

# IPE and Law Enforcement: Understanding China's Abroad Law Enforcement Activities through an Internatinal Political Economy Perspective

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Western media and the academic literature have been increasingly discussing that the rise of criticisms towards the existing international order by the Global South countries has been attempted to be represented by the BRICS organization under the auspices of China especially following the 2008 financial crisis. Recent years have also shown a rise against international norms and principles constructed following the WWII. Those criticisms have also reflected themselves in the law enforcement sector. *China's rising international law enforcement activities* have been regarded especially by the Western officials and media outlets as a fundamental threat to the liberal democracies and the concept of rule of law as its domestic law enforcement activities have been regarded as extremely repressive. Within the framework of an accelerating competition between the USA and China and the increasing abroad activities of China, analyzing the future of law enforcement has been an urgent and necessary endeavour. Thus, this paper aims to explore China's impact on global law enforcement ecosystem through its strategies and implementations. It questions the motivations and mechanisms that China's Communist Party uses to impact global law enforcement environment. It will analyze this by looking at the Ministry of Public Security's (MPS) global activities abroad such as *bilateral police diplomacy*, *joint action plans*, *training for counterparts*, *the rise of Chinese overseas police outposts* and *the Lianyungang Forum* as an alternative law enforcement governance organization. For analyzing the scope of the Chinese effectiveness in the global law enforcement sector, the paper firstly discuss the Beijing's and MPS's vision for its role abroad. Then, it will demonstrate the types of MPS' overseas activities. After showing the Beijing's vision and types of activities, the paper will discuss its potential impact on the global law enforcement governance through a broad lense of international political economy. The paper argues that China has an increasing impact on global law enforcement sector even though its current is relatively limited. The paper also concludes that China's abroad activities regarding law enforcement are mediated through political economic factors such as constructing an alternative law enforcement governance model with an alternative interpretation of the concept of "the rule of law", prompted and legitimized by the individual countries' urgent needs to secure their national territory and the Chinese strategies to secure their officials, citizens and investments in the host countries. Thus, it concludes that the MPS' global efforts to implement the CCP's directive to "actively build a law enforcement security cooperation system with Chinese characteristics" are conceptualized through Chinese political economy interests and strategies. Finally, it argues that by trying to provide alternative governance model and an alternative technological infrastructure for other states, China has the ability to impact the law enforcement practices globally towards a direction different from liberal democracies experiences and practices.

**Keywords:** global law enforcement, China, MPS, competition over law enforcement principles

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## I. Introduction

The literature on the rise of China has been accelerating in the last two decades.<sup>2</sup> One side of the literature has focused its attention on the political rise of China as the influence of political organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the BRICS have been seen as increasing in global politics. The other side of the literature has considered the economic expansion of China based on the increasing global investments all around the world and the huge scales of manufacturing in China. Regarding the discussions of the rise of China's political and economic engagement and importance, the literature on the US-China competition has also accelerated in the last decade especially following the 2008 financial crisis. While neo-realist scholars have defined the US-China competition as inevitably leading to the harsh confrontations between the two powers<sup>3</sup>, liberals have argued that the accelerating confrontations will be harmful for the both sides.<sup>4</sup>

As a part of the discussion of the US-China competition, Western media outlets and the academic literature have been increasingly discussing that the rise of criticisms towards the existing international order by the Global South countries has been attempted to be represented by the BRICS organization under the auspices of China especially following the 2008 financial crisis. Recent years have also shown a rising criticisms against international norms and principles constructed following the WWII. According to the Western media coverage, those criticisms towards the established **organizational bodies have also reflected themselves in the global law enforcement sector**. Within this scope, international media coverage has been increasingly interested in the digital surveillance technologies implemented in China and exported into other countries by China.

Given the US-China competition discussions and the rise of China on the global scale, it has been important to understand how China's influence on the global law enforcement ecosystem reflects itself. Thus, the purpose of this article is to understand and analyze the impact of China on global law enforcement ecosystem. In order to analyze its impact, the article firstly discusses the China's vision regarding the security and law enforcement. Secondly, the article will attempt showing the

