



Foreign Interference Commission

Public Consultation Process

Small Group Consultation Meeting Public Summary

In the summer of 2024, Commissioner Marie-Josée Hogue and members of the Foreign Interference Commission's (the "**Commission**") Public Consultation Process ("**PCP**") team met with eight individuals belonging to the Canadian Falun Gong community in a consultation meeting organized with the assistance of the Human Rights Coalition. This is a summary of the information shared at that meeting.

Notes to reader:

- The Commissioner has not and will not be making any findings about the accuracy of the information shared at the consultation meeting or make any findings of fact based on this information.
- The meeting attendees did not make an oath or swear to tell the truth before sharing information at this meeting.
- The meeting attendees were not subjected to cross-examination.
- The meeting attendees have reviewed and approved the contents of this public summary.
- Meeting attendees were given the option of anonymizing themselves for the purposes of the present public summary. Where meeting attendees opted to anonymize themselves, they are designated as "Participant 1", "Participant 2", etc.
- At each of the consultation meetings, the meeting attendees were asked to answer two questions, which are set out below. The meeting attendees were each given a total of 15 minutes to respond to both questions.
- Where necessary, Commission counsel have provided explanatory notes in square brackets to assist the reader.

Executive Summary

- Certain attendees described the benefits they experience from their Falun Gong practice.
- Certain attendees talked about harmful disinformation they said is spread by the Chinese Communist Party (“**CCP**”) and its proxies, including through traditional news outlets and social media. Certain attendees talked about the repercussions of this disinformation for their advocacy work and in their personal lives.
- Certain attendees described being harassed, including in person and over the phone, by people unknown to them who knew private details about the attendees’ personal lives. Certain attendees described the stress and fear this risk of monitoring and surveillance instilled in Falun Gong practitioners in Canada.
- Certain attendees described acts of vandalism and attempted violence. One attendee described an experience while driving after attending a *Shen Yun* performance in which a pickup truck tried to force them into oncoming traffic. One attendee described having their car tire punctured with a screwdriver and a knife.
- One attendee talked about their volunteer work assisting in maintaining an online application reporting on incidents of Chinese persecution of Falun Gong. The attendee described various cyberattacks on the application and its supporting infrastructure and the malicious theft of data. The attendee said that these attacks were carried out by state-sponsored hackers. The attendee described the difficulty and the costs, both monetary and personal, of trying to counter and recover from these cyberattacks.
- One attendee described being fired from a job after speaking out against disinformation about Falun Gong that was being discussed at their workplace.
- Certain attendees discussed the various tactics they said the CCP may use to dissuade people from supporting Falun Gong. Certain attendees said that threatening and misleading emails impersonating Falun Gong practitioners have been sent to Canadian politicians to dissuade them from supporting Falun Gong. One attendee said that the CCP offers trips to Canadian politicians and that, upon their return from such trips, Canadian politicians have withdrawn their support for Falun Gong.

- Certain attendees discussed the various tactics they say that the CCP may use to dissuade people from practicing Falun Gong. Certain attendees described the withholding and cancelling of travel documents for Falun Gong practitioners who refuse to abandon their practice of Falun Gong.
- Certain attendees described the difficulties Falun Gong practitioners face when seeking to participate in community events in Canada. Certain attendees described interference in their protests. Certain attendees described being refused the opportunity to participate in parades and festivals. Certain attendees described being refused permits to engage in various activities.
- Certain attendees described efforts made to interfere in *Shen Yun* performances, including a threat that a theater hosting *Shen Yun* would be bombed if the performance was not cancelled, and the coercion of sponsors of the performance to withdraw their sponsorship.
- Certain attendees described the stress and fear they and their loved ones experience as a result of the monitoring, surveillance, harassment and disinformation they experience.

1. Participants' responses to Question 1

The first question posed to the participants was: *How are you, your loved ones and members of your community impacted by foreign interference in Canada's electoral processes and democratic institutions?*

Participant 1

Participant 1 said that they have observed profound impacts of interference by the Chinese Communist Party (the “**CCP**”) in all three levels of government in Canada. Participant 1 said that the Falun Gong’s peaceful protests outside of the People’s Republic of China’s (“**PRC**”) consulate in British Columbia are being dismantled as the result of CCP’s interference to three levels of Canadian government. Participant 1 said that Falun Gong used to be permitted to continually protest outside of the Chinese consulate in Vancouver with banners 24 hours a day, seven days a week for eight years.

