

Background: a front with “Chinese characteristics”

"...the united front, armed struggle, and Party building are the three 'magic weapons' of the Chinese Communist Party..."

Mao Zedong (1939) ¹.

«The water flows uninterruptedly and reaches the goal:
the image of the Abyssal reiterated.

I Ching. The Book of Changes. (*circa* 1122–221 BC)

In December 1921, the Executive Committee of the Communist International (Komintern) originally formulated the policy of the united front. Its origins date back to the era of the Russian Revolution led by Lenin. This policy was based on the union of workers' organizations at the highest possible level to confront capitalism. In its formulation, it guaranteed the participants in the revolution autonomy and freedom in the formulation of their positions ².

In 1922, the leadership of the Communist Party of China (CPC) did not agree with this policy. Its intention was to act independently as a party, organizing and educating the masses in preparation for the proletariat's seizure of power. Despite this, the Second Congress of the CPC met on July 1, 1922, where both the constitution and the Komintern membership were approved, all without Mao Zedong's participation. Years later, he would say, "I forgot the name of the venue" ³.

Sponsored by the USSR, and despite Mao's reluctance, the First United Front was formed in 1924 between the CCP and its rival, the Kuomintang (KMT), led by Chiang Kai-shek. Three years later, this alliance abruptly ended with the KMT's massive attack on the CCP, which led to the communist retreat known as the "Long March." In 1937, the Second United Front was announced to combat the Japanese invasion. This Second Front

¹QIUSHI: "Understand the significance of the united front in the new era", March 18, 2015, available at: http://en.qsttheory.cn/2025-03/19/c_1079147.htm. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

²RIDELL, John: "The origins of the united front policy", April 5, 2011, available at: <https://isi.org.uk/the-origins-of-the-united-front-policy/>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

³DÍAZ VÁZQUEZ, Julio A. "China: Mao's Model vs. the Soviet Model", available at: https://www.utadeo.edu.co/sites/tadeo/files/collections/documents/field_attached_file/china_modelo_de_mao_versus_modelo_sovietico.pdf. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

allowed the CCP to reorganize its political and military structures ⁴.

On January 5, 1939, the CCP leadership decided to organize the "Central United Front Department." On March 20 of that year, it issued the "Instructions on United Front Work," urging all organizational levels to establish the United Front Department. In March 1943, the CCP established that the Organization Committee of the Party Central Committee, under the Central Political Bureau and the Secretariat, should supervise the work of the Central United Front Work Department ⁵.

At the end of 1946, the CCP Central Committee promoted the work of the "Urban Work Department" to study and manage areas formerly under KMT control. On September 24 and 26, 1948, the CCP Central Committee decided to "rename the Central Urban Work Department the Central United Front Work Department, to administer work in KMT-controlled areas, work on national ethnic minorities, regime united front work, work on overseas Chinese, and liaison work with brother parties in the East." For the CCP Central Committee, the basic functions of the United Front Work Department (UFWD) were to "understand the situation, master policies, adjust relations, and organize personnel"⁶.

At this point, it might not be out of place to outline a series of concepts:

The United Front is a coalition of groups and individuals whose efforts converge with the goals of the CCP.

"United Front Work" is the work carried out by the CCP to strengthen and expand the United Front.

The "United Front Work Department" is a section directly under the CPC Central Committee that implements and coordinates the work of the United Front⁷.

Thus, between 1949 (the founding of the People's Republic of China, PRC) and 1956, the DTFU focused its efforts on integrating the few wealthy people who had not left the country and the urban middle classes into the new system, in an attempt to minimize the

⁴COLE, Allan B. "The United Front in the New China," September 1951, available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/1030250?read-now=1&seq=7#page_scan_tab_contents. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

⁵NEWS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CHINA, available at <http://cpc.people.com.cn/BIG5/64114/75372/5130905.html>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

⁶*Op.cit*

⁷ JOSKE, Alex: "The party speaks for you", Australian Strategic Policy Institute, July 9, 2020, available at: <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/party-speaks-you>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

loss of talent that plagued the PRC. Beginning in 1978, a similar impulse motivated the DTFU to attract into its orbit those sectors with economic and/or intellectual capital that survived Mao's purges, in order to revitalize the PRC's economy. Even before these purges, efforts were made to influence the Chinese diaspora, taking advantage of its connections to provide markets for goods and seek the economic investment that Chinese industry needed.⁸

Following Deng Xiaoping's rise to power in 1978, the DTFU experienced a sustained revitalization. Its efforts were directed toward seeking convergence with the CCP's interests among new interest groups stemming from the reforms undertaken by the Chinese economy. This segment included new entrepreneurs, lawyers, and employees of foreign companies. Thus, the DTFU collaborates with the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPC), which, like the National People's Congress (NPC), meets annually. Although the CPC makes recommendations to the CCP, it lacks executive power⁹.

