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**CHINA'S POLITICS 2009 IN REVIEW:
AN INCREASINGLY CONFIDENT CHINESE LEADERSHIP**

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The China Policy Institute, part of the School of Contemporary Chinese Studies at The University of Nottingham, was set up to analyse critical policy challenges faced by China in its rapid development. Its goals are to help expand the knowledge and understanding of contemporary China in Britain, Europe and worldwide, to help build a more informed dialogue between China and the UK and Europe, and to contribute to government and business strategies.

Executive Summary

1. China has fared exceptionally well compared to most countries in 2009. It quickly recovered from the global economic crisis and is now on the way to robust growth.
2. The 60th anniversary parade held in Beijing awed audiences with its impressive display of military might and precision marching, showcasing a country beaming with exuberance and confidence.
3. Global power politics is shifting towards a new structure with China as a key player. This was evident in the perceived "diplomacy of deference" during President Obama's first state visit to China.
4. Despite initial worries about China's grave unemployment situation and social instability at the beginning of the year, Beijing has succeeded in boosting its economy and creating jobs to maintain a stable domestic environment.
5. The Urumqi riots in Xinjiang, however, revealed China's deep-rooted ethnic tensions intertwined with religious issues in border areas. This called into question the underlying principles of the Party's "ethnic policies."
6. To improve its image before the Copenhagen Climate Summit, China declared that it was targeting a hefty 40-45% cut in carbon intensity-the amount of carbon dioxide emitted per dollar of GDP-by 2020.
7. China has spent lavishly on its media sector this year to make it into one of the key public diplomacy outlets for enhancing China's "soft power" and improving its international image often marred by human rights and environmental concerns.
8. The global economic crisis has undermined the influence of pro-market liberals in China. The "New Left" has been given a shot in the arm.
9. Contrary to widespread expectations, Xi Jinping was not appointed vice chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) at the Fourth Plenum.

10. The process to groom candidates for the sixth generation leadership has started. As the two youngest provincial party secretaries, Hu Chunhua (胡春华) and Sun Zhengcai (孙政才) are regarded as possible core figures in the sixth generation leadership.
11. Having consolidated their power in their second term, the Hu-Wen leadership is now directing anti-corruption efforts at apprehending more senior political figures. So far, a dozen ministerial-level officials are under investigation or in jail.
12. The Party's high-profile battle against corruption peaked in southwest Chongqing, the largest megalopolis in the world, with a massive crackdown known as "*dahei*" (fight triads), a crackdown that implicated hundreds of millionaires, gangsters, and even police officers.
13. The year 2010 should be less eventful for the Chinese government due to the absence of critical events on the domestic agenda. Still, social tensions as well as economic challenges will continue to test the leadership's crisis management capability.

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ZHENG Yongnian, CHEN Gang & LYE Liang Fook *

G-2 and China's Enhanced Role in Global Power Politics

- 1.1 The year 2009 was tough for most political leaders in the world, but not really so for China's. While the global financial crisis has greatly diminished the influence of the world's economic superpower, the USA, China has quickly recovered from the initial shocks and is now on the way to a robust growth.
- 1.2 Domestically, one sees very few signs of real economic recession in China today, thanks to the government's huge stimulus package. The massive layoffs from its export industries in late 2008 had not led to mass protests or serious social unrest, as was originally feared. Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao have emerged from this crisis as increasingly confident and capable leaders. Their rising confidence is clearly manifested in the magnificent military parade in Beijing at the 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic on October 1, 2009.
- 1.3 Year 2009 also marked the 20th anniversary of the Tian'anmen Square crackdown, an event in which China was subsequently slapped with harsh sanctions by the western world, as well as the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, which ushered in an era of unparalleled US dominance.
- 1.4 Twenty years thereafter, global power politics experienced another once-in-a-generation revolution towards a new world structure with US President Obama's

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first state visit to China seen as a new “diplomacy of deference”¹ due to his conciliatory tone used.

