FELTMAN
John C. Whitehead Visiting Fellow in International Diplomacy, Foreign Policy
The Brookings Institution

LINDSEY FORD
David M. Rubenstein Fellow
Center for East Asia Policy Studies
The Brookings Institution

SOPHIE RICHARDSON
China Director, Human Rights Watch

DAVE SHULLMAN
Senior Advisor, International Republican Institute; Adjunct Senior Fellow, Center for a New
American Security

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. MALONEY: Good morning. My name is Suzanne Maloney and I'm the vice president and director of Foreign Policy at the Brookings Institution. It's my great pleasure to welcome all of you here today for an online conversation on China's approach to the world, especially around global governance and norms.

This morning's webinar helped to launch a group of papers that examine China's efforts to expand its influence in international institutions -- forgive me for blocking my camera briefly. This morning's webinar helped launch a grouping of papers that examine China's efforts to expand its influence in international institutions and shape global norm. This research forms the key part of the Brookings project on Global China, assessing China's role in the world. Global China is a two-year Brookings foreign policy initiative that seeks to provide an empirical baseline for understanding China's global role across wide-ranging geographic and functional areas. This project involves scholars from across the Brookings Institution as well as outside experts with deep insight on China. The project uses a cross-disciplinary approach, drawing not just from Brookings (inaudible) of China and East Asia experts, but also from the Institution Security Strategy, regional studies, technology, and economic scholars. This approach has generated an eclectic set of perspectives on China's behavior and its impact.

The papers released this month are the panel's mitt in the theory. As the United Nations celebrates its 75th year, the paper launched as part of this project to examine China's interactions with UN agencies and provide a glimpse into China's ambition for setting rules on the international stage. The papers examine how China deploys a diversity of methods and tools in advancement of its ambitions. The findings also raise critical questions about how China's growing activism will impact the rules, norms, and institutions at the heart of the modern international system.

To help advance our thinking on these questions, we're delighted to welcome a panel of authors to this Brookings webinar. We will have Jeff Feltman to discuss China's expanding reach at the United Nations and how the United States should react. Sophie Richardson of the Human Rights Watch, to examine China's greater engagement with the global human rights system. Lindsey Ford on China's efforts to reshape Asia's regional security architecture, and David Shulman of the International

Republican Institute on the competition of political systems, all moderated by Patrick Quirk, a nonresident fellow here at Brookings Foreign Policy, who co-authored a piece with David for this series as well.

Now, before we move onto the formal session, I need to note that outside of their work for Brookings, our scholars occasionally advise political candidates on the issues in accordance with the institution's policy on nonpartisanship. That policy can be found on the Brookings' website and all affiliations are disclosed on individual expert pages on the website. A final reminder that we are on the record and streaming live, so please send your questions to us on Twitter using the hashtag #GlobalChina. Before I hand over the mic, I would like to thank The Ford Foundation for their generous support of this initiative. And with that, I'll pass it over to Patrick Quirk to guide the panel discussion. Thank you.

MR. QUIRK: Thank you very much, Suzanne, and welcome again to everyone logged in and joining us today for this important conversation about China's approach to global governance and norms. A few words about the run of show before we proceed. I will ask each presenter a few questions starting with Lindsey. After each panelist responds, I will invite the other experts to weigh in. We'll do this for each of the four panelists and then take questions from all of you in the audience. With that, let's begin.

Central to any discussion of China's engagement with global governance and norms is security. For insights on this, we'll look at Lindsey Ford, who is David M. Rubenstein fellow in Foreign Policy with Brookings. So Lindsey, to what extent in your opinion are traditional U.S. security partners in Asia such as South Korea and Thailand, aligned or engaged with China's regional security architecture? And if they are, how might that reflect on America's influence and our relations in the region?

MS. FORD: Thanks, Patrick. So, first I think it's important for those who may not live in the -- in the wonky world of Asian security relationship to at least say what -- what exactly is the regional security architecture. So we're really talking about things ranging from bilateral alliance and partnership relationship up to multilateral institutions. You know, the most formal of those would be things like we have in Europe like NATO. When it comes to building regional security networks, I think the Chinese are deploying an approach that works on multiple levels. The real opportunities are actually in places like say

Central Asia, the Mekong region where the U.S. has traditionally had much of a less noticeable security role. And that's where you've seen the Chinese and Asia build much deeper activities and exercises, border patrol, cyber terrorism exercises, even overseas facilities in some places. So that's where the opportunities for significant end roads are. But when it comes to allies, it's a different approach. I don't think any of the allies you named would call themselves "aligned" with China. But what the Chinese have done in some ways, is try to neutralize the significance of those alliances. We've seen with South Korea where the decision to deploy U.S. missile system back in 2016/2017 really resulted in a lot of economic coercion, boycotts, it helped shape the decisions that the South Koreans are willing to take in particular on things like regional missile defenses of trilateral cooperation with the U.S. and the Japanese.

I highlighted Thailand in my paper in particular as well because I think it's an important example of how the Chinese build relationship. A lot of times it's opportunistic. What we've seen in some cases as with Thailand, multiple coups really diminished the ability of the U.S. and Thailand to have a strong security relationship. China stepped into the gap in a lot of ways. It's now a significant (inaudible) partner with (inaudible) and the result of that is potentially long lasting because they use those relationships to facilitate training, exercises, the kind of things that the U.S. has done over the last 40 years, is create a much broader and more far reaching security relationship.

MR. QUIRK: Great, thanks Lindsey. So picking up on that, does China's rising participation in security networks play a role perhaps in ensuring stability across the region? And if so, to what degree is that stability perhaps being offset by recent tensions that China has with regional lagers like India and other South China sea claimants across Southeast Asia?

MS. FORD: That's a great question and I think offset is exactly the right word to be using. Because I think the theory of the case for many years certainly following The Cold War for both the U.S. and a lot of China's neighbors was that if China was participating more actively in regional security institutions, that would be a good thing overall for regional security. So you saw the U.S. encourage the Chinese to participate in things like antipiracy cooperation together. As recently as 2014, the U.S. was inviting China to participate in RIMPAC, which is the largest naval exercise that we do in the region. And if there's any number of regional threats, proliferation, disaster relief, where ultimately

responses would be stronger and more effective if the Chinese were playing a positive cooperative role. The problem is that what we've seen in a lot of cases is the -- these interactions more routine interactions that may occur multilaterally aren't necessarily offsetting a lot of the other things that China is doing in the region. So in Myanmar for example, there's been a lot of mass atrocities against the Rohingya people. There's active violence going on in the region. China's selling arms both to the government and in some cases, we've seen arms flowing to rebel groups as well. It doesn't contribute to stability. Participating in disaster relief exercises doesn't actually matter if in cases like the 2013 typhoon that hit the Philippines, the Chinese offer up disaster relief right afterwards, which left them what Ikea was offering. And you know, part of the problem here is that China's talking about cooperative security mechanisms, but it's unwilling to take more meaningful steps, things like being transparent about its military investments involving territorial disputes that would actually contribute to stability in a much more substantial way in the region. And you've seen this over the past several months, like you said, encroaching on the exclusive economic zones of its neighbors just this past week crossing the midpoint of the Taiyuan Strait, the China-India border crisis. The facts on the ground just don't suggest that what China is doing is actually making the region more stable rather than less stable.

