

# The Road to the 19<sup>th</sup> Party Congress

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The Politburo's scheduling of a Central Committee plenum for October signals the start of formal preparations to convene the Chinese Communist Party's 19<sup>th</sup> Congress in the fall of next year. This article lays out the successive procedures and processes that will lead to the congress and that will charge leadership politics over the coming year.

A 26 July meeting of the Politburo called for the 18<sup>th</sup> Central Committee to convene its Sixth Plenum “in October.”<sup>1</sup> In prescribing the agenda of the upcoming plenum, the Politburo did not mention formally scheduling the party congress. But presuming the leadership follows past precedents, the communiqué to be issued at the end of the plenum will state simply that the Central Committee has decided to convene the next party congress “in the latter half of next year.” That declaration will set in motion the complex processes that precede a party congress: election of roughly 2,300 delegates from all sectors and levels of the party; drafting the long report on the work of the outgoing 18<sup>th</sup> Central Committee to be delivered by party General Secretary Xi Jinping at the congress; amending the party constitution; and the composition of nominations for a new Central Committee and for the party's top leadership bodies.

## *Beidaihe Meeting*

Although PRC media have reported nothing of what the Politburo leadership talked about at its recently closed annual retreat at the seaside resort Beidaihe, discussion of the plenum agenda and with it, discussion of preparations for the 2017 party congress were likely part of the agenda. Public appearances by top party leaders show that this year's Beidaihe retreat began after 30 July and ended on 14 or 15 August. Comparison of leadership appearances in recent years suggests that the first two weeks of August has become standard for the retreat.

With two exceptions, no Politburo Standing Committee members appeared in public throughout that period. One exception was Liu Yunshan's reception for meritorious scientists and academics in Beidaihe on the 5<sup>th</sup>. The other was Yu Zhengsheng's tour of Tibet on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. As in recent years, not all regular members of the Politburo attended the retreat. PRC Vice President Li Yuanchao met with Swiss visitors in Beijing on the 11<sup>th</sup>. Vice Premier Liu Yandong appeared in Guiyang on the 1<sup>st</sup> and then attended the Rio Olympics 2–8 August, capped by a brief visit to Mexico. Party Organization Department Director Zhao Leji toured Hebei 13–15 August.

Four of five regionally based Politburo members—Guangdong party chief Hu Chunhua, Chongqing party chief Su Zhengcai, Beijing party boss Guo Jinlong, and Xinjiang party chief Zhang Chunxian—appeared regularly in their home bailiwicks or elsewhere, and so could not have attended the retreat. The fifth—Shanghai party chief Han Zheng—was

out of public view until he showed up in Shanghai on the 12<sup>th</sup>, suggesting that he was in Beidaihe for most of the retreat.

## Why Party Congresses Are Important

National party congresses are the most important public event in Chinese leadership politics. According to the CCP's constitution, party congresses are required to convene every five years. One of the hallmarks of the political reforms pressed by Deng Xiaoping since the beginning of the reform era in 1978 has been the restoration of institutionalized political processes after two decades of erratic observance under the leadership of Mao Zedong. In keeping with Deng's emphasis, this constitutional stipulation has been rigorously observed since the 12<sup>th</sup> Party Congress in 1982.<sup>2</sup> This regularity in the convocation of party congresses and the consistency of procedures in preparing for them since then make it possible to project the likely course of preparations for convening the 19<sup>th</sup> Congress in 2017.

Party congresses are important for three reasons. First, they establish the party's line in all major policy sectors. In principle, the party congress is the most authoritative body in the CCP's organizational hierarchy, and so its policy prescriptions reflect the CCP's authoritative line on all issues that the congress addresses. A party congress brings together roughly 2,000 delegates from all levels of the CCP and normally lasts about a week. Over the course of its session, a party congress sets down a consensus evaluation of the party's work over the five-year period since the preceding congress and an assessment of the party's present situation, and it sets forth general guidelines—the party's line—for the party's priorities, emphases, and tasks for the coming five-year period until the next congress. These supremely authoritative judgments about past work and future tasks are incorporated into a long “political report,” normally delivered by the party's top leader, the general secretary, in the name of the outgoing Central Committee. As such, the political report is not a speech by the general secretary reciting his personal views on the issues it addresses; it is a synthetic document that reflects the consensus of the broader party leadership.