- 1.5 Much has changed in China in these twenty years. China will soon be the world’s second largest economy after USA in nominal terms, and is now the largest exporter,² with more outward investment flowing to overseas markets.³ With its growing economic strength, China’s political status in the international arena has been uplifted with an increasingly noteworthy role in critical global security issues involving North Korea, Iran and Sudan, and in issues involving global warming, international financial stability and energy shortage.
- 1.6 To indicate the increasing importance of Sino-American relations in the new world power structure, the term G-2 (Group of Two) was raised by some Americans⁴ during the global financial crisis; there were expectations from the international community of the need for China to assume a larger international leadership role.
- 1.7 To improve its image in global climate politics before the Copenhagen Climate Summit, China declared that it was targeting a hefty 40-45% cut in carbon intensity-the amount of carbon dioxide emitted per dollar of GDP-by 2020. On the currency issue, China was steadfast about its stance, calling the foreign pressure for a stronger Renminbi “unfair.”⁵
- 1.8 In domestic politics, while Beijing continues to be troubled by a chain of intractable problems like poverty, corruption, pollution and human rights, the leadership has displayed more confidence than before about its legitimacy thanks to the quick recovery from the global financial crisis.

¹ Geoff Dyer and Edward Luce, “A wary willingness,” *Financial Times*, 19 Nov. 2009, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/801443aa-d559-11de-81ee-00144feabdc0.html>

² “China becomes world largest exporter for first time,” *China Daily*, 26 Aug. 2009.

³ China’s overseas direct investment rose 190 percent year-on-year in the third quarter of 2009, bringing total investment for the first nine months to US\$32.87 billion, according to figures from China’s Ministry of Commerce.

⁴ Champions of the G2 format in the United States included Robert Zoellick (President of the World Bank and former United States Deputy Secretary of State as well as U.S. Trade Representative) and former U.S. National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski.

⁵ “Wen labels renminbi pressure ‘unfair’,” *Financial Times*, 30 Nov. 2009, http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/65a7a78e-dd77-11de-9f8b-00144feabdc0.html?ftcamp=rss&nclink_check=1

- 1.9 Despite worries about China's grave unemployment situation and social instability at the beginning of the year, Beijing has succeeded in boosting the economy and creating jobs to maintain a stable domestic environment. The Urumqi riots in Xinjiang, however, revealed deep-rooted ethnic tensions intertwined with religious issues in border areas and called into question the underlying principles of the Party's "ethnic policies."
- 1.10 China's fast-growing online community is exerting strong influence over the setting of the political, economic and social agendas. To enhance Internet regulation, the government issued a directive requiring all personal computers to be installed with the filtering software called "Green Dam," but such an effort failed because of public rage.
- 1.11 The global financial crisis has significantly undermined the credibility of pro-market liberals in China and provided avenues for the "New Left" to voice their concerns. As a result, there is a shift in the Chinese government's policy from an all-out growth mantra towards a more European-style social-market paradigm that stresses social security, equity and environmental protection.
- 1.12 A surprise in elite politics is that Xi Jinping failed to secure the position of vice chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) at the Fourth Plenum in September. Xi had been widely expected to enter the CMC at this plenum to cement his status as the heir-apparent to Hu. Ten years ago, Hu, then vice president, was named CMC vice chairman at a similar party meeting.
- 1.13 Having consolidated their power in their second term, Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao are now shifting anti-corruption efforts towards apprehending big-timers to clean up the Party, with about a dozen ministerial-level officials investigated or jailed over the year.
- 1.14 While power competition among leaders will continue, the leadership is determined to push the reform further. The recent economic conference has set the policy guidelines for the coming year. Meanwhile, the leadership has also begun to establish agendas for the 12th Five-Year-Plan.

Gaining Confidence with Greater Crisis Management Capability

- 2.1 Beijing is gaining more self-confidence from the successful handling of major challenges in the aftermath of the global financial crisis. As in every other country, the economy is China's No. 1 concern in 2009. Its export-oriented economy was seriously affected by the sudden shrink in external demand at the beginning of the year; social stability was at stake when tens of millions of migrant workers became jobless and millions of university graduates could not find employment.
- 2.2 Through a massive stimulus package focused on large-scale infrastructure construction and easing of the monetary policy, Beijing has succeeded in boosting the economy at a better-than-expected rate and creating sufficient jobs to maintain a stable domestic environment. In the middle of 2009, a shortfall in labor resources even occurred in some coastal regions as both the domestic and world economies were registering positive growth.⁶
- 2.3 The year 2009 was politically sensitive as it not only marked the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the PRC, but also the 90th anniversary of the May Fourth Movement, the 20th anniversary of the 1989 Tian'anmen student movement and the 50th anniversary of the Dalai Lama's exile. The ruling party faced increasing political pressure from human rights activists and western countries for more civil rights and political freedom.
- 2.4 However, none of these sensitive dates brought substantial trouble to the leadership. Displaying its newfangled weaponry including nuclear missile carriers and rocket launchers at the 60th anniversary parade, Beijing showcased the CCP's achievement in its modernizing efforts and the country's military and economic strength in the international society, thus consolidating the party's legitimacy. The display of military might was a clear indication that Beijing still looks at the world from a real politic perspective.
- 2.5 To placate the public's long-time complaint of an ailing health care system, the Chinese government in April unveiled a much anticipated blueprint aimed at