MR. QUIRK: Great, thanks Lindsey. All really excellent points. Given that, the security piece cuts across most everything else. I'd like to open it up to other panelists, David, Jeffrey, Sophie, any thoughts on these two questions or reactions to Lindsey's points? Other remarks you'd like to make?

MR. SHULLMAN: Well, I can jump in. I think all of -- all of the points that Lindsey made were -- were excellent. I would say one thing that struck me, and this was in her paper as well, was identifying how the role that China's playing economically in the region, specifically through the Belt and Road Initiative, but also through just other economic leverage that China has developed like the fact that it's a 14 trillion dollar economy and it's so central to Asia's economy in particular is really driving a lot of these relationships and creating a certain level -- certain amounts of leverage for incentives for actors in these countries to side more with China even in the security domain. It's typically been thought of, you know, we have China rising and China's going to be central economically and holding those bonds in the region. But that the security piece would always be, you know, that these countries were more aligned

with the United States because of the mounting China threat and China being in the neighborhood. But you know, I think looking at the role that, that -- those economic incentives play, looking at the role that China as more of a provider of -- of digital technology and other sorts of things, these -- these elements are going to be really critical as we think through what does the security architecture look like in Asia and -- and for their field. And then just the other thought that I had, and this I more in the diplomatic domain, not purely in the security, but just you know the -- the comparison that you could make in terms of what China's been trying to do in terms of the security architecture in Asia with ASEAN Plus One and Plus Three and -- and the Key Conference and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and then in other regions such as Africa would be, the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation or the 17+1 arrangement in Europe, or to some degree China's (inaudible) in Latin America. These all kind of look fairly similar to what China's trying to do in Asia where it's kind of illuminating or at least diminishing the role of the U.S. in these regional engagements and setting up these situations whereas China and the region having -- having these more closed engagements where China can be more -- more dominant and have more leverage. So, just a few thoughts there.

MR. QUIRK: Thanks, Dave. Sophie, Jeffrey, anything to add? Great. The security piece certainly reflects on the UN system, so for that let's shift the discussion to China's role in the United Nations and move to Jeffrey Feltman, who is John C. Whitehead Visiting Fellow in International Diplomacy with Brookings. So Jeffrey, I really liked your paper as I did Lindsey's. To start, has China's recent increased participation in the UN notably improved its international standing? And if so, could you remark on which nations in particular and link to this to what extent has China's growing presence in the UN been cause for trepidation and animosity in other UN participants, particularly in industrialized or western countries? So I'm looking forward to your thoughts.

MR. FELTMAN: Patrick, thank you, allowing me to be part of this -- part of this panel -- panel today. The reality is China is now the second largest contributor in assessed contributions, that is the mandatory dues to the UN at 12 percent compared to 22 percent to the U.S., the number one donor, and on peace keeping it's also the second with 15 percent of the assessed contributions versus 28 percent for the U.S. And given the -- given China's weight in the world, I think it's natural that China

wants to have a louder voice at the UN. I think most people understand that China wants to have a louder voice at the UN, wants to have more influence inside the -- inside the institution than it's traditionally played given its size. That's the reality.

Whether it's welcomed by some or it's seen as, to use your words, trepidation by some is the question worth exploring. And going back -- going back in time, just sort of a -- almost the golden age of multilateralism from an American perspective, you'd be the immediate post Cold War period, the period after 1989 when it was a unipolar world. And during that time, this sort of liberal world order that animates the sort of operating system with the UN was greatly expanded. So you had concepts like responsibility to protect, meaning that countries could almost -- had a responsibility to go in and intervene in places where local -- where there were -- there were massacres, where local governments were not taking -- were not protecting their people. You had a great expansion of the norms of agenda on human rights. This was -- this made a lot of global south countries uncomfortable. They saw all these new concepts coming out of the -- coming out of the UN as being an invitation for the global north to interfere in the internal affairs of global south. So these countries, all of that category, and I think we -- you know, they -- they tend to be autocratic. They don't -- they don't have much respect for human rights of their -- of their population. These countries welcome the fact that China is having greater influence inside the United Nations because they were uncomfortable with where the -- where United States, Europe, were -- were pushing the global agenda inside the United Nations, so they -- they very much welcomed China's greater voice because China for example will talk about the rule of law in international relation. They changed the debate from the rule of law being about people, about to the rule of law being about relations between states and autocratic leaders in the global south or elsewhere tend to like that. Those that view China's rise in trepidation (inaudible) are those that -- that care about the norm of the agenda of the United Nations, those that care about -- about maintaining the liberal operating system that animates the - - animates the multilateral system.

But the problem is right now that they're rather a vacuum where the U.S. leadership used to be. That you know, the United States would like to deny China -- China having a leadership role in the multilateral system while not exercising itself while creating vacuums to China that China can easily fill.

So the concern of those who -- who are -- the concern by those worried about China's rise are related not only to China's rise, but by the lack of -- of sustained pushback by the United States, by the traditional leader in the -- in the system. I just -- I think about a European diplomat from a small European country told me in a meeting just before the pandemic shut down fiscal meetings, he said, "Look Jeff, you gotta -- you -- you -- you need to know China approaches us on everything on the UN agenda. China lobbies us on everything. And if the U.S. is absent, and this is an issue that doesn't matter that much to us, why wouldn't we just concede to what China -- what China's asking?" So the lack of U.S. leadership combined with China's rise is what's leading to that trepidation.

MR. QUIRK: Great, thanks for that, Jeffrey. Picking up on that point with regard to China leaning in, in your paper in discussing China's attempts to expand influence in the UN system, you write that, "China has deployed its Security Council veto only 16 times, less than any of the other permanent members, but it's, at its current rate China will surely soon outstrip France in using its privilege". So this occurrence, can you speak to how if at all gridlocked this will make the UN system going forward?

