

Speech at World Summit Combating & Preventing FOH

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Thank you for having me speak at this important world summit. In this session, I'll speak from the angle of the largest victim group of forced organ harvesting – The Falun Gong.

Over the last 15 years, convincing evidence has led to the conclusion that the peaceful meditation group Falun Gong is the primary target group of the Chinese Communist regime in a non-consensual organ transplant industry in Mainland China. This conclusion is also affirmed by an Independent Tribunal into Forced Organ Harvesting from Prisoners of Conscience in China in 2020. It has been widely accepted that this atrocity is a crime against humanity.

But I argue it is a genocide which involved both physical and non-physical destruction of the Falun Gong group. I and my co-authors called it a cold genocide which is hidden and lingers for over two decades without much notice. It is a genocide by attrition which is a slow process of annihilation that reflects the unfolding phenomenon of mass killing of a protected group under disguise – the public don't see an immediate unleashing of violent death.

The word “genocide” was coined by Raphael Lemkin in 1944 who defined genocide as “a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of the essential foundations of the life of national groups with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves”. His definition actually went beyond bodily destruction which the recent scholarship of cultural genocide refers to.

Lemkin's inclusion of membership in a social or religious collectivity indicates the existence of a common conscience, signified by a shared way of thinking. It's more than just a group entity. In cultural genocide, the destruction of a common conscience is the true essence and definition of a group. In the case of the Falun Gong, the target is the mind or spiritual being of the group that the Chinese Communist regime wants to destroy.

A defining feature under **Article II** of the 1948 Genocide Convention is the intent to destroy, in whole or in part of one of the four defined groups (national, ethnical, racial or religious). Falun Gong (aka Falun Dafa) is a peaceful spiritual practice that espouses the principles of Truthfulness, Compassion and Tolerance, with five sets of gentle qigong exercises. The spiritual discipline fits into the Western paradigm of religion, so the Western legal framework considers Falun Gong a protected religious group.

The popularity and exponential growth of the Falun Gong in mid-90s in China was seen as posing a moral and cultural challenge to the Chinese Communist Party's Marxist-based Lennin-style ideology, with numbers surpassing Chinese Communist Party membership. When former CCP leader Jiang Zemin officially launched the eradication campaign against the Falun Gong in July 1999, many orders were given verbally

through large-scale Party meetings, or through directives to different levels of the government ordering a comprehensive clean up of the Falun Gong, e.g. from “Falun Gong needs to be disappeared in three months,” “defame their reputations, bankrupt them financially and destroy them physically,” to the present day “zero-out” campaigns in China are all directed at the annihilation of the group.

According to the jurisprudence of the international criminal tribunals, intent to destroy a group in whole or in part could also be inferred from factors such as the scale and nature of the atrocities committed, the number of group members affected, the use of derogatory language towards members of the targeted group, or the systematic targeting of victims – all apply to the eradication campaign against the Falun Gong in China.

Begun with ferocity not seen since the Cultural Revolution, the intense initial CCP campaign against the Falun Gong did not fully succeed in neutralizing the group due to the resilience and resistance of the group. The CCP then gave way to an extended phase through coerced recantation and physical destruction.

The intent to destroy Falun Gong casts itself into a bifurcation – one is the ideology, the other is the people who abide by that ideology. So according to Lemkin’s framework, the dissolution of the people group (the Falun Gong) is defined by this group’s specific core beliefs, commitments, and practices, carried out through a physical and non-physical means. The Forced Organ Harvesting is the physical aspect of it, with the profit motive attached to it. However, the CCP’s ultimate destruction of the Falun Gong is not the body per se, but the collective human conscience of “truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance”, the ideology and culture represented by the way of life and identity that are the true object for eradication.

The Falun Dafa Info Center suggested that at least several million Falun Gong adherents have been detained since 1999. Ethan Gutmann’s survey-based investigation found that close to half a million to a million Falun Gong practitioners were detained in re-education through labour camps (commonly known as forced labour camps) at any given time in mid-2000. In 2020, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the persecution continues unabated in China.

Falun Gong practitioners are usually sent by a 610 Office to forced labour facilities or brainwashing centres (aka legal education centres) extrajudicially for so called “educational transformation”, but in fact what they go through are physical and psychological torture in these state-run institutions.

The persecutory mechanism is structured and integrated with the government and Communist Party hierarchies. The 610 office is a Gestapo extra-legal entity that implements orders from the ruling Communist party in all levels of government, and have the authority to send Falun Gong practitioners to detention and brainwashing without needing a trial. It is also an integral part of a chain of command that link with the

forced organ harvesting operation in China (take a look at this intricate relationship in this **command chart** from the China Organ Harvest Research Center).