Once endorsed by party congress resolution, the political report establishes at the highest authority the party's consensus line on virtually all policy sectors that the party leadership will address in the five years until the next party congress convenes. The party leadership is in principle expected to refer to the congress guidelines as the basis for all subsequent major policy decisions. Once the party congress has closed, the roughly 200-member body that acts in the name of the congress—the party Central Committee—may change its guidelines. By constitutional stipulation, a Central Committee plenum must convene at least once a year.

A second reason party congresses are important is that they have the authority to revise the party constitution. The current party constitution was adopted at the 12<sup>th</sup> Congress in 1982, and every party congress since has introduced changes to it. Among several changes, the 16<sup>th</sup> Party Congress revised the party constitution's preamble, adding the “important thinking of the ‘three represents’”—an ideological initiative pioneered by former party chief Jiang Zemin, though not specifically credited to him—as well as

“Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought and Deng Xiaoping Theory” to the guiding ideology of the CCP. In 2007, the 17<sup>th</sup> Party Congress revised the constitution’s preamble to incorporate the “scientific development concept” advanced by then party chief Hu Jintao as a further contribution to the party’s ideological foundations. The 18<sup>th</sup> Party Congress in 2012 strengthened the party’s commitment to reform by adding the declaration to the constitution’s preamble the statement that “reform and opening up are the path to a stronger China.” Other revisions in the past have included stipulations on membership in top leadership bodies, on party recruitment criteria, and on party procedures. All such revisions are politically significant because they endow the measures with final authority, at least in principle.

Finally, party congresses are important because they change the party’s top leadership. A congress’s main task in this respect is to elect a new Central Committee, which will preside over the party until the next party congress, and a new Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CDIC). The day after the party congress closes, the new Central Committee convenes its first plenum, the sole function of which is to appoint a new top party leadership. These appointments include a new Politburo and its Standing Committee (the top decision-making bodies); a new Central Military Commission (the top decision-making body in military affairs); a new Secretariat (the body that facilitates implementation of Politburo decisions throughout the party apparatus); the presiding CDIC secretary; and the party’s top leader, the general secretary. The degree of leadership turnover in these appointments varies from congress to congress.

A congress’s three tasks of setting down broad guidelines for the party’s upcoming work, revising the party constitution, and changing the party’s top leadership are fundamentally intertwined. Judgments about the success or shortcomings of party work over the period since the previous party congress affect the standing and prospects of party leaders in power over that time. Administrative and substantive expertise in specific policy areas has become increasingly important for promotion into the top levels of the party—alongside the traditional criteria of political patronage and factional balance of power—and policy departures conveyed in the congress’s political report have thus come to play a significant role in shaping the career prospects of individual leaders. At the same time, policy directions imparted in a congress’s political report reflect in some measure the strength of leaders and their allies who advocate that course over other leaders advocating a different policy course.

For all these reasons, preparations for convocation of a party congress are intensely political, and heat up the political atmosphere in Beijing more than a year ahead of time. Over this period, appointments to high-level posts in the Central Committee departments, in the State Council ministries, among the PLA brass, and in the provinces are made with an eye toward concurrent appointment to the Central Committee. Some appointments—to the post of party chief in provinces such as Shanghai, Beijing, Guangdong, and Tianjin, for example—usually involve consideration for concurrent membership on the Politburo itself.

Meanwhile, top leaders debate policy questions with an eye toward authoritative endorsement of their views in the upcoming congress's political report. The party's primary mouthpieces—the newspaper *People's Daily* and the semimonthly journal *Seeking Truth*—publish commentary and opinion pieces that reflect competing positions on issues that the congress's political report will address. As the political atmosphere heats up, the shadows of leadership politicking under way in the party's internal networks may be tantalizingly cast into the open press. At the same time, often-contradictory rumors and speculations circulate among mid- and lower-ranking officials and academics in Beijing and make their way into Hong Kong's independent China-watching press and into foreign media. All of these factors make the long campaign to convene a CCP congress into an intensely political season.

