

Forced Organ Harvesting in China and its Global Implications

Short Report By
Doctors Against Forced Organ Harvesting

May 2020



Foreword

In 1984 the People's Republic of China has adopted provisions that permitted the harvesting of organs from executed prisoners. This allowed China to perform transplantations in absence of a public, voluntary organ donation program. China has always been among those countries with the lowest organ donation rates per million population in the world.

Without any changes in the 1984 law and without implementation of a public organ donation program, the annual numbers of organ transplantation in China increased by at least 300% in a few years after 1999. In absence of any rational explanation for the sudden abundance of organs and the unprecedented short wait times of less than 14 days for a transplant, the question of where those organs were coming from emerged in the early years of the 21st century.

In 2006 several independent witnesses and an early investigation indicated that those transplant organs that ignited the transplant boom in China were harvested from prisoners of conscience, primarily Falun Gong practitioners, victimized by the state-organized, systematic forced organ harvesting on a scale that is unprecedented in history. Falun Gong, also

known as Falun Dafa, is a traditional spiritual practice whose adherents cultivate their character according to Truthfulness, Compassion, and Forbearance.

In July 1999, Jiang Zemin, then leader of the atheistic Chinese Communist Party (CCP), outlawed and vilified this peaceful spiritual practice, and subjected Falun Dafa practitioners to a brutal, nationwide persecution that has lasted more than two decades. The underlying crimes against humanity, including continuous religious persecution and unabated forced organ harvesting, have escalated over the past 20 years under an insufficient global response and been likened to a Cold Genocide against Falun Gong.

The world was revolted by the medical experimentations in Nazi concentration camps, but has never before witnessed a government systematically killing detainees for organs, monetizing the bodies of prisoners to fuel and sustain a profitable nationwide transplant business. In addition to elaborating on the evidence, this report will serve as a call for action against the systematic, forced organ harvesting of Falun Gong practitioners and all prisoners of conscience in China.

DAFOH is a medical ethics advocacy association registered in the United States. The mission of DAFOH includes providing the medical community and public with objective findings of forced organ harvesting, which is understood as organ procurement without informed consent against the will of the organ donor under circumstances where organ harvesting results in the organ donor's death.

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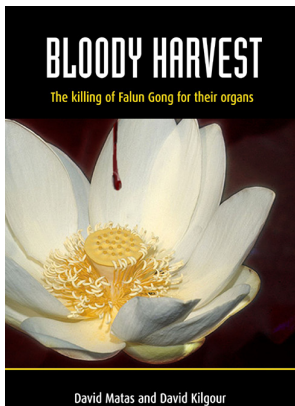
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1

History of Forced Organ Harvesting in China

In 1984, the People's Republic of China passed provisions that permitted the harvesting of organs from executed prisoners. Harvesting of organs from convicted prisoners, deprived of their freedom to make informed decisions, has been condemned by the World Medical Association (WMA) and violates the World Health Organization (WHO) Guiding Principles on organ donation and transplantation. Until 2013, China did not have a public organ donation program and organs for transplantation were procured primarily from prisoners.



The 2006 publication "Bloody Harvest" by David Kilgour and David Matas, first derailed allegations of forced organ harvesting in China.

In 2006, allegations first broke the news that China was harvesting organs not just from criminals convicted to death but also from prisoners of conscience detained for their spiritual beliefs, political, or other dissenting thoughts. The wife of a Chinese surgeon came to public in March 2006 stating that her husband told her that he had removed corneas from 2,000 detained Falun Gong practitioners. Her claim was corroborated by two other sources, a journalist and an anonymous veteran military doctor.

The allegations led to an initial investigation by David Kilgour and David Matas in June 2006. They conducted phone calls to Chinese hospitals pretending to need an organ transplant. A significant number of doctors contacted in the hospitals admitted over the phone that they use "fresh" organs from Falun Gong practitioners.



International investigators who have written independent findings on Organ Harvesting crimes in China since 2006. Mr David Kilgour (L), Dr David Matas (centre) and Ethan Gutmann (R).

