

INVOLUNTARY RETURNS

A new report from Safeguard Defenders exposes China's massive, growing and global covert Sky Net operation to force 'fugitives' overseas back home, often via illegal means and in violation of national sovereignty of target countries.

After Xi Jinping came to power, the CCP claimed some 18,000 officials had fled the country. Since then, Chinese asylum seekers has gone up by some 700%. **Sky Net** and sub-operation **Fox Hunt** were launched with the aim of 'repatriating and returning' Chinese overseas to face trial, and plays a key role in Xi Jinping's signature "anti-corruption" campaign. Today, Chinese government data shows that the number of successful *returns* surpassed 10,000 by end of 2021, from over 120 countries.

China uses numerous methods to secure targets' return. Formal judicial proceedings such as extraditions are rare. Instead, they rely primarily on three methods: 1) going after family members of the target still in China; 2) sending police and agents **overseas on illegal missions** to intimidate the target to return; and 3) use of direct **kidnappings**. This report maps 80 cases of attempted *involuntary* return actions of the three types across four continents, about half of which were successful.

- ⊗ The report exposes an **official legal interpretation** that outlines the use of such return methods - including **direct references to the use of entrapment and kidnappings overseas**.
- ⊗ Operational command of Sky Net was taken over by China's new **National Supervision Commission** (NSC) in 2018 - despite it not being a judicial organ.
- ⊗ Covert operations, including kidnappings, take place even in countries that have signed extradition treaties with China.
- ⊗ Sky Net and Fox Hunt continues despite the pandemic and is set to greatly increase in scope.

Take action

- ⊗ **Raise Parliamentary questions** to understand if and to what extent foreign governments are aware of the practice and monitor its use within their jurisdiction.
- ⊗ **Suspend existing extradition treaties** in response to such clear violation of international norms and national sovereignty of target countries.
- ⊗ Evaluate and **terminate any official judicial cooperation with the NSC**, a body credibly accused of crimes against humanity for its mass-use of arbitrary detention and disappearances.
- ⊗ **Institute adequate reporting mechanisms** for the exiled community to monitor illegal practices.



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