A series of changes, which Falun Gong disputed, resulted in a revised City bylaw that makes continuous protesting by Falun Gong impossible. Participant 1 said that the City consulted the Chinese consulate during the bylaw drafting process, and questioned why a foreign state actor was involved in the Canadian law-making process. Participant 1 shared their view that the bylaw is the result of an abuse of political process and that it silences Canadian voices calling for justice.

Participant 1 said that Falun Gong have consistently had their application to participate in a Chinese New Year event in Vancouver denied, despite interventions from Members of Parliament and an attempted intervention by the police. Participant 1 said that this example is typical of Falun Gong's experience in trying to participate in community events. Participant 1 said that Falun Gong's exclusion from community events is consistent with the CCP's directive to exclude and oppress Falun Gong. Participant 1 said that these examples show that the foundation of Canadian freedoms is being eroded by foreign interference. Participant 1 said that the exclusion of Falun Gong from government funded events is interference with Canadian democratic processes. Participant 1 said that this exclusion is stressful, and physically and mentally draining for Falun Gong practitioners.

Participant 1 said that a local Falun Dafa association has been involved in the organization of *Shen Yun* performances for years. Participant 1 said that the theater hosting the show in March 2024 received a threat stating that the theater would be bombed unless the show was cancelled. Participant 1 said that similar threats have been made to other venues set to host performances of *Shen Yun*. Participant 1 also spoke about threats made to individual Falun Gong practitioners. Participant 1 said that they were deeply disturbed and disgusted by these threats. Participant 1 said that these threats create immense anxiety for Falun Gong practitioners, and that they show that the overall threat from the CCP is increasing.

Participant 1 said that the CCP invites Canadian politicians to the PRC for the purpose of convincing them to refrain from supporting Falun Gong. Participant 1 said that some Canadian politicians who have taken such trips have withdrawn their support for Falun Gong upon their return to Canada.

Participant 1 also mentioned that many emails, impersonating Falun Gong practitioners, were sent to MPs and MPPs. Participant 1 believes that these emails were an attempt at discrediting Falun Gong practitioners.

Participant 2

Participant 2 spoke about the benefits they experience from their Falun Gong practice.

Participant 2 said that they are treated differently from other Chinese Canadians in their interactions with certain groups within Chinese Canadian society. Participant 2 opined that the extent of CCP interference in Canadian academic institutions had worsened over the last decades.

Participant 2 said that as the Chinese diaspora in Canada has grown, more Chinese immigrants to Canada have formed close links with the Chinese consulate. Participant 2 said that Chinese-controlled or influenced organizations in Canada have consistently rejected Falun Gong participation in their activities. Participant 2 said that the Chinese consulate relays priorities to Chinese Canadian community leaders. According to Participant 2, the Chinese consular officials are likely from the United Front Work Department.

Participant 2 said that a local business owner withdrew their sponsorship of *Shen Yun* after receiving a warning that they should not support the performance group. Participant 2 said that the business owner was surprised that the Chinese consulate knew about their sponsorship of *Shen Yun* because they had never publicly disclosed their support of the group.

Participant 2 said that they learned in 2017 that a person impersonating a Falun Gong practitioner sent a threatening email to the Minister of a Canadian provincial government. Participant 2 said that the threatening email was sent from an email address used to send the same email to many Members of Parliament. Participant 2 said that the refusal of support to the local Falun Gong community could be tied with the close engagement with

CCP facilitated by CCP proxies and an elected pro-CCP official member who disseminated disinformation against Falun Gong to their colleagues.

Participant 2 said that on an individual level, the ongoing repression and intimidation of Falun Gong has created an environment of fear for practitioners. Participant 2 said that on a community level, the CCP's foreign interference and repression of Falun Gong has weakened the political support for their cause and impeded their participation in Canada's democracy. Participant 2 also noted the psychological impacts of this repression campaign on Falun Gong practitioners, as well as the social and political isolation they suffered.