More investigations conducted since 2006 have compiled a large amount of evidence. An updated report by Kilgour, Gutmann and Matas, published in 2016, revealed that the actual volume of annual transplant surgeries in China is multiple times larger than the officially reported government number. The 2016 report estimates that more than 60,000 transplants are performed in China on an annual basis.

In June 2019, an international people's tribunal, known as the China Tribunal, delivered its final judgment on China's forced organ harvesting practices. The seven-member panel chaired by Sir Geoffrey Nice, QC, lead prosecutor in the trial of former Serbian President Slobodan Milošević, found that forced organ harvesting from prisoners has taken place "on a substantial scale by state-supported or approved organizations and individuals..." and that there is no indication that these practices, charged by the Tribunal as Crimes Against Humanity, have stopped. The panel assesses as credible that between 60,000 and 90,000 organ transplant operations were taking place in China per year, a number far higher than official statistics suggest, and that adherents of the Falun Gong practice are likely the "principal source" of organs for forced organ harvesting.

Current Situation in China

In 2015, China claimed that it has ended the harvesting of organs from executed prisoners and transitioned to using organs from its newly founded public organ donation program, stating that all organs used for transplants in China after 2015 would be procured solely through its voluntary organ donation program.

It is noteworthy that an individual medical doctor, not a representative of the Chinese government, has made this claim. It remains unverified whether this announcement represents the official and legally binding policy in China. Furthermore, there has been no official retraction of the 1984 provisions that permit the use of organs from executed prisoners. Therefore, the legal foundation behind forced organ harvesting in China is unclear. The perception that China has reformed its transplant practices by ending the unethical procurement of organs from prisoners of any kind remains unverified. Independent scrutiny and investigations suggest the contrary.

In November 2017, a South Korean film team from TV Chosun recorded conversations with a hidden camera at the Tianjin Transplant Center in Tianjin, China. A Chinese nurse was filmed saying that the wait time for organs is about two weeks, but with an extra payment to the hospital, the wait time can be reduced to two days. This is unheard of in countries that solely depend on voluntary, public organ donations. Furthermore, the nurse indicated that there are many patients from South Korea and the Middle East, suggesting that there is ongoing, active transplant tourism to China. The nurse also indicated that while not officially permitted, the Chinese government is aware of the transplant tourism but turns a blind eye to it.

In 2017, over 15,000 transplants were reportedly performed in China. Officials have announced that it is China's goal to surpass the United States in transplant numbers by 2020. For years, Chinese hospitals have offered transplant surgeries to both domestic and foreign patients with unprecedented short wait times.

Some transplants have been scheduled with only two weeks advanced notice. In one case, a Canadian patient received a kidney transplant in just three days.

Despite China's claims that since 2015 its organ donation program has been the sole source of organs for transplantation, independent monitoring and analysis of China's organ donation data reveal significant anomalies and inconsistencies. Therefore, the question remains as to the true origin of the organs used in China's transplant surgeries. International investigators have postulated that there exists in China an available, undisclosed pool of organ donors ready to be matched and forcibly harvested for organs at any time.

Throughout its history, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has incarcerated and eliminated those deemed undesirable by the Party, such as political dissidents, ethnic minorities, and religious believers. The President of the Supreme Court in China is quoted in the January 2017 Financial Times as saying that the CCP is above the Constitution, suggesting it holds itself above any Chinese law or ethical standard, and that any kind of persecution or elimination of dissidents sanctioned by the CCP is permissible in China.

Forced organ harvesting of prisoners could then be viewed in China, not as a violation of Western ethical standards and laws, but as a legitimate action under CCP rule. As the Chinese Communist Party's directives surpass the Chinese constitution, there is no independent judiciary system in China that could or would prosecute the state-sanctioned forced organ harvesting.

Academic research by Cheung et al. recently revealed a direct link between the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners initiated by former secretary general Jiang Zemin and forced organ harvesting, and described the persecution as a Cold Genocide, a slow-moving, concealed, yet nevertheless destructive form of genocide, which continues unabated to this day.