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<sup>2</sup> Graham Alison, *Destined for war: Can America and China escape Thucydides's Trap?*, Houghton Mifflin, (2017).; Cliff Kupchan, 'US-China: The Cool War', Eurasia Live, September 4, 2019, accessed May 1, 2023, <https://www.eurasiagroup.net/live-post/us-china-cool-war>; Andrew A. Michta, 'Bipolarity Is Back', *The American Interest*, January 17, 2020, accessed May 5, 2023, <https://www.the-american-interest.com/2020/01/17/bipolarity-is-back/>; Richard Maher, 'Bipolarity and the Future of US-China Relations', *Political Science Quarterly* 133(3), (2018), pp. 497-525; Lin Linim and Wang Xuan, 'The US and China: A New Bipolar World', *Contemporary International Relations* 30(1), (2020), pp. 1-8; 阎学通 [Yan Xuetong], '2019开启了世界两极格局' ['2019 opened the bipolar world'], *现代国际关系* [Contemporary International Relations] (1), (2020), pp. 6-8.; Robert D. Kaplan, 'A New Cold War Has Begun', *Foreign Policy*, January 7, 2019, accessed July 1, 2023, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/01/07/a-new-cold-war-has-begun/>; Lawrence J. Haas, 'US must prepare for cold war with China', *The Hill*, March 27, 2021, accessed July 1, 2023, <https://thehill.com/opinion/international/545215-us-must-prepare-for-cold-war-with-china>; Alan Dupont, 'The US-China Cold War Has Already Started', *The Diplomat*, July 8, 2020, accessed July 1, 2023, <https://thediplomat.com/2020/07/the-US-China-cold-war-has-already-started/>; Michael Lind, 'Cold War II', *National Review*, May 10, 2018, accessed May 1, 2021, <https://www.nationalreview.com/magazine/2018/05/28/US-China-relations-cold-war-ii/>; Aaron L. Friedberg, *A Contest for Supremacy: U.S., China, and a Struggle for Mastery in Asia* (New York: Norton, 2012), p. 1

<sup>3</sup> John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014).

<sup>4</sup> G. John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), p. 9.

mechanisms used by the Ministry of Public Security being under the auspices of the China Communist Party. Then, in the following section, the article will attempt contextualizing China's vision and mechanisms through an international political economy (IPE) perspective. This perspective will help understand the motivations, requirements and strategies for the Chinese leadership with a combined approach of the national and international scale of political economy.

## II. China's Security Vision

China's global law enforcement vision is a part of its broader national security vision, which was conceptualized in 2014 by the concept of "Comprehensive National Security".<sup>5</sup> With the introduction of this conceptualization, Chinese decision makers have demonstrated their approaches to the national security issue from more comprehensive perspective combining sovereignty issues and development interests within the same framework of national, regional and international scales.<sup>6</sup> In such a comprehensive understanding of security, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regards every issues encompassing traditional areas such as political security, territorial security, and military security, to new policy areas such as cultural security, scientific security and the security of China's overseas interests a matter of national security.<sup>7</sup>

As the first and primary component of the China's vision regarding the national security and global law enforcement, China has a clear understanding of increasing its influence globally in terms of global security and law enforcement processes. For this purpose, China has aimed at developing enhanced relationships with other states by providing a law enforcement infrastructure ranging from training, legal procedure and technology. Also it has aimed at the export of the law enforcement mechanisms that have been in the use for decades within China towards other countries through bilateral agreements, joint patrol cooperations and overseas service or police stations. Within the scope of comprehensive national security conceptualization, the issue of extraterritorial application of Chinese laws is a prominent subject for Chinese leadership. As Minister of Justice Fu Zhenghua has expressed in 2020, China gives importance to the creation of an international system for the extraterritorial application of Chinese laws.<sup>8</sup> This approach includes an understanding of improving the implementation of international standards and procedures for the extraterritorial application of existing laws and strengthening the judicial practice of law enforcement in foreign countries. According to him, this will help China to enhance its international influence in terms of judicial practice.

Secondly, China has a clear strategy of the creation of an alternative law enforcement ecosystem and value system for the processing and implementation in the global law enforcement ecosystem. Based on the threat evaluations by the Chinese leadership and its "Comprehensive National Security" vision, Chinese leadership aims at advancing new norms for global security governance.<sup>9</sup> In this regard, China has three main strategies for this objective. First of all, it actively participates into the existing institutional global organizations such as UNPOL and INTERPOL in order to have

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<sup>5</sup> Helena Legarda, 'China's new international paradigm: security first', <https://merics.org/en/chinas-new-international-paradigm-security-first>

<sup>6</sup> Katja Drinhausen and Helena Legarda, 'China's Anti-Foreign Sanctions Law: A warning to the world', <https://merics.org/de/kommentar/chinas-anti-foreign-sanctions-law-warning-world>

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Zhang Yi, 'Extraterritorial application of Chinese laws to be strengthened', <http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202001/22/WS5e27f2b9a310128217272ce3.html>

<sup>9</sup> Lindsey W. Ford, 'Extending the long arm of the law: China's international law enforcement drive', *Brookings*, 2021, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/extending-the-long-arm-of-the-law-chinas-international-law-enforcement-drive/>

an international presence to express its own principles giving an emphasis on the sovereignty rights of the nation-states and opening room for more robust internal security practices. Secondly, China uses international policy exchange and training activities for the imposition of its own values and principles into the counterpart countries. Thirdly, China has been attempting to create an alternative international law enforcement institutional structure, demonstrating itself in *the Lianyungang Forum*.