Participant 3

Participant 3 spoke about the physical and mental health benefits they have experienced because of their Falun Gong practice.

Participant 3 said that they immigrated to Canada in the late 1990s. Participant 3 said that when they tried to travel to mainland China through Hong Kong to visit a loved one in the early 2000s, they were abducted at the border by plainclothes officers who confiscated their personal belongings and detained them for 33 days. Participant 3 said that during their detention, they were shown pictures of themselves in Hong Kong protesting against Jiang Zemin [the then-Chairman of the PRC], who had launched the persecution of Falun Gong. Participant 3 said that they were surprised to learn that the people detaining them were aware that Falun Gong practitioners in Canada were printing a newspaper opposing the CCP regime and seeking to rectify the false narratives targeting Falun Gong. Participant 3 said that during their detention, a psychologist was sent to try to convince them to give up Falun Gong, and that threats were made that they would be sent to a mental hospital. Participant 3 said that they were rescued following efforts by the Canadian Embassy, a Canadian Member of Parliament, and Amnesty International. Participant 3 said that before they left the PRC, they were asked by Chinese officials to inform on their fellow Falun Gong practitioners, which they refused to do. Participant 3 said that they have been blacklisted by PRC authorities and have been

unable to obtain a visa to return to the PRC. Participant 3 noted that their backlisting had prevented them from obtaining a visa to the PRC on the occasion of their father's death.

Participant 3 said that after they returned to Canada, they discovered that the CCP was monitoring them and their family in Canada. Participant 3 said that a couple of years after their return to Canada, one of their loved ones travelled to Canada. Participant 3 said this individual was questioned about Falun Gong and their bank account was frozen. Participant 3 said that a loved one living in the PRC has warned them not to confront the CCP for fear that another loved one living in the PRC would lose their job because of Participant 3's activism. Participant 3 said that while Falun Gong was initially invited to participate in cultural events, after the persecution of Falun Gong began in 1999, invitations to participate in cultural events in Canada stopped. Participant 3 believes that this exclusion followed instructions given by the PRC embassy in Ottawa to community organizations.

Participant 3 said that in the late 2000s, the group that they joined was invited to participate in a parade and that their participation was very successful. Participant 3 said that after the parade, the parade's president informed them that a City Councillor requested that the group be kicked out based on the CCP's position on Falun Gong. Participant 3 found this request unacceptable, especially coming from a Canadian elected official.

Participant 3 said that the covert surveillance by a foreign regime that they are subjected to has left them terrified and feeling unsafe in Canada.

Participant 4

Participant 4 said that they were in Hong Kong for two weeks in the early 2000s. Participant 4 said that upon their return to Canada, a friend informed them that his neighbour who shared Participant 4's last name and first initial and birthplace was detained and interrogated at the airport in Shanghai. Participant 4 said that after about 10 hours of interrogation, the police found that the wrong person was arrested, and that Participant 4 was the intended target because of their practice of Falun Gong. Participant

4 said that they kept a low profile about the trip to Hong Kong and they don't know how it was learned that they were travelling there. Participant 4 explained that their partner and themselves have been blacklisted by PRC authorities.

Participant 4 said that in 2011, the Icelandic government apologized for using a blacklist provided by Chinese authorities to prevent Falun Gong practitioners from entering Iceland. Participant 4 said that one of their loved ones was temporarily prevented from entering Iceland in 2002, to attend peaceful demonstrations against Jiang Zemin [the then-Chairman of the PRC] who was visiting the country. Participant 4 said that while their loved one was eventually able to gain access to the country, other Falun Gong practitioners trying to travel to Iceland for the same purpose were left stranded.

Participant 4 said that a few months before the CCP persecution of Falun Gong began, a Chinese consular official praised practitioners at a community event for introducing Falun Gong and spreading Chinese culture. Participant 4 stated that after the persecution started, the same Chinese consular official began spreading CCP's hate propaganda demonizing Falun Gong in Canadian society.