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Implausible Organ Donation Numbers

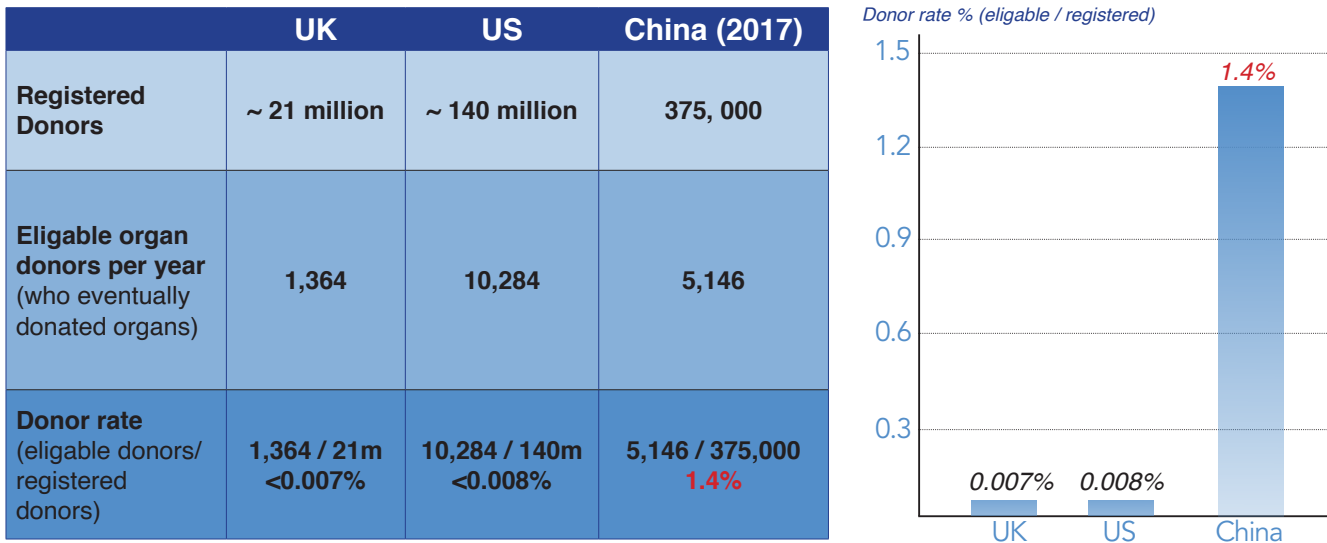


Figure 3.1 The donor rate reflects how many registered organ donors will eventually donate to a recipient (yield). China claims that its organ donor yield is almost 200x greater than observed in the UK and US.

In 2015, China claimed to have ended organ harvesting from executed prisoners and that all organs used in transplantation would come from its public organ donation program. However, there are discrepancies and a lack of credibility in China's official explanations regarding organ sourcing both before and after 2015.

A country comparison of the numbers of registered organ donors reveals unusual donor rates for China. In 2017, China had only about 375,000 registered organ donors. This number is small in comparison with the United States (U.S.) and the United Kingdom (U.K.).

Under the presumption that the number of registered organ donors is real, the number of organs actually procured for transplantation from eligible donors is very large, three times larger than the number in the UK and only half that in the U.S.

The discrepancy of eligible, actual organ donors to registered organ donors, is significant. Provided the numbers from China are correct, and that the traditional reluctance among Chinese people to donate organs would not generate additional organ donations outside the public organ donation program, China would have procured 140 times more organs from its 4-year old organ donation program than the decades old, established organ donation programs in both the U.S. and the U.K.

More concerns regarding the veracity of China's organ donor numbers emerged after eighteen months of monitoring the organ donor numbers posted on the website of the Red Cross Society of China. Monitoring revealed two spikes, one at the end of 2015 and another at the end of 2016.

On Dec 31, 2015, the number of registered organ donors increased by exactly 25,000. Each registered



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Organ Transplants in China and Around the World

China publishes annual transplant numbers for the entire country, not the numbers of transplants at individual transplant centers. This obscures any scrutiny and verification of actual transplant numbers.

The computerized China Organ Transplant Response System (COTRS) effectively allowed the whitewashing of the country's organ procurement practices. China eliminates all means of tracing organs back to donor sources by not supplying transplant tourists with their medical records and documentation.