Currently, the DTFU is located in the CCP Secretariat, headed by Cai Qi, a member of the CCP Politburo¹⁰. Therefore, the DTFU does not *strictly speaking work* for the government, but rather directly serves the CCP, a party that, in the words of renowned sinologist Xulio Ríos: "...has a pronouncedly instrumental vision of the State (...) the truth is that (...) operates as an authentic State within the State (...). It is the CCP that controls all institutions and organizations, that guides and directs the State, defines the profile and installs its candidates in key positions, adopts the fundamental political decisions of each State organ and sets the strategies, whether temporary or systemic. This leading role at all levels of the CCP is enshrined in the current Constitution”¹¹.

The UFWD under the leadership of Xi Jinping.

In November 2012, at the 18th Congress of the CCP, Xi Jinping was re-elected to the

⁸ GROOT, Gerry: “The Rise and Rise of the United Front Work Department under Xi”, April 24, 2018, available at url: <https://jamestown.org/program/the-rise-and-rise-of-the-united-front-work-department-under-xi/>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

⁹ *Op.cit.*

¹⁰ CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE: “China Primer: China's Political System”, July 1, 2024, available at: https://www.everycrsreport.com/files/2024-07-01_IF12505_b6c236a2b37935a73cb9058c1e513d798348a90c.pdf. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

¹¹ RÍOS, Xulio: “Modern China. A quick immersion” Tibidabo editions, Barcelona (2016).

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Politburo Standing Committee, succeeding Hu Jintao as General Secretary of the CCP. He was inaugurated as President of the People's Republic of China on March 14, 2013¹².

Although Xi Jinping's direct involvement is unclear, a confidential internal CCP circular, colloquially known as "Document No. 9," was reportedly circulated beginning in July 2012, the ninth to be issued that year. Beginning in April 2013, it was circulated more widely within the CCP under the title "Communiqué on the Current State of the Ideological Sphere"¹³.

The document¹⁴, which develops seven “Notable Problems Related to the Current State of the Ideological Sphere”¹⁵ and puts forward four proposals for “work in the ideological sphere”¹⁶, includes in its introduction a series of initiatives to “improve the quality of life of the population” such as “spreading thought in the cultural sphere as the most important political task; (...) expanding and strengthening positive propaganda; strengthening guidance on deep-rooted problems; strengthening the management of ideological fronts; promoting the unification of thought...” Among other issues, it criticizes the attacks on the leaders of the CCP “for placing themselves above the constitution, stating that China “has a constitution, but not a constitutional government. Some still use the phrase “constitutional dream” to distort the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation”¹⁷.

This last expression was used by Xi Jinping himself on June 6, 2014, at a Conference of Overseas Chinese Associations in Beijing: "As long as overseas Chinese are united, they can play an irreplaceable role in realizing the Chinese Dream of National Rejuvenation,

¹²BRITANICCA: “Xi Jinping,” available at <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Xi-Jinping>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

¹³CARROLL, John: “Xi Jinping Seen Through the Roadmap of 'Document 9'” JAPAN FORWARD, June 23, 2024, available at <https://japan-forward.com/xi-jinping-seen-through-the-roadmap-of-document-9/>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

¹⁴CHINA FILE: “Document 9: A ChinaFile Translation” November 8, 2013, available at: <https://www.chinafile.com/document-9-chinafile-translation>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

¹⁵These would be: 1. Promotion of Western constitutional democracy: an attempt to undermine the current leadership and governing system of socialism with Chinese characteristics; 2. Promoting “universal values” in an attempt to weaken the theoretical foundations of the Party’s leadership; 3. Promoting civil society in an attempt to dismantle the social base of the ruling party; 4. Promoting neoliberalism, attempting to change China’s basic economic system; 5. Promoting the Western idea of journalism, challenging the Chinese principle that the media and publishing system should be subject to Party discipline; 6. Promoting historical nihilism, attempting to undermine the history of the CCP and New China; 7. Questioning Reform and Opening Up and the socialist character of socialism with Chinese characteristics; *Op. cit.*

