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HU JINTAO FIRMLY IN COMMAND: THE SIXTH PLENUM OF THE 16TH CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY

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SUMMARY

The Sixteenth Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) concluded its 6th Plenum on 11 October. The plenum released an important political document on building a harmonious socialist society. It also announced that the CCP's 17th national congress will be held in autumn, 2007. All signs show that Hu Jintao is now firmly in command.

Despite the high profile dismissal of Shanghai Party Secretary Chen Liangyu a few days before the plenum, no further personnel changes took place during the plenum, for the sake of leadership stability. Understandably, media control during and after the plenum was unusually tight, to avoid any potential political fallout or social disorder.

Beneath the veil of this tight media control, the Chinese leadership appears set to embark on far more aggressive reforms, which seem set to head on a different trajectory from before. In the past few years, the Hu leadership has struggled to shift the priority from the previous single-minded pursuit of GDP growth to a more balanced development model that focuses on social justice. With the endorsement of the Central Committee, the Hu leadership has firmly established 'Building a Harmonious Socialist Society' as the goal of the party in years to come. This concept is in the process of becoming Hu's signature legacy.

The concept subtly replaces Jiang's policy to 'build a well off society' (*xiaokang shehui*) by the year 2020. The leadership is aware that the whole idea of a 'harmonious society' is grounded in China's continuing push for economic development. However, the emphasis is now on the *sustainability* of development.

So far, two new policy measures connected to the 'harmonious society' blueprint have surfaced. The first is the plan to expand China's existing public feedback apparatus. Public feedback channels are also set to be made more transparent in the process. The other measure is to suppress the activities of the so-called 'special interest conglomerates'. This refers to the State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) that have become huge monopolies. These conglomerates operate on their own market rules and are deemed responsible for widening the existing disparities in China today.

Enforcement now becomes the key to success. Economic reforms in past decades have given rise to localism, as popular national policies are often met with strong local resistance. To make matters worse, local strong men like Chen began to challenge the legitimacy of centrally made policies. The Hu leadership faces the challenge of keeping China's unruly political elites in line so that its policies can be effectively implemented. The dismissal of Chen is a positive sign that increasingly strong local resistance is being curbed.

Hu has largely presided over major personnel decisions at the provincial level, including personnel changes in the ranks of provincial party secretaries and governors, the key actors for policy implementation. Over the last few years, many cadres with a background in the Chinese Communist Youth League (CCYL)—a well-connected network to which Hu himself belongs—have been appointed to important positions at the provincial level.

Personnel changes at the provincial level are particularly meaningful for Hu's long-term plan for power succession. With the placement of CCYL people in provincial leadership positions, Hu exponentially expands his potential support base within the Central Committee, where the provincial party secretaries and governors usually form the largest bloc. In the year ahead, all spotlights will be upon power succession, and especially upon potential rising stars in the CCP such

as Li Keqiang, Li Yuanchao and Liu Yandong, among others. Major personnel changes are expected within the Political Bureau and fresh blood is expected to be introduced during the 17th Party Congress in 2007.

Hu still faces some tough challenges in the year ahead. The leadership is now expected to deliver its promises. But this may be a more difficult task than it appears as local interests remain deeply rooted. Barring a structural overhaul in China's central-local relations, the leadership will still have to rely heavily on local leaders to reach out to the grassroots.

An even more difficult issue is power succession. Hu—not a strong man—has first to provide the conditions for the current members of the Political Bureau Standing Committee to exit 'gracefully', and then to balance different interests, not only functional interests but also factional ones, in lining up the future leadership. Without an institutionalized mechanism, let alone a democratic procedure, Hu is also facing the daunting challenge of effecting a smooth power succession.

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Setting the Stage for Firm Control

- 1.1 Two days after the dismissal of Shanghai Municipal Party Secretary Chen Liangyu over alleged corruption that jolted the news media into a frenzy, Beijing announced, in a low-key manner, that the 6th Plenum of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Central Committee was to be held on 8-11 Oct 2006. The timing and the uncharacteristically short notice of this announcement signalled the wrapping up of top political wheeling inside *Zhongnanhai*, and the beginning of a new political era under Hu Jintao's firm command.
- 1.2 Even though the Chen Liangyu event is the key reason for the tight media control in the lead up to this year's plenum, Hu Jintao's reservations about the media – as opposed to the more liberal and transparent approach adopted by Jiang Zemin – presumably plays a part as well. This has initially raised a lot of uncertainties regarding the commitment of the Hu leadership to continuing China's reforms.
- 1.3 Beneath the veil of this tight media control, however, the Chinese leadership appears set to embark on far more aggressive reforms, which seem to be headed on a different trajectory from before. Since coming to power in 2002, the Hu leadership has struggled to shift the priority from the previous single-minded pursuit of GDP growth to a more balanced development model that focuses on social justice. To achieve this policy turnaround at all levels of party organisation and government, Hu has first to consolidate, and then expand his power base within the regime.
- 1.4 This year's plenum can thus be understood as a transition from the first stage to the second. It was centred on two themes. An explicit theme is to put the idea of a 'harmonious society' into actual practice, while the implicit one is personnel changes in preparation for power succession in the long-term. The two themes are closely related, since personnel changes, especially those between the central-provincial levels, serve to 'set the house in order'. This is in order to make sure that central policies are dutifully implemented at the lower levels of government.
- 1.5 In the year ahead, all spotlights will be upon power succession, especially upon the potential rising stars in the CCP – Li Keqiang, Li Yuanchao, Liu Yandong, Xi Jinping, Bai Kemin, Bo Xilai, and Liu Yunshan, among others. At stake were the seats in the Political Bureau of the Central Committee in the CCP. Some turnover is expected within the Political Bureau and fresh blood is expected to be introduced during the 17th Party Congress in 2007.