Participant 4 said that after the persecution began, Chinese newspapers around the world propagated narratives against Falun Gong. Participant 4 said that Chinese newspapers were turned into mouthpieces for the CCP, some publishers were made to pledge allegiance to the CCP, and against Falun Gong. Participant 4 said that no local Chinese community papers would run advertisements for Falun Gong events.

Participant 4 described a dispute over whether a loved one would be permitted to remain a member of a Chinese seniors' community association because of their association with Falun Gong. A Canadian tribunal found that this exclusion was discriminatory. However, Participant 4 said that the association ultimately dissolved rather than pay the damages related to their refusal to allow the loved one to remain a member. According to Participant 4, the Chinese embassy instructed the association to exclude the individual and a pro-CCP proxy covered the legal costs of the Chinese seniors' community association associated with the above-noted proceedings at the request of the Chinese Embassy.

Participant 4 said that a performance group that a loved one is part of was banned from participating in a community festival following pressures from the Chinese embassy, which their loved one found very upsetting.

Participant 4 said that they received numerous anonymous harassing phone calls.

Participant 4 said that after their home phone service was moved from a traditional landline to an internet phone service in the summer of 2017, they received a call from a Chinese-speaking person, asking if this phone still belongs to Participant 4's spouse, to which question Participant 4 said yes. Participant 4 said that shortly after, a Mandarin-speaking woman called, asking whether Participant 4's spouse still lives at the address of their home, because there was an international parcel for them, to which question Participant 4 also answered by the affirmative. Participant 4 explained that the parcel never arrived. Participant 4 noted that they believe that this phone call was to verify that their phone number was still connected their home address.

Participant 4 said that a couple of days later, a man with a strong Chinese accent, who spoke broken English, called their home and said that he was working for Bell, doing maintenance for their home phone line, and that there was no signal on the phone line. Participant 4 explained they replied that we were no longer using Bell.

Participant 4 said that these calls made it obvious to them that their phone line had been tapped and that when they had switched telephone providers, those tapping the phone line had discovered that the signal had been lost.

Participant 4 said that Falun Gong practitioners and the Falun Gong website are targeted by cyber attacks, stating that Falun Gong practitioners have been sent infected emails. Participant 4 said that there is evidence that files on their computer have been tampered with, and those files were subsequently completely erased from their computer.

Participant 4 said that they had learned the day before former Chinese leader Hu Jintao's June 2010 visit to Ottawa, that the Chinese embassy organized a pro-PRC rally to counter a Falun Gong protest. Participant 4 said that the Chinese embassy covered the cost of travel, meal, and accommodations for foreign students and pro-PRC locals, who were

bussed to outside of the Westin Hotel, where Hu Jintao was to stay, and sought to squeeze the Falun Gong protesters out of the area, and that the police let this happen.

Participant 5

Participant 5 said that Falun Gong practitioners in Canada face significant interference and stress resulting from CCP efforts to intimidate them. Participant 5 said that shortly after the 1999 crackdown on Falun Gong, Chinese diplomatic and consular officials travelled to Canada to meet with local Chinese community leaders to convey the message that they should denounce Falun Gong. Participant 5 said that local Chinese media were invited to attend but Falun Gong practitioners were not allowed to participate. Participant 5 said that those who attended the meeting came out full of hate towards Falun Gong.

Participant 5 said that Falun Gong practitioners are excluded from and not permitted to participate or perform in community events. Participant 5 said that Falun Gong practitioners face prejudice and are the subject of damaging disinformation, including disinformation published in local newspapers. Participant 5 said that the CCP is paying people to disseminate this disinformation across Canada.

Participant 5 spoke about a Falun Gong practitioner who faced pressure to move back to China or to abandon their practice in Canada. More specifically, Participant 5 said that the practitioner's brother, who lived in the PRC, was paid by the security service to travel to Canada to try to convince the practitioner to abandon their practice or to go back to the PRC.

Participant 5 described a fellow practitioner who was approached by a man in grocery store who asked them a series of questions about their personal life, family, and Falun Gong practice. Participant 5 said these questions suggested they were being monitored and that their expectation of privacy and safety in Canada was not being met.