⁶ "Labor shortfall felt in coastal China as orders pile up," *China Daily*, 27 Aug. 2009, http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/bizchina/2009-08/27/content_8624701.htm

establishing a functioning health care system by 2020. After years of high-rate economic growth, the government is now more funded than before to improve the medical, education and pension systems.

- 2.6 To kick start the health care reform, the central and local governments will spend 850 billion RMB (U\$124 billion) by 2011, in addition to the regular health budget of 227 billion RMB established in 2007.⁷ The new spending is additional to the 4 trillion RMB stimulus package. The blueprint shows that the government is ready to play a greater role in providing basic health care. The new commitment is in accordance with the Hu-Wen leadership's concept of building a "harmonious society" and a divergence from the neoliberal ideology of the state retreating from the health care sector.
- 2.7 China has spent lavishly on the media sector this year to make it into one of the key public diplomacy outlets for enhancing China's "soft power" and improving its international image often marred by human rights and environmental concerns.
- 2.8 State media such as Central China Television (CCTV), Xinhua News Agency and *People's Daily* reportedly received up to RMB 15 billion (\$2.19 billion) respectively for ambitious schemes of global expansion.⁸ Xinhua began offering English-language television service in Europe this year.⁹
- 2.9 Xinhua and other Chinese media outlets also have ambitious plans to expand their overseas bureaus. The CCTV launched Russian and Arabic channels this year. The *Global Times*, a nationalist and popular tabloid owned by the Party's print mouthpiece, the *People's Daily*, launched an English version earlier this year.
- 2.10 The global financial crisis, while bad news for employment in the western world, provided a rare opportunity for China to attract global talent. Institutions of both central and local governments sent their teams on recruitment trips to London, Chicago, New York and other metropolises in the western world.

⁷ For details of the health care reform, please refer to "China Moves to Reform its Health Care System," Zhao Litao & Huang Yanjie, *EAI Background Brief* No. 486, 22 Oct. 2009.

⁸ Zhang Xiaoling, "Chinese State Media Going Global," *EAI Background Brief* No. 488, 5 Nov. 2009, p. 1.

⁹ "China state news agency to air in Europe: official," *AFP News*, 30 Jun. 2009.

- 2.11 At the central level, the Chinese government launched an initiative at the end of last year to hire 1,000 top-notch overseas professionals. The central government offers these professionals RMB 1 million each as a post-tax subsidy.¹⁰ The task force is headed by Li Yuanchao, head of the Party's Organization Department.
- 2.12 Local governments on the other hand are more interested in attracting entrepreneurs and engineers in high-tech industries like telecommunications, renewable energy, environmental protection and biological technology. Major cities like Beijing and Shanghai are now able to offer high living standards and globally competitive salaries.

Elite Politics: Grooming the Next Generation and Cleaning up Corruption

- 3.1 A surprise in elite politics is that there was no word on the appointment of Xi Jinping (born in 1953) as the first vice chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC) at the Fourth Plenum in September. Xi was widely expected to enter the CMC at this plenum to cement his status as the heir-apparent to Hu. Ten years ago, Hu, then vice president, was named CMC vice chairman at a similar party meeting.
- 3.2 It appears that Xi, being a "princeling," is not Hu Jintao's favorite choice as future successor, so the delay in Xi's appointment might bring him greater pressure from his competitors such as Executive Vice Premier Li Keqiang (李克强), Hu's protégé, and Chongqing Party Secretary Bo Xilai (薄熙来).
- 3.3 The delay may also signal that the military is not yet comfortable with Xi or that the Party leadership has other important issues to settle, such as cracking down on corruption and weathering the global economic slowdown, before personnel issues could be addressed.¹¹

¹⁰ "China Absorbs Overseas Talent," *China Today*, 27 Sep. 2009, http://www.chinatoday.com.cn/ctenglish/se/txt/2009-09/27/content_219762_4.htm

¹¹ "China's Xi Not Named to Party Military Commission," *Bloomberg News*, 19 Sep. 2009.