The detained Falun Gong victims perform long hours of forced labour in extremely poor conditions. Not only without pay, they typically work 16 hours/day, oftentimes with poisonous raw materials without any protection.

By the time these victims are at the breaking point of exhaustion, they are coerced to sign an undertaking to give up their spiritual practice. Victims are deprived sleep and subjected to ideological conversion by being constantly bombarded with anti-Falun Gong propaganda films or literature that defames and demonizes Falun Gong. Trained psychologists participated in designing programs to break the wills of practitioners in order to recant their beliefs.

Quotas are set for conversion rates in these detention camps. If they don't recant, they'll be subjected to torture and inhumane treatments. Over the fifteen years of research on forced organ harvesting, it has been found that Falun Gong practitioners are being targeted for specific bodily examinations such as blood sampling and EKG etc. Medical professionals confirm that these procedures are to screen candidates for FOH to feed the lucrative transplant industry in China. In my recent research data from three countries on the torture experienced by refugees who practice Falun Gong in China, about 75% have been subjected to these selective screening procedures for FOH when they're detained in China.

For those subjected to FOH or being tortured to death, it's a bodily destruction, period. For those who signed the pledge, it is spiritual and social death. Claudia Card described social death as a loss of social vitality which is loss of identity, and thereby of the meaning for one's existence.

In my research data, the Falun Gong respondents told me about the void they experienced after they signed the recantation. They said they felt a major part of their being is like dead.

Although they could be sent home, it does not mean they are set free. They are constantly monitored by street level CCP organizations and harassed by police anytime, no matter at home or at work. The CCP's systematic propaganda efforts in demonization and dehumanization of the Falun Gong subjected the victims to hate, and isolation from their families, neighbours, and trusted friends and colleagues.

Social death and spiritual death, unlike physical massacre, are silent and bloodless, but they achieve a similar, profound effect in the pursuit of eradication. They are central to the understanding of the evil of genocide.

The above-mentioned physical or non-physical means of destruction lead to the eventual annihilation of the Falun Gong victim group under a cover up, unnoticeable, and normalized way without the public's awareness of an ongoing genocide.

The propaganda strategies ensure mainstream society both ignores and rejects the existence of this group like a tumour or virus that they should get rid of. The result of such normalization is inattention from the public in China and the international community. It creates an environment in which a cold genocide, a genocide by attrition that can thrive and be sustained for over twenty years.

Let's stop here for a second: why does the CCP deploy so much of its economic, political, and cultural resources to undermine a peaceful spiritual group's foundations of existence, to bring about the eventual destruction of the group? Consider this postulation from the angle of genocide: the Falun Gong offers an alternative centre of meaning which is perceived as undermining the cultural primacy and hence the hegemonic political power and legitimacy of the ruling Communist Party in China.

I quote Daniel Feierstein, he said: "genocidal destruction is the transformation of the victims into nothing and the survivors into nobodies." (2011) "Genocidal social practice is intended to destroy social relations based on autonomy and cooperation by killing a significant portion of society and then attempts to create new social relations and identity models through terror."

From the trajectory of what the CCP has done to its citizens since its rule in China in 1949, it's not difficult to discern that the CCP has been engaging in a genocidal project (no matter against Tibetans, Uyghurs, unregistered Christians, or Falun Gong). It will continue until every citizen is subsumed under the hegemony of the ruling Communist ideology that dominate the social fabric of society, ultimately the minds of Chinese people.

Such an attempt of subjugation is also brought into the world under a more subtle path of long-term expansion and domination e.g. via their belt and road initiatives.

Conclusion

Mixed with the financial motives, the FOH has evolved into a final solution to get rid of the ideological Falun Gong problem. The eradication campaign against the Falun Gong is an egregious case of state-sanctioned atrocity that involves arbitrary detention, harrowing torture, extrajudicial killings, and forced organ harvesting under cover up.

We are facing a totalitarian regime that tries to achieve annihilation of a victim group over time under a cloak of inattention, ignorance, or apathy. It is not a matter for just the victim groups, or the Chinese people, but also to the global citizens.

A crime of this extent, in the scope of a genocide, puts humankind at a critical position. We can't just discuss it as an academic interest without taking meaningful actions. This universal declaration is an important step of action and more need to follow.

Note: all references are in the earlier version.