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- 1.6 Landing a position in this elite circle of China's politicians would give these individuals a massive head start in getting into the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau, and maybe even grabbing the coveted prize to succeed Hu as the party boss in the important 18th Party Congress to be held in 2012.
- 1.7 Policy-wise, the centrepiece of this plenum is the document entitled 'Decisions by the CCP Central Committee on the Major Issues of Building a Harmonious Socialist Society'. The significance of the document, and its corresponding themes, is underlined by the fact that it was read in the Political Bureau meeting which also announced the plenum, and approved by the Central Committee during the plenum. Ideological debate aside, the 'harmonious society' concept looks set to become institutionalised as *the* policy orientation, if not the signature, of the Hu-Wen legacy.
- 1.8 More significantly, this was the first time after Hu came to power in 2002 that he displayed firm political control. Effectively, China's 11th Five-Year Plan (FYP), proposed during the 5th Plenum in October 2005, was Hu's first shot at pushing his own policy program.¹ Yet, his face-off with Jiang Zemin's legacy continued, as the new policy package was resisted by older administrators and factional politicians.
- 1.9 Now, with the removal of Chen from Shanghai, Hu has more manoeuvring space in the Political Bureau to build up a stronger support base, as positions in the Political Bureau are now open for competition among those rising stars, some of whom are regarded as Hu-loyalists. At the same time, he is sending a very clear signal to any doubters still left out there, of his leading position amongst his peers – the Hu Jintao era has finally arrived.

Calmness before the Storm

- 2.1 Prior to Beijing's official announcement, the 6th Plenum was widely anticipated to take place in early October – as it had in previous years.² Yet, as the month approached, there was very little sign that the plenum was being convened. Tight control imposed upon media reports added more secrecy, and raised expectations as well, to the ongoing backroom negotiations within Beijing's elite group of powerbrokers. Hu's 'mid-term' congress is fast approaching (the 17th Party Congress). In order to secure a positive legacy, Hu has only a short time to introduce substantial changes to the party and to the country.
- 2.2 By far the most crucial matter is how Hu will deal with issues related to power succession. With the institutionalisation of public offices, Hu is expected to step down as CCP party secretary and State President after two terms in office – following the example set by Jiang Zemin, and in accordance with China's Constitution – thus, it should be during the 18th Party Congress in 2012. The 6th Plenum had therefore been seen as an important juncture for Beijing's power succession plans, especially when no major personnel changes were made in the previous plenums.

¹ For an analysis of the 11th Five Year Plan, see, Yongnian Zheng, 'The New Policy Initiatives in China's 11th 5-Year Plan', *Briefing Series*, Issue 1 (Nottingham: China Policy Institute, November 2005).

² 'Mid-October Date Anticipated for the 6th Plenum', *Wen Wei Po* (Hong Kong), 12 September 2006.