¹⁶This would involve: 1. Strengthening leadership in the ideological sphere; 2. Guiding our Party members and leaders to distinguish between true and false theories; 3. Unwavering adherence to the principle of Party control over the media; 4. Consciously strengthening management of the ideological battlefield. *Op. cit.*

¹⁷CHINA FILE.

as they are patriotic and rich in capital, talent, resources, and business connections”¹⁸.

Xi made the same point in September 2014, during the 65th anniversary of the CPC Central Committee. In his speech, he referred to the united front as a "magic weapon" for the "great rejuvenation of the Chinese people"¹⁹.

In December 2014, as part of Xi Jinping's anti-corruption campaign, the director of the UFWD, Ling Jihua, was removed from his post. He was later sentenced to life imprisonment for corruption, abuse of power, and illegally obtaining state secrets. This, coupled with criticism of the DTFU's work, led Xi Jinping to implement a series of reforms²⁰.

Although the UFWD had held 20 meetings between 1995 and 2006, the CCP convened its first National United Front Work Conference in nine years from May 18 to 20, 2015, under the title "CPC Central Committee Conference on United Front Work." The mention of the "Central Committee" gave the meeting an important status, placing it on a par with other central-level CCP work conferences ²¹.

In his speech, Xi Jinping said, “Throughout our history, the Party has always given the United Front and its work a prominent place in the work of the entire Party. [...] Currently, our situation and our mission have undergone significant changes. The greater the change, the greater the need to develop the United Front in the ‘new situation’. [...] United front work is the work of the entire Party.” Xi also highlighted three new approaches to “united front work”: Chinese students abroad, representative individuals in the new media, and the young generation of entrepreneurs and businessmen ²².

At the end of July 2015, the CCP announced the creation of a "Short Leading Group" (SLP), ²³an important and significant element of Chinese foreign policy, on "United Front

¹⁸ GROOT, Gerry: “The United Front in an Age of Shared Destiny” THE CHINA STORY, available at <https://www.thechinastory.org/yearbooks/yearbook-2014/forum-begging-to-differ/the-united-front-in-an-age-of-shared-destiny/>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

¹⁹ ANGLIVIEL DE LA BEAUMELLE, Marcel: “The United Front Work Department: “Magic Weapon” at Home and Abroad”, July 6, 2017, available at <https://jamestown.org/program/united-front-work-department-magic-weapon-home-abroad/>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

²⁰ MATTIS, Peter and JOSKE, Alex: “The Third Magic Weapon: Reforming China's United Front”, WAR ON THE ROCKS, June 24, 2019, available at: <https://warontherocks.com/2019/06/the-third-magic-weapon-reforming-chinas-united-front/>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

²¹GROOT, Gerry: “The Expansion of the United Front Under Xi Jinping”, THE CHINA STORY available at <https://www.thechinastory.org/yearbooks/yearbook-2015/forum-ascent/the-expansion-of-the-united-front-under-xi-jinping/>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

²²ANGLIVIEL DE LA BEAUMELLE, Marcel.

²³Leading Small Groups bring together various government and CCP officials to implement their interests and opinions.

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Work.” This decision, coupled with the fact that the then (since 2014) head of the SLP was Politburo member Sun Chunlan, one of the highest-ranking women in the CCP, is a good example of the importance Xi Jinping attaches to these issues. At that time, some 40,000 new cadres were reported to have joined the SLP.²⁴

On January 16, 2025, a National Conference was held in Beijing, attended by leaders of the UFWD from across the PRC. Wang Huning²⁵, a member of the Politburo Standing Committee of the CPC Central Committee and Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference²⁶, delivered a speech.

Wang Huning highlighted “General Secretary Xi Jinping’s important idea on doing good work in the Party’s united front in the new era.” He also pointed out a series of necessary issues such as: “Building a solid sense of community for the Chinese nation”; “systematically promoting the sinicization of religions in China”; “strengthening the ideological and political guidance of non-Party intellectuals and people from new social strata, and encouraging them to contribute to China’s modernization”; “strengthening the great unity of Chinese sons and daughters at home and abroad and giving full play to the role of the united front in Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan and abroad to win popular support”; and finally “strengthening the Party’s overall leadership in united front work to ensure the full implementation and effective execution of the decisions and resolutions of the Communist Party of China Central Committee”²⁷.