MR. FELTMAN: Well I think the reality is of course that the Security Council hardly reflects the -- the world's demographic or economic or political powers of -- of today. But it is very hard to imagine reinventing the Security Council right now in this polarized world so we have to deal with -- with what we have rather than what we -- rather than what we should have. And I don't know that the Security Council becomes more polarized because of China's increasing use of the veto. China -- China vetoed two resolutions along with Russia and as recently as July. What concerns me more is that China could very well gain the power to deny the passage of Security Council resolutions without using the veto. And -- and in (inaudible) it doesn't make any difference. If the Security Council resolution doesn't pass, there's sort of a -- there's sort of a more of a humiliation factor. If China can -- if China can deny a resolution from passing that say the U.S., the UK and -- and France were supporting without using the veto, that's -- that's sending a very strong message about the influence it has. Now how could they do that? You need nine votes from the Security Council, nine affirmative votes to pass a resolution, and no vetoes obviously from one of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

China has -- has done a -- a very good job of cultivating its ties with G77 and cultivating

its ties with the Non-Aligned Movement. You know, over the -- over the years as well as of course using cash with its -- with some its infrastructure projects in lending. So the -- So the African states always have three members in the Security Council. They're called the A3. Africa -- I mean China aligns its policies with the A3 on Africa-related issues. That means that China can probably call in the chips if there's something important for the Security Council with the -- with the A3. China also has strong ties with Non-Aligned Movement elsewhere, and China and Russia, despite whatever tensions there may be in their bilateral relationship from time to time inside the Security Council today are aligned. So you can sort of see how China could -- could assemble the votes to deny a U.S./UK French draft from passing without having to use the veto, meaning that it's a -- it's a stronger message to be able to design the votes than to have to use a veto. They will use the veto if it's a national interest and -- and they -- they -- they see that it's necessary, but I'm more worried about how they've cultivated other allies on the Council. And for the -- and for the United States, we're going to just have to accept the fact that we need to be pursuing rivalry with China and cooperation with China when we can't -- when we can simultaneously.

The way this worked in The Cold War when our -- when it was the -- when it was the Washington-Moscow was a lot of times there were negotiations offline to work on cease fires or to reduce tensions that were then brought to the Security Council for endorsement, and I think that's the model that we need to be seeing and looking at how to work with the Security Council going forward, is have some of the middle powers work with Washington and Beijing to deescalate problems and then bring it to the Security Council, but do not expect the Security Council itself to solve the issues, merely to endorse something that's been decided offline.

MR. QUIRK: Okay, thanks so much, Jeffrey. With that I'd like to open it up to the other panelists. We very much welcome your thoughts on Jeffrey's paper, the two questions we talked about here in particular implications of China's increased engagement in the U.S. system and perhaps any thoughts as to how the United States can approach this.

MS. RICHARDSON: Patrick, can I step in and put a question to Jeff?

MR. QUIRK: Absolutely.

MS. RICHARDSON: Yes Jeff, it's hard to disagree with anything that you've just

sketched out. I guess I'd be curious for your thoughts about whether you see Chinese diplomats or the Chinese foreign ministry in some occasions or in some ways overstepping and creating a little bit of pushback? In the last year or so we've seen for example, a couple of states quietly disassociate themselves after the fact from Chinese government statements, occasions when some governments have found out that Chinese diplomats signed the other government up to their statements without asking them, leaving them in the position of having to be -- to ask to be removed from them. And I just wonder if or even look at for example, the -- the vote on most recent version of the Mutually Beneficial Cooperation Resolution of the Human Rights Council, which was a very different response this year than from a couple of years ago, and some of the governments voted against it this time. You really to fall into that category of G77 global south governments, and so I'd just be interested in your views about whether overly aggressive maneuvers like this might not be producing an outcome that Beijing doesn't want.

MR. FELTMAN: Sophie, I think you're -- I think you're absolutely right. And it's -- and I think that there's an opportunity for you know like-minded states to -- to come together and -- and push back at it. So I think there is -- there is rise and concern among some states about the aggressiveness, about the -- the -- you know the wolf diplomacy, etc. And in fact it was what the conversation I had that I described earlier was about -- was actually about was look, we're frustrated. We -- we want to be able to push back against this but our -- you know we, we here at the Mission to the United Nations are seeing what's happening, are seeing the -- the increasing aggressiveness of China trying to -- they can't really change the rules so much because the charter's so hard to amend, but to change the -- the sort of norms, to roll back that -- that post Cold War expansion of -- of the norms of agenda of the UN. But our capital is concerned about relations to Beijing and so we need -- we need to have the U.S. leading an effort to push back against this so that we can tell our capitals this is why we're not going to vote for China on this particular issue. But I think that you're absolutely right. I just don't think that we're exploiting that rising concern effectively.

MR. QUIRK: Okay, thanks for that, Jeffrey. Dave, Linsey, anything to add here? Implications of China's increased participation in the UN system for the two issues that you were writing on?

MR. SHULLMAN: Well, I -- I mean I -- I think that -- I know that Jeffrey's paper was focused primarily on the -- on the political and the security aspects at the UN and I know that Sophie may get into this a little bit in here remarks, but I mean obviously what we've seen in terms of China's effect on the -- the liberal order and on democracy generally come from the -- I've been looking at it a lot from the -- from the bottom up in individual countries, but from the so-called top down or from the international institution level. Clearly what's happening in terms of China's attempt to shape the narrative in -- in the UN and other multilateral institutions about issues such as human rights, about democracy, about -- about the norms that have underpinned the order since its founding, I think are -- are really problematic and something that need to be paid closer attention to. I think it -- it certainly has begun and -- and specifically in the development space and the way that China's trying to insert language about the Belt and Road Initiative and about its -- its vision of -- of authoritarian capitalism and the -- the lack of a focus on -- on you know, civil local rights, these sort of things are -- are critical in what's happening at the United Nations to the extent that there's a growing awareness of that and perhaps you know, in -- in the vein of what Jeffrey was discussing perhaps on that -- on that side, that there's a growing momentum between democratic countries to -- to pay more attention to that and to push back on it. I think that, that's -- that's a good thing.

MS. FORD: The only thing I'd add there, Patrick, that I, that I think is quite interesting is you know, there's -- there is a connection between what Jeff's talking about and -- and what I was talking about at the regional level. And you know, one thing we've seen is that China is actually trying to build greater connectivity between some of the regional institutions that it really invests in and the UN system because Chinese diplomats really contrast between what they call as like a "world order" that would be U.S., led and based on U.S. relationships and the UN system, which China tries to hold up as sort of the more legitimate you know, ordering institution within -- on the global stage. And so what China likes to do here is take some of the institutions that it's particularly invested in. Let's say for example the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, where a lot of the norms that China may have a very difficult time actually getting support for on the global level, it can do more successfully in institutions like the SCO. So for example, antiterrorism, where the SCO has really sort of embraced China's version of how it talks about

terrorists and extremists is quite different from the way that the United States would talk about it. It uses the SCO to build ties between the SCO and the UN system to then have the SCO also advocate at the global level for these kinds of norms as well. So that connectivity I think is an important part of sort of the overall Chinese approach.