China avoids providing critical information that would invite or allow scrutiny, not only of its transplant numbers, but also in medical publications by Chinese transplant professionals. Critical information that would provide accurate information regarding the volume of transplants performed or the origin of donor organs remains opaque.

Key Points:

4.1 The large volume of transplants paired with a steep increase of annual transplant numbers between 1999 and 2004 suggests, in absence of an alternative organ donation program, either the number of death sentences increased or that a new source of organs emerged;

4.2 The disparity between a growing transplant infrastructure and the apparent stagnation of annual transplant numbers for over ten years between 2006 and 2016 is implausible. In this context we also highlight the implausible discrepancy between the initially proclaimed source of organs (executed criminals) and the physical requirements for a sufficient amount of eligible organs from this sole source group; and

4.3 If the officially announced numbers of transplants are accurate, there remains a fundamental inconsistency between the official explanation of organ sourcing and the documented growth in transplant infrastructure and reported number of surgeries.

The exponential growth of China's transplant industry plays a role in global organ trafficking. There is a need to specifically address China, now a world leader in number of transplant surgeries, because it is killing prisoners of any kind for their organs, committing the crime against humanity of forced organ harvesting. While there is organ trafficking in other countries, there is no other country in the world with state-sanctioned, large scale forced organ harvesting.

China is a major destination for global transplant tourism. In a study that reviewed 86 medical papers published over 15 years, the authors found that 63% of all transplant tourists worldwide, documented in academic research papers, travelled to China to receive an organ.

Number of Transplants

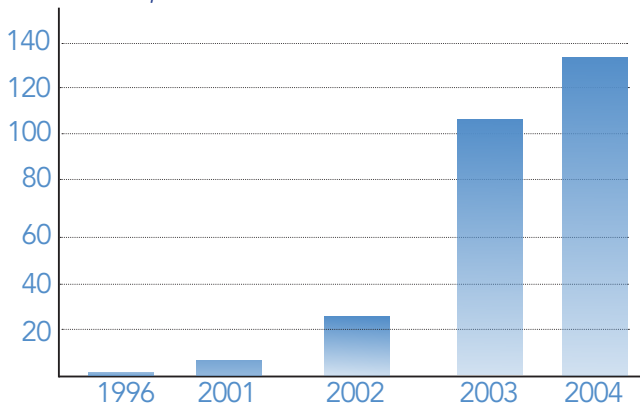


Figure 4.1 Liver transplants performed annually at the Shanghai Changzheng Hospital Organ Transplant Centre. (Source: Changzheng Hospital Organ Transplant Centre website)

Case Study:

Tianjin No1 Hospital : A giant in transplantation numbers

Tianjin First Central Hospital, one of the busiest and most acclaimed in the country. An [investigative analysis](#) of its operations was written in 2016 by *The Epoch Times* journalist and researcher Matthew Robertson. Furthermore, in 2017 a Korean undercover [documentary](#) confirmed the high transplant volumes and incredibly short waiting times at the hospital. Some key findings included:

1. There is a daily average of 2,000 outpatient services conducted per day; the bed utilisation rate is 86 percent; kidney and liver transplantation beds are at 90 percent utilisation. The total number of beds devoted to transplantation at Tianjin First around 2008 was 500, at the Orient Organ Transplant Center. Entire floors in nearby hotels were permanently booked for the incoming transplant tourists—mainly from South Korea, but also from Malaysia, Egypt, Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan.

2. “Originally, patients had to wait about a week. But now, because more and more people have joined the queue, the waiting times are longer. The longest time now is a bit over three months,” the report quotes from an article in *Phoenix Weekly*.

3. According to Tianjin’s advertising materials for foreign patients, the total time an organ tourist would expect to stay in the hospital could be between one and two months, depending on the wait time for an organ and how long it takes to convalesce. If an average patient stay was 30 days per transplant, then 5,400 transplants per year may have taken place at the Orient Organ Transplant Center from late 2006 until the end of 2008. If each stay was two weeks, then the amount could be 10,800.

4. Meanwhile, official numbers put the cumulative total of transplant by 2014 at 10,000 –a fraction of the estimated numbers from the actual operations within the hospital.

