



ANNUAL REPORT

ADVANCING RIGHTS
THROUGH DIALOGUE

2023

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A thank you to our contractors and volunteers who support Dui Hua's work.

“

I promised I would use all the capital I gained by helping save China's access to the US market to press for the release of political prisoners. I promised that, and I have done my best to fulfill it.

”

- JOHN KAMM
FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
THE DUI HUA FOUNDATION

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Twenty-five years ago, when I joined like-minded colleagues to form Dui Hua, we saw an opportunity for the business community to create better conditions for human rights dialogues with China. A key, perhaps unspoken, ethos of Dui Hua's approach is that human rights are too important to be left to governments alone.

Advocating for human rights is never a straightforward endeavor, particularly in the current era of US-China ties. In January 2023, tensions between the two countries were exacerbated by a high-altitude balloon from China drifting into American airspace, triggering a period of hostility and disengagement.

Despite this, Chinese President Xi Jinping travelled to the APEC summit in November and met with US President Joe Biden in Dui Hua's home city of San Francisco. The two leaders signaled they would manage their nation's differences when they announced areas of cooperation.

For us, 2023 began on a promising note when we announced the release of Hong Kong-based publisher Yao Wentian (姚文田). Yao was a special case for me because his son, Yao Yongzhan (姚勇战), was a student leader in the 1989 protests, and the first political prisoner I asked the Chinese government about.

In September, we announced a very different and tragic result: the Uyghur scholar Rahile Dawut had been given a life sentence, the first time her sentence had been confirmed by a Chinese source. Our press statement attracted widespread attention from the media and from the US State Department, which condemned the ruling.

Fraught relations impact more than just diplomacy. **In recent years, access to crucial information across many areas of government has been curtailed in China.** In last year's annual report, I wrote about diminishing judicial transparency, a point we raised alongside the treatment of female religious prisoners in submissions to the United Nations in 2023.

Notwithstanding ever-growing restrictions to data gathering, we added **1,100 names** to our database of political and religious prisoners and submitted **31 prisoner lists**. As with past years, we remember that every name on those lists is an individual who faces coercive measures for exercising universally acknowledged rights to free, peaceful, and non-violent expression.

As we mark our 25th anniversary, we want to express our thanks for your support. 2024 has already brought some significant achievements, including the submission of our 500th prisoner list and the release of US citizen Pastor David Lin. Yet the most significant realization remains this: In our different capacities we all can do something to facilitate a world in which dissent is expressed and respected, and that we speak to those who disagree with us as equals across a table, not separated by prison bars.



A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Kamm". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John Kamm
Executive Director
The Dui Hua Foundation

OUR MISSION

Dui Hua 对话 Means Dialogue

We are a nonprofit humanitarian organization seeking clemency and better treatment for at-risk detainees through the promotion of universally recognized human rights, in well-informed, mutually respectful dialogue with China.

Our work rests on the premise that positive change is realized through constructive relationships and exchange.

We focus on:

- Political and Religious Prisoners
- Juvenile Justice
- Women in Prison
- Issues in Criminal Justice

Dui Hua is the only human rights group that conducts direct dialogue on human rights in China with the Chinese government, the US government, and like-minded governments worldwide.

OUR APPROACH



ADVOCACY through respectful, well-informed dialogue with China, both directly and via the UN and government bodies.



RESEARCH through internet and library resources to uncover relevant cases, regulations, and trends.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT to apprise the global community of research findings and practical experience.



PUBLICATIONS on prisoner cases and analysis of developments in criminal justice and human rights.



EXPERT EXCHANGE among criminal justice practitioners and experts, including China's Supreme People's Court.

PRISONER ADVOCACY

In April 1999, a small group of business leaders formed The Dui Hua Foundation. It began as a way to continue John Kamm's Prisoner Information Project, which Kamm launched after the 1989 Tiananmen protests to encourage clemency for protestors. When Kamm testified to Congress in support of Most Favored Nation trade status for China, he pledged to leverage any political capital he gained to advocate for political and religious prisoners in China.

Guided by the belief that it is a humanitarian act to monitor a foreign government's population of political and religious prisoners and to let that government know that you are doing so, Dui Hua's requests for information of at-risk detainees in China has prompted clemency and better treatment for many detainees.