MR. QUIRK: Excellent point, Lindsey. Thanks so much. To Dave's earlier point, shifting the conversation from top down international regional to bottom up, a key part of any discussion of China's engagement with norms is its relationship with democracy. In particular, how its trade practices and sharp power efforts might underline democratic practices in charter countries. For that, we're going to move to David Shullman who is Senior Advisor with the International Republican Institute and Adjunct Senior Fellow with the Center for a New American Security. So Dave, starting off, to what degree do you see the stresses facing democratic institutions in other countries as new and evolving or perhaps as a reflection of longstanding weaknesses that have not been addressed? And in assessing that question, how do you view the relative balance and causes between external factors such as China's influence and internal pressures that those governments and regimes are facing? Look forward to your thoughts.

MR. SHULLMAN: Thanks, Patrick. I think that's the exact right question. You know a lot of times when I and others are working on the question of to what extent is China having as some sort of a negative influence or impact on democracy in individual countries, the pushback is, well there's problems in these countries that are longstanding and -- and you know it's, it's more a kind of question of how are they going to handle this and is China just walking into a situation where democracy is autocratic? And the answer is absolutely. You know, in many -- in so many of these countries you have longstanding problems around corruption, certainly around the lack of transparency, a lack of a healthy media sector, no tradition really of investigative journalism, weak judiciary sectors and so a weak rule of law, and an inability to translate you know, electoral victories by democratic actors into actual effective legislating in government. So, you know, there's a lot of kind of a -- a lot of weakness there that China is - - is able to -- to exacerbate and -- and to take advantage of in addition to some of those newer problems that these democracies are facing in terms of you know what's happened with digital technology and how that's amplifying what's happening in the misinformation space in a lot of these countries. And so China

comes in and you know, perhaps is China or I should say Chinese government went into these in a lot of cases, state-owned enterprises and policy banks, are coming in and what they're doing is they're engaging with these corrupt officials. They're doing it in an environment where there's little transparency, there's little exposure of what China's doing. And then signing up to you know, having these country sign up to deals that not only do create levels of debt and dependence in a lot of these countries that are bad for these democracies long term financial solvency, but it also creates a situation where number one, you know, these are -- these are investment deals that are not conditioned on good governance. They're not conditioned on human rights, so that increases the ability of -- of the liberal leaders in these countries to ignore or even pay lip service rhetorically to some of the conditions that western governments and what western development agencies and multilateral banks have traditionally attached to some of these things. And then these deals and these -- these investment projects are -- are actually bolstering of short-term political fortunes of a lot of these liberal actors in the sense that they can point to or look at these buildings, look at these bridges that we're building, leaving aside you know what is the long-term impact for these countries financially. And that also helps -- helps bolster these officials.

And then, you know, when democratic processes do actually get in the way of what China's trying to achieve in a country, and it is usually you know, for China it's about its strategic interest. It's not that they're targeting individual countries to undermine their democracies. It's usually an effective bi-product of what China's doing. But when you do have elections, when you do have you know, exposure of what China's doing in the media or in the civil society sector, you do see China actually digging in to try to use what's global we're calling sharp power tools to try to manipulate political in the information environment to protect China's interest in these countries. So -- so it's -- it's taking advantage of the democracy gaps, the government creates and -- and using them to China's advantage.

And then the last thing I'll say on this is you know, what China's also doing is helping to ensure that allies, our liberal allies in countries who have reached a certain level of power and are serving China's interest, China is helping to ensure that those leaders stay in power, right, by sharing the training and the technology to better surveil and monitor their own population, to better control the internet, and to -- to effectively override the types of democratic checks that -- that might otherwise be functioning in a

system where you had a healthy society and a healthy media sector. So you know, I think just to, you know to come back to where I started, the balance here is -- is really unique in each country but it's always going to be the case that I think what's happening at the domestic level in terms of democratic vulnerabilities is critical, and then the extent to which China can take advantage of that is dependent on -- on whatever is the context that China's operating and to some extent as well the level of strategic interest that China has in that country, both economically or potentially for -- for military or other geostrategic purposes.

MS. MALONEY: Dave, it looks like we may have lost Patrick. So, oh he's back.

MR. QUIRK: Sorry about that, we had a power outage in our neighborhood. I think everyone is kind of logged into a livestream (laughter). Lindsey, where were you and I'll jump back in.

MS. FORD: Jump right back in. We hadn't gone on to the next question yet.

MR. QUIRK: Already, excellent. So moving from David's analogy and assessment of that particular threat to democracy, what should the solutions, Dave, how should policymakers grapple with this issue? What if anything can the United States as well as its allies in cooperation with those allies do to shore up countries that's vulnerable to Chinese reliant ones? And as the United States navigates this really thorny question, what new developments or challenges may arise from the ongoing COVID crisis? Looking forward to your thoughts.

MR. SHULLMAN: Yes, you know there -- there is a lot that the United States and in conjunction especially with its allies and partners can do. But the key is that we're going to have to go beyond rhetoric. We're going to have to go beyond stride and rhetoric about the -- the China problems for these countries to actually helping them build their resilience and provide solutions that -- that shore up their democracies. Right? So you know, you can think of this in kind of two main buckets. One is you know, the sort of democracy and governance assistance that the United States and -- and organizations like -- like mine, like the International Republican Institute has engaged in for a long time in terms of just bolstering the foundation of democracy in these countries, making sure there's a healthy civil society sector, making sure there's a healthy independent journalism and media base, making sure that there's healthy regulatory environment. These sorts of things are really critical so that when China -- when

countries engage with China as they will, as we should expect that they will and when they accept investment for infrastructure which they desperately need across the developing world, they can do so in a way that actually protects the democratic institution. So I think that -- that is one key point -- part of this and it's something that I think that lip service has been paid to, but I think you know actual resources need to be put behind us in really working with the democratic actors and partners in these countries.

And then, you know, to some degree also, we really need to be focusing on making sure that there's an understanding in these countries of how China and the Chinese communist party operates in particular. It's not just the just kind of level of resilience and democratic foundation. It's how can you expect that -- that entities tied to the Chinese government are going to come in and are going to combat some of these financing deals? How are they going to come in and try to shape the information space and potentially the political process in order to benefit China's interests so that these actors are ready to effectively protect their own house and make sure that -- make sure that their democracies are protected.

The other aspect I would say is also just U.S., the diplomatic engagement should be championing democratic actors on the ground in these countries and also, you know, holding (inaudible) to account and I think that's really important. I think we should be doing that in conjunction with our allies and partners as much as possible so it's not just again, the United States versus China in some great power competition, but that it's actually bolstering actors on the ground and then it's a broad based coalition of democratic countries supporting these types of actors.