- 2.3 Even with his departure from public life, Jiang's legacy continues to be felt at all levels of the party and government. Individuals associated with, and appointed by, Jiang during his tenure have remained in office. Meanwhile, Jiang's pro-business, pro-development policy orientation has led to the rise and polarisation of vested interests within Chinese society. Altogether, they pose formidable resistance to Hu's pro-redistribution policy.
- 2.4 Resistance was apparent at the local level. The interests of local party cadres and government officials are, more often than not, deeply rooted in local economic activities, especially the local property development market. Their involvement provided strong impetus to the resistance of central policies. Since the interests of the local cadres and officials are intrinsically interdependent, provincial leaders can hardly be expected to take central guidance seriously.
- 2.5 The Shanghai Municipal Government, in particular, led the pack in retarding policy implementation. For example, when the State Council went ahead with new macroeconomic controls to cool the economy in 2004, the Shanghai Municipal openly went against the policy by declaring that no overheating had in fact taken place.³ Likewise, in Jiangsu, central macroeconomic controls met with little success. Jiangsu's party secretary, Li Yuanchao, even if deemed an important CCP Youth League figure and Hu's close associate, dallied upon central guidelines, and when pressed to act, did little more than carry out token actions like closing the Ben Steel Company.⁴
- 2.6 It became quite apparent by the second half of 2005 that Hu had decided to make a case out of the defiant Shanghai party boss. Rumours concerning Chen's removal had been rife since autumn 2005, when Liu Yandong, another of Hu's associates from the CCP Youth League, was tipped to replace the out-of-favour Shanghai party secretary.⁵ This plan did not materialise, as Hu was presumably not able to reach a compromise with Jiang at that time.⁶
- 2.7 However, beginning in July 2006, signs indicated that a compromise was finally achieved. In that month, 'The Selected Works of Jiang Zemin' (three volumes) was published and endorsed by the highest level of the leadership. This tribute to China's former leader cleared the way for Hu to carry out broader changes – especially on personnel matters – with 'due respect' to and concordance with Jiang and his interest circle. Then, in late August 2006, a commentary was published in the *People's Daily* linking Chen, anonymously, to an alleged corruption case involving Zhu

³ Leslie Foong, 'Leadership Dispute Over China Growth', *Straits Times*, 10 July 2004.

⁴ One of the key targets of the centre's macroeconomic plan is China's bloated steel industry, which fuelled local economic overheating. While the State Council has made it very clear to provincial governments that they should stop approving plans for new steel plants, and either halt or scale down the operations of existing ones, provincial leaders often pay only lip-service to the central directives. The Ben Steel Company in Jiangsu, for example, is a privately-owned steelworks that played an insignificant part in Jiangsu's steel industry. Li closed the company as a mere token to central directions. For more evidence of central-local tensions, see 'Central's Stern Questioning: Bold Moves to Discipline Unlawful Local Governments', *Xinhua News*, 9 October 2006.

⁵ 'President Seeks First Lady for Shanghai', *The Times*, 19 August 2005.

⁶ As recently as April 2006, when Jiang was invited by Shanghai Jiaotong University to celebrate the university's 110th birthday, the university's banner – intentionally or otherwise – continued to call Jiang 'State President'. These events give the impression of two coexisting power centres in China, one centred in Beijing (Hu), with the other in Shanghai (Jiang). They add to the controversy surrounding the role of Jiang in China's politics, even though he relinquished all his official posts in 2004. See 'Shanghai Jiaotong University's Banner: Welcome, "President Jiang"', *Ming Pao*, 08 April 2006.

Junyi, director of Shanghai Social Security Bureau.⁷ These set the stage for Chen's eventual dismissal, which took place on 25 September 2006.

- 2.8 The removal of Chen as the party secretary of Shanghai Municipal served at least three functions: first, it delivered a stern warning to local leaders who were erstwhile singing different tunes to get into line or risk being disposed of; second, it opened up vacancies, both in the Political Bureau and in Shanghai Municipal, to be filled by those in favour of Hu's cause; and three, it helped to solidify Hu's policy of 'harmonious society' by proving his commitment to anti-corruption measures.
- 2.9 More significantly, Chen's dismissal went a long way towards showing that Hu is now the *de facto* 'number one' in China. Chen was a member of the Political Bureau and closely related to Jiang Zemin, and to Huang Ju, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau and core of the so-called Shanghai Gang. It is a huge step, indicating the direction in which China's on-going power succession is heading. To a great degree, it resembles Jiang Zemin's dismissal of Chen Xitong in 1996. Chen Xitong was a close associate of the former Premier of the State Council, Li Peng, and was a member of the Political Bureau. Chen's dismissal paved the way for Jiang to take firm control of the politics inside *Zhongnanhai*.

Building a 'Harmonious Society'

- 3.1 The idea of a 'harmonious society' is now just short of being institutionalised in the CCP's charter (like the case of Jiang's 'Three Represents'), a fact supported by the document, 'Decisions by the CCP Central Committee on the Major Issues of Building Harmonious Socialist Society', which was approved by the Central Committee during the 6th Plenum. This concept is in the process of becoming Hu's signature legacy.
- 3.2 'Harmonious Society' is apparently not a new concept in Hu's administration. It has been in incubation since the 4th Plenum in 2004, took its current form during the 5th Plenum in October last year, and is reflected in the policy guidelines delineated in China's 11th Five-Year Plan, approved during the *lianghui* in March this year.⁸
- 3.3 The concept is an extension of Hu's 'pro-people' leadership style. At its core, it calls for a drastic reorientation from the development-first strategies implemented by Deng Xiaoping and Jiang, to a return of people-centred policies aimed at addressing the mounting social problems that China faces today.
- 3.4 Earlier, Deng operated under the principle of 'get-rich-first'. The state of the poor became a secondary priority in Deng's plans, embodied by the slogan, 'to get rich is glorious'. Then Jiang pushed Deng's directives to an extreme, as the Chinese state evolved to become what the scholarly community called a 'developmental state': a state that plays a key role in pushing economic development. It was under Jiang that GDP growth became the single most important performance indicator for local government officials; when the capitalists were invited to the CCP party

⁷ Lu Gaofeng, 'Exactly How Much Public Funds were Appropriated? A Revelation by the Shanghai Social Security Scandal', *Renmin Ribao (People's Daily)*, 29 August 2006.