- 3.4 Although Xi has been pressured to double his effort in his climb up the paramount position, there was no imminent danger of him losing his “crown prince” status. According to the plenum communiqué, only Hu and Xi made major speeches at the four-day conclave. In time-honored CCP tradition, this signifies Xi’s formidable clout.¹²
- 3.5 It is noteworthy that in terms of personnel policies, the plenum resurrected late patriarch Deng Xiaoping’s dictum about “grooming cadres from the five lakes and four seas.”¹³ Three years from now, a batch of high-ranking officials will have to retire and their current posts will be taken over by fifth generation or even sixth generation cadres.¹⁴ The Party thus now faces a very urgent task of grooming potential leaders in the next five to ten years.
- 3.6 It is almost certain that after 2012, Xi Jinping and Li Keqiang (李克强), both born in the 1950s, will be the core figures of the fifth generation leadership, and supported by other prominent figures including current CCP Organization Department Chief Li Yuanchao (李源潮), Chongqing Party Secretary Bo Xilai (薄熙来), Vice-Premier Wang Qishan (王岐山) and Guangdong Party Secretary Wang Yang (汪洋).
- 3.7 Indeed, grooming candidates for the sixth generation leadership has started. They would be those mostly born in the 1960s and those who would most likely assume major positions at the 20th Party Congress in 2022 according to Chinese political conventions.
- 3.8 China watchers place Hu Chunhua (胡春华), former governor of Hebei Province and Sun Zhengcai (孙政才), former agriculture minister, as possible core figures of the sixth generation leadership. Both aged 46, Hu and Sun were respectively transferred to Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region and Jilin Province, respectively, in November to be the Party Secretary. They are the youngest provincial chiefs in current China’s officialdom.

¹² Willy Lam, “CCP 17th Central Committee Plenum Skips Xi Jinping and Inner-Party Democracy,” *China Brief*, Vol. 9, No. 19, Sep. 24, 2009, p. 3.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 4

¹⁴ From 1949 to 1976, Mao Zedong was the core of the first generation leadership; from 1976 to 1992, Deng Xiaoping was the core of the second generation leadership; from 1992 to 2003, Jiang Zemin was the core of the third generation and since 2003, Hu Jintao has been the core figure of the fourth generation leadership.

- 3.9 Like Li Keqiang, Hu Chunhua also comes from the Communist Youth League, Hu Jintao's old bailiwick. Hu Chunhua's special advantage compared with his peers is his two-decade working experience in the remote Tibet Autonomous Region. This experience tallies with the Party's current personnel preference for grassroots-level and backward region experience. Before entering the Political Bureau, Hu Jintao himself was the Tibetan Party Secretary for four years.
- 3.10 Sun Zhengcai's background is very different from that of Hu Chunhua. With a PhD, he is an expert on agriculture having graduated from a research institute on agriculture and forestry. In 2006, he was appointed as the agriculture minister and became the country's youngest ministerial-level official.
- 3.11 While promoting young cadres with integrity and ability, the Party has been taking harsh actions throughout the year to clean out corruptive officials. The government is now shifting its anti-corruption work from catching small fries to big-timers amidst the public's growing concern about the transparency of the 4-trillion-yuan stimulus package to revitalize the economy.
- 3.12 In 2009, about a dozen ministerial-level officials or SOE (state-owned enterprise) leaders were investigated or jailed on corruption charges, many of them involving large sums or embezzlement of up to tens of millions of RMB.
- 3.13 The Party's high-profile battle against corruption peaked in southwest Chongqing, the largest megalopolis in the world, with a massive crackdown known as "*dahei*" (strike at the triads), a crackdown that implicated hundreds of millionaires, gangsters, and even police officers. The campaign has put the spotlight on organized crime and how it has infested local bureaucracy and businesses through bribery, extortion, blackmail and violence.¹⁵
- 3.14 However, there has been no sign that the Party is ready to invite the media and public to supervise senior officials. Despite high social expectations that the Party was preparing to establish a system of publicizing the assets of government

¹⁵ "China cracks down on Chongqing's gangsters," *CNN News*, 22 Oct. 2009.

officials at the Fourth Plenum in September,¹⁶ no concrete measures were mentioned in the relevant documents.