Participant 5 said that Falun Gong practitioners in Canada have had their Chinese passports confiscated. Participant 5 provided an example of a Falun Gong practitioner who, when they sought to renew their passport, was asked to write a guarantee that they

would stop practicing Falun Gong. Participant 5 said that this individual refused to give the requested guarantee, and that their passport was cancelled on the spot. Participant 5 said that the individual had business interests in the PRC and the cancellation of their travel documents caused them a lot of difficulties. Participant 5 said this control of travel documentation is used to convince Falun Gong practitioners to abandon their practice of Falun Gong.

Participant 6

Participant 6 spoke about two individuals interfering at a rally outside of the Chinese consulate intended to expose the crime of organ harvesting. Participant 6 said that the individuals were agents of the CCP. Participant 6 said that one of the individuals, a Chinese man, claimed to be a City employee, asserted that the protest was illegal, took down the Falun Gong's banner, and swore at Participant 6 in Chinese. Participant 6 said that they called the police and the two individuals left. They added that the Chinese individual had tried to hit a female Falun Gong practitioner who was taking a picture of his car. Participant 6 said that two people came out of the Chinese embassy to talk to the other individual. Participant 6 said that the police identified the Chinese individual and said they would keep an eye on him.

Participant 6 said they were involved in organizing a forum on organ harvesting in the fall of 2014 that featured an author of a popular book on the topic. Participant 6 said that the forum attracted a significant audience. Participant 6 described experiencing significant interference before and after the forum. Participant 6 said that their car tires were punctured four times with a screwdriver and once with a knife. Participant 6 said that the incidents were caught on their home security camera and were reported to the police. Participant 6 also said that, after they moved to a new house, their backyard light was taken out and thrown on the ground. Participant 6 said that this signified that someone wanted them to know that their home address was known. Participant 6 said that they took notice of suspicious cars behind them. Participant 6 said that these incidents made them deeply concerned about their safety and the safety of their loved ones. Participant

6 noted that these events reinforced their feeling of being actively monitored and targeted by the CCP in Canada.

Participant 6 said that they experienced a life-threatening incident after a *Shen Yun* performance. Participant 6 said that, while driving on the main road to the airport, a pickup truck squeezed them with the intent to try to push them into oncoming traffic. Participant 6 said that they were unable to get the license plate of the pickup truck because it sped away.

Participant 6 said that a consular official sought to interfere with a *Shen Yun* performance in the late 2000s and convince sponsors of the performance to cancel their sponsorship, threatening that the sponsor's business with the PRC would be affected and that their visas to mainland China would be threatened. Participant 6 said that the sponsor was forced to withdraw their sponsorship and that they said they were withdrawing their sponsorship because of these threats. Participant 6 said that the sponsor told them that the threats originated from the Chinese consul general.

Participant 6 said that in the late 2000s, Falun Gong's application to buy a booth at a Chinese cultural festival in a Canadian city was refused. Participant 6 said they were told that the booths were sold out, but that when they submitted an application under the name of another organization, they were told they could buy a booth. According to Participant 6, this is a clear example of the CCP pressuring local community organizations to exclude Falun Gong.

Participant 6 said that they have a strong feeling that they are being monitored by the CCP, and that no matter where they move, the CCP knows where they are. Participant 6 said that CCP agents are rampant in Canada. Participant 6 said that in their Canadian city they sometimes have the terrible feeling that they are back in the PRC.

[Participant 7](#)

Participant 7 described the change in attitude towards Falun Gong they experienced in the PRC, explaining that prior to 1999, Falun Gong was very popular in the PRC.

However, according to Participant 7, after 1999, Falun Gong experienced a negative change in attitude from family and coworkers, as well as persecution by Chinese authorities. They said they were detained and interrogated for three entire days due their practice of Falun Gong.

Participant 7 said that the persecution of Falun Gong has changed in form but not in substance. Participant 7 said that the persecution of Falun Gong occurs everywhere, including online and through state media, inside and outside of the PRC. Participant 7 said that overseas Chinese are unknowingly manipulated by the CCP and the PRC on this topic.