Source: Investigative report: *Hospital built for murder*, *The Epoch Times*, 2016

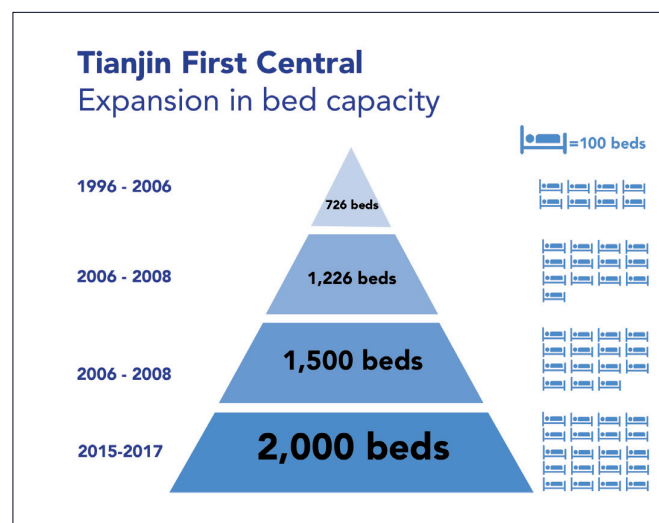
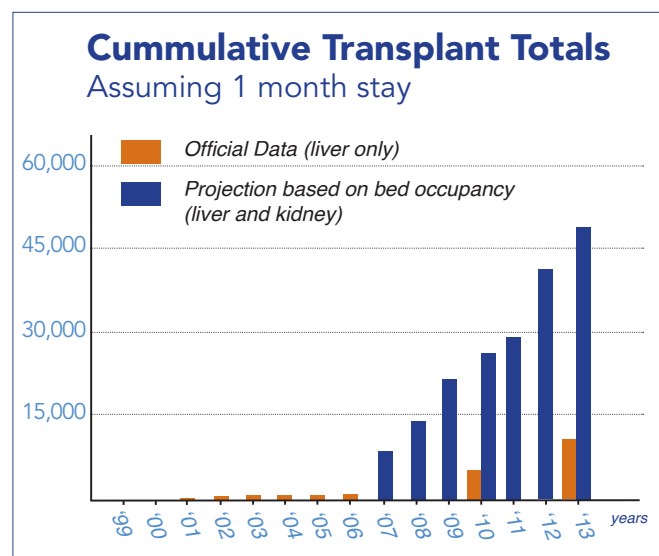


Figure 4.2 The rapid growth of overall bed capacity at Tianjin First Central Hospital, based on internal documents and building reports. (Infographic adapted from the 2016 *Epoch Times* report)



A projection showing cumulative transplant totals, based on bed utilisation rates found in hospital records. While the official data available was for liver transplants only and the projected numbers were based on liver and kidney combined, the estimates are still showing a marked discrepancy between the performance of just one centre in China and the constantly reported official figure of a mere 10,000 total transplants for the whole of China annually.

Cold Genocide

In 2018, an academic paper co-authored by Cheung et al. found evidence that the persecution of Falun Gong and forced organ harvesting, primarily targeting Falun Gong prisoners of conscience, amounted to a specific form of genocide, a slow-moving, concealed Cold Genocide.

// Cold Genocide is a multifaceted strategy that has no bounds as to what means or methods can be used to completely annihilate a target group from society.

Cold Genocide is a multifaceted strategy that has no bounds as to what means or methods can be used to completely annihilate a target group from society. It is the strategy used by Jiang Zemin, who initiated the persecution of Falun Gong in July 1999, to thoroughly and effectively eradicate Falun Gong practitioners without alerting the international community.

The international response after the 1989 student massacre on the Tiananmen Square made a fast, hot eradication of Falun Gong risky for the Chinese leadership. In order to conduct a thorough nationwide persecution, a special police force, the 610 Office, was founded on June 10, 1999 with the sole purpose of destroying the Falun Gong spiritual practice. The 610 Office used its branches throughout all of Chinese society including in schools, universities, work places, law courts, and government offices to enforce its extermination directives.