Ethnic Conflicts and Social Tensions

- 4.1 Triggered by an earlier small-scale fight between Han and Uyghur workers thousands of miles away in Shaoguan, Guangdong Province, China's deadliest ethnic violence in decades broke out between the Uyghurs and Han Chinese on 5 July 2009 in Urumqi, capital city of the northwest Xinjiang Autonomous Region. With a death toll of 197, most of whom were Han Chinese, the Urumqi riots revealed deep-rooted ethnic tensions intertwined with religious issues in the border regions like Xinjiang and Tibet and called into question the underlying principles of the Party's "ethnic policies."
- 4.2 The riots, called by some Chinese commentators as the Chinese version of "9/11," have taken Beijing by surprise and shocked the top leadership. It was so serious and crucial that President Hu Jintao had to cut short his Europe tour and cancel his participation at the G8 summit. Such an abrupt change in a paramount leader's diplomatic activities is rare in Chinese history, implying that other leaders including Premier Wen Jiabao and heir-apparent Xi Jinping were not in a position to handle the crisis without Hu, the only leader empowered to mobilize and coordinate civil security and military forces.
- 4.3 Immediately after the riots, the Chinese government opened the restive region to foreign media but censored online sources of information and suspended cell phone services in Xinjiang. The western media continued its biased reports on the riots in Xinjiang but refrained from China bashing this time.
- 4.4 Despite the government's effort to restore calm to Xinjiang after the riots in July, hundreds of local people were reportedly stabbed by hypodermic syringes in the following two months in Urumqi, which spurred protests in the already tense communities due to conflict between the Han and Uyghurs. To placate public anger

¹⁶ "Party demands full asset disclosure to curb graft," *China Daily*, 21 Sep. 2009.

over the inaction of local government, the authorities sacked Urumqi Party Secretary Li Zhi and Xinjiang police chief Liu Yaohua.

- 4.5 Beijing has practised preferential policies in favor of minorities in a number of areas. In education, minorities have priorities in college admission; in family planning, minorities are allowed to have more than one child; in legal affairs, minority suspects receive lenient treatment. These preferential policies have heightened the ethnic consciousness of the minorities and the majority Han Chinese, sharpening the ethnic divide.
- 4.6 The CCP's policy on religion in Xinjiang has manifested grievances within the Uyghur community, which is largely Muslim. Offence is taken at any attempts by the government or other ethnic groups to constrain their religious practices such as fasting. But the CCP has been adamant about controlling religious activities, especially in Xinjiang and Tibet.
- 4.7 While the Chinese government has invested a lot in Xinjiang in the past decades with the intention of improving the minorities' economic wellbeing, it has failed to diminish the income gap between different ethnic groups. The modern industries brought by the Hans have depressed many traditional Uyghur handicraft industries and commerce.
- 4.8 To the Uyghurs, rapid economic growth has only benefitted the Hans while making them victims of Han exploitation. While the government has spent billions of dollars in Xinjiang on infrastructure and welfare projects, and a huge amount of fiscal subsidies from the Beijing have gone to the minority areas to support those projects, the Uyghurs do not take kindly to these efforts.
- 4.9 Long-established social tension and grievances not only exist between different ethnic groups, but also were aggravated within the dominant Han Chinese group. In June, a chef's mysterious death in the Shishou city of central China's Hubei Province led to the outbreak of one of the largest riots in China in several months, with around 70,000 angry residents taking to the streets and fighting security forces with bricks and bottles. The deputy governor of Hubei province rushed to

Shishou, and army troops from Yueshan in Henan province were deployed to the area.

