

**Title of Presentation:** Human Rights as a source of tension in relations between the United States and China

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### **Research Activities**

I am the author of scientific works and publications about US security issues, war on terror, military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq. I have been in charge of three grants funded by the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education. The outcome of one of the project was the publication of a monograph under the title of „National Security Policy of the United States of America in the years 2001-2009”, Cracow 2014, pp.330.

### **Summary**

The United States has criticized China for violating human rights, while they themselves have committed numerous abuses, such as the torture of prisoners in secret CIA prisons around the world, the detention of terrorist suspects without charge, the death of civilians as a result of US drone strikes or surveillance of its own citizens. While criticizing human rights violations in China is not only justified, but also necessary, the United States, due to the mutual economic dependence of both countries, has treated human rights as an instrumental part of their policy. Every year, the US State Department issues a report on the situation in the world in the field of human rights, which criticizes the Chinese authorities for the use of repression and coercion against those involved in actions for civil and political rights, as well as against ethnic minorities, extrajudicial executions, political control over judges, illegal detention, torture and extortion of testimonies of prisoners, widespread corruption, discrimination against women, minorities and persons with disabilities, and forced labor of children. China has not remained passive, and in response published its own report in which it accused the United States of racial discrimination, human rights violations in other countries, surveillance of world leaders and civilians, unlawful detention and torture of terrorism suspects in other countries, including in Guantanamo, loss of civilians resulting from illegal drone attacks etc. Although the issue of human rights has for many years been a source of tension in relations between

Washington and Beijing, when compared with other major global problems, this issue recedes into the background. In 2009, Hillary Clinton said that Human Rights "cannot interfere with The Global Economic Crisis, The Global Climate Change Crisis, And The Security Crisis". The Secretary of State Declaration sent a clear signal: human rights are an important part of US policy, but much more important is the economy. Americans repeatedly showed that they have an ambivalent attitude towards human rights and respect for international law. On the one hand, they moralize and demand compliance of other countries to human rights regulations. On the other hand, as seen in the war against terrorism, Americans have no major qualms about disregarding the provisions of the Geneva Convention, the use of torture against prisoners, or avoiding criminal liability by refusing to ratify the Rome Statute, under which the International Criminal Court was created to prosecute the most serious international crimes. The legitimate question seems to be whether the United States can judge other countries on the basis of principles they themselves do not respect? In turn, the rhetorical question is, shouldn't the country that moralizes other nations and criticizes others for human rights violations be a worthy model to follow?

#### **Five Key Words**

human rights, torture, repression, China, United States of America