

*Speech given by Christine Lin, Creative Director at Friends of Falun Gong,  
Monday July 15 at the rally in front of the Chinese Consulate, NYC.*

July 20th will be the 20th anniversary of the persecution of Falun Gong. On that day in 1999, the Chinese regime announced that it would do whatever it takes to eradicate this peaceful spiritual practice and the people who follow it. In one moment of hatred, it turned the entire society against upstanding members of society. Using economic pressure, police force, and slanderous propaganda, it has spent billions of dollars in an attempt to destroy the spirits of innocent people.

The Chinese regime thought that it would be able to make quick work of a group of unarmed meditators. In fact, they anticipated that it would take 3 months. But it has been 20 years. And not only has it failed to change the faith of the people, it has exposed its true nature. The world no longer has any doubt that it is a cruel and evil regime. Little did they know that the truth is stronger than their lies, and that faith outlasts the iron fist of a totalitarian regime.

To put into context what 20 years of persecution feels like, a baby born to Falun Gong practitioners in or before 2001 would have now reached adulthood knowing nothing but persecution. Many such young people have lost their parents due to torture, or are living in terror of losing all prospects for a normal future. In China, if a demographic you belong to is targeted by the CCP, it can ruin everything for you. Social control, high-tech surveillance, and rule by terror combine to form the stifling reality of living in China.

This is the world the Chinese regime envisions not only for its own people but for all the parts of the world that it tries to dominate. By threatening or bribing foreign governments and companies, it has tried to buy our silence. Those who kowtow to Beijing become complicit in all its crimes. We now know more and more about what the Chinese Communist Party does to prisoners of conscience: labor camps, brainwashing centers, forced organ harvesting. We in the free world have no excuse not to act.

Falun Gong practitioners around the world have tirelessly worked to spread the truth about the persecution, and increasingly the world's people are standing by them. The resistance has been admirable. Many of the people in the audience today have survived the worst of the persecution. Others have not personally experienced those horrors, but have shown up at events like these every year. They have all been persistent in their advocacy. This is the way to resist an evil regime—fighting lies with truth has proven to be incredibly impactful. Even as ordinary citizens we have tremendous power.

For those of you encountering this issue for the first time, I encourage you to learn more, and join the chorus of voices calling for an end to the persecution. We are standing at the crossroads of history. Do we choose to stand up to the evil and defend the freedom of belief of other people, or do we choose to stay silent in the face of a little human interest? The path we choose will define the future of our civilization. America is the beacon of freedom in this world. If we don't stand up, who will? I hope that you will share articles online about what you've learned today. Please visit us at Friends of Falun Gong, [fofg.org](http://fofg.org). You can also find us on Facebook and Instagram. Every little bit of knowledge we can spread will help to put pressure on the Chinese regime.