The Keynote Speech of Xi Jinping at the opening ceremony of the 86th Interpol General Assembly held in Beijing<sup>10</sup> has shown important arguments by the Chinese leadership for making reforms in the international security governance towards a more systemized, efficient and scientific system of "social management". This speech has sparked criticisms towards China by the democratic states. China has discontent with the concepts of the established international liberal democratic order such as individual rights, limits to state authority and the restricting and binding international law.<sup>11</sup> Thus, values of the international liberal order such as the rule of law and the protection of human rights are reevaluated by the Chinese leaders in order to construct alternative global governance in security issues.<sup>12</sup> In the version of Chinese vision, the supreme authority of the state has the legitimacy and the absolute sovereignty over its political and economic policies and strategies in a way which is unrestricted by international sanctioning or monitoring.<sup>13</sup> According to Jordan Link, the CCP gives its own definitions for the internationally established norms such as the rule of law and terrorism.<sup>14</sup> Regarding the rule of law, Huo Zhengxin, a law professor at the China University of Political Science and Law argues that the Western states have been frequently interfering the internal affairs of China through unilateral sanctions and long-arm jurisdictions. As a response to this interference by "law", Zhengxin argues that the spear of the rule of law needs to be accelerated.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, China has an active engagement in the norm-creating activities regarding the international technology standards. For this purpose, China has an active engagement at the the UN's International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and other international organizations regarding technology standards-setting issues.<sup>16</sup> In this regard, specifically China has several submissions to the ITU for international standards in surveillance technology since 2016.<sup>17</sup> Jordan Link also argues that Chinese global norm breaking behaviors have the potential to give encouragement for the authoritarian regimes<sup>18</sup> since the expansion of the China's vision into reshaping the global governance norms provides opportunities for governments to use illiberal practices. According to Link, Chinese leadership has a different domestic legal understading

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<sup>10</sup> Xi Jinping Attends Opening Ceremony of the 86th Interpol General Assembly and Delivers a Keynote Speech September 26, 2017, [http://md.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/zgyw/201709/t20170928\\_2617258.htm](http://md.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/zgyw/201709/t20170928_2617258.htm).

<sup>11</sup> Melanie Hart and Blaine Johnson, "Mapping China's Global Governance Ambitions" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2019), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/mapping-chinas-global-governance-ambitions/>

<sup>12</sup> Jessica Chen Weiss, "A World Safe for Autocracy?", *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2019, available at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2019-06-11/world-safe-autocracy>

<sup>13</sup> Freedom House, "Policy Recommendations: Transnational Repression," available at <https://freedomhouse.org/policy-recommendations/transnational-repression>.

<sup>14</sup> Jordan Link, 'The Expanding International Reach of China's Police', *Center For American Progress*, October 17, 2022, <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-expanding-international-reach-of-chinas-police/>

<sup>15</sup> Chen Qingqing and Xing Xiaojing, 'China passes its first foreign relations law in key step to enrich legal toolbox against Western hegemony', *Global Times*, June 28, 2023, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202306/1293344.shtml>.

<sup>16</sup> Sheena Chestnut Greitens, 'Dealing with Demand for China's Global Surveillance Exports', *Brookings*, April 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/dealing-with-demand-for-chinas-global-surveillance-exports/>.

<sup>17</sup> Anna Gross and Madhumita Murgia, "China Shows its Dominance in Surveillance Technology," *Financial Times*, December 26, 2019, <https://www.ft.com/content/b34d8ff8-21b4-11ea-92da-f0c92e957a96>.

<sup>18</sup> Jordan Link, 'The Expanding International Reach of China's Police'.

regarding the national security vis-a-vis the liberal democracies and a different interpretation of the term "rule of law" to mean the rule of law, being a political tool for the Chinese leadership in order to control the Chinese society in a way that is excluded from the accountability of the legal framework.

The third component of the China's global security and law enforcement vision is the protection of Chinese economic investments globally. This factor has increased in importance alongside the increasing activities of China's companies and citizens in foreign countries. For a specific concern for the Chinese leadership, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has led to new security challenges for the protection and maintenance of the investments. In order to secure China's investments along the BRI, Chinese leadership has a strategy of bolstering partner states' own capacity for securing their internal territories. Within this scope, China provides technological infrastructure and know-how to the partner states reflecting itself in the concept of "safe-city technologies" as a part of its intention to establish a multilateral law enforcement cooperation along the investment routes. Since 2012 when Xi Jinping came to power, the international influence of the Ministry of Public Security has increased alongside the grand vision of national security which showed itself in the "comprehensive national security" conceptualization in 2015 and the Global Security Initiative launched in 2022 its several international activities.<sup>19</sup> While China has an enormous amount of know-how regarding digital surveillance technologies thus giving it an important power to export its technologies to other states, the export of its surveillance know-how should be evaluated as a part of its global security vision.

