



## Communist Party Congress Opens in China

China's President Hu Jintao opened China's 18th Communist Party Congress at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on November 8. During a 90-minute speech, Hu praised the "epic accomplishments" and "superiority" of China's communist system and gave no indication that government policies would change under his successor, Vice President Xi Jinping.



A team of journalists for Britain's [Telegraph](#) in Beijing observed that Hu's speech indicated continuity in China's present course and that the communist state would "never copy" so-called democratic models in the West. The *Telegraph* quoted an assessment of Hu's talk made by Chen Ziming, described as a liberal commentator who was arrested after the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989: "I listened with concentration but I did not hear anything new." Chen continued, "I knew there would not be many big changes, but I was still hoping for some small things at least, but sadly there was no sign even of that."

The *Telegraph* also cited Qian Gang, the former managing editor of *Southern Weekend*, described as one of China's most pioneering newspapers, who wrote in a blog after analyzing Hu's speech that "conservative forces within the Party are still very powerful."

Qian added: "There is very little prospect that substantive moves will be made on political reform."

Hu also addressed corruption that has embarrassed the Chinese government in recent months. An AP report in [USA Today](#) noted that a top government leader, Bo Xilai, had been purged after his wife murdered a British businessman. Another incident involved a top aide to Hu whose son had crashed a Ferrari, a conspicuously expensive automobile for an individual in his position to drive. Addressing these and other examples of corruption in his government, Hu said: "Nobody is above the law," a comment that caused the more than 2,300 delegates in the hall to applaud. He later added, "If we fail to handle this issue well, it could prove fatal to the party, and even cause the collapse of the party and the fall of the state."

China's Communist Party has "been through a crisis of political legitimacy since the Bo Xilai affair and they're trying to mend that," AP quoted Jean-Pierre Cabestan of Hong Kong Baptist University. Cabestan said Hu wants "to demonstrate that China needed the Communist Party as a leading force and that they will improve, but at the same time, clearly indicating that the party should remain in the saddle, and the only one in the saddle."



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on November 8, 2012

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While many Western observers have theorized that China's position as a leading economic power and trading partner have caused it to put its hard-line communist past behind it and mellow somewhat, the AP's contributing writers painted a picture of the congress that suggested otherwise:

Despite China's economy and society being entwined with the world through trade and the Internet, the congress itself seems from another era. Most of the delegates are drawn from the ranks of the 82 million-member party to make the event appear broadly representative while the real deal-making is done by a few dozen power-brokers behind the scenes.

After the delegates stood for the national anthem, the congress paused for a moment of silence to remember Mao Zedong and other revolutionary leaders. A golden hammer and sickle, the party's symbol, hung on the wall behind Hu. On the rostrum, dressed in a Mao jacket, sat 95-year-old Song Ping, a veteran revolutionary and party insider. Hu's predecessor, Jiang Zemin, sat in the center, symbolic of his vital position in the bargaining over the next leadership.

A VOA report noted that following this Congress, Hu will step aside and Vice President Xi Jinping will become the head of the Chinese Communist Party. Xi is also expected to assume Hu's role as president, early next year.

The Beijing-based (and therefore, officially controlled) *China Daily* online newspaper described the CPC Congress in glowing, almost poetic terms, quoting Hu's statement: "We must give high priority to making ecological progress, work hard to build a beautiful country, and achieve lasting and sustainable development of the Chinese nation."

The Chinese paper said that this is "the first time that the concept of 'beautiful China' has been written into the keynote report at the five-yearly [CPC National Congress](#)" and explained that the reference was "translated as 'conservation culture' or 'ecological civilization'" in China's official documents. In other words, the Red Chinese are going Green!

While those in the West for whom "going Green" is a top concern may be gratified to learn of China's new interest in the ecology of nature, advocates of human rights and of the right to life for the unborn will not be so encouraged. In a recent article in *The New American* online, "China Think Tank Recommends End to Brutal One-Child Policy," Dave Bohon noted that though a think tank in China has recommended that the government do away by 2015 with its 30-year policy that has limited most Chinese couples to having but one child, the brutal policy continues for now. Bohon observed:

The report comes mere months after a high-profile and embarrassing standoff between the Chinese government and pro-life dissident Chen Guangcheng, who suffered years of abuse and imprisonment because of his efforts to expose the forced sterilizations and abortions that thousands of Chinese women faced for trying to bear more than one child.

The article reveals that even as voices within China condemn the brutal policy, it remains in force. He cites a report from LifeNews about a Chinese woman who was abducted from her home and injected with a chemical solution into her womb to induce an abortion.

Though some may hope that Western overtures to China may lead to a softening of such atrocities, if history is any indicator, life in China will become "beautiful" for plant life before it becomes beautiful for human life.

Mao Tse-tung (aka Mao Zedong), the infamous historic tyrant honored so reverently at the current Communist Party Congress, was responsible for the mass murder of an estimated 38 million people,



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according to political scientist [R.J. Rummel](#), author of [China's Bloody Century](#).

*Photo: Former Chinese President Jiang Zemin, right, gestures at Chinese President Hu Jintao at the 18th Communist Party Congress held at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing,*

*China, Nov. 8, 2012: AP Images*

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