You know, in terms of the impact of COVID, it's -- it's a really important question. I think you know we, as everyone I'm sure knows, we've already seen authoritarian actors in many of these countries around the world using COVID as an excuse for -- for authoritarian power grabs using it is an excuse to crack down on the media, on healthcare workers, on -- on anyone who doesn't approve of how they're -- they're handling these problems. I think you know, as you know the pandemic continues to affect these countries it's only going to get worse in the sense that you know these leaders are facing massive economic societal challenges and there's going to be the temptation to take the easy way out in terms of taking more of an authoritarian approach to some of these issues in terms of you know, if they're -- if they're feeling like they're -- they're getting demands from the populous that they cannot meet, it's

going to be increasingly enticing better monitor and surveil the population, better control messaging that's out there, to ensure that they can -- that they can stay in power and I think they're going to be taking lessons from -- from China on -- on how to do that. And I think they'll also be more incentivize to take investment -- again -- again more of these kind of deals from China again for short-term political gain to say, well we're having economic problems but look, we've got this investment here and this investment there, leaving aside what the actual terms of those deals are. So I think that's -- that's very problematic. And then lastly, I'll say you know, China has been pushing this narrative throughout the pandemic about its supposedly very effective managing of it at home, leaving aside the origins of the -- of the virus, leaving aside the fact that China has used drastic human rights abuses to achieve what it has at home, but kind of trying to contrast that with the failings of democracy such as the United States and some in Europe, and that messaging, I think, is -- is effective in some countries, but it's something that the United States and our allies and partners need to push back on and we need to be providing democratic solutions to these countries so that -- so that they can you know, use citizen-centered governance responses to COVID as opposed to grabbing onto the -- to the low hanging fruit that trends in a more local direction.

MR. QUIRK: Thanks for that, David. Recognizing I'm going to hear from Sophie soon on the human rights dimension of this conversation, I would love to open it up to the rest of the panelists to speak to the potential impact of China's actions on democratic practices and institutions, competition between political systems, the variant that China has been pushing as well as what's on offer from the West. So I'll pause there, would love to hear from Lindsey, Jeffrey, or -- or Sophie.

MS. FORD: Thanks, Patrick. So just to jump in, you know, I -- I really agree with a lot of what -- what Dave was saying. You know I would, I would I guess point again that I think there's a relationship between what David is talking about and -- and some of what I was saying earlier in terms of the security partnerships and institutions that we care about. In particular, the U.S. for a long time, I think the presumption was the United States and our allies, our alliance network is -- is powerful because it has been grounded for some time in similar values and norms. That is not always the case right now and China has really taken advantage of the fact that in some places with countries like Turkey, like the

Philippines, and mentioned before, the coup in Thailand that some of the erosion of the domestic good governance at home and erosion of democracy has actually allowed China to build up bilateral relationships that have an impact on weakening the overall security network that the United States really relies upon.

You can see that in NATO. It's hugely problematic. What do you do when you suddenly have a liberal ally in the middle of NATO? How does NATO continue to operate as effectively as it would have in the past? These are the kinds of things that I think the U.S. hasn't actually had to wrestle with in a while. But increasingly, we're going to have to think about that and -- and it's become a real -- it's become a real problem in some places. The other I think echoing again what I was saying earlier about tools really mattering, you know, China in a lot of cases is very successfully selling tools, whether that's facial recognition, surveillance equipment, and U.S. allies buy them as well and close U.S. security partners buy them as well because they can use them for all sorts of things that they'd really like to. It's easy to say that a tool is -- you know, has nothing to do with democracy or norm. But countries can use these in ways that actually erode domestically the base for civil societies, the space for the kinds of ecosystems that a democracy needs to flourish. And so I think you have to pay attention not simply to just is China going around trying to spread communism, but are they actually selling the kinds of tools that when you use those over time, make it more easy for authoritarian leaders and authoritarianism to take root in a country.

MR. QUIRK: Great. Thanks, Lindsey. Jeffrey, if I could put you up.

MR. FELTMAN: Yes.

MR. QUIRK: Perfect. Thank you.

MR. FELTMAN: The Chinese does like to talk about democracy in the UN when it talks about equality between states. So their -- their definition in the UN context is each member state is equal. Each member state has a vote. And again, as part of an overall Chinese narrative that you -- that you take the words that we use to describe how -- how individuals are affected by their governments, it's you know, as far as human rights, etc., and apply it to interstate situations. So you take -- you take the concept, but you try -- but you distort it to define relations between states rather than what the relations

are between the -- the governors and the government.

I will say that China has not objected or tried to interfere with the UN electoral assistance. You know, the design will provide technical assistance to try to build credibility for elections and that is because the election assistance the UN provides is only done with member state consent. Member states ask for UN to provide electoral assistance. The UN responds in kind, and that has not -- that fortunately, has not been an issue, but mostly in the broad diplomatic context within the United Nations, when China talks about democracy, we're talking about the relations between the states for the members of the United Nations.

MR. QUIRK: Please, Sophie.

MS. RICHARDSON: Yes, I just wanted to talk on a quick observation/question to -- to David as a fellow veteran of the world of election monitoring and electoral assistance. I find it fascinating that the Chinese government now provides electoral assistance to other governments (laughter), and Jeff's sort of picking up a bit on your point. And you know, you -- you really, I think have to wonder what expertise there is on offer there. Mostly it's in the provision of equipment up to and including ballot boxes. You know, but -- but David, love your thoughts on whether you think that's an effort to actually you know co-opt or undermine norms around the idea of electoral assistance to you know, pause at the idea that one doesn't have to be a democracy to provide assistance to a democratic process. Thoughts on what that -- what that's all about.

MR. SHULLMAN: Yes, that's -- that's something that I've watched closely as I know you have and it's -- it's fascinating to watch. I mean especially you know in a place like, you know, Cambodia where obviously China has done a lot to -- to at least facilitate the -- the slide in a wrong direction under -- under (inaudible). And -- and you know, as you're saying, kind of monitoring and then legitimizing elections saying yes, it's all -- it's all good here (laughter), this was a -- this was a fair and clean democratic election.

I think it's -- It's definitely worth watching right now. It seems kind of almost amusing, but it's not -- it's not -- this is -- this is serious and I think that the drive is to basically set up an equivalence between you know, China is just as -- has just as much right as the United States or any other kind of

international NGO to be going in and monitoring these processes and making sure that they're you know, free and fair without the assumption, the normative assumption that -- that it has to be done in a -- in a purely democratic fashion to be legitimate. And I think that it points in a direction to where not just in the election space, although I think you know for ORI and others, that's really critical. Just going forward, you know, we -- we've you know, we've looked a lot at what China's doing in terms of providing governance training to -- to countries and coming in and -- and -- you know kind of increasingly being willing to through its new development agency you know, kind of color, make it a little bit more grey, who has the legitimate right to be talking about governance and good governance.

I think we're going to be going more and more in the direction where on the ground in countries you'll have western or -- or democracy favoring organizations, pushing their versions of governance and China on its own coming in and saying, well we're doing the same, we're just doing it from a different vantage point. And it's going to be a brave new world in terms of both election monitoring and in terms of governance assistance because -- because I think China's becoming much more bold in that direction. And 10 years from now we may be looking at a very different situation on the ground in many of these countries.