### III. Mechanisms of China's Global Law Enforcement Vision

Within the scope of the "comprehensive national security" approach announced by the Chinese leadership, **the Chinese leadership, and the Ministry of Public Security (MPS)** as the agent for activities, have been using **several mechanisms** for the realization of its vision. Studies have mostly categorized these mechanisms through the number of partners such as unilateral, bilateral and multilateral, however this article adopts **a subject-based approach** to the mechanisms used by China in order to show the relative importance of all mechanisms. First of all, China uses bilateral and multilateral law enforcement cooperation agreements in order to increase its influence and finding solutions to the challenges on the ground for decades. These have included cooperation agreements, extradition treaties, bilateral meetings and joint patrol activities. Secondly, China uses law enforcement trainings in accordance with its grand vision and makes several investments in this direction such as the establishment of new subject-based police academies and the increasing capacity of the police academies for training foreign law enforcement officials. Thirdly, the export of the Chinese domestic security technologies has been an important part of the China's grand vision. The last two important mechanisms are respectively the approach to use the existing international institutions such as UNPOL and INTERPOL for its objectives and intentions and creating new global institutions such as *Lianyungang Forum* for the purpose of creating a law enforcement hub in order to promote the grand security vision with Chinese characteristics.

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<sup>19</sup> Tao Xu and Nan Yang, "Chinese Policing: Its History from a Legal Perspective", in Monica De Boer (dir.), *Comparative Policing from a Legal Perspective*, Northampton (USA), Research Handbooks in Comparative Law, 2018, 363-379.

## *A Law Enforcement Cooperation Agreements*

Under Xi Jinping administration, international law enforcement cooperation has become a key concern as the movements of China's interests and citizens have spreaded to the international realm. The Ministry of Public Security has become the important institutional agency of this new international mandate of the China's global security vision. Public Security International Cooperation Work Conference held in China on February 2017 emphasized the "internationalization of public security work" and the necessity for the creation of "actively build a law enforcement security cooperation system with Chinese characteristics."<sup>20</sup> China's cooperation agreements regarding the international law enforcement have increased over the past ten years. The content of these agreements were intelligence sharing, judicial coeoperation and joint police operations.<sup>21</sup> A report publicized in 2017 by the Mercator Institute for China Studies showed the spread of the Chinese law enforcement agreements. According to this report, the number of extradition treaties with other states has doubled under the Xi administration. This shows the importance given to the increasing capacity of the international reach of the Chinese national security agencies by the Chinese leadership.<sup>22</sup> According to the MERICS report, China has extradition treaties with 9 countries from the European Union such as France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Hungary, Greece.<sup>23</sup> Signing of the law enforcement cooperation agreement between China and Solomon Islands<sup>24</sup>. Regarding the content of the agreement, a joint statement well shows the focus of the Chinese leader Xi Jinping on the capacity building of the Solomon Islands' law enforcement sector.<sup>25</sup> Also, China has extended its agreement span towards the Europe. The readmission agreement signed with Switzerland in 2015 is a sign of the dedication of the Chinese leadership to increase its international reach and grip on its own citizens and dissidents over the globe.<sup>26</sup>

From 1997 to 2021, senior MPS officials held 114 bilateral meetings with foreign counterparts. Most of the meetings has been held under the Xi administration.<sup>27</sup> Following the Xi presidency, the term of stability maintenance as a topic of the MPS bilateral security meetings has doubled, showing the mutual understanding of the importance given to maintaining political and social stability.<sup>28</sup> According to the CAP database, the MPS has signed 51 agreements with 31 different foreign governments. These formal agreement sinclude protocols of cooperation, cooperation agreements, memorandums of cooperation, memorandums of understanding, cooperation documents and letters of intent for cooperation.

China has concluded bilateral agreements with Croatia, Serbia and Italy in order to conduct extraterritorial joint security patrols for the purpose of protectig Chinese tourists. As a result of

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<sup>20</sup> Lindsey W. Ford, 'Extending the long arm of the law: China's international law enforcement drive'.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> "China concludes 59 extradition treaties with foreign nations", Global Times, available at <https://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1204670.shtml>

<sup>23</sup> Thomas Eder, Bertram Lang, Moritz Rudolf, "MERICS China Monitor, China's Global Law Enforcement Drive", Mercator Institute for China Studies, 2017.

<sup>24</sup> Riyaz ul Khaliq, "Law enforcement cooperation promotes stability in Solomon Islands: China", available at <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/law-enforcement-cooperation-promotes-stability-in-solomon-islands-china/2943805>

<sup>25</sup> Damien Cave, "China and Solomon Islands Draft Secret Security Pact, Raising Alarm inthe Pacific," The New York Times, March 24, 2022.

<sup>26</sup> Safeguard Defenders, "Lies and spies – Switzerland's secret deal with Chinese police, December 9, 2020, available at <https://safeguarddefenders.com/en/blog/lies-and-spies-switzerland-s-secret-deal-chinese-police>.