⁸ See, Zheng, 'The New Policy Initiatives in China's 11th 5-Year Plan'; Yongnian Zheng, Zhengxi Wang and Sow Keat Tok, 'China's National People's Congress 2006: Policy Shifts Amidst Growing Dissatisfaction With Existing Development Patterns', *Briefing Series*, Issue 7 (Nottingham: China Policy Institute, March 2006).

membership; and when private properties were granted constitutional protection.

- 3.5 But after more than a decade of the ruthless, single-minded pursuit of GDP growth, the Chinese leadership is finding it necessary to step back from its previous mode of economic development. Undesirable consequences, like income disparities and environmental degradation, are today affecting not only economic growth itself, but also social stability. Hu began to turn the wheels of China's economic growth in a different direction when he first rose to power.
- 3.6 Evidence of this change is the subtle replacement of Jiang's time-table to 'build a well off society' (*xiaokang shehui*), enshrined during the 15th Party Congress in 1997, with Hu's aim to 'build a harmonious society'. In the communiqué issued after the 6th Plenum, 'harmonious society' is given unrivalled attention, and is set to be achieved by the year 2020 – the same year targeted for the realisation of Jiang's *xiaokang* society.⁹
- 3.7 The leadership is, however, aware that the whole idea of a 'harmonious society' is grounded in China's continuing push for economic development, as the communiqué asserts 'the need to use development as a solution to solve developmental problems'.¹⁰ The emphasis is now on the *sustainability* of development.
- 3.8 The present aim of the approach of so-called 'scientific development' is, in essence, to 'strike a balance' in Beijing's various policies. More specifically, it raises the importance of social justice in the pursuit of China's long-term development, in terms of more even distribution between different regions and different social groups, of economic, legal and political rights.
- 3.9 Since the political base of the CCP continues to rest in China's rural regions, rural problems were tackled first. The idea of 'building a new socialist countryside' was pushed in the 11th FYP and during the *lianghui* of 2006, when economic benefits were redistributed to China's underdeveloped regions through the building of infrastructure, education subsidies, the provision of medical services, etc.

Encouraging Social Participation and Tackling Disparities

- 4.1 The blueprint for a harmonious society is slowly surfacing. Among various measures under discussion, two new items are particularly noteworthy. The first is the plan to expand public feedback apparatus.¹¹ China currently does not have in place extensive, open, transparent and institutionalised feedback mechanisms (e.g. direct elections) that allow different social groups – especially less privileged ones such as farmers, rural workers, and workers – to articulate and aggregate their interests. The existing system of '*xinfang*' (petitioning) is plagued with bureaucratic red tape and political back-peddalling, and is ineffectual in carrying out its intended task.

⁹ 'Communiqué for the 6th Plenum of the 16th Central Committee of the CCP', *Xinhua News*, 11 October 2006.

¹⁰ The exact words used are '必须坚持用发展的办法解决前进中的问题' (*bixu jianchi yong fazhan de banfa jiejuo qianjin zhong de wenti*). Ibid.

¹¹ 'China to Improve and Expand Channels for the Articulation of Public Interests', *Xinhua News*, 05 October 2006.