## Milestones Ahead

If procedures for convening the 19<sup>th</sup> Party Congress follow earlier precedents, a number of events will mark milestones along the way.

- In the wake of the Sixth Plenum's scheduling the congress, a preparatory committee will be established, presided over by party General Secretary Xi Jinping. The preparatory committee will oversee four basic tasks: election of more than 2,000 party delegates to the congress; drafting of the political report that Xi will deliver at the congress; managing the constitution amendment group; and nomination of a new Central Committee membership, as well as of new top leadership bodies. Each of these tasks will take several months to complete. Over these months, PRC media will give no publicity to the formation of the preparatory committee for the 19<sup>th</sup> Party Congress or its activities, though, judging by past practice, Xinhua will provide an account after the congress closes.
- By the end of June 2017, election of the congress's roughly 2,300 delegates should be completed.
- Sometime in late August or early September 2017, the Politburo will propose a precise date for the Central Committee's Seventh Plenum to open. The Politburo will also approve the lists of delegates, the draft political report, proposed amendments to the party constitution, and the slates of leadership nominees for approval at the plenum. In the days preceding the plenum, judging by past practice, Xi Jinping and other top party leaders will preview the drafted political report in a series of meetings with party and non-party representatives in Beijing.
- Finally, the 18<sup>th</sup> Central Committee's Seventh Plenum will meet a few days ahead of the party congress, will formally approve the congress documents submitted by the Politburo, and will set the date for the party congress to open.

## Selection of Congress Delegates

Election of party congress delegates takes place among "electoral units" designated by the Politburo. In preparation for the 1997 15<sup>th</sup> Party Congress, delegate elections were

held among 36 electoral blocs (选举单位)—one for each of the PRC’s 31 provinces and Taiwan, one for Hong Kong and Macao, and one each for central party organs, national state institutions, and the PLA. For the 2002 16<sup>th</sup> Party Congress, two new units were added: one for centrally directed state-owned enterprises and another for central banking and finance institutions. For the 17<sup>th</sup> Party Congress in 2007, two more electoral units—one for units involved in “social management” (社会管理) and the other for the public service sector—were added, bringing the total to 40. In 2012 for the 18<sup>th</sup> Party Congress, delegate selection processes followed those of the 17<sup>th</sup>.

Election of delegates follows congresses convened in party units at various levels among the 40 electoral blocs. Among China’s 31 provinces, party congresses in ascending sequence at four subnational levels of party hierarchy—township (乡), county (县), city (市), and province. Ahead of the 2012 18<sup>th</sup> Party Congress, party congresses at the township and county levels began in January 2011 and were completed by the end of June, and city congresses were completed by the end of September that year. A first wave of provincial party congresses in 14 provinces began in October 2011 and was completed in December; the remaining provinces convened their respective party congresses between April and July 2012. Concurrent party congresses among the eight other electoral blocs were completed by the end of June 2012.

According to the official news service Xinhua a Party Central Committee circular specified the election of 2,270 delegates to the 18<sup>th</sup> Congress, an increase of 50 over those elected to attend the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress, in part to reflect the party’s growth of 10 million new members since 2007. The circular also stipulated that 68 percent of the delegates come from the ranks of officials—a decrease of 2 percent—and that 32 percent be drawn from grassroots party units. Finally, 10 percent of all congress delegates must be workers drawn from both public and private enterprises.<sup>3</sup> Party membership growth has slowed in recent years and in 2016 stands at nearly 89 million—about 3.5 million more than in 2012. The number of delegates selected for the 19<sup>th</sup> Party Congress may therefore be only marginally larger than in 2012. (Xinhua, 1 November 2012)