Their main function is ministerial coordination and consensus-building between the government, party, and People's Liberation Army (PLA) systems. Their formulation and work are derived from Chapter IX of the Constitution of the Communist Party of China. Thomas, Alvin: “Leading Small Groups. Formulation of Foreign Policy in China,” June 14, 2022, available at: <https://orcasia.org/article/203/the-importance-of-leading-small-groups>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

²⁴ GROOT, Gerry.

²⁵ Wang Huning (1955) was one of the few young Chinese chosen to pursue university studies during the “Cultural Revolution” (1966-1976). In 1995, he joined the headquarters of the CCP. Wang stands out for his remarkable rise despite never having led a province or city and for advising three successive Chinese leaders over three decades. He enjoys the complete trust of Xi Jinping, with their relationship being described as that of “the country’s most powerful leader in decades, and (...) the most influential ideological advisor to the ruling Communist Party in decades. BUCKLEY, Chris: “The Man Who Shaped China’s Strongman Rule Has a New Job: Winning Taiwan”, THE NEW YORK TIMES, October 26, 2024, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/10/26/world/asia/china-xi-jinping-adviser-taiwan.html>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

²⁶ THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE: “Wang Huning highlights role of united front in Chinese modernization”, January 16, 2025, available at: http://en.cppcc.gov.cn/2025-01/16/c_1064980.htm. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

²⁷ NEW ERA OUTLOOK: “The National United Front Work Ministerial Conference was held in Beijing”, January 16, 2025, available at: https://www.lwxsd.com/pcen/info_view.php?tab=mynews&VID=61238. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

Structure of the UFWD

In 2018, the CPC Central Committee released a document entitled " Plan for Deepening the Reform of Party and State Organisms ²⁸. "

The document is aimed at “resolutely upholding the authority and centralized unified leadership of the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at the core” and urges, among other things, “ modernizing our national governance structure (...) with a focus on promoting the optimization, coordination and efficient utilization of the functions of Party and state agencies (...) improving our efficiency and effectiveness, and actively building a functioning system of Party and state agencies with perfected systems, scientific standards and high operational efficiency, so as to provide a powerful systemic guarantee for a decisive victory in establishing a prosperous society in all respects, embarking on our new journey of building a modernized socialist country and realizing the Chinese Dream of great national rejuvenation” ²⁹.

In that same document, the UFWD is assigned three new areas of responsibility. being structured as follows:

The UFWD Central depends on ³⁰:

General Office (in charge of administrative work)

Political Research Office (political theory research and propaganda coordination).

Retired cadre office.

Party Committee (ideological and disciplinary issues).

Twelve other divisions:

1.- Minority Party Work Office (supervises the eight "democratic parties" ³¹of the PRC.

²⁸ CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES: “Publication of the Full Text of the Plan for Deepening the Reform of Party and State Agencies”, available at: <https://interpret.csis.org/translations/publication-of-the-full-text-of-the-plan-for-deepening-the-reform-of-party-and-state-agencies/> . Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

²⁹ *Op.cit.*

³⁰US-CHINA ECONOMIC AND SECURITY REVIEW COMMISSION: “China's Overseas United Front Work: Background and Implications for the United States” August 24, 2018, available at: <https://www.uscc.gov/research/chinas-overseas-united-front-work-background-and-implications-united-states> . Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

³¹Namely: the Kuomintang Revolutionary Committee of China, the China Democratic League, the China National Democratic Construction Association, the China Association for Promoting Democracy, the China Peasants’ and Workers’ Democratic Party, the China Zhi Gong Party, the Jiusan Society, and the Taiwan League for Democratic Self-Government. CGTN: “Is There Only One Party in China? What Are the Other Eight Political Parties?”, available at:

- 2.-Office of Work for Ethnic-Religious Affairs.
- 3.-United Front Work Office in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan.
- 4.-Office of Executives.
- 5.-Economic Office (related to the less developed regions of the PRC)
- 6.-Office of Work of Non-Affiliated Intellectuals.
- 7.-Tibet Labor Office.
- 8.- Labor Office of Representatives of the New Social Class (Chinese middle class).
- 9.- Xinjiang Labor Office.
- 10.- National Commission on Ethnic Affairs (established in 2018). It is responsible, among other issues, for the "Working with ethnic minorities, coordinating and handling important issues in working with ethnic minorities, and properly deploying minority cadres."³²
- 11- State Administration for Religious Affairs (established in 2018) It is responsible for, among other things, "fully implementing the Party's fundamental guidelines on religious matters, adhering to the sinicization of China's religions (...) and actively guiding religions in adapting to socialist society ³³. "
- 12.- Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (established in 2018) It is responsible for, among other things, "unified leadership over overseas united front work, management of administrative affairs of overseas Chinese affairs (...) supervision and investigation of the status of overseas Chinese and returned overseas Chinese at home and abroad (...) guidance and promotion of overseas Chinese propaganda, cultural exchanges and Chinese education work. ³⁴"

In April 2025, the structure of the UFWD underwent a leadership change. In an unprecedented decision within the CCP, Li Ganjie and Shi Taifeng, both members of the Politburo but not the Standing Committee, swapped positions. Li Ganjie became head of

<https://espanol.cgtn.com/n/2022-04-02/GcJFIA/cuales-son-otros-ocho-partidos-politicos/index.html> . Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

³² CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES.

³³ *Op.cit.*

³⁴ *Op.cit.*

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the UFWD, and Shi Taifeng, previously in charge of the UFWD, was placed at the head of the CCP's Organization Department ³⁵.

The UFWD AS "GRAY RHINOS" ³⁶.

The financing of a winter amusement park in the far northeast of the PRC, about 160 kilometers from Vladivostok, the purchase of 24,000 tea sets emblazoned with the phrase "Ethnic unity enters the home" in Sichuan, or the installation of surveillance cameras in 85 places of worship in Shandong are good examples of the very diverse activity that the UFWD carries out inside the PRC. In the words of Neil Thomas of the Institute's Center for China Analysis: "It [the UFWD] is primarily a domestic apparatus whose tentacles extend beyond China's borders"³⁷.

Beyond the Great Wall, the shadow of UFWD is also long, with an important role played by the "overseas Chinese," ³⁸whose number is around 50 to 60 million (according to 2023 data from Statista and Pew Research, adjusted for 2025) ³⁹, many of whom, largely thanks to the CCP, are endowed with a strong nationalist sentiment ⁴⁰.

Without being exhaustive, the following examples are valid:

In 2017, reports emerged indicating that various influence tactics were being used in Australia, including Chinese students reporting on their fellow Chinese residents who oppose the CCP and donating funds to Australian organizations. Specifically, Australian

³⁵According to Deng Yuwen, former deputy editor of Study Times, the official newspaper of the Central Party School, the switch may have been made in preparation for the 21st Party Congress, scheduled for 2027, since, "From Xi's perspective, assigning a trusted ally in charge of this process could be a strategic move to ensure stability and control." THE SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST: "In a first for China's Communist Party, Politburo members Li Ganjie and Shi Taifeng swap jobs" April 2, 2025, available at: <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3304844/first-chinas-communist-party-politburo-members-li-ganjie-and-shi-taifeng-swap-jobs>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

³⁶The "gray rhino" metaphor, which refers to a highly probable but ignored threat, was coined by Michele Wucker, author of "The Gray Rhino: How to Recognize and Act on the Obvious Dangers We Ignore," St Martin's Press, April 2016.

³⁷BATKE Jessica: "Holding Sway. China's United Front Work Department, Known for Its Influence Operations Abroad, Is Even Busier at Home", CHINAFILE, September 28, 2023, available at: <https://www.chinafile.com/reporting-opinion/features/united-front-work-department-domestic>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

³⁸In the specific case of Spain (2024 data), the figure stands at 226,718 people (219,929 in 2023). INE: "Annual Population Census. January 1, 2024" available at <https://www.ine.es/dyns/Prensa/CENSO2024.htm>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

³⁹POPULATION INFORMATION: "What is the population of Chinese people around the world?", April 8, 2025, available at: <https://danso.info/en/How-many-overseas-Chinese-are-there-in-the-world/>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

⁴⁰SIERRA ORTIZ, Ander: "Transnational Dynamics of the Chinese Diaspora and Its Role in the "Great Rejuvenation of the Nation." IEEE Opinion Paper 84/2022, available at: https://www.ieee.es/Galerias/fichero/docs_opinion/2022/DIEEEO84_2022_ANDSIE_Dinamicas.pdf. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

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citizen Chau Chak Wing and Australian resident Huang Xiangmo, both property developers and billionaires, allegedly provided significant amounts of money to Australian political parties and universities ⁴¹.