<sup>27</sup> Jordan Link, "The Expanding International Reach of China's Police", Center For American Progress, 2022.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

these bilateral agreements, China has conducted joint patrols with these three countries' police forces. In addition to the bilateral agreements and activities, China has been conducting multilateral patrols along the Mekong Rivers since 2011 under the "China-Laos-Myanmar-Thailand Mekong River Joint Patrol Law Enforcement Operation." The Western media and state officials have been increasingly accusing China of operating its own illegal police stations.<sup>29</sup> <sup>30</sup> According to the Madrid-based NGO 'Safeguard Defenders'<sup>31</sup>, China has at least 54 undeclared and extraterritorial police stations in more than 30 countries. The report released by the Safeguard Defenders under the title of "110 Overseas – Chinese Transnational Policing Gone Wild" argues that those stations operate under the guise of providing diplomatic and consular services.<sup>32</sup> Most of the countries are European Union members such as Ireland, Germany and the Netherlands. Following the report by Safeguard Defenders, several countries in the West such as Canada, the United States, the Netherlands and Germany have started investigations regarding the examination of the accusations in the report.<sup>33</sup> Also, after the report, accusing China of operating illegal police service stations all around the world, the ministry of interior in Italy stopped its joint patrol activities with Chinese police officers in Rome, Florence, Naples and Milan.<sup>34</sup> These joint patrols had continued between 2016 and 2019 in Italy and they were suspended at the beginning of the pandemic in 2019. However, Serbian and Croatian officials have not accepted the accusations towards the China's illegal service activities through bilateral cooperations with them. They argued that the joint police patrols with Chinese police officers have no purpose other than the increasing the protection and communicational capacity of the Chinese tourists in both countries.<sup>35</sup> In this regard, "Safe Tourist Destinations" project between Chinese and Croatian police has been operating for a month during the summer season since 2018.<sup>36</sup>

## ***B Law Enforcement Training***

Law enforcement trainings have been one of the important mechanisms of the China's global security vision. China has intensely invested in the law enforcement training centers for giving courses to foreign law enforcement officials. These trainings and courses have been operated under the title of capacity building of the recipient country with a special focus on the stability and maintenance. The establishment of a new China-Association of Southeast Asian Nations(ASEAN)

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<sup>29</sup> Jacob Gu, "China Warns Its Citizens on 'Entrapment' by US Law Enforcement", Bloomberg, 2023, available at <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-07-10/china-warns-its-citizens-on-entrapment-by-us-law-enforcement?embedded-checkout=true>

<sup>30</sup> Nina Dos Santos, "China operating over 100 police stations across the world with the help of some host nations, report claims", CNN, 2022, available at <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/12/04/world/china-overseas-police-stations-intl-cmd/index.html>

<sup>31</sup> Safeguard Defenders, "230,000 Chinese 'persuaded to return' from abroad, China to establish Extraterritoriality", available at <https://safeguarddefenders.com/en/blog/230000-policing-expands>

<sup>32</sup> Oidtmann, Raphael: *Foreign Agents, Diplomatic Skirmishes and the Law on Diplomatic and Consular Relations: Extraterritorial Chinese Police Forces on European Soil*, *VerfBlog*, 2022/11/02, <https://verfassungsblog.de/chinese-police-stations/>, DOI: 10.17176/20221102-215629-0. <https://verfassungsblog.de/chinese-police-stations/>

<sup>33</sup> Italy stops joint police patrols with China - interior minister, Reuters, available at <https://www.reuters.com/world/italy-stops-joint-police-patrols-with-china-interior-minister-2022-12-19/>

<sup>34</sup> "Italy Stops Joint Police Patrols With China After Reports of Covert Overseas", available at <https://irvinejournal.com/World/6004>

<sup>35</sup> Sasa Dragojlo, "Serbia, Croatia, Deny Allowing Chinese Police Coercive Powers", available at <https://balkaninsight.com/2022/12/05/serbia-croatia-deny-allowing-chinese-police-coercive-powers/>

<sup>36</sup> "Joint Chinese-Croatian police patrol welcomed by tourists, locals", English News, available at <https://english.news.cn/20230811/9f415d15a43e453597ac576186c4ef1d/c.html>

Law Enforcement Academy in 2016 by the Yunnan Police College in Kunming and the arrangement of annual training course for African law enforcement officials in eastern Shandong province could be seen as important examples of the training investment by China. China's training programs have also included some specific courses such as railway security training.<sup>37</sup>

According to the data compiled by Center for American Progress, in the last two decades, the MPS has given 77 law enforcement training and courses to some countries in Asia (the largest share with almost 40 percent), Africa (holding second largest share with almost 35 percent), Latin America and the Caribbean, Oceania, Europe, the North America (only Mexico) and the Middle East (only Qatar).<sup>38</sup> The trainings are equipped with practical content with the corresponding state's urgent needs. Those trainings and courses were on issues such as stability maintenance, an euphemism for the control of protests and other forms of dissident activities and the active use of law enforcement technologies. Cyber and technological training materials have been increasing in amount for the courses given to the foreign countries' law enforcement officials by the China's MPS. According to CAP database, 12 countries such as Argentina, Armenia, Cambodia, Djibouti, Fiji, Indonesia, Malaysia, Panama, the Philippines, Tajikistan, Tunisia, and Uzbekistan have received 15 training sessions related to cyber issues since 2017.