Since the CCP acts above and outside the national

justice system and controls all media and means of expression in China, the Cold Genocide of Falun Gong is invisible to the public. Only those who participate in the persecution are aware of it.

The CCP has also instilled censorship in democratic societies around the world through manipulation of the world's media and economic and political pressures exerted on the industries, finances, universities and hospitals of other nations. If this censorship, along with other human rights infringements such as China's facial recognition and social credit score systems, is allowed to spread to and develop in other countries, then the Cold Genocide in China could continue unabated, as it already has for many years, as a result of a worldwide, self-induced silence.



Source: Minghui.net

Falun Gong practitioners represent the largest group of prisoners of conscience in China and make up 66% of all torture cases, according to the UN Rapporture of Torture.

6

Global Response to Forced Organ Harvesting of Falun Gong Practitioners in China

At the beginning of the 21st Century, many governments and media outlets worldwide listened to and believed Jiang Zemin's government propaganda and defamation of Falun Gong practitioners. For commercial and political reasons, governments around the world remained quiet about China's human rights abuses, even after unethical organ harvesting was revealed in 2006. Many international hospitals and universities have turned blind eyes to the preponderance of evidence of organ harvesting, even the more recent up-to-date reports and the China Tribunal findings.

The World Health Organisation and the United Nations have not substantially reacted to calls for an independent investigation into the allegation of forced organ harvesting in China. A petition initiated by DAFOH to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights calling for an end to forced organ harvesting in China, which was signed by 3 million people in over 50 countries, has yet to receive an official response.

Since the 1980s, the Chinese regime has been buying up media outlets, offering financially interesting contracts to those media that abide by CCP recommendations. Therefore, worldwide media attention to organ harvesting has been stifled by a self-imposed silence or self-censorship. Universities and teaching hospitals, by accepting financially attractive research programs and student exchanges, have followed the media's example.

The reality of forced organ harvesting has been confirmed by different investigative groups. After one year of review and hearings, the Independent Tribunal into Forced Organ Harvesting of Prisoners of Conscience in China, chaired by Sir Geoffrey Nice, stated in December 2018 that:

// In the long-term practice in the PRC of forced organ harvesting it was indeed Falun Gong practitioners who were used as a source—probably the principal source—of organs for forced organ harvesting.

- Sir Geoffrey Nice, China Tribunal Chair

“The Tribunal’s members are certain – unanimously, and sure beyond reasonable doubt – that in China forced organ harvesting from prisoners of conscience has been practiced for a substantial period of time involving a very substantial number of victims.”

After a systematic process of gathering evidence, witness and expert testimonies, the Tribunal has presented the full text of its judgment on March 1, 2020. The Tribunal concludes, “In the long-term practice in the PRC of forced organ harvesting it was indeed Falun Gong practitioners who were used as a source—probably the principal source—of organs for forced organ harvesting.” The judgment of this people’s Tribunal is unequivocal.

Medical professionals and medical journals have also begun to understand the implications of forced organ harvesting and its effect on the ever-growing international transplant tourism market. Medical publications are rejecting and banning research articles that do not respect the traceability and transparency clause set forth in the WHO Guiding Principles on organ donation and transplantation.

Notable efforts have been made in response to

China's transplant crimes. World governments have enacted resolutions and laws to address the ethical and legal implication of organ harvesting as well as the distressing lack of transparency and traceability of organ procurement procedures and transplant practices in China.

In 2016, the U.S. House of Representatives passed House Resolution 343 condemning the forced organ harvesting of Falun Gong practitioners in China. In the same year, the European Parliament passed Written Declaration 48 calling for an end to forced organ harvesting in China.

Governments around the world including Israel, Taiwan, Malaysia, Spain Italy, and Belgium have enacted resolutions or laws to limit or stop

international organ trafficking and transplant tourism. The Council of Europe Convention against human organ trafficking has set an international precedent for other countries to fashion and apply their own laws. Most recently, the U.K. and France are in the process of enacting new laws against transplant tourism. Some governments are implementing Magnitsky Act-like laws in order to detain human rights abusers.

Different readily available solutions exist to address and stop abusive transplant practices in China that will protect internationally accepted medical ethics, medical research, and to prevent individual patients and institutions from becoming criminally complicit. It is time for the world to end the Cold Genocide against the Falun Gong practitioners in China.