To conduct this unique form of human rights diplomacy, Dui Hua must have an accurate account of people believed to be imprisoned for the non-violent expression of their political and religious beliefs. This is done through open-source research, the results of which Dui Hua enters into the **Political Prisoner Database (PPDB)**. Using the PPDB, Dui Hua compiles lists of at-risk detainees and submits them to the Chinese government.

Whenever Dui Hua submits a list, it is inquiring after a prisoner and engaging in the cultural equivalent of seeking clemency on the prisoner's behalf.

Political Prisoner Database (PPDB)

- One of the largest databases of Chinese political and religious prisoners
- Information on people imprisoned for exercising universally recognized rights of free speech and association
- Mostly from open-source materials

Names in the database:

- Political and religious prisoners incarcerated in China since 1980
- Foreign nationals including US citizens undergoing coercive measures
- Ethnic minorities
- Petitioners

Data used to:

- Analyze trends in clampdowns on dissent
- Document the treatment of prisoners in the criminal justice system
- Inform dialogue with government officials inside and outside China
- Consult with human rights advocates
- Prepare prisoner lists for raising names and advocating for clemency

PRISONER INFORMATION

Dui Hua's PPDB is one of the world's largest databases of Chinese political and religious prisoners, and Dui Hua remains the only non-governmental organization able to submit prisoner lists directly to the Chinese government, and to receive written responses.

At the end of 2023, the PPDB had 48,699 prisoner profiles, an increase of roughly 2.5 percent from 2022. The PPDB's Active Registry, comprised of detainees currently undergoing coercive measures, contained records on 7,371 individuals.

Access to the PPDB is granted to governments and organizations that support our work.

Although judicial transparency continues to deteriorate, **Dui Hua's research continues to uncover new cases from legal and government sources**, including information related to sentencing and clemency not known to the public.

OUR 2023 NUMBERS



1,181

Names added to the PPDB



89

Names raised with the Chinese government



30

Lists submitted to the Chinese government



22

Prisoners about whom responses were received



16

Acts of clemency learned of during the year

DEATH PENALTY

China remains the world's top executioner, but transparency around China's use of the death penalty continues to decline.

Dui Hua's **Death Penalty Log (DPL)** tracks China's use of the death penalty, and Dui Hua's estimates of China's death sentences and executions are among the most reliable figures available.

At the end of 2023, the DPL had records on more than 6,000 death sentences and more than **3,000 executions** in China since 2007.

Dui Hua added **313 new entries to the DPL** in 2023, learned about **60 death sentence judgments** and **242 executions, 133 of which were carried out during 2023**.



CONSULTATION FOR AT-RISK DETAINEES

Dui Hua conducts consultations with at-risk individuals facing coercive measures such as detention, imprisonment, residential surveillance at a designated location, and exit bans. These consultations may involve the detainees themselves or their families and supporters. From assisting families with legal inquiries to working with the United Nations (UN) Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, consultations are an important part of Dui Hua's advocacy.

In 2023, Dui Hua conducted 76 consultations with 24 detainees, their families, or supporters. Of these, five were first-time consultations. An increasing focus of Dui Hua's interventions is foreign nationals, US citizens, and permanent residents subjected to coercive measures.

2023 Consultation Numbers

76 Consultations with 24 detainees,
their families, or supporters

(Including **5** first-time consultations)

Cumulative figures (April 1999-December 2023)

Total number of records in the PPDB: 48,699

Number of Records in Active Registry*: 7,803

Total number of lists submitted: 494

Total number of prisoner names submitted (unique records): 2,208

Chinese government has provided 282 responses covering 1,000+ prisoners

Acts of clemency** for prisoners on Dui Hua lists: 455

* Active: Individuals placed under coercive measures

** Clemency include sentence reduction, parole/medical parole, bail, lifting of exit bans, and better treatment in prison

Outreach

Dui Hua reached new audiences through a mix of in-person and online events in 2023:

- “Losing Sleep Over China? Perspectives from the Expert”, University Club of San Francisco.
- “HCSF Salon Talk: Human Rights in China Discussion with John Kamm”, Harvard Club of San Francisco.
- “Brehm Boucher Speaker Series”, University of New Haven.