### ***C The Export of the Security Technologies***

Chinese security bureaucracy has gathered several amounts of experiences in the field of the use of domestic security technologies for surveillance and forensic purposes. For the development of security technologies, China has several globally well-known technology companies such as Huawei, Meiya Pico, ZTE, Dahua and Hikvision. In this regard, Huawei plays an active role in China's global law enforcement activities. According to Sheena Chestnut Greitens,<sup>39</sup> Chinese surveillance technologies for policing and public security have been received in at least 80 countries all over the world. These surveillance technologies are within the scope of Safe City Solutions Projects developed by Huawei which provide functions such as collecting, integrating and analyzing data from a wide range of sources. Also, Meiya Pico gives technical training to police officers in more than 30 countries as well as its importance in the construction of "digital forensic laboratories" as part of China's BRI initiatives.<sup>40</sup>

### ***D The Engagement with the Existing International Law Enforcement Organizations***

As an active rule-breaking activities of the China, International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) provides a proper structure for China to express the inadequacy of the existing rules and institutional framework and the proposal for new norms and principles as alternatives for the inadequate current one. In addition to that, China actively engages with the existing Interpol institutional framework such as the Red Notice System in order to seize the dissidents and pursue its own interests. As a way of expanding its influence within INTERPOL, China has benefited the funding mechanisms of the organization. Especially following the election of Meng Hongwei as the president of the INTERPOL in 2016, China has increased its financial contribution to

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<sup>37</sup> Jin Zheng and Christine Lagat, "Kenyan police to visit China for railway security training", Xinhuanet, available at [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-05/24/c\\_137201302.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-05/24/c_137201302.htm)

<sup>38</sup> Jordan Link, 'The Expanding International Reach of China's Police'.

<sup>39</sup> Sheeba Chestnut Greitens, "Dealing With Demand For China's Global Surveillance Exports", Brookings, April 2020.

<sup>40</sup> Danielle Cave, Fergus Ryan and Vicky Xiuzhong Xu, "Mapping More of China's Tech Giants: AI and Surveillance", Australian Strategic Policy Institute, 2019, available at <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/mapping-more-chinas-tech-giants>



INTERPOL projects. The annual financial participation of China has increased from almost 2 million Euro in 2017 towards almost 4 million Euro in 2021.<sup>41</sup> Since 2000s, the China's active engagement with the UN peacekeeping operations has been on the rise. Annika S. Hansen has argued that China has been one of the most supportive states in the United Nations Police (UNPOL) activities.<sup>42</sup> In the last two decades, nearly 3000 Chinese police officers have participated into the peacekeeping operations.<sup>43</sup>

### ***E The Lianyungang Forum***

The Lianyungang Forum is a Beijing-led Global Public Security Cooperation Forum for the purpose of increasing cooperation among the law enforcement agencies globally. Although it was firstly designed for the coordination of the security-related issues along the BRI routes, its scope has been expanded into being a global security forum. The Lianyungang Forum was established and held firstly in 2015 by the Ministry of Public Security and The Jiangsu Security Association is the organizing body for the Lianyungang Forum.

Since its establishment, Chinese officials have been using the Forum in order to criticize the existing institutional framework and its principal procedures and propose an alternative way of global law enforcement cooperation. In this regard, in April 2022, Xi proposed the Global Security Initiative, calling on all countries to adapt to the profoundly changing international landscape in the spirit of solidarity, and address the complex and intertwined security challenges with a win-win solution.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, in the last Lianyungang Forum held on 17-19 September 2023, the Chairman of the China Association for Friendship, Chen Zhimin described the existing global security governance as inadequate in dealing with the escalating geopolitical conflicts and global competition.