- 4.2 As social grievances run high following Beijing's long period of negligence, the task of expanding the public feedback apparatus becomes imminent. Similar to the policy of making administrative procedures more transparent (*touming xingzheng*), public feedback channels are set to undergo changes.
- 4.3 Meanwhile, more social participation is encouraged through the expansion of current democratic institutions at the local level. These policies aim to improve accountability and build better governance.¹² While not quite as ideal a solution as more institutionalised and nation-wide feedback methods would be, the expansion will help to temporarily address current failings by translating more public opinion into proper political action.
- 4.4 The second major development is the new pledge to suppress the activities of the so-called 'special interest conglomerates' (*teshu liyi jituan*). These conglomerates mainly refer to those state-owned enterprises (SOEs) that were formed under the strategy of '*zhuada fangxiao*' (literally 'grasp the big, drop the small', figuratively, it means 'to invigorate large enterprises while relaxing control over small ones', or, 'focus on the restructuring of major enterprises and leave minor ones to fend for themselves'), implemented during Zhu Rongji's premiership (1998-2002).
- 4.5 Over the years, many of these enterprises have outgrown their original scope and size. Owing to their powerful economic capacity, and the lack of effective corporate governance, these enterprises end up forming huge monopolies in the Chinese economy.
- 4.6 In their own closed market setting, these conglomerates operate according to their own rules, which are hardly in line with market principles. Price-fixing is a major concern, and this affects social and economic equity both at the consumers' as well as the producers' ends. Prices are often inflated to feed the needs of the employees of these monopolies; whereas a graduate in a major coastal city earns an average of about 2000RMB per month, it is revealed that a highway toll collector working for a monopoly earns as much as 8000RMB.¹³ This adds to the disparities that China faces today.
- 4.7 Corruption, cronyism, profiteering activities, etc, have greatly exposed the need for more monitoring and accountability. Corporate social responsibilities need to be enforced, and a sense of 'fairness' instilled. The highly dissatisfied masses need to be placated – and fast – or there is a risk of a further increase of social tension in China.
- 4.8 In the light of this, the high-profile sacking of Chen Liangyu is once again no coincidence. It is an intentional indication of future firmer action against all activities that pose obstacles to the vision of a 'harmonious society'. Its message is, even a member of the Political Bureau is not spared from prosecution, much less individuals in China's public and private sectors.
- 4.9 To take a wider view, these activities took place within the context of the ongoing debate on developing methods of 'good governance', which Beijing is keenly in favour of. As ideological dogma becomes less

¹² 'Premier Wen: Direct Elections Should Reflect Conditions of the State', *Ming Pao*, 07 September 2006.

¹³ 'China to Implement Measures to Suppress and Prevent the Growth of "Special Interest Conglomerates"', *Xinhua News*, 05 October 2006.

convincing in the current post-Cold War climate, the sustainability of the CCP regime will now have to depend on an institutionalised, and thus reliable, governance structure, legitimated in one way or another.

Personnel Changes: Facilitating Policy Implementation and Power Succession

- 5.1 After the dismissal of Shanghai Party Secretary Chen Liangyu, although new personnel appointments in the Political Bureau were widely expected, none actually occurred during the plenum. This was so partly because the Chen case is still under investigation, and partly because Hu seeks to stabilise the top leadership as it braces itself for the aftershocks of Chen's downfall. Even so, the removal of Chen was significant in terms of the renewal of provincial-level leaders and the preparation for power succession in the forthcoming party congress.
- 5.2 Extensive personnel changes have taken place at the provincial level over the past 4 years. Older provincial leaders were gradually retired to give way to a crop of younger leaders in their mid-50s to early-60s. Most of them are university graduates (some have postgraduate degrees), and have practical experience in either local administration, the state bureaucracy, or with the party set-up (See Table 1).
- 5.3 In the party structures and state ministries, the renewal process is also in progress. Many of the new personnel, like Liu Yandong and Liu Yunshan from the Working Departments of the Central Committee, and Bo Xilai and Zhou Yongkang from the state ministries, were appointees who took over their current offices only after the 16th Party Congress.
- 5.4 Particular attention is given to those who owe their rise in fortunes to their work in the CCP Youth League (*zhongguo gongchandang qingnian tuan*, or *gongqingtuan*; individuals associated with this group are conveniently labelled as *tuanpai*), a lineage shared by none other than State President Hu himself (see Table 2). They form a network of relations that rests on their common experience in rural administration, political mobilisation, and party affairs.
- 5.5 However, be it due to personal loyalty, group identity, or professionalism, all these personnel changes have established an ordered hierarchy through which central command can be effectively transmitted to the local or ministerial level. Compared to the leadership structure Hu inherited when he first came to power, the command structure is now clearer and more firmly established, allowing Hu to push ahead with his policy plans.
- 5.6 Hu will certainly take this into consideration in his plans for power succession (see Appendix III: Composition of the Political Bureau). At the same time as he promotes his close associates into the Political Bureau, he will have to balance the nomination list with both functional – technocrats whom he can trust to carry out his policies – as well as factional interests.