## Drafting Xi’s Political Report

The drafting of the political report that Xi Jinping will present to the 18<sup>th</sup> Party Congress will follow an elaborate process of review and revision. According to Xinhua, the political report that General Secretary Jiang Zemin presented to the 16<sup>th</sup> Congress in 2002 went through four drafts on its way to the congress.<sup>4</sup> Over that drafting process, which Xinhua states took nearly 13 months, the Politburo Standing Committee reviewed four successive drafts and the full Politburo two. A draft was circulated as an internal party document “to solicit opinions” from more than 3,100 people among 178 party units throughout China. It was further reviewed by party and state officials in the capital and by representatives of non-party constituencies over a 19-day period in August and September 2002, introducing some 600 changes in the text. Finally, the 15<sup>th</sup> Central Committee’s Seventh Plenum, convened five days before the party congress opened, introduced further amendments.

According to Xinhua, the process of composing Hu Jintao's report to the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress in 2007 was even more extensive.<sup>5</sup> Over the 10-month drafting period, the Politburo Standing Committee reviewed drafts six times and the full Politburo twice. Drafts of the report were circulated internally among 5,560 party members in central party and government bodies, in the PLA, and in provincial leadership organs; among various united front parties, mass organizations, and non-party persons; and among "some old comrades in the Party." These efforts resulted in nearly two thousand proposals for changes and nearly a thousand changes in the draft report. A final review by the Politburo and then by the 16<sup>th</sup> Central Committee's Seventh Plenum produced further changes, yielding the sixth and final draft that was delivered by Hu at the opening day of the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress.

The process of drafting and review of the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress political report included the following steps:

- In early October 2006, even before the formation of the 17<sup>th</sup> Party Congress preparatory committee, the Politburo designated research in 20 key issue areas that would figure into the political report, and authorized the formation of 36 research groups. These groups convened some 1,523 forums attended by more than twenty thousand people, and produced a total of 62 investigation reports. Hu Jintao personally presided over 12 meetings to review the investigation reports.
- In early December, the Politburo authorized the creation of the drafting group under Hu Jintao's direction and prescribed several "guiding principles" for the report's drafting. Politburo members Liu Yunshan and Zeng Peiyan were appointed as Hu's deputies. On 11 December, the drafting group held its first meeting. Over the ensuing 10 months, nine more full meetings of the drafting team convened.
- On 15 December, a Central Committee circular invited opinions from party, government, and PLA organs and from united front institutions, which produced 124 feedback reports.
- In late December, the drafting group divided into seven subgroups and began a series of 51 forums among 13 provinces to investigate specific topics to be addressed in the report. In April 2007, a second round of forums were held in central party and state institutions.
- In March 2007, Hu Jintao presided over the drafting group's fourth full session, at which the report's overarching theme was set.
- On 15 June, the full Politburo reviewed the first draft of the congress report. On the 25<sup>th</sup>, Hu previewed several themes of the draft in a widely publicized speech at the Central Party School. After comments were solicited from party leaders in central and provincial party bodies, a second draft was produced.

- On 11 July, the Politburo authorized circulation of the second draft widely among 5,560 people in party bodies down through provincial level and among various united front groups. In addition, on 27 July Hu Jintao hosted a forum to solicit opinions from non-party people in Beijing. He also presided over seven more such forums for representatives from various provinces and the PLA. These forums together elicited nearly 2,000 suggestions for revision, leading to the incorporation of nearly a thousand emendations into the report's third draft.
- The third draft was reviewed by the Politburo Standing Committee, and then on 17 September by the full Politburo, leading to new revisions and a fourth draft. That version was approved for consideration at the Central Committee's Seventh Plenum. The plenum review elicited 239 new proposals for changes, and a fifth draft was produced and finally approved for presentation to the party congress, which opened three days later.
- After Hu delivered the political report at the congress's opening day on 15 October, the congress delegates proposed new suggestions. After these were incorporated, the final report was approved by congress resolution on 21 October, the day that congress closed.