## **IV. Contextualizing China's Vision and Mechanisms through IPE**

Looking at the China's leadership vision and mechanisms globally would not be enough in order to understand the impact of China on global law enforcement ecosystem since it will lack the perspective which will help understand the motivations, requirements, challenges of Chinese leadership and its counterparts. The article adopts the approach that the global activities regarding the law enforcement by China could be better understood through a political economy perspective. This perspective refers to the idea that both political economy strategies of the decision-makers and the domestic realities and necessities of the related country have cyclical and relational impact on the global activities of the state, considering the relative power and power capabilities of the state. In this regard, the article goes beyond a neorealist understanding when analyzing the Chinese activities specifically regarding the global law enforcement. Thus, the article adopts the approach that a political economy perspective provides more dynamic and relational understanding of the China's global law enforcement activities. While a neorealist approach would focus on that Chinese officials see a security requirements and the inevitable competition with the Western powers regarding the rise of its relative power capacities all around the world, political economy

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<sup>41</sup> Carine Pina, "China's International Police and Judicial Cooperation", IRSEM, 2023.

<sup>42</sup> Annika S. Hansen, "Operationalizing Conflict Prevention - The Role of United Nations Police", Policy Briefing, Center for International Peace Operations, July 2019, p. 4.

<sup>43</sup> UNPOL, "In Focus: Beijing hosts Senior Police Officers Course", October 30, 2018.

<sup>44</sup> Cang Wei, "Cooperation called on for security", Chinadaily, available at <https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202309/21/WS650b9205a310d2dce4bb6dd9.html>

perspective would also include the domestic political economy requirements as well as the international political economy dynamics into the analysis. In this regard, the article argues that China's political economy and the global IPE structure require Chinese decision-makers and also create several opportunities for China in order to be a pro-active designer of its own-defined security priorities. Based on the discussions of global competition of China with the Western powers and China's political economy requirements, Chinese decisions-makers have increasing motivations to actively get involved in the other countries law enforcement sectors. These motivations are mediated through China's own political economy requirements, structural global opportunities and global competition with the West.

For the motivations of the Chinese leadership in order to increase its influence on the global level in terms of the law enforcement activities, MERICS report provides three main factors. These are (1) the necessity to extend anti-corruption and counter-terrorism campaigns abroad to make them successful at home, (2) the growing exposure of Chinese citizens and investments to international crime and terrorism, and (3) the Chinese government's push for global governance participation and recognition as a 'responsible great power'. The necessity of being international for the implementation of the domestic policies such as anti-corruption campaigns has been one of the important drivers of the Chinese going global on law enforcement activities. In this regard, according to the Chinese leadership, the success of the international operations such as "Operation Fox Hunt" and "Operation Skynet" were regarded as being achieved only through an active engagement in international law enforcement cooperation. Also, as well argued by Thomas Eder, Bertram Lang, Moritz Rudolf, one of the reasons for the drives of the Chinese global law enforcement engagement goes hand-in-hand with the increasing global economic engagement of China's state, companies and citizens. The provision of physical protection for Chinese citizens and investments has been important especially following the Xi administration and the announcement of the BRI. Thus, security risks and challenges in foreign countries oblige Chinese officials to take precautions for the protection of its citizens and investments. In this regard, it is crucial to demonstrate that the way that China chooses in order to deal with these challenges and risks through law enforcement cooperation shows a sharp difference with the Western experiences which had focused its security relations through military forces. Also, China's focus on punitive and prosecutorial measures are in collision with the preventive perspective of the UN regarding the issues of terrorism, corruption and organized crime, having an approach to fight with political and socio-economic causes of these issues through transparency, strengthened institutions and empowerment of the civil society and local community. China's understanding of international cooperation on security issues focuses its attention as the agent of the process on and intergovernmental cooperation of the nation-states as a shift from the multi-stakeholder approach of the international community for the last four decades.<sup>45</sup> For the factor regarding being a responsible state, it is argued that the Chinese leadership needs to show itself as a responsible state to its own citizens and companies in order to show its power and interests to them and at the same time having legitimacy through the power of being a responsible state. Although all of these three factors counted in the MERICS report have important credibilities in order to understand the China's global law enforcement drive, here the article would add some other dimensions for better understanding the China's drive.

With the help of the contextualization of the IPE perspective, this section argues that China's global law enforcement vision and mechanisms are mediated through its own domestic political economic interests and requirements. China has its own way of governing and policy making vis-a-vis the

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<sup>45</sup> Thomas Eder, Bertram Lang, Moritz Rudolf, "MERICS China Monitor, China's Global Law Enforcement Drive".

Western values and practices. It has its own political economic conditions and geographical and demographic realities. As the first dimension, China has an unemployment challenge. Chinese global investments are partially triggered by the solution of the unemployment problem domestically when we look at the numbers that Chinese workers are located into the global investments of Chinese companies. While considering the security challenges domestically and abroad, the Chinese leadership has a great amount of motivation to take into account the unemployment challenge of China and its potential short-term and long-term consequences for the regime. Thus, Chinese global law enforcement activities are not only triggered by the increasing influence in world politics vis-a-vis the Western powers, but also the Chinese leadership has a great concern and impulse to increase its international reach in its global law enforcement activities. As the second dimension, related to the above unemployment problem, China has a economic growth challenge. Given the accelerating competition and regionalization practices of the trade relations, China necessitates trade routes and activities being maintained globally. Feldstain suggests that the Chinese-sourced AI technology receiving states are likely to be signatories of the BRI. This demonstrates the importance given to the protection of the global investments. The idea and the struggle of protecting the investments are mediated through the growing challenge of the Chinese leadership and society. Also, the discussions regarding the shift in the growth model of China from a export-oriented model towards a more central point given to the increase of the domestic consumption help partially in order to explain the increase of the China's global law enforcement reach. In a growth model based on the idea of increasing the global purchasing power of the national currency and the rise of the domestic consumption through an import-approach from other countries, the protection of the transportation routes has the primary concern of the Chinese leadership.