Table 1: List of Provincial Leaders and Their Affiliations

Municipal/Province/Region	Party Secretary	Mayor/Governor
Anhui	Guo Jinlong (郭金龙) ◆	Wang Jinshan (王金山) ◆
Beijing Municipal	Liu Qi (刘淇) ◆⊕	Wang Qishan (王岐山) ◆
Chongqing Municipal	Wang Yang (汪洋) ◆▲⊕	Wang Hongju (王鸿举) ◆
Fujian	Lu Zhangong (卢展工) ■	Huang Xiaojing (黄小晶) ◆
Gansu	Lu Hao (陆浩) ■◆	Xu Shousheng (徐守盛) (Acting) ■◆
Guangdong	Zhang Dejiang (张德江) ◆	Huang Huahua (黄华华) ◆▲
Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region	Liu Qibao (刘奇葆) ▲⊕	Lu Bing (陆兵) ◆
Guizhou	Shi Zongyuan (石宗源) ◆	Lin Shusen (林树森) (Acting) ■◆
Hainan	Wang Xiaofeng (汪啸风) ◆	Wei Liucheng (卫留成) ◆
Hebei	Bai Keming (白克明) ◆■	Guo Gengmao (郭庚茂) (Acting) ◆
Heilongjiang	Qian Yunlu (钱运录) ◆▲	Zhang Zuoji (张左己) ◆■
Henan	Xu Guangchun (徐光春) ◆■	Li Chengyu (李成玉) ▲
Hubei	Yu Zhengsheng (俞正声) ◆	Luo Qingquan (罗清泉) ■
Hunan	Zhang Chunxian (张春贤) ◆⊕	Zhou Qiang (周强) (Acting)▲
Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region	Chu Bo (储波) ◆	Yang Jing (杨晶) ▲■
Jiangsu	Li Yuanchao (李源潮) ▲⊕	Liang Baohua (梁保华) ◆
Jiangxi	Meng Jianzhu (孟建柱) ▲■⊕	Wu Xinxiong (吴新雄) (Acting) ◆
Jilin	Wang Yunkun (王云坤) ◆	Wang Min (王珉) ◆⊕
Liaoning	Li Keqiang (李克强) ▲⊕	Zhang Wenyue (张文岳) ◆
Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region	Chen Jianguo (陈建国) ◆	Ma Qizhi (马启智) ■▲
Qinghai	Zhao Leji (赵乐际) ◆	Song Xiuyan (宋秀岩) ◆▲
Shaanxi	Li Jianguo (李建国) ◆	Yuan Chunqing (袁纯清) (Acting) ▲⊕
Shanxi	Zhang Baoshun (张宝顺) ▲⊕	Yu Youjun (于幼军) ■⊕
Shandong	Zhang Gaoli (张高丽) ◆	Han Yuqun (韩寓群) ◆
Shanghai Municipal	Han Zheng (韩正) (Acting) ◆⊕	Han Zheng (韩正) ◆▲⊕
Sichuan	Zhang Xuezhong (张学忠) ◆■	Zhang Zhongwei (张中伟) ◆
Tianjin Municipal	Zhang Lichang (张立昌) ◆	Dai Xianglong (戴相龙) ◆
Tibet Autonomous Region	Zhang Qingli (张庆黎) ▲	Qiangba Puncog (向巴平措) ◆
Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region	Wang Lequan (王乐泉) ◆▲	Ismail Tiliwaldi (司马义·铁力瓦尔地) ◆
Yunnan	Bai Enpei (白恩培) ◆	Xu Rongkai (徐荣凯) ◆
Zhejiang	Xi Jinping (习近平) ◆⊕	Lu Zushan (吕祖善) ◆

Legends ■ Party Affairs ◆ Technocrat ▲ CCP Youth League ⊕ Postgraduate degree

Table 2: Key Youth League Figures in Provincial, Party, and State Structures

Administration Level	Name (<i>Appointment</i>) (in alphabetical order)
Provincial	Han Zheng (<i>Acting Party Secretary and Mayor, Shanghai</i>) Huang Huahua (<i>Governor, Guangdong</i>) Ji Yunshi (<i>Governor, Hebei</i>) Li Chengyu (<i>Governor, Henan</i>) Li Keqiang (<i>Party Secretary, Liaoning</i>) Li Yuanchao (<i>Party Secretary, Jiangsu</i>) Liu Qibao (<i>Party Secretary, Guangxi</i>) Ma Qizhi (<i>Governor, Ningxia</i>) Qian Yunlu (<i>Party Secretary, Heilongjiang</i>) Song Xiuyuan (<i>Governor, Qinghai</i>) Wang Lequan (<i>Party Secretary, Xinjiang</i>) Wang Yang (<i>Party Secretary, Chongqing</i>) Yang Jing (<i>Governor, Inner Mongolia</i>) Yuan Chunqing (<i>Acting Governor, Shaanxi</i>) Zhang Baoshun (<i>Party Secretary, Shanxi</i>) Zhang Qingli (<i>Party Secretary, Tibet</i>) Zhou Qiang (<i>Governor, Hunan</i>)
Working Departments of the CCP Central Committee	Liu Yandong (<i>Director, United Front Department</i>) Liu Yunshan (<i>Director, Propaganda Department</i>)
State Ministries	Du Qinglin (<i>Minister, Agriculture</i>) Li Dek Su (<i>Minister, State Ethnic Affairs Commission</i>) Li Xueju (<i>Minister, Civil Affairs</i>) Li Zhilun (<i>Minister, Supervision</i>) Sun Jiazheng (<i>Minister, Culture</i>) Wu Aiyong (<i>Minister, Justice</i>) Zhang Weiqing (<i>Minister, National Population and Family Planning Commission</i>)