Xinhua's account of the drafting of Hu Jintao's report to the 18<sup>th</sup> Party Congress described a comparably extensive effort<sup>6</sup>:

- On 1 December, shortly after the 17<sup>th</sup> Central Committee's Sixth Plenum authorized preparations for the party congress, the Politburo established the report drafting group, headed by Xi Jinping under Hu Jintao's supervision and with Executive Vice Premier Li Keqiang and party propaganda chief Liu Yunshan as deputies.
- On 5 January 2012, at the group's first full meeting, Hu Jintao laid out the broad parameters for the report. On the 6<sup>th</sup>, a Central Committee notice went out in internal party channels soliciting opinions from party groups at central and provincial levels, in state institutions and in the PLA, and in mass organizations. Over the entire period, the drafting group held a total of eight full meetings.
- In early February, the drafting group dispatched seven research groups, which held 44 forums in the provinces and conducted onsite investigations at 116 local units.
- Between 13 and 20 April, Hu Jintao convened five half-day meetings of the group to review research results from 38 research groups on 11 topics. From 11 to 14 May, Xi Jinping presided over meetings to review reports on four more topics.
- On 24 May and 12 June, Hu convened two Politburo Standing Committee meetings to review a first draft of the report, producing "important" suggestions for revisions. On 25 June, Hu presided over a full Politburo session to review the draft, leading to several more proposals for revision. Over the 10 months devoted to the report's

drafting, the Politburo Standing Committee reviewed successive drafts four times and the full Politburo twice.

- On 23 July Hu previewed major issues the report would address at a speech to assembled ministerial officials and provincial party leaders. Between 27 August and 4 September, Hu conducted seven forums in Beijing with provincial party and government officials, with military representatives, and with non-party personages to present the draft report. This process elicited some 2,400 suggestions for revision.
- The Central Committee's Seventh Plenum met 1-4 November to review the report, producing nearly 200 new suggestions for changes, 41 of which were adopted.

This time around, the group that drafts the report that Xi Jinping will deliver at the 19<sup>th</sup> Party Congress will most likely be presided over by Xi himself. Based on past practice, his deputies are likely to be Executive Vice Premier Zhang Gaoli and Liu Yunshan, the Politburo Standing Committee member who manages the party apparatus and presides over propaganda.

This elaborate process of consultation, drafting, review, and revision underscores two basic conclusions about a political report presented at a party congress. First, most of the congress delegates will already be thoroughly familiar with its contents, even if some of the later revisions may be new to them. Having reviewed early drafts of the document, they may be forgiven for looking sleepy and bored during its presentation at the party congress. Second, and more significantly, the process underscores that the political report is a consensus document reflecting compromise and negotiation among competing leaders and party constituencies, presumably worked out through tried and true processes of bargaining, horse-trading, and inventing formulations sufficiently general to allow differing constituencies to extract their own preferred interpretations. Although the general secretary has the opportunity to place his own imprint on the political report, it is not a presentation of his views. It is delivered in the name of the outgoing Central Committee and reflects a leadership consensus behind it. In that sense, although Xi Jinping will deliver the political report to the 19<sup>th</sup> Congress, it will not, strictly speaking, be a Xi speech.

## Amending the Party Constitution

If the 19<sup>th</sup> Party Congress amends the party constitution, the proposed changes will be the product of a process of several months' duration. The 18<sup>th</sup> Party Congress in 2012 introduced 30 changes in the party constitution after several months' deliberation, following procedures that paralleled those used to amend the party constitution in 2007.<sup>7</sup>

According to Xinhua, Xi Jinping presided over the amendment drafting group, which invited opinions and suggestions from among central and provincial-level party bodies. By August 2012, the group had received some 1,400 comments and suggestions. After review, the group adopted 90 as the basis for proposals to revise the party constitution.



The Politburo Standing Committee reviewed the group's draft proposals on 23 August, and the Politburo approved them for circulation among party organs in Beijing and the provinces. That process produced some 382 new comments and suggestions, among which 23 were incorporated into the final draft submitted to the Politburo Standing Committee on 27 September. The Politburo approved the proposals on 22 October, and they were finally adopted for submission to the party congress by the Seventh Plenum.