Looking Ahead to 2010

- 5.1 In contrast with year 2008 that threw the spotlight on the Beijing Olympics, 2009 was a year of anniversaries. 2010 seems less challenging for the Chinese government due to the absence of critical events on the domestic political agenda. With economic recovery on track, the CCP will be much more assured this year about the employment and social stability situation in the country.
- 5.2 Ahead of the 18th National Party Congress in 2012, the CCP is expected to speed up reshuffling of provincial leaders to make room for the new generation of cadres born in the 1950s and 1960s. Provincial units have long served as the training ground for national leaders.¹⁷ Provincial leaders who reach the retirement age of 65 or have stayed in one position for ten years will have to step down.
- 5.3 Xi Jinping, the likely successor to the top leadership, is expected to be elected Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission at the Party's annual plenary session in 2010. Otherwise, his heir-apparent status will be questioned with the succession issue remaining open.
- 5.4 Li Keqiang, Hu Jintao's crony, faces serious challenges too. Li is in charge of healthcare reform. No substantial progress has been made so far. A breakthrough in this area will certainly be a career boost for him to succeed Wen Jiabao in a few years' time.
- 5.5 For 2010, the government is likely to continue to face grim social challenges. In spite of its confidence on the economic front, Beijing is becoming less efficient in carrying out social policy reforms in the fields of healthcare, affordable housing, pension and education, with vested interests increasingly becoming major obstacles.

¹⁷ Bo Zhiyue, "China's New Provincial Leaders: Major Reshuffling Before the 17th National Party Congress," *China: An International Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 1, Mar. 2007, p. 2.

- 5.6 Ethnic tension is likely to prevail and be a time bomb in the country's border regions like Xinjiang and Tibet. After Xinjiang's riots in July, the central government has not made any significant changes to its ethnic policy.
- 5.7 As China is still in its long process of transformation, social conflicts are inevitable. Armed with its experience of crisis management and a huge fiscal surplus, the government is well equipped to placate public grievances.

**APPENDIX A CHRONOLOGY OF SELECTED DOMESTIC EVENTS IN CHINA IN
2009**

5 Jan	The Ministry of Public Security and six other central agencies launched a month-long campaign against websites that “spread pornography and threatened the morals of young people.”
3 -12 Mar	The Second Session of the 11 th Chinese People’s Political Consultative Committee convened in Beijing.
5-13 Mar	Deputies to the Second Session of the 11 th National People’s Congress endorsed Premier Wen Jiabao’s report that focused on promoting economic and social development. Wen set the target of 8% GDP growth this year.
6 Apr	The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CCP) and the State Council jointly issued the Guidelines on Deepening the Reform of the Healthcare System. By 2020, China aims to have a basic health-care system that provides “safe, effective, convenient and affordable” health services to urban and rural residents.
13 Apr	The State Council Information Office unveiled the National Human Rights Action Plan of China (2009-2010).
22 Apr	According to the National Anti-Pornography and Anti-Illegal Publications Office, Chinese authorities launched a nationwide crackdown on illegal and pornographic publications, destroying over 46 million items. (On April 12, a national crackdown was also launched on obscene audio-visual products where nearly 3 million discs were confiscated over a 10-day period).
23 Apr	In a ceremony marking the 60 th Anniversary of the founding of the People’s Liberation Army Navy, President Hu Jintao pledged that China’s armed forces, including the navy, while pursuing modernization would never seek hegemony, nor would it turn to military expansion or arms races with other nations.
25-29 Apr	In their third round of talks, Chen Yunlin (President of China’s Association of Relations Across the Taiwan Straits) and Chiang Pin-kung (Chairman of Taiwan’s Straits Exchange Foundation) signed three agreements on opening regular flights, boosting cooperation in finance and cracking down on crime.
29 Apr	Taiwan’s Health Minister Yeh Ching-chuan announced that Taiwan has been

