**Online supplementary material**

Aggressive Journalistic Questioning and China's “Wolf Warrior Diplomacy”: Appendices

Appendix 1. Examples of aggressive question–answer dyad at Chinese MFA press conference

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| Issue/Event | Date | Aggressive question | Aggressive response (excepts) |
| COVID-19 | 31/03/2021[[1]](#footnote-1) | *Wall Street Journal: Do you have any response to the European Union’s statement on the Wuhan mission which expressed regrets over delays and the lack of access and called for an independent and transparent investigation.* | *Hua Chunying: […] some Western countries are really used to preconceived ideas. Whenever they fail to achieve their goals and see conclusions that are not what they want, they will make accusations of lack of independence, openness and transparency.* |
| Xinjiang | 20/01/2021[[2]](#footnote-2) | *CNN: Pompeo just released a statement declaring on behalf of the State Department a determination that China has committed crimes against humanity and genocide against Muslim Uyghurs and other members of ethnic minority groups in Xinjiang. What’s your comment on this?* | *Hua Chunying: […] Pompeo’s so-called “determination” is nothing more than a piece of wastepaper. This notorious liar and cheater is making himself a doomed clown and a joke of the century with his show of lies and madness just before the curtain falls.* |
| Hong Kong | 31/03/2022[[3]](#footnote-3) | *Associated Press: The UK has withdrawn its judges from Hong Kong’s top court because of what British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss calls “a systemic erosion of liberty and democracy in Hong Kong”. What is your comment on these resignations?* | *Wang Wenbin: […] The UK side’s attacks and accusations are purely false and unfounded. In the name of defending Hong Kong’s rule of law, the British side grossly interferes and undermines Hong Kong’s justice with political maneuvers. This runs counter to the spirit of rule of law, profanes the legal system, and fully exposes the UK’s hypocrisy and double standards.* |
| South China Sea | 06/04/2021[[4]](#footnote-4) | *Bloomberg: Last week, the Filipino government said they've found illegally built structures on features in Union Banks, which is near the Whitsun Reef, and there are still Chinese vessels at the Whitsun Reef. Can you confirm that China constructed what the Philippines termed “illegal structures”? Can you say whether China plans to maintain a permanent presence at Whitsun Reef?* | *Zhao Lijian: […] It is a customary practice running over a thousand years for Chinese fishing boats to work and shelter in relevant waters. I don't know why relevant sides refer to the Chinese fishermen as “maritime militia”. It shows malicious intent driven by ulterior motives. […] Such clumsy ploys won’t work as the whole world can see through them.* |
| Debt trap diplomacy | 01/12/2021[[5]](#footnote-5) | *AFP: The head of UK’s intelligence agency has warned of China using debt traps and data traps on trying to gain vast amounts of critical information of other countries to enhance its global influence. How does Beijing react to this?* | *Wang Wenbin: […] I would like to stress that the remarks of the relevant individual on the UK side deliberately distorted facts and smeared China’s policy. Essentially fraught with the Cold War mentality, the remarks were intended to instigate ideological confrontation.* |
| Wolf warrior diplomacy | 26/03/2021[[6]](#footnote-6) | *AFP: China seems to be acting stronger in diplomacy. Sometimes this is called "wolf-warrior diplomacy". We also noticed that the countermeasures China takes against the UK comes in a wider scope the UK sanctions on China. What are reasons behind this strong reaction?* | *Hua Chunying: […] If some countries repeatedly undermine China's sovereignty, security, honor and dignity, then we have to make clear our firm position. They might be a little uncomfortable with that […] They should learn and get used to treating China and other countries as equals and with mutual respect.* |
| Vaccine diplomacy | 10/03/2021[[7]](#footnote-7) | *Kyodo News Agency: A leaders' meeting of the Quad group of countries on Friday plans to announce agreements to support an increase in coronavirus vaccines aid to developing countries. Some call this move an attempt to counter China's widening “vaccine diplomacy”. Do you have any comment?* | *Zhao Lijian: […] China was among the first to pledge that its vaccines, when available, will be made a global public good. […] China opposes “vaccine nationalism”. We reject any “vaccine divide” or any attempt to politicize vaccine cooperation.* |