Participant 7 said that they were hired as an interpreter for Chinese officials doing an internship at a Canadian provincial government. Participant 7 said that one day at lunch the officials were talking about Falun Gong in a hateful manner. Participant 7 said they felt the remarks were defamatory and demonized Falun Gong. Participant 7 said that they stood up against the disinformation and stated that their personal experience with Falun Gong had been a positive one. Participant 7 said they also explained the Falun Gong narrative to the Canadian official that was with the group. Participant 7 said that they were fired from the second interpretation session for that job. Participant 7 said that when they were fired from this interpretation job because of their comments on Falun Gong, they asked themselves, “am I still in China?”

Participant 7 said that staff from the Chinese consulate distributed anti-Falun Gong material at a university conference, placing stacks of the material containing disinformation narratives at the conference venue’s entrance. Participant 7 said that this was reported to the police. Participant 7 said that following a year-long investigation the police found the materials to be hate propaganda, in breach of the *Criminal Code* of Canada. According to Participant 7, this serves as a good example of CCP manipulation of the Canadian community including Chinese Canadians.

Participant 7 said that recently, they were promoting *Shen Yun* to a group of seniors in their city, and that they had a group organized to go see a *Shen Yun* performance. Participant 7 said everything was going smoothly until they were supposed to make a

verbal presentation at the seniors' residence. Participant 7 said the organizer cancelled the event as a result of feedback they received; the organizer said they wanted to minimize discomfort and maintain neutrality.

Participant 7 said that during the last provincial election, a candidate knocked on their door and told them not to vote for one of the candidates because that candidate supported Falun Gong and Uyghurs. Participant 7 mentioned that upon realizing that Participant 7 were themselves a Falun Gong practitioner, the candidate quickly left. Participant 7 wondered if the candidate said that to every Chinese household they went to. Participant 7 said this shows a clear corruption of democratic values and that this can only be done by the CCP.

Participant 7 said that someone claiming to be a Falun Gong practitioner sent Edmonton City Councillors an email discussing the earthquake in Japan, stating that the earthquake was punishment. Participant 7 noted that the email was in fact an impersonation. Participant 7 said that the CCP sent threatening emails to provincial elected officials posing as Falun Gong practitioners stating that those who opposed the *Shen Yun* shows would be punished. Participant 7 said that the purpose of sending these emails was to present Falun Gong practitioners as unbalanced and unhinged.

Participant 7 also stated that they had experienced isolation from the Chinese Canadian community due to the predominantly anti-Falun Gong view that they harbour and due to the CCP's control. They believe the discriminatory and hateful narratives they spread are detrimental to the fabric of Canadian society. Participant 7 further noted that the anti-Falun Gong environment created significant pressures on their family members. For instance, they recounted that their life partner did not want Participant 7 to talk about Falun Gong in their circles, and that their daughter had stopped practicing Falun Gong upon entering university, in order to avoid being excluded by her Chinese Canadian peers.

Participant 8

Participant 8 said that in the late 2000s, they participated in a human rights rally and they were subsequently interviewed by a reporter. Participant 8 said that in the resulting article, both their name and age were misreported. Participant 8 said that the day after their interview was published, a loved one living in Participant 8's hometown in the PRC told them that the police in their hometown were looking for someone with the same misreported name and age appearing in the article. Participant 8 said that they didn't share their hometown with the reporter and that it didn't appear in the article. Participant 8 concluded that someone must have reported this information to the Chinese embassy. Participant 8 said that there are likely local students who make weekly reports to the CCP.

Participant 8 said that they volunteer to assist with a website that tracks published cases of Falun Gong persecution in the PRC and makes daily reports. Participant 8 said that the website, which has been online for 20 years, lists over 160,000 cases. Participant 8 said that the website is subject to hacking from within the PRC multiple times a year, especially on sensitive dates such as April 25, May 13, June 4, July 20¹, as well as during the PRC's National People's Congress annual meeting. Participant 8 said that the hacking activities were carried out by professional hackers using sophisticated tools customized to Participant 8's server that, on one occasion, allowed the hackers to view and download files from the server computer. Participant 8 said that on other occasions the hackers also damaged the server and modified the database, causing data loss. Participant 8 said that the damage the hackers caused frequently required manual fixes, or even reinstall of the operating system. Participant 8 said that antivirus software often cannot detect the hackers' programs.