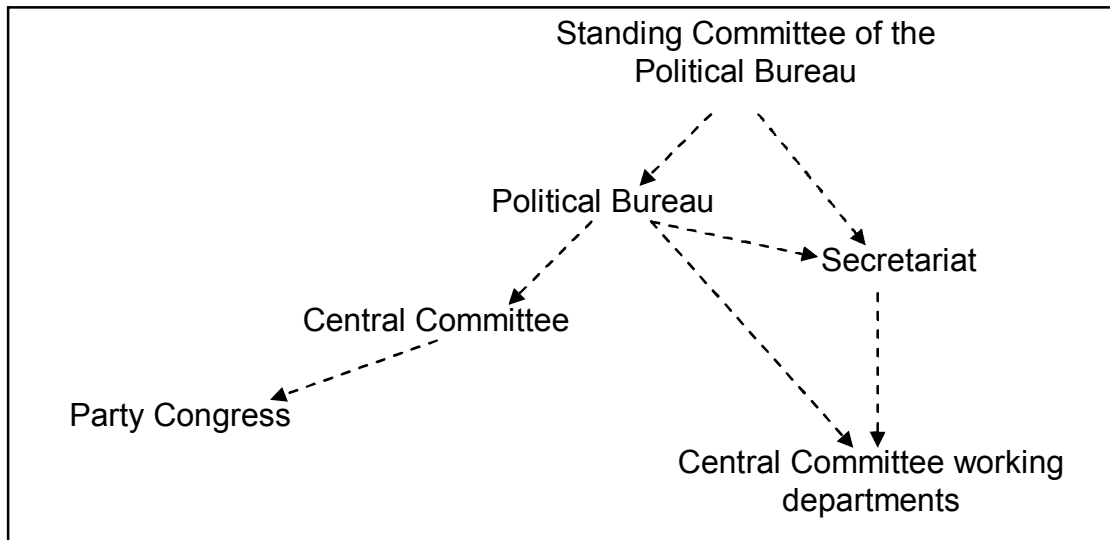
Post-Plenum Challenges

- 6.1 As the curtains of the 6th Plenum drew on the 11th, it was announced that the 17th Party Congress will be held in the 'second half of 2007'.¹⁴ Surely, it will be a short and busy year between now and autumn 2007, as Hu faces several major decisions that cannot be made without extensive lobbying and horse-trading with the other members of the Political Bureau, and members representing different factions and interests.
- 6.2 The most important of all decisions relates to the line-up for the post-Hu party leadership. Unlike his predecessors, Hu has neither the authority of revolutionary credentials – like Deng – nor the luxury of others to decide on his behalf – as was the case for Jiang – in the choice of his own successor. To protect his legacy, he will need to take into account the interests of all factions in his current Standing Committee, and select a candidate that is able to play a similar balancing act.

¹⁴ '17th Party Congress Will be Held in Beijing in the Second Half of 2007', *Xinhua News*, 11 October 2006.

- 6.3 Even in the Standing Committee, as older members reach retirement age, the choice of their successors may not entirely be Hu's prerogative, as factional interests continue to play a part in the decision-making process. In Hu's own calculation, he too needs to take into account the mix of his loyal associates, individuals who are familiar with the workings of the party, and technocrats who are familiar with the functioning of China's economy as well the state structure (see again Appendix III for a breakdown of the current mix). A delicate balance is needed to ensure a smooth transition of power in the 18th Party Congress in 2012.
- 6.4 The Political Bureau is under a lot of pressure to undergo further reforms of its composition and structure following Chen Liangyu's dismissal. China's development has reached a point whereby central-local power dynamics are gradually shifting in favour of the local barons. As resources at the localities become more abundant, Beijing is finding it harder to break down local interests and resistance to the implementation of national policy.
- 6.5 At present, Beijing attempts to minimise local resistance by co-opting local interests into the central decision-making process. This is achieved through the appointment of key provincial-level party secretaries into the Political Bureau. Should Beijing discontinue this practice? An alternative view suggests that keeping central position holders out of local affairs (i.e. dissociating central interests and local interests) may be more effective in maintaining a firm central command.
- 6.6 Any reforms to the Political Bureau will inevitably involve changing its current structure and composition. Will the Standing Committee finally reduce its number of members for the first time following its rapid expansion from 5 to the current 9 in the past decade? Will the Political Bureau expand or shrink correspondingly?
- 6.7 While these are some of the many challenges and decisions that Hu faces in the lead up to the 17th Party Congress, there is little doubt that Hu is now firmly in command of the various branches of the party, the state, and the military. In the 6th Plenum, observers have witnessed the last stage of Hu's consolidation of power; he has the better part of the next 5 years to make true his legacy before stepping down as China's leader in 2012.