| Hostage diplomacy | 27/09/2021[[8]](#footnote-8) | *CNN: […] On the same day when Meng Wanzhou regained freedom, Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor were allowed to return to Canada. Does China think the timing is purely coincidental? Some foreign individuals believe that the timing of the two Canadian citizens' release proves that China conducts “hostage diplomacy” and “coercive diplomacy”.* | *Hua Chunying: […] The Meng Wanzhou incident is a political frame-up and persecution against a Chinese citizen, an act designed to hobble Chinese high-tech companies. […] The practice of arbitrary detention of foreign nationals out of political motives and with made-up excuses of all forms is through-and-through coercion and bullying, and affronts international rules and human conscience.* |
| Economic warfare | 01/12/2021[[9]](#footnote-9) | *AFP: America’s top envoy to the Pacific Kurt Campbell has said China is trying to drive Australia to its knees through a series of sanctions that amount to “economic warfare”. How do you react to this?* | *Wang Wenbin: […] Certain Australian politicians have played up the so-called “China threat theory”, hurled unsubstantiated accusations and attacks against China, provoked tensions and instigated confrontation. It seems that the last thing they want is peace.* |
| Spy balloon | 06/02/2023[[10]](#footnote-10) | *CNN: The US is confident though that what they shot down is in fact a spy balloon. Can you help us understand how this could be a weather balloon?* | *Mao Ning: […] As history shows, it is the US that has repeatedly trampled on international law and violated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other countries. […] The US side’s deliberate hyping up of the matter and even use of force are unacceptable and irresponsible.* |
| Support for Russia | 17/03/2022[[11]](#footnote-11) | *AFP: there’s mounting evidence now of several Russian attacks on civilian targets in Ukraine. […] My question is given that China has not explicitly opposed Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, should we assume that China therefore has no problem with this kind of indiscriminate killing of civilians? President Biden has called President Putin a “war criminal”. Does China agree that Russia may have committed war crimes in Ukraine?* | *Zhao Lijian: […] When it comes to civilian casualties and humanitarian situation, I wonder if you were equally concerned about the civilian casualties in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and Palestine. Do these civilians mean nothing to you? […] The US, NATO and some western media are very hypocritical, especially as some reports smack of racism. We suggest some media focus more efforts on things that are conducive to promoting peace.* |
| Threat to US leadership | 17/07/2020[[12]](#footnote-12) | *AFP: US Attorney General William Barr said China is engaged in an economic blitzkrieg and an aggressive campaign to seize commanding heights of the global economy and overtake US. He warned that China would take advantage of globalization to spread its political ideology. I wonder if China has any comments or response on this?* | *Hua Chunying: […] Some in the US, driven by ideological bias, have been sparing no effort to paint China as a rival or even adversary, smear and attack China, and encircle and contain its development. […] Simply put, attacking China is their panacea to deal with every domestic political issue. […] Possessed by such evil, they are on the brink of losing their mind.* |
| Threat to democracy | 04/12/2020[[13]](#footnote-13) | *AFP: Yesterday the top U.S. intelligence chief branded China as the greatest threat to democracy and freedom of the world since WWII. […] I want to know if you have any comment on that?* | *Hua Chunying: […] The NDI Director said China is the No.1 threat in his article. With such an eye-catching headline but unsubstantiated claims all over it, this so-called article serves no purpose at all other than repeating lies and rumors. […] We urge certain US politicians to respect facts, stop making and spreading disinformation, political virus and political lies.* |
| Threat to global order | 27/05/2022[[14]](#footnote-14) | *AFP: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken called yesterday for vigorous competition with China to preserve the existing global order. He said that Beijing posed the most serious long-term challenge to the international order. I wonder if you have any comment on this?* | *Wang Wenbin: […] Secretary Blinken went to great length to spread disinformation, play up the so-called “China threat”, interfere in China’s internal affairs and smear China’s domestic and foreign policy. […] The so-called “rules-based international order” claimed by the US is nothing but a set of “house rules” established by the US and a handful of other countries to maintain the so-called “order” led by the US. The US always puts its domestic law above international law, and cherry-picks international rules as it sees fit in a pragmatic way.* |

