

Pentagon Lists Companies Connected to Chinese Military, Including Huawei

The U.S. Department of Defense listed 20 companies with alleged relationships to the Chinese military, including telecommunications company Huawei, which has already been charged with racketeering by the U.S. Department of Justice. The document cleared the prepublication review process in June.

Also included on the list is the video surveillance company Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology, Co. Ltd., which manufactures equipment that may be used in China's Xinjiang region, where the ethnic Uighur people and other Turkic Muslims are reportedly being detained in concentration camps. Other entities on the list include aerospace, transportation and nuclear technology companies. Companies on the Pentagon's list may be engaged in delivering U.S. technological information to the Chinese Communist Party.

Lawmakers, including U.S. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and Arkansas Senator Tom Cotton, requested the list in a 2019 letter to Secretary of State Mark Esper. According to the letter, China was using a "Military-Civilian Fusion" tactic involving technological espionage to further its goals.

"If Beijing cannot develop technology on its own, it attempts to steal it from the United States using cyber espionage, intelligence assets operating in the United States, and state-directed companies that acquire American firms to transfer proprietary information," the letter read.

"As the People's Republic of China attempts to blur the lines between civil and military sectors," Hoffman continued, "'knowing your supplier' is critical." Hoffman added that the list should be a "useful tool" for organizations within the U.S. to "conduct due diligence with regard to partnership with these entities, particularly as the list grows."

Newsweek reached out to the office of Senator Schumer and Huawei Technologies U.S.A. for comment. This story will be updated with any response.



According to a list compiled by the Department of Defense, 20 companies engaged in business practices within the U.S. have alleged ties to the Chinese government including telecommunications company Huawei.STR/AFP/GETTY

In February, Huawei was charged in a Brooklyn, New York federal court with conspiracy to steal trade secrets. According to the DOJ, Huawei and four of the company's subsidiaries attempted to "misappropriate intellectual property." Information about internet routers, robotics technology and cellular antennas were allegedly provided to Huawei, allowing the company to cut its "research and development costs and associated delays, giving the company a significant and unfair competitive advantage."

Huawei also allegedly did business through its subsidiaries in Iran and North Korea despite the fact that the U.S. had levied sanctions against those countries, making such transactions illegal.

Hikvision was placed on a trade blacklist by the U.S. Department of Commerce in October, citing implications that the company was involved in "China's campaign of repression, mass arbitrary detention, and high-technology surveillance."

In an October press release, Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross said that the blacklisting, designed to make getting U.S. materials for manufacturing more difficult, would “ensure that our technologies, fostered in an environment of individual liberty and free enterprise, are not used to repress defenseless minority populations.”

Diplomatic relations between the U.S. and China have become strained since the coronavirus pandemic spread worldwide, causing the global economy to suffer losses. President Donald Trump has publicly referred to the virus as the “Wuhan Flu,” after the Chinese city where the coronavirus was first reported in December.

President Trump also signed the Uighur Human Rights Bill of 2020, allowing the U.S. government to levy sanctions against China in response to allegations of human rights abuses.

In response to the bill, China’s Foreign Ministry said in a June statement that the U.S. should not use the legislation to “harm China’s interests and interfere in China’s internal affairs. Otherwise, China will resolutely take countermeasures, and all the consequences arising therefrom must be fully borne by the United States.”

Updated 11:42 p.m. EST 06/24/2020: This story has been updated to include a statement from Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Jonathan Rath Hoffman.

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