As the third dimension, China has a one-party government, which is the Chinese Communist Party. Thus, it is highly sensitive to the democratic demands. It is a red-line for the Chinese leadership. It is partially for this reason that China focuses on economic relations with the counterpart countries and has no principal perspective regarding the political systems in other countries. As the fourth reality, regarding its political system, China has a global legitimacy challenge. The engagement through global law enforcement activities help it to legitimize its own way of policy-making. Thus, through its law enforcement mechanisms discussed earlier, Chinese leadership tries to legitimize its own domestic practices in international level. In this regard, capacity-building activities such as the establishment of domestic security technologies, law enforcement trainings and legal procedural engagements applied in other countries have a real impact on the ground for the counterpart countries. Also, it is likely to have an increasing impact for the construction of alternative norms in global law enforcement ecosystem. In this regard, Polyakova and Meserole argue that the China's motivations in order to export surveillance technologies are not restricted to security and economic concerns. It also aims at constructing political leverage against the West.

It is important here to demonstrate the motivations of the of the China's counterpart countries. Firstly, the Western-China (or BRICS) bipolarity or increasing multipolarity of the world politics create new political economic opportunities for the third countries. The rise of China's global power capacities offers alternative ways in the political economy decisions of the related countries. The process of the increasing influence of China regarding the global law enforcement activities also depends on the willingness and the pros-cons determinations of the related states. As discussed in the literature, there are three main policy strategies regarding taking positions against the USA-

China competition such as balancing strategy, bandwagoning strategy and hedging strategy.<sup>46</sup> Thus, the China's impact will be effected by these strategies. This can be exemplified by looking the distinguished decisions by Ital on one side and Croatia and Serbia on the other side regarding their responses towards the reports accusing China of operating overseas illegal police stations. Furthermore, these strategies are affected by the political economy and growth considerations of the decision makers as it can be shown in the example that countries along the BRI routes are more inclined towards the Chinese law enforcement drive. Secondly, the dimension of demands in adopting China's technology by the recipient side provides an important edge for understanding the impact of China's law enforcement drive. In itself, the demand dimension includes the political economic considerations of the recipient states, reflecting itself on the idea of the necessity of domestic security for attracting the domestic and international capitals for investments and political stability. It is the idea that this technology would help them solve the local security challenges which will help them economic development through attracting investment and political stability through public safety. In this regard, Chinese technology firms and state officials offer a crucial infrastructural and theoretical base for the recipient states.

## V. Conclusion

China has been increasing its global influence in international economic activities as well as the international policital cooperation. This influence has sparked a huge discussions especially in the Western media as it is described as a fundamental challenge to the Western values and norms also the global order. Confronted with criticisms and accusations, the Chinese leadership defends itself sometimes by criticizing the inadequacy and inefficiency of the established global institutions and sometimes by highlighting the colonial and emperial Western background and global inequalities all around the world. Within this scope, it has been increasingly important to understand the reflections of these discussions into the global law enforcement ecocosystem. For this purpose, this article has discussed the China's vision, mechanisms and motivations regarding its global law enforcement drive in order to understand the impact of this drive. As a metholody for understanding the impact, the article has demonstrated that the inclusion of the IPE perspective into the discussions of the China's law enforcement drive would help better understand it as it gives the methodological equipments providing dimensions such as the considerations of domestic political and economic necessities and realities, strategies of China and the counterpart countries.

The article has provided a comprehensive perspective for analyzing the Chinese law enforcement activities and its current and future impact globally. After discussing the Chinese leadership vision and national securirty perspective especially in the last decade, the article has shown five main mechanisms that the CCP, through the Ministry of Public Security, has been using for increasing its influence in global law enforcement ecosystem. In the last section, the article has adopted an IPE perspective in analysis in order to include the political economic requirements and dynamics for both China and the countries whom China has been in relation to. This section can be regarded as an overview of this perspective and open to new discussions and improvements.

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46 Jenn-Jaw Soong (2022): The Political Economy of Asian States and Their Development Strategies under USA-China Power Rivalry: Conducting Hedging Strategy on Triangular Relation and Operation, The Chinese Economy, DOI: 10.1080/10971475.2022.2136689

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