Appendix I
Central Party Structure of the CCP



Arrows indicate general direction of authority in practice.

Source: Kenneth Lieberthal, *Governing China: From Revolution Through Reform* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1995), p 160

Appendix II

Plenums of the 16th Central Committee of the CCP

Plenum	Date	Agenda
6th	08.10.2006 ~ 11.10.2006	Central Committee approved 'Decisions by the CCP Central Committee on Building Socialism and a Harmonious Society, and Other Important Issues', and announced that the 17th Party Congress will be held in the second half of 2007.
5th	08.10.2005 ~ 11.10.2005	The Central Committee approved 'Suggestions by the CCP Central Committee on the 11th Five-Year Plan for the National Economy and Social Development'.
4th	16.09.2004 ~ 19.09.2004	The Central Committee approved 'Decisions by the CCP Central Committee on Enhancing Governing Capability'.
3rd	11.10.2003 ~ 14.10.2003	The Central Committee approved 'Decisions by the CCP Central Committee on Perfecting a Market Economy of Socialist Character' and 'Suggestions by the CCP Central Committee on Constitutional Amendments'.
2nd	24.02.2003 ~ 26.02.2003	The Central Committee approved the lists of candidates for key office holders in the State Council, and for key position holders in the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. The Committee also approved 'Suggestions on Furthering Public Administrative and Institutional Reforms'.
1st	15.11.2002	The Central Committee elected members and alternate members of the Political Bureau, members of the Standing Committee, the Party Secretary; approved the list of candidates of the Central Committee Secretariat; decided on the members of the Central Military Commission (CMC); approved the secretary, deputy secretaries, and standing members of the Central Commission for Discipline.

Source: *Xinhua News*, <http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2005-10/08/content_3591815.htm> [Accessed 08 October 2006]

Appendix III**Composition of the Political Bureau of the 16th Central Committee (CC) (Oct 2006)**

Organisation	Area of Responsibility	Name	Age (as of Oct 2006)	Portfolio	Other Remarks
Standing Committee of the Political Bureau (in hierarchical order)	-	Hu Jintao	63	General Secretary of CC President, PRC Chairman, CMC	
	-	Wu Bangguo	65	Chairman, NPC Standing Committee	NPC
	-	Wen Jiabao	64	Premier, State Council	State Council
	Party Affairs	Jia Qinglin	66	Chairman, CPPCC	United Front work
	Party Affairs	Zeng Qinghong	67	Vice-President, PRC Principal, Central Party School Member, CC Secretariat	Hong Kong and Macau affairs
	Economics and	Huang Ju	68	Vice-Premier, State Council	
	Party Affairs	Wu Guanzheng	68	Secretary, Central Commission for Discipline	Party discipline
	Party Affairs	Li Changchun	62		Propaganda
	Political and Legal Affairs	Luo Gan	71	Secretary, Political and Legislative Affairs Committee Director, Committee for Social Order and Governance	
Political Bureau	Party Affairs	He Guoqiang	63	Head, Organisation Department Member, CC Secretariat	Party organisation
		Liu Yunshan	59	Head, Propaganda Department Head, Office of Spiritual Civilisation Steering Committee	Propaganda

	Economics and Finance	Hui Liangyu	62	Vice-Premier, State Council	Rural and agricultural	
		Wu Yi	67	Vice-Premier, State Council	Public health	
		Zeng Peiyan	67	Vice-Premier, State Council	State development and	
	Political and Legal Affairs	Wang Zhaoguo	65	Vice-Chairman, NPC Standing Committee Chairman, All-China Federation of Trade	Labour relations	
		Zhou Yongkang	63	State Councillor, State Council Minister, Public Security Member, CC Secretariat		
	Military Affairs	Cao Gangchuan	70	Minister, National Defence State Councillor, State Council Vice-Chairman, CMC		
		Guo Boxiong	64	Vice-Chairman, CMC		
	Local Administration	Chen Liangyu (dismissed)	60	Former Party Secretary, Shanghai		
		Liu Qi	63	Mayor, Beijing		
		Wang Lequan	61	Party Secretary, Xinjiang First Political Commissioner, Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps		
		Yu Zhengsheng	61	Party Secretary, Hubei		
		Zhang Dejiang	59	Party Secretary, Guangdong		
		Zhang Lichang	67	Party Secretary, Tianjing		
	Alternate Member of the Political Bureau	Party Affairs	Wang Gang	64	Member, CC Secretariat Director, CC General Office Secretary, CC Work Committee	