According to government officials, the PRC is reportedly conducting a larger-scale interference campaign in Australia than in any other country, signaling the CCP's interest in infiltrating Australian political and foreign affairs circles to gain more influence with its growing Chinese population ⁴².

In October 2024, an investigation involving journalists from several countries revealed the existence in Germany of "a network of alleged Chinese 'agents of influence'" comprised of 47 individuals. These individuals had high-level political connections and held important positions in business, culture, at companies such as Beiersdorf and Evonik, and at German universities. According to the investigation, "all the 'agents of influence' are contacts of the so-called United Front, a branch of the Chinese Communist Party" ⁴³.

In December 2024, numerous media outlets reported that British Prince Andrew had contacts with a businessman from the People's Republic of China known only as "H6." In March 2023, then-Home Secretary Suella Braverman banned him from entering the United Kingdom, a ruling upheld by a court in December 2024 ⁴⁴.

The judgment states that a letter sent to "H6" from the Ministry of the Interior (July 19, 2023) states: "We have reason to believe that you are engaging in, or have previously engaged in, covert and deceptive activities on behalf of the United Front Work Department (UFWD), a branch of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) state apparatus"⁴⁵.

⁴¹ CAVE, Damien: "Are Australia's Politics Too Easy to Corrupt?", THE NEW YORK TIMES, June 7, 2017, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/07/world/australia/china-foreign-donations-tim-winton-melbourne.html>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

⁴²THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD: "China's Operation Australia: payments, power and politicians", 2017, available at <https://www.smh.com.au/interactive/2017/chinas-operation-australia/>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

⁴³ NTV: "Chinesisches Netzwerk in Deutschland aufgedeckt", October 4, 2024, available at: <https://www.ntv.de/politik/Chinesisches-Netzwerk-in-Deutschland-aufgedeckt-article25269628.html>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

⁴⁴COUGHLAN, Sean; CASCIANI, Dominic; MAO Frances: "Prince Andrew says he 'ceased all contact' with alleged Chinese spy". BBC, 14 December 2024, available at: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cvg6n6yq6nyo>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

⁴⁵ SPECIAL IMMIGRATION APPEALS COMMISSION: "Appeal No: SC/205/2023, 12 December 2024, available at: <https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/H6-v-SSHD-OPEN-Judgment-final-for-hand-down-FINAL.pdf>. Last consultation date: 10/03/25.

Conclusions

Even at the risk of treading on the obvious, it wouldn't hurt to remember that the CCP is much more than a typical political party. Its decisions, and governmental decisions are merely an extension of those decisions, directly influence hundreds of millions of Chinese citizens and indirectly, to a greater or lesser extent and with varying degrees of intensity, a very large percentage of the world's population.

Given that, in the CCP, the pragmatism of the "C" in "Chinese" seems to outweigh the "C" in "communist," it could be inferred that the UFWD plays an important role in both its activities and decision-making. An indication of this may be that, since the beginning of his term, Xi Jinping, the now all-powerful leader of the PRC, has increased both the DFUT's areas of responsibility and its endogenous and exogenous capabilities.

At this point, the PRC diaspora plays an important role as a first-class source of human intelligence. This fact is reinforced by the fact that among expatriates, there seems to be a desire to participate in "the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the nation." This feeling may be genuine or induced by having personal expectations and/or family ties in mainland China.

Externally, the work of the UFWD enjoys certain advantages over conventional government institutions focused on intelligence/influence. While the latter have a rigid and more or less identifiable structure, the UFWD could be considered a kind of "fluid" configuration. Its members are not Chinese government officials, like intelligence operatives, for example, although, *strictly speaking*, anyone can be.

Interference/influence? Patriotism? Possibly all at once. What seems certain is that for decades the UFWD has demonstrated, like Deng's cat, that it "catches mice." For this reason, a dispassionately objective observation of its conduct can draw important lessons that can eventually be replicated to at least try to stem these currents.

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1st Corporal GC