MR. QUIRK: It's a great juncture to -- to move on. Linked to the topic of democracy is China's relationship of course with human rights, both domestically and abroad. For this, we'll shift this over to Sophie Richardson who is China director with Human Rights Watch. Sophie, really looking forward to your thoughts. To start, in your recent paper you wrote that, "One can no longer pretend that (inaudible)" and you mentioned several cases where pressure from Beijing has led to self-censorship and job losses. Looking ahead, do you see anything more serious coming, perhaps as an extension of the new national security law in Hong Kong that would represent an even greater threat to both Chinese citizens and non-Chinese citizens outside of its borders, arrests, detainments, and so forth?

MS. RICHARDSON: Patrick, thanks for the question and thanks for inviting me to join you. You know, in a way, I'm going to make your question even bleaker, (laughter) because it's not just what we're worried about in the future, it's what we're not paying attention -- not paying enough attention to right now. I think some people are aware that the new national security law imposed on Hong Kong at

the end of June by Beijing includes for example a clause saying that the law will be applied extraterritorially, meaning that anyone criticizing Beijing anywhere in the world could in theory be prosecuted under this law. There's -- there are relatively straightforward fixes to that, which is you know involves governments refusing to cooperate with that, some who have already suspended extradition treaties in their response, although that's not quite the same thing as saying they won't cooperate. But either that has you know, very real consequences for people around the world as they stop and think as 7 million people in Hong Kong now have to whether it's something they're going to say out loud or publish or wear or a sign they're going to hold might somehow you know, cause offence to Beijing.

But I think what's frightening about this is that you know, it's -- it's one of the problems that we can see, that we know about and to which there is a clear response. I think the -- the Chinese government's threats to the freedom of expression worldwide are extraordinary but on some level not very clearly seen. And I want to -- I want to give you a couple for -- for the purposes of our discussion this morning. In the category of what you can see, here's one example. Last week the UK Mission to the Human Rights Council in Geneva announced that it was going to be holding an event this week to talk about Hong Kong full disclosure. I am on it. Shortly after they announced the event and publicized it, the Chinese mission in Geneva issued a note verbale telling other governments they shouldn't go to or participate (laughter) in this event. That's only distributed to governments, but often one -- one gets to see these things. But you know, they are clearly, the Chinese government, is taking an anti-free speech position. It could go ahead and just organize its own side event. It is now also doing that. Being against the message that goes out to other governments is, stay away from that discussion, we'll be watching to see who participates. Beijing also introduced a new resolution at the Human Rights Council last week. This one is called "Putting People at the Center of Efforts in Promoting and Protecting Human Rights". Again, as Jeff alluded to earlier, this is another kind of document that slowly leaches out responsibility for states or role for independent civil society. (laughter) So you're not allowed to run for free expression in either of those two.

But you know, a couple of weeks ago we organized a sign-on statement for NGOs all over the world that was essentially calling for greater scrutiny of China at the Human Rights Council, and I

am very sad to have to recount to all of you that we had a number of civil society groups based either here in the U.S. or in Western Europe who were extremely keen to join, but were reluctant to do so even anonymously because they felt that somehow their participation would be known and that, that would be held against them particularly in their pursuit of accreditation status for the UN. We're all watching how universities around the world, not only are grappling with China related free speech issues on their campuses, for example, when students have held pro Hong Kong democracy protests and they are attacked or shut down by other voices. We've watched dozens of universities in those circumstances stop publicly at saying we respect everybody's rights to free speech, but not taking the -- the additional steps of making it clear what that really means, that those kinds of discussions are precisely what should happen on campuses that people can have robust debate, but that they may not threaten one another physically, that classroom conversations can't be reported to constellates. You know, these are real problems for the universities who are now also because of the pandemic, grappling with the challenges of holding classes for example via Zoom with students who are essentially stuck in the mainland who might otherwise be on campuses elsewhere and trying to figure out what to say to those students about accessing material or class discussions that might be considered sensitive by local authorities. That's a very real issue for them. Some of the have taken I think reasonably responsible and progressive steps, but we now live in an age when ivy league universities in the United States are having to come up with a solution that involves students submitting papers anonymously or coded by number to try to minimize the opportunity that the students who wrote them who are sitting in China might get into trouble for writing on those topics.

You know, think about how a university, any one single university grapples with that problem. And then down towards you know, on the issues that I think are really not on people's radar screens, are the kinds of not just constant threats to public or you know vocal memories of (inaudible) who are critical of the Chinese government, but we've done work looking at whether people who immigrated from China, say to Canada or Australia, you know, which are not particularly politically engaged, but whether they feel sufficiently confident having obtained these other citizenships making full use of those rights to criticize the Chinese government. And many of them tell us that they are not. You

know, that's a pretty powerful state of affairs, that somebody who's even gone through the processes of obtaining these rights in a place where they should be defended, aren't. (laughter) That even having those rights better protected doesn't necessarily give people the confidence to act on them. And I think they're a whole range of steps that states need to take. You know, at the multilateral level or at the UN in particular, I think if a group of rights respecting governments don't come together soon to provide a credible longstanding counterweight to what the Chinese government is trying to accomplish, the system that we all rely on around the world for our human rights to be protected is going to be that much weaker. But I also feel there's a whole range of steps individual governments need to take to contemplate these kinds of threats to freedom of expression inside their own countries. You know, it's just not -- it's not an issue I think governments have really had to grapple with and it requires a very different kind of response.

MR. QUIRK: Thanks, Sophie. You promised a bleak picture and you delivered a bleak picture. Picking up on your comment with regard to engagement on this issue in the UN system, given the discrepancies with the values championed by the UN Human Rights Council and the practices by some of its members like China, to what extent do you think this institution can be reformed? And how, if at all do you think the U.S. rejoining the council can provide more balanced platform to oppose erosion of human rights by China and other liberal actors?

MS. RICHARDSON: Well, on the first point I think there are -- you know there are some changes that an organization like Human Rights Watch would want to see, for example, to make the elections more competitive. You know, often states are elected through closed slates or they aren't really in any way obliged to campaign, you know, but in a way either that really stacks up pledges against what other states are expected to do. But I think a lot of the tools are there to make it an effective institution if member states actually uphold, you know the obligations and the expectations, which you know clearly China is not.

As for the U.S., look, it's -- you know, we will always want truly rights respecting governments that have international rights respecting agendas, to be on the council. I think Human Rights Watch has a lot of concerns about Trump administration's track record on human rights. So I -- what I want people to do is not necessarily assume that we think any U.S. administration is going to by

definition, going to be an asset. With that said, I think it has been harder for you know, the real like-minded rights respecting governments on the council to collectively push back against Beijing's pressure. I think we have seen more of that around a couple of recent developments, resolutions, those kinds of initiatives. You know, but China will run to rejoin the council this Fall and it will almost certainly be reelected and I think that is just going to put more pressure on the government's ability to care, not just about immediate issues, but on the health of the system as a whole to work hard and work together and set themselves a very ambitious agenda.