Participant 8 said that for years, their server was hosted outside of Canada in another Falun Gong practitioner's home, and Participant 8 relied on remote access software to do their volunteer work. Participant 8 said that the remote control was once hacked, and the

¹ **Note:** April 25, 1999 is the date on which Falun Gong practitioners went to the Beijing's Appeals Office to appeal for the release of practitioners who had been arrested. May 13th is World Falun Dafa Day. June 4, 1989 is the date of the Tiananmen Square massacre. July 20, 1999, is the date on which the CCP launched its campaign to "eradicate" Falun Gong.

files were being deleted when seen from the remote control screen. Participant 8 said that they then quickly backed up the database, shut down the server, then asked the owner of the server to reinstall everything in the server computer.

Participant 8 said that the consistent hacking of the website drains their time and energy, explaining that updating software required time and money. Participant 8 said that they are self-funded volunteers while the hackers are state-sponsored. Participant 8 said that other Falun Gong websites suffer similar attacks, noting that some suffer more severe and more frequent attacks.

Participant 8 also mentioned that members of their family in the PRC had asked them not to come back home because of the persecution.

2. Participants' responses to Question 2

The second question posed to participants was: *What are your suggestions for how you and others in your community who may be vulnerable to foreign interference could be supported and protected, and for how foreign interference could be detected or combated?*

Participant 1

Participant 1 said that Canada should provide support systems for those affected by foreign interference.

Participant 1 said that they hope that the Canadian government will provide more protection for Falun Gong practitioners in Canada and uphold Canadian values over economic interests where there is conflict between the two.

Participant 1 said that Chinese diplomats who interfere with Canada's democratic processes should be declared *persona non grata*.

Participant 1 said that the Canadian government should investigate Chinese interference in Canada, and should investigate and identify proxy organizations. Participant 1 also stated that legislation aimed at countering foreign interference ought to be introduced.

Finally, Participant 1 said that government officials and general public should be educated on the different infiltration means that CCP is applying to Canada and the impact on Canadian values.

Participant 2

Participant 2 said that foreign interference is rampant not only at the federal level, but also at the provincial and municipal government levels. Participant 2 said that all levels of government are unprepared to handle foreign interference.

Participant 2 said that it is crucial to address the harm done by proxies, stating that this harm has become more extensive over the last decades. Participant 2 said that Bill C-70 does not provide definitions for the terms “proxy” or “transnational repression”. Participant 2 said that definitions should be provided so that proxies can be identified.

Participant 2 said that the kinds of harassment and violence experienced by Falun Gong practitioners in Canada, including in online environments, should be added to the *Criminal Code*.

Participant 2 said that Canadian cities should sever “sister city” relationships with those foreign actors involved in foreign interference. Participant 2 said that these sister city relationships are used to suppress Falun Gong. Participant 2 said that these sister city relationships undermine Canada’s democracy and democratic values.

Participant 2 said that Falun Gong practitioners are in contact with government services such as the police and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (“**RCMP**”) when they face harassment by the CCP. Participant 2 expressed hope for respectful interactions with the representatives of these government services and increased understanding of Falun Gong practitioners’ lived experiences. Participant 2 said that some Falun Gong practitioners don’t speak English, and said that the communications with Falun Gong practitioners need to be in a language the practitioners can speak. Participant 2 also noted the need to establish two-way communications.

Participant 2 said that some cities do not understand that the advocacy carried out by Falun Gong practitioners is peaceful and not harmful. Participant 2 said that offices that grant permits, such as city offices and tourism bureaus, need to understand the needs of the Falun Gong community and not apply unnecessary conditions to restrict their activities or their advocacy work.

Participant 2 said that Falun Gong suffers from CCP propaganda and disinformation that is spread through Canadian media channels targeting diaspora communities. Participant 2 said that television networks featuring the CCP's propaganda such as CCTV and CGTN that are available through regular cable subscriptions, and Xinhua news inserts in Canadian newspapers should be stopped. Participant 2 said that Canada should ban Tik Tok like the United States has.