Publications and Media

Our work received substantial media attention. Dui Hua press releases were cited by the Associated Press, Reuters, BBC, and *New York Times*, among others. Dui Hua’s press statement on Rahile Dawut led to public statements from Human Rights Watch, the Campaign for Uyghurs, World Uyghur Conference, and the US Department of State.

In total, we released 45 publications, exploring current events, insights from the past, and trends in US-China relations. We transitioned to a bimonthly newsletter, started a podcast series called *Encounters with China*, and made *John Kamm Remembers* a standalone publication. Dui Hua’s websites -- duihua.org, duihuahrjournal.org, and GirlsJustice.org -- attracted 27,654 visitors and 66,724 page views. Read our publications [here](#).



Above: John Kamm’s talk: “Losing Sleep Over China? Perspectives from the Expert”, at the University Club of San Francisco on January 12, 2023.

Publications in 2023 included:

- 6 Digests
- 6 podcast episodes
- 6 John Kamm Remembers
- 11 Human Rights Journals
- 2 UN submissions
- 2 press statements

Work cited in more than 200 news articles.

PROMOTING DIALOGUE AND EXCHANGE

Special Consultative Status

Dui Hua is one of the few overseas NGOs focused on human rights in China that has **Special Consultative Status** with the UN Economic and Social Council. We were granted this status in 2005 and have used it effectively. We have made submissions to all of China's Universal Periodic Reviews (UPR), and when appropriate, used our status to comment on the human rights record of the United States.

In 2023, we made two submissions to UN bodies. First, a written submission to The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)'s review of China's record, which largely focused on female prisoners charged under Article 300 ("organizing or using a cult to undermine implementation of the law"). Dui Hua also made an oral intervention during the informal public meeting with NGOs at China's CEDAW review at the UN on May 8.

Second, in July, Dui Hua finalized its submission for China's fourth UPR, held in 2024. Dui Hua called attention to China's declining judicial transparency, noting that much of the positive changes to transparency noted in Dui Hua's 2018 submission had either been negated or eliminated. It also made a recommendation on the death penalty.

During 2023, Dui Hua remained in frequent communication with Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, providing information and advice to rapporteurs and treaty bodies, including those planning visits to China.



Above: 197th Meeting, 85th Session, CEDAW on May 8, 2023.

On Juvenile Justice

On April 13, 2023, Dui Hua hosted “Topics in Juvenile Justice: A Sino-American Exchange,” an online expert exchange with the Supreme People’s Court (SPC) of China.

The event brought together legal experts from the United States and China who gave presentations on juvenile justice laws in their respective countries. This was the ninth exchange with the SPC dating back to 2008.



Above: Panelists of the “Topics in Juvenile Justice Reform” webinar on April 13, 2023.

“

Since 2008, we have maintained close exchanges in the field of juvenile justice... which served as a crucial platform where the courts of both countries shared their experience and learned from each other, and the judges from the two countries established and enhanced their friendship.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the judges who have been supporting the project and the friends of The Dui Hua Foundation.

”

– Dr. Jiang Jihai
Deputy Director-General of Research
Office of Supreme People’s Court of China

Statement of Activities

(Year ended December 31, 2023)

The following statement is summarized from the financial statements audited by Lindquist, von Husen & Joyce LLP, San Francisco, California. All amounts are in US dollars.

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
Support & revenue:			
Government grants	296,328	-	296,328
Individuals & corporate contributions	184,729	-	184,729
Program service fees	20,000	-	20,000
Other income	35,457	-	35,457
Foreign currency exchange net realized loss	(2,801)	-	(2,801)
Foreign currency exchange net unrealized gain	82	-	82
Net assets released from restrictions	249,044	(249,044)	-
	782,839	(249,044)	533,795
Expenses:			
Program services	721,037	-	721,037
Supporting services			
Management	120,357	-	120,357
Fundraising	61,745	-	61,745
	903,139	-	903,139
Change in net assets	(120,300)	(249,044)	(369,344)
Net assets, start of year	885,041	408,102	1,293,143
Net assets, end of year	\$764,741	\$159,058	\$923,799

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With our deepest gratitude...

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OFFICE

450 Sutter Street, Suite 900
San Francisco, CA 94108
USA

T: (415) 986-0536

F: (415) 986-0579

CONTACT

www.duihua.org



DuiHuaFoundation



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