MR. QUIRK: Thanks, Sophie. Before we shift to the questions that are flowing in by Twitter from the audience, I wanted to open it back up one last time to the panelists. Any thoughts on Sophie's remarks and the question more broadly of China's engagement and use of the human rights both domestically and abroad?

MR. SHULLMAN: Sophie, thanks for that -- for that bleak picture that you -- that you painted. Very deep insights. And I'm just reminded hearing you talk about what's been happening in Geneva lately with the UK proposal for a discussion on -- on Hong Kong, another UK initiative back in the Fall, which I'm -- back in October when the UK was trying to -- working with the general assembly was developing a letter criticizing the Chinese treatment of the Uyghurs. And the UK managed to get 22 member states to sign on. China then had an alternative letter that praised China's human rights record, China's human rights practices, China's perspective on human rights, and they got 54 member states to sign -- to sign its letter.

MS. RICHARDSON: Yes, look, that's what China does, but my first response to that is to suggest people look at the list of signatories on the Chinese government's initiative. You know when -- when your cheerleaders include North Korea and Zimbabwe and Venezuela, it's -- it's a little hard to take seriously the integrity of a counter proposal. I think it's been particularly disappointing to see episodes for example like Pakistan on behalf of the OIC praising the Chinese government's response or policies against leaders. You know, but -- but the fact remains these are the institutions that exist. We're not going to stop encouraging governments to do what they can to do the right thing.

I also think as we started to talk about a little bit earlier, there's a little bit less support

there than the Chinese government wants you to believe. You know if you look at some of the states that have been alienated by diplomatic overreach, ones who are pushing back for principle reasons, you know, there -- there's some different constituencies of governments. There's some that are very angry about what's happened in Hong Kong. There's some that are horrified by what's happened to Uyghurs. There's some who are angry about Chinese government censorship in the early days of the coronavirus pandemic. And some of that is translating into pushback at this institution. But you know, when -- when -- when frustrated or -- or beleaguered diplomats express some frustration to us, one of the points that we try to make back to them is that you know, they have access to call for scrutiny and accountability of Chinese government authorities that most people in China won't ever have, and that their -- their duty bound to make use of the opportunity to push for better rights protections.

MR. FELTMAN: One additional thought on this and perhaps it's obvious, but you know, obviously these international institutions, the UN that we're talking about are made up of hundreds of individual countries and if in those individual countries China is able to exhibit an increasingly level of influence and leverage through either fully (inaudible) through shaping information stakes through any number of actors, that's going to create a situation where ultimately when the cost benefit comes to these countries to make their vote or decide who they're going to side with or be public about -- what they're going to be public about, they're going to decide that they don't want -- that it's not worth the risk to -- to come out against -- against China and make these issues that Sophie's talking about.

MS. RICHARDSON: Yes, that's true. I will just say that sometimes we do see states take I think gutsy positions that you know other interests might suggest a different course of action. For example, one of the governments that's now joined up to being critical of Beijing's policies towards (inaudible) is Albania, you know a country that could go in a very different direction. You know, one of the governments that voted for -- sorry, one of the governments that voted against mutually beneficial cooperation resolution with the Marshall Islands. You know, but I think it's also illustrative to think about you know other major international human rights crises that the Council has addressed where there has been a lot of enthusiasm. You know, think for example about the Gambia taking Myanmar to the International Court of Justice over treatment of Rohingya. Flip that around, I think an important taboo got

broken at the last Human Rights Council session when member states came together to demand significantly heightened HRC scrutiny of the police violence and abuses against the racist police abuse here in the U.S., you know, an issue that Human Rights Watch certainly supported.

Look at all of the governments that were happy to be supportive of you know, that kind of scrutiny of a P5 member state. That breaks an important taboo, but I also think it makes it that much more important to hold other P5 member states like China accountable too for serious human rights violations.

MR. QUIRK: Okay, thanks again, Sophie, for those remarks. So we're about an hour in and during that period lots of questions coming in by Twitter from the audience. I'd like to pose a few to the panelists here starting with Ateya Shah (phonetic) who's an attorney with Barnes and Thornburg. He asks to the panel, does China have more to gain or lose from the preservation of international institutions? Welcome thoughts from the four panelists.

MS. RICHARDSON: I'm happy to start that one off if you want.

MR. QUIRK: Yes, please.

MS. RICHARDSON: I think the Chinese government believes it has a lot to gain from remaking certain kinds of international institutions in the way it wants and a certain amount to lose for failing to do that. And by that I really mean some of the pathologies that we've been talking about here where you know, human rights scrutiny at least from the Chinese government's perspective should be more a matter of state to state dialogue, not of binging consequential legal action or an active role for international or even local civil society initiatives. I think that's what really fuels a fair amount of the Chinese government's conduct at least the Human Rights Council, but I'm sure my co-panelists have views about other kinds of institutions.

MR. FELTMAN: Patrick, I'll jump in now, echoing what -- what Sophie said. I -- in terms of the United Nations and New York, the UN is a safe space for China. The UN is hierarchical. The UN at least in terms of the -- the secretariat, the staff, the Secretary General, tend to be differential to great powers. It's safe space. So I think that China wants to, as we've discussed, wants to -- would like to substitute the -- the -- the liberal operating system of the UN for -- for its own, for saying we're reflecting

its own, but in general, I think that they -- they like the universality. They feel confident that even -- even with the rising concerns we've talked about by some member states, that their relation with the G77 Nonaligned Movement gives them an advantage in an organization that has universal membership. It gives them some advantages. At the same time, you know, they do hedge their best of it in terms of the existing multilateral system. You know, you -- you set up the SCO, you set up the -- the Asia infrastructure investment bank, so you -- you maintain -- China maintains its role to expand its assertiveness in the existing system, while also creating some parallel institutions with specific purposes. And frankly, this isn't -- this is a lesson they've taken from us. After World War II, we set up a layered multilateral system with various components to do different things, NATO for security, the UN for this, etc. So I -- so in a way, China is imitating us at how we dealt with the -- with the -- with multilaterals after World War II, but of course doing it with a far different operating system inside.

MS. FORD: Yes, I completely agree with what Jeff just said and -- and for me, I think this is one of the main points I was trying to make in my paper is when you look at what China's doing institutionally, it's -- it's actually kind of similar to the way that the U.S. has done things, which is -- is layering together smaller types of institutional cooperation whereas the Chinese can have more influence and they can really sort of build deep cooperation with specific countries as well as within broader institutions where sometimes I think it's been frustrating for the Chinese that they haven't actually been able to reshape those organizations as effectively as they might want to sometimes. You know, they can use those smaller mechanisms to reshape the bigger organism -- organization. So it's neither -- it's neither an either/or. It's not an in or out when it comes to the international system. It's both/and. And that's really difficult I think for the United States because the relationship between some the parallel institutions and the existing UN system is reinforcing in some cases, and the Chinese try to encourage that.