Participant 2 said that the CCP uses a wide range of interference tactics. Participant 2 said that these experiences should be acknowledged and used by the Canadian government. Participant 2 said that to date, this knowledge has not yet been sought by the Canadian government.

Participant 2 said that the Falun Gong community should be consulted at the stage of developing regulations and procedures as laid out in Bill C-70 to counter foreign interference by the CCP.

Participant 3

Participant 3 said that Chinese diplomats are involved in repression activities against Falun Gong in Canada. Participant 3 said that punishments can include expulsion from Canada.

Participant 3 said that the *Magnitsky Act* should be used to ban foreign officials and police officers involved in the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners from entering Canada.

Participant 3 said that the Canadian government should set up secure ways for Canadians to report proxy groups and newspapers.

Participant 3 said that the Canadian government should investigate and identify groups and people spreading information on behalf of the CCP in Canada and sanction them.

Participant 3 also recommended the closure of educational and cultural centers in Canada that propagate CCP ideology and narratives in Canada that contribute to the repression of diaspora communities, such as those who practice Falun Gong.

Participant 4

Participant 4 said that Canada requires the political will to handle and counter transnational repression.

Participant 4 said that not all Chinese people want to follow the PRC, and that Canada's primary relationship should not be with the regime, but rather with the Chinese people.

Participant 5

Participant 5 said that the Canadian government should ensure the public condemnation of the oppression of Falun Gong and ensure public support for Falun Gong.

Participant 5 said that the Canadian government should hold the Chinese regime accountable. Participant 5 said that the Canadian government should work together with other countries to impose sanctions on the Chinese regime.

Participant 5 said that the Canadian government should investigate and identify proxy individuals or groups and hold them accountable for their actions on behalf of the PRC.

Participant 5 said that the public should be made aware of the lies propagated by the PRC about Falun Gong. Participant 5 suggested that efforts along these lines could include working with the media to share the truth about Falun Gong.

Participant 5 said that a support system should be implemented for victims of PRC interference to help people feel safe, including legal support for victims.

Participant 5 said that the PRC's influence on Canadian media should be monitored and regulated. Participant 5 said that the independence of Canadian media must be ensured.

Participant 6

Participant 6 said that more action is required to protect the rights and freedoms of Falun Gong practitioners, who should not have to live in fear in Canada. Participant 6 said that this will require the Canadian society to spend more time and resources to counter foreign interference.

Participant 6 said that the government needs to pay more attention to the PRC's penetration of Canada's democratic systems. Participant 6 said that the Canadian government must protect the rights and freedoms of Falun Gong practitioners in Canada.

Participant 6 said that Canada should expel Chinese diplomats and CCP agents and spies who conduct malicious activities against Canadian citizens.

Participant 7

Participant 7 said that Canadian government officials, and specifically those involved in tackling foreign interference, should be encouraged to educate themselves about the truth about Falun Gong, why Falun Gong practitioners are persecuted, and the nature of the CCP. Participant 7 said that it is difficult to tackle these issues without understanding the context. Participant 7 said that the public also had to be educated on this topic. Participant 7 recommended resources available on Falun Gong websites and in books about CCP persecution.

Participant 7 asked that the Canadian government keep an eye on the new directions foreign interference is taking, including the weaponization of social media. Participant 7 said that the CCP has been very successful in using social media platforms such as WeChat and TikTok to manipulate Chinese people in the PRC and overseas. Participant 7 said that the CCP is now trying to use YouTube and Facebook to attack Falun Gong.

Participant 8

Participant 8 said that the Canadian government should develop more robust measures to protect against cyberattacks. Participant 8 said these measures could include enforcing cybersecurity laws, including increasing the severity of the penalties for the people involved and sanctioning the nations that sponsor cyberattacks. Participant 8 acknowledged that in practice, this is a difficult problem to tackle. Participant 8 said that the practical solution will begin with acknowledging the threat the CCP poses to Canadians and educating the public about this threat.

Participant 8 also recommended the closure of educational and cultural centers (e.g. Confucius Institute) in Canada that propagate CCP ideology and narratives in Canada that contribute to the repression of diaspora communities, such as those who practice Falun Gong.