## Nominating the New Top Party Leadership

If the party continues to uphold the norm observed at the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup> Party Congresses, leaders achieving the age of 68 or older in 2017 will retire from the Politburo and other top party organs. By that rule five of seven members of the Politburo Standing Committee and six of 18 regular members of the Politburo will retire. At least four of 11 members of the Party Central Military Commission (CMC) will retire. Who will replace the retiring Politburo and CMC members is, of course, the focus of intensifying competition in China and already the object of endless speculation among foreign and domestic observers.<sup>8</sup>

The procedures for nominating leaders to the Politburo have historically been closely guarded. Until 2007, PRC media gave no inkling of the selection processes for Politburo appointment for any party congress throughout the reform era, either on the way to the congress or in its wake.

Following the 17<sup>th</sup> Party Congress, however, Xinhua publicized a long report describing new departures in the process that was used to nominate the members of the Politburo endorsed by that congress and appointed by the 17<sup>th</sup> Central Committee's First Plenum.<sup>9</sup> On 25 June 2007, Hu Jintao presided over a meeting of more than 400 members of the party elite, including all full and alternate members of the 16<sup>th</sup> Central Committee and "relevant responsible comrades." The meeting conducted a procedure called "democratic recommendation" (民主推荐)—effectively a straw poll—in which each participant was given a ballot listing the names of nearly 200 candidates in stroke order (the Chinese equivalent of alphabetical order). All of the listed candidates met the prescribed criteria for membership in the Politburo: Officials serving at ministerial rank and above or serving at the level of a military region or above, and of age 62 or younger. According to Xinhua, the meeting's program had been the product of repeated meetings of the Politburo and its Standing Committee, which established the criteria for nominations. The final tally of the straw poll, Xinhua reported, was "quite concentrated on some nominees and conformed to the reality of the contingent of cadres."

On the basis of the results of the "democratic recommendation" procedure in June, of opinions solicited outside the Politburo, and of the Politburo's own evaluation of its "needs" and of the candidates' character and integrity, the Politburo and its Standing Committee drew up and approved a slate of proposed nominees on 27 September. The full Politburo endorsed the list on 8 October, and it was submitted to the Seventh Plenum, which approved its submission to the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress.

The 25 June 2007 meeting was the first time the procedure of “democratic recommendation” had been used for leadership nominations at the top level of the party. “Democratic recommendation” is one of several procedures, along with multi-candidate slates and secret balloting, whose roots trace back into the 1980s and that Hu Jintao promoted since becoming general secretary in 2002 as part of his effort to expand “intra-party democracy.”

PRC media described extensive use of the procedure of “democratic recommendation” in the city, county, and township party congress elections that began early in 2011, and it was used again in 2012 in nominating the Politburo and its Standing Committee heading into the 18<sup>th</sup> Party Congress. According to Xinhua, the meeting was held in May in Beijing, and, as in 2007, the results factored into subsequent leadership deliberations on final nominations submitted to the Seventh Plenum and finally the party congress.<sup>10</sup>

In the past two decades, the overall nomination process has been supervised by a three-man group headed by the general secretary, with the executive secretary of the Party Secretariat and the head of the Party Organization Department as deputies. If the Xi leadership continues that practice, the three-man group managing nominations to be presented to the 19<sup>th</sup> Congress would include Xi Jinping, Executive Secretary Liu Yunshan, and Organization Department chief Zhao Leji.

In any event, PRC media will provide no clue as to who is on the final slate of nominees to be presented to the 2017 party congress. Despite the escalating torrent of rumors that will inevitably swirl through Beijing and make their way into the Hong Kong and foreign press in the months preceding the party congress, no solid information on the identities of the new leadership will be available until Xinhua publicizes the press communiqué of the 19<sup>th</sup> Central Committee First Plenum, which will meet the day after the 19<sup>th</sup> Congress closes.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> A later Politburo meeting—usually about two weeks before the plenum convenes—will set the precise dates for the meeting.