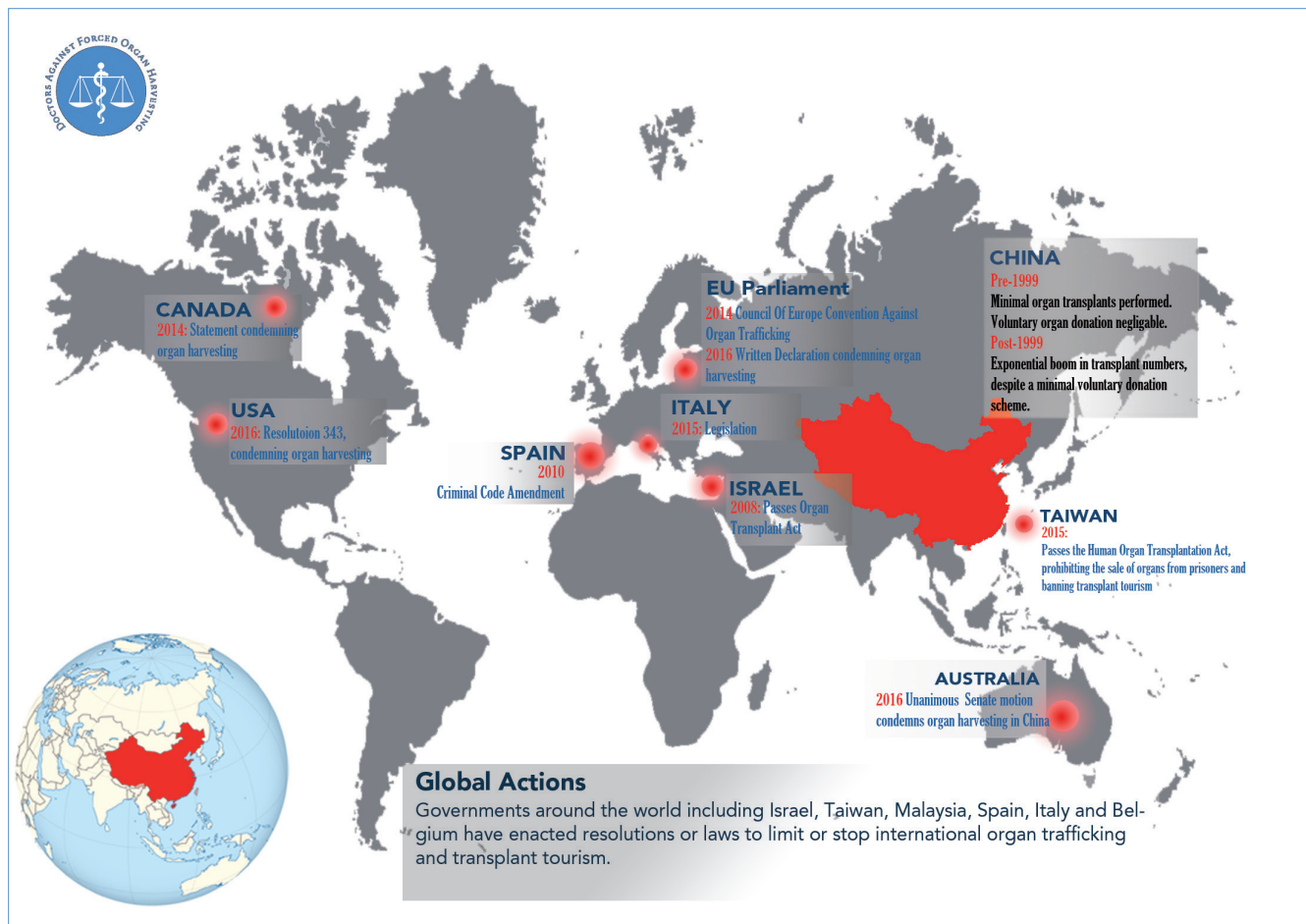


Figure 6.1 Global actions in countries, where laws or resolutions have been passed to address the crimes of forced organ harvesting in China.