*Appendix 2. Data breakdown*

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| **Country** | **Media** | **Number of questions** |
| **United States** | Bloomberg News | 1,096 |
| Feature Story News | 32 |
| National Broadcasting Company (NBC) | 35 |
| Cable News Network (CNN) | 35 |
| Associated Press | 37 |
| New York Times | 31 |
| Wall Street Journal | 18 |
| National Public Radio (NPR) | 9 |
| Consumer News and Business Channel (CNBC) | 4 |
| Market News International (MNI) | 2 |
| United Press International | 1 |
| **United Kingdom** | Reuters | 1,170 |
| British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) | 92 |
| Sky News | 20 |
| Financial Times | 14 |
| Independent Television (ITV) | 16 |
| Daily Telegraph | 7 |
| **France** | Agence France-Presse (AFP) | 1127 |
| France 24 | 3 |
| **Japan** | Kyodo News | 227 |
| NHK | 192 |
| Nikkei | 20 |
| Fuji Television Network | 18 |
| Asahi Shimbun | 22 |
| NTV | 14 |
| Yomiuri Shinbun | 9 |
| TV TOKYO | 9 |
| Tokyo Broadcasting | 4 |
| Tokyo Shinbun | 4 |
| Mainichi Newspapers | 1 |
| Hokkaido Shimbun | 1 |
| Jiji Press | 4 |
| **India** | Prasar Bharati | 163 |
| Press Trust of India | 106 |
| The Hindu | 13 |
| **Total** | | 4,556 |

1. Chinese MFA. 2021. Spokesperson Hua Chunying’s Regular Press Conference. March 31. https://www.mfa.gov.cn/mfa\_eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202405/t20240530\_11347015.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Chinese MFA. 2021. Spokesperson Hua Chunying’s Regular Press Conference. January 20. https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202405/t20240530\_11346970.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Chinese MFA. 2022. Spokesperson Wang Wenbin’s Regular Press Conference. March 31. https://www.mfa.gov.cn/mfa\_eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202405/t20240530\_11347254.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Chinese MFA. 2021. Spokesperson Zhao Lijian’s Regular Press Conference. April 6. https://www.mfa.gov.cn/mfa\_eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202405/t20240530\_11347018.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Chinese MFA. 2021. Spokesperson Wang Wenbin’s Regular Press Conference. December 1. https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng./xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202405/t20240530\_11347174.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Chinese MFA. 2021. Spokesperson Hua Chunying’s Regular Press Conference. March 26. https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202405/t20240530\_11347012.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Chinese MFA. 2021. Spokesperson Zhao Lijian’s Regular Press Conference. March 10. https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\_eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202405/t20240530\_11347001.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Chinese MFA. 2021. Spokesperson Hua Chunying’s Regular Press Conference. September 27. https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\_eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202405/t20240530\_11347130.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Chinese MFA. 2021. Spokesperson Wang Wenbin’s Regular Press Conference. December 1. https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng./xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202405/t20240530\_11347174.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Chinese MFA. 2023. Spokesperson Mao Ning’s Regular Press Conference. February 6. https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202405/t20240530\_11347458.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Chinese MFA. 2022. Spokesperson Zhao Lijian’s Regular Press Conference. March 17. https://www.mfa.gov.cn/eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202405/t20240530\_11347244.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Chinese MFA. 2020. Spokesperson Hua Chunying’s Regular Press Conference. July 17. https://www.mfa.gov.cn/mfa\_eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202405/t20240530\_11346839.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Chinese MFA. 2020. Spokesperson Hua Chunying’s Regular Press Conference. December 4. https://www.mfa.gov.cn/mfa\_eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202405/t20240530\_11346938.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Chinese MFA. 2022. Spokesperson Wang Wenbin’s Regular Press Conference. May 27. https://www.mfa.gov.cn/mfa\_eng/xw/fyrbt/lxjzh/202405/t20240530\_11347291.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)