MR. SHULLMAN: Yes, I'll just chime in and say I agree with everything that's said and I think Lindsey put it really well there. I think it would be much easier if China was revolutionary in the sense that they were trying to brawl up all of the international institutions that are existing right now. It's much harder to deal with the China that comes in and wants to revise and in many cases wants to keep

the form of many of these institutions but effectively change their function and change the very nature of them and neuter the values oriented aspects and not necessarily replace those values with Chinese communist party values or set up little mini Chinese communist parties everywhere, but effectively knock off liberal values is kind of the inner-pinning of many of these institutions. And for China, you know, these -- China is trying, as we've discussed earlier, to put itself out there as the responsible risen great power that democratization of international relations and China's rise that China dreamed as meeting common destiny is going to benefit all. And so if they can repurpose a lot of these institutions to serve those goals and to shape this vision of China as leading on climate change, on leading on a lot of really critical transnational issues, that's what they're going to do while still, you know, as we've discussed, kind of quietly -- somewhat quietly and gradually just eviscerating the devalues aspects that -- that are inherent to many of these institutions.

MR. QUIRK: Thanks for answering Tayes' (phonetic) question. Another question came in from Robert at Kiwi Self-Identified Consultants. He writes, "Looking ahead to the election, how might a Biden administration go about pushing China with adherence to human rights?" And if I could add to the question, how might the second Trump term, what would that look like in terms of pushing China to adhere to human rights norms, I think he -- and laws he might be referring to?

MS. RICHARDSON: Shall I kick us off?

MR. QUIRK: Please.

MS. RICHARDSON: (laughter) Sure. Well, foresight being the -- the flawed exercise that it is, I would say to him that we would see the Trump administration continue down the path of using primarily targeted sanctions either against individuals against Chinese government agencies or against companies in response to serious human rights violations. We've now seen Magnitsky, the Global Magnitsky Act to the addition of companies and the entire Center on Public Security Bureau and (inaudible) to the entity twist. This seems to be the -- the preferred tool that this administration has used, and I assume we would see more of that in the future.

I -- I have no predictions about whether a second Trump administration would want to try to run for Human Rights Council. I assume a Biden administration would do that. You know, I assume

we would see it perhaps use some of those same kinds of tactics, meaning the sanctions or additions to the entities list, but I think they would probably think, hope, there would perhaps be a strong emphasis on working with other likeminded governments, not just at the Human Rights Council, but on other kinds of initiatives to promote or protect human rights defenders to push back on the kinds of threats to the freedom of expression inside countries that we see somewhere both multilateral and through heightened domestic attention to some of these kinds of issues, but I'd love to know what Lindsey and Jeff and David think, too.

MR. SHULLMAN: I'll jump in here and say, I mean, I know this is by now it's oft repeated, but I think probably a Biden administration and potentially a reelected Trump administration, I think there's a recognition increasingly of the importance of working with partners and allies on these issues. And you know, I think that there's some momentum in a positive direction where we see our European friends now awakening to the fact that we're dealing with more of what could be termed a -- a systemic challenge from China, a values challenge, a challenge to universal human rights, a -- a real concern not just, you know, I think we've talked about how China's wolf worrier approach and disinformation around COVID I think really woke up a lot of people in Europe and -- and in other countries. But I think also what's been happening with the crackdown in Hong Kong, what's been increasingly aware -- increasing awareness of what's happening in Shanghai has really started to -- to turn the tide down. And so I think that there's a lot of -- a lot of room to run in terms of working with our -- our allies and partners either in some sort of more formalized summit or concert of democracies, which is something that Vice President Biden has discussed, or just other ways in which there's a more concerted united approach to pushing China on some of these rights issues that I think is -- is inevitably going to be much more effective, not just because you have more countries involved, but because it's more clearly not just about a U.S. trying to keep China down by focusing on what it's doing at home. This is not just a kind of purely realist great power competition. This is really about what a risen China under the Chinese communist party means for the world and the fact that what it's been doing at home for a very long time is now increasing -- it's not increasingly clear what a big problem that is for the rest of the world. So I think that -- that there's a lot of coordination and a lot of joint efforts that can be undertaken in the next four

years by whoever is president working with our partners.

MR. QUIRK: Great. Thanks, Dave and Sophie. With the few minutes left, one question that came from Si Yang (phonetic), Voice of America for Jeffrey. They write, "Can Mr. Feltman speak of China's increasing role in UN peacekeeping forces? What is the prime driver for China's approach towards UN peacekeeping from rejection to joining the forces and fighting for the lead role in such missions?" So, over to you, Jeffrey.

MR. FELTMAN: I think as people know, China has more blue helmets, more Chinese nationals have blue helmets than all the other P5 combined. So about 2500 Chinese nationals serving in -- in UN peacekeeping forces, mostly in Africa, a few in Lebanon. This is part of China's increasing role in the peace and security agenda in the United Nations. China traditionally focused on the economic and social affairs part of the UN, but under President Xi Jinping there are much more -- they -- they have expanded their == their work on peace and security. They have -- they're basically doing what other P5 members have done in the past, blocking Secretary General appointments, insisting on a Chinese national for a special envoy here or deputy special representative there. This is very much like the other P5. Peacekeeping however, they have more -- they have more blue helmets than the others. Combined, as I said, they're in Africa. Part of this was -- they -- they used the Chinese peacekeeping as part of their explanation for their port in Djibouti, you know that this is -- that -- that their port, their military assets in Djibouti are -- are designed to support their peacekeeping forces. Of course, their special envoy for the Great Lakes. They're -- the UN special envoy for the Chinese National, the first Chinese National to take the UN special envoy job as the special envoy to the Great Lakes Region in Africa. I see this therefore, as part of -- part of two elements. One, the -- the increasing focus by China on the peace and security agenda, the heart of the UN, the irreducible purpose of the UN. And two, China's overall interest in -- in markets and relations in Africa.

MS. RICHARDSON: Patrick, can I just add a quick point. I know the question was -- was directed to Jeff, but I do think it's worth noting that the Chinese government has also tried a couple of times now in -- in increasing its support for peacekeeping operations to cut the human rights component from those operations. So it's -- you know, there's -- there's a -- there's an additional agenda there, too,

and further limiting you know what's been a reasonably important kind of human rights monitoring in that -
- in that part of the UN.

MR. QUIRK: That's a great point, Sophie, thank you. So with that we are at time. It's been a really insightful and stimulating discussion. Sophie, on our collective behalf, thank you so much to Suzanne Maloney and her Global China team. Thank you all out there for joining us today in this live screening event. Take care everyone and have a great day.

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Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia

Commission No. 351998

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