<sup>2</sup> Technically, the 1982 12<sup>th</sup> Party Congress convened five years after the 11<sup>th</sup> in 1977. But the 11<sup>th</sup> Central Committee’s Fifth Plenum had called for the 12<sup>th</sup> Party Congress to be convened “ahead of time”—probably in 1981—to deal with several major matters. In the end, however, political contention over several issues impeded convocation of the 12<sup>th</sup> Congress until 1982.

<sup>3</sup> “中共中央发出通知部署党的十八大代表选举工作” (The CCP Central Committee issues a notice on delegate election work in preparation for the 18<sup>th</sup> Party Congress), Xinhua, 1 November 2011.

<sup>4</sup> The following details of the process of drafting the political report presented at the 2002 16<sup>th</sup> Party Congress are drawn from Xia Lin, Zhang Sutang, and Sun Chengbin, “A Marxist Programmatic Document—An Account of How the Report to the 16th National Party Congress Was Prepared,” Xinhua, 19 November 2002, translated as FBIS

document CPP2002112000003. Comparable accounts of the drafting of the political reports to the 1992 14<sup>th</sup> Congress and the 1997 15<sup>th</sup> Congress were also carried by Xinhua immediately after each congress closed. See, respectively, the accounts transmitted by Xinhua on 23 October 1992, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service *Daily Report—China*, FBIS-CHI-207, 22–27, and on 25 September 1997, translated as FBIS document number FBIS-CHI-97-268.

<sup>5</sup> The details that follow on the process that produced Hu Jintao’s report to the 17<sup>th</sup> Party Congress are drawn from Xia Lin 夏林, Sun Chengbin 孙承斌, and Zou Shengwen 邹声文, “发展中国特色社会主义的政治宣言和行动纲领” (A Political Declaration and Action Program for Developing Socialism with Chinese Characteristics—A Record of the Birth of the Report to the 17<sup>th</sup> CCP National Congress) Xinhua, 27 October 2007, as translated in Open Source Center (OSC) document no. CPP20071027338002.

<sup>6</sup> Xu Jinyue 徐京跃, Wu Jing 吴晶, and Zhao Chao 赵超, “夺取中国特色社会主义新胜利的政治宣言和行动纲领——党的十八大报告诞生记” (Striving for a political declaration and action program for a new victory for Socialism with Chinese Characteristics—A record of the drafting of the 18<sup>th</sup> Party Congress Report), Xinhua, 20 November 2012, in *People’s Daily*, 21 November 2012, p.1.

<sup>7</sup> The amendment process was described in a Xinhua “insight” column, “Hold High the Bann: Amending the CPC Constitution,” transmitted on 21 November 2012. On the 2007 amendment process, see Xu Jinyue 徐京跃, Li Bin 李斌, Li Yajie 李亚杰, and Gu Ruizhen 顾瑞珍, “为高扬的党旗增添新的思想光辉” (Adding New Ideological Glory to the High-Flying Party Banner), 28 October 2007. For an OSC translation, see document no. CPP20071028073001.

<sup>8</sup> For a particularly brilliant projection of appointments to the Politburo Standing Committee at the upcoming 19<sup>th</sup> Party Congress, see “Projecting the Next Politburo Standing Committee,” *China Leadership Monitor*, no. 49 (1 March 2016).

<sup>9</sup> Liu Siyang 刘思扬, Sun Chengbin 孙承斌, and Liu Gang 刘刚, “为了党和国家兴旺发达长治久安—党的新一届中央领导机构产生纪实” (For the Sake of the Prosperity, Growth, and Long-Term Stability of the Party and the State—An Account of the Formation of the New Central Leadership Organ of the Party), Xinhua, 23 October 2007 and *People’s Daily* (人民日报), 24 October 2007, p.1. An OSC translation is available as document no. CPP20071023354001.

<sup>10</sup> Zhang Sutang 张宿堂, Qin Jie 秦杰, Huo Xiaoguang 霍小光, and Li Yajie 李亚杰, “开创中国特色社会主义事业新局面的坚强领导集体——党的新一届中央领导机构产生纪实” (A strong leadership collective for creating a new situation in the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics—A record of the birth of the new central leadership organs), Xinhua, 15 November 2012.