	invited as observer at the 62 nd Session of the World Health Organization annual assembly.
28 Apr	President Hu Jintao issued a call to step up inspection and quarantine measures to prevent swine flu from spreading to China and ensure public health and safety. The State Council also stipulated measures including a direct reporting system that focused on early discovery, early reporting, early diagnosis, early quarantine and early treatment.
10 May	Deng Yujiao stabbed a local Party official to death in Hubei after the latter demanded for sex. She was subsequently released given the outpouring of public sympathy for her plight and widespread indignation at the audacity of the local Party official.
16-23 May	Representatives from China and Taiwan gathered at an unofficial week-long cross-Strait forum and carnival in Xiamen.
17 May	According to an estimate by the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), about 600,000 supporters led by the DPP protested in Taipei against President Ma Ying-jeou's policy of improving economic ties with China.
5 Jun	A fire broke out on a bus in Chengdu, claiming 27 lives and injuring dozens. Police did not rule out terrorist involvement. Several major cities raised their security alert following this incident.
9 June	In an apparent bid to fight online-pornography, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology required all computers produced or sold in China after 1 July 2009 to be installed with a filtering software known as "Green Dam." This requirement was subsequently repealed.
9 Jun	A massive anti-terrorism drill was launched in several cities in China, a sign of tightened security in the lead-up to the 60 th anniversary celebrations of the founding of the People's Republic of China.
5 Jul	Riots by Uyghurs against Han Chinese unexpectedly broke out in Urumqi. An estimate put the death toll at 197 and 1,680 injured.
11-12 Jul	The fifth Cross-Strait Economic, Trade and Culture Forum kicked off in Changsha (Hunan province). Going beyond economics, the forum focused on cooperation in the areas of media, culture and education.
12 Jul	The CCP issued regulations to promote Party officials' accountability and the honesty of state-owned enterprise leaders, as well as strengthen inspection

	work inside the Party.
26 Jul	Taiwan leader Ma Ying-jeou was elected KMT Chairman with a landslide win of 93.87 percent of votes.
30 Aug – 4 Sep	The Dalai Lama was granted a visa to visit Taiwan to pray for the victims of Typhoon Morakot.
5 Sep	Urumuqi Party Secretary Li Zhi was removed from his post. Li's removal came after Han Chinese protested over lapses in public security following a series of hypodermic syringe stabbings in the city.
11 Sep	Former Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian was sentenced to life in prison after a Taiwan district court found him guilty of corruption and money laundering.
15-18 Sep	The 4 th plenum of the CCP focused on the theme of party building particularly the fight against corruption. The much anticipated elevation of Xi Jinping to vice chairman of the Central Military Commission did not occur.
1 Oct	Beijing staged an impressive military parade involving high-tech China-made weapons and precision marching to mark the 60 th Anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.
22 Oct	The National Bureau of Statistics announced that China's GDP growth hit 8.9 percent in the third quarter, bringing China's growth in the first nine months to 7.7 percent. With the latest figures, China looks set to achieve the full-year growth target of 8 percent.
29 Oct	A spokesman for China's People's Liberation Army Navy announced that China will dispatch its 4 th navy flotilla to the Gulf of Aden to escort merchant vessels to protect them from pirate attacks.
3 Nov	Xie Caiping, a gang leader in Chongqing, was sentenced to 18 years jail for operating gambling dens, harboring drug users and bribing officials. Her co-defendants also received jail sentences.
6 Nov	At an international forum to mark the 60 th Anniversary of the founding of the People's Liberation Army, Hu Jintao reiterated China's commitment to adhere to the peaceful exploitation and use of airspace.
9 Nov	Hu Shuli, chief editor of <i>Caijing</i> (China's most influential business magazine), had resigned. Her resignation came after a spate of mass resignations over moves by <i>Caijing's</i> parent company, the Stock Exchange Executive Council,

	to tighten control over the outspoken magazine.
12 Nov	Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao visited snow-ravaged Shijiazhuang, capital city of Hebei, and urged local authorities to put people's livelihood as top priority.
14 Nov	At the sidelines of the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, Hu Jintao met Lien Chan in their respective party capacities. The two leaders agreed to start the consultation process for a cross-Strait Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement within this year.
26 Nov	China's Health Ministry announced that officials are strictly prohibited from concealing, omitting or delaying reports of Influenza A (H1N1) deaths and that those who do so will be held accountable.
5 Dec	In the county magistrate and mayor elections in Taiwan, the KMT saw its share of votes decline (from 50.96 per cent in 2005 to 47.86 percent now) while the DPP experienced an increase in the share of votes (from 38.2 percent in 2005 to 45.32 percent now). The DPP also regained control of Yilan which it lost to the KMT in 2005.
5-7 Dec	China's Central Economic Work Conference reaffirmed the need to continue with the proactive fiscal policy and moderately easy monetary policy to consolidate China's economic recovery in 2010. It also stressed the importance of pressing ahead with economic restructuring by boosting domestic demand.