

## U.N. RIGHTS CHIEF REGRETS LACK OF ACCESS TO EAST TURKISTAN



EAST TURKISTAN PRESS AND MEDIA ASSOCIATION  
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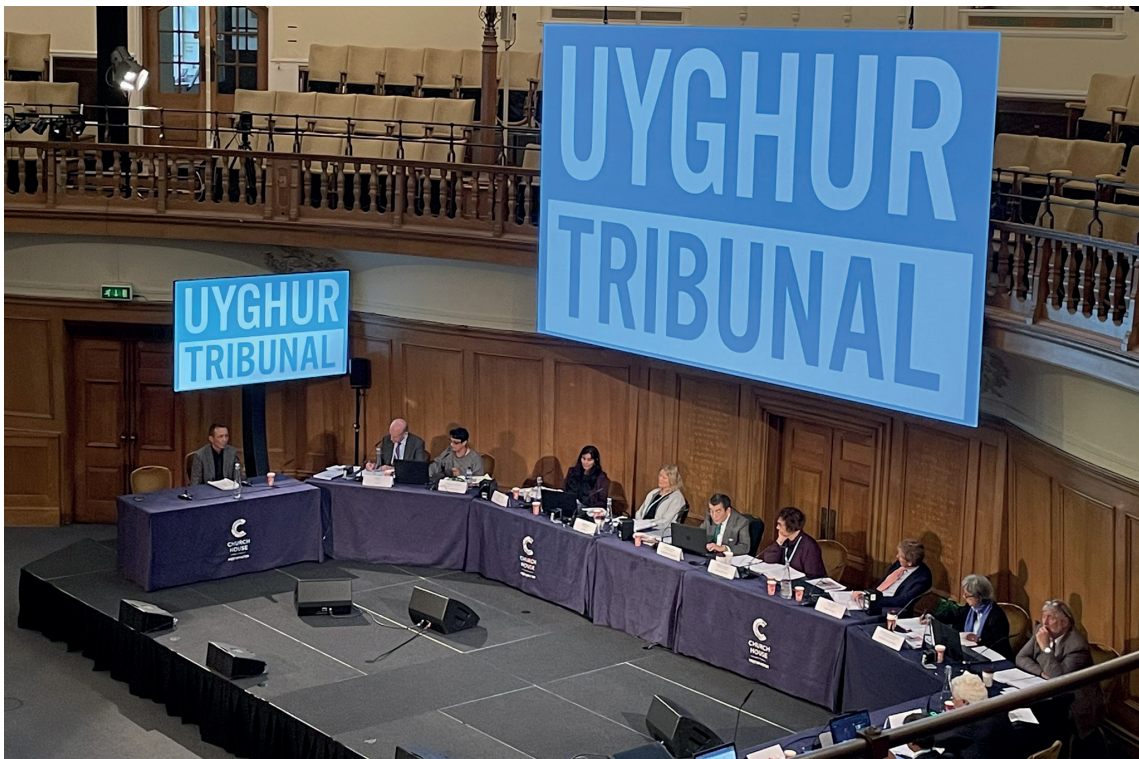


## U.N. RIGHTS CHIEF REGRETS LACK OF ACCESS TO XINJIANG

**GENEVA, Sept 13 (Reuters) - The United Nations' rights chief lamented on Monday that efforts to gain access to China's Xinjiang region to probe reports of serious violations against Muslim Uyghurs have not succeeded, adding that she was finalising a report on the situation.**

**"I regret that I am not able to report progress on my efforts to seek meaningful access to the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region," Michelle Bachelet said at the opening of the Human Rights Council on Monday in Geneva.**

**"In the meantime, my Office is finalising its assessment of the available information on allegations of serious human rights violations in that region, with a view to making it public."**



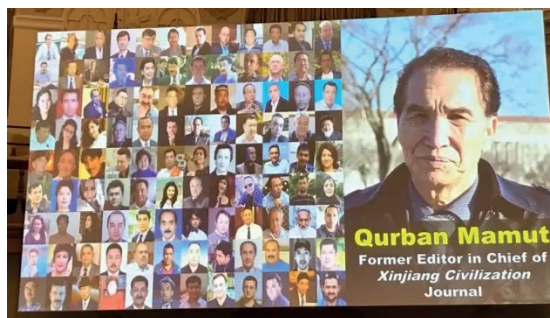
## THE UYGHUR TRIBUNAL'S SECOND SESSION LAUNCHED IN LONDON

A stream of Chinese government invective heralded the start of the second set of hearings of the Uyghur Tribunal in London last week.

**The independent Tribunal aiming to examine evidence of China's human rights abuses against the Uyghur people in China's Xinjiang autonomous region, opened against a volley of attacks against the proceedings, which the CCP claimed were a "political farce" and "pseudo court" "used by terrorists and anti-China forces to smear China's anti-terrorist efforts in the Xinjiang region."**

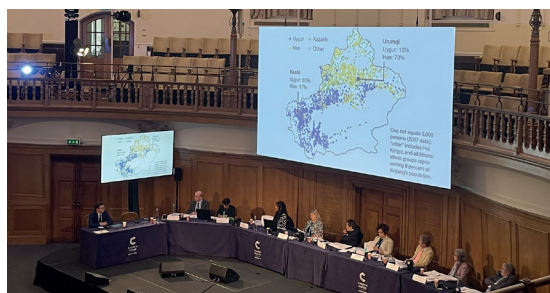
Objecting to the aim of the tribunal, which is to assess whether a genocide has been carried out by the Chinese government against its own people, the Chinese Embassy in the UK joined forces with the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Government of Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region to jointly condemn the event, slated as “another group of ‘actors and actresses’ getting together with anti-China forces” “in an attempt to offer sensational but fake materials to Western media and make stories about the ‘evil China.’”

Following the first grueling session of the Tribunal in June, a raft of witnesses had come forward to testify of torture, forced sterilization and systematic rape, during their incarceration. Chinese State Television responded by parading their relatives and colleagues onscreen who lashed out at the witnesses for their unpatriotic “lies,” immorality, and questionable lifestyles.



Nothing has been heard since from those giving evidence in China, said Sir Geoffrey Nice QC introducing the second four-day proceedings. Sir Geoffrey who together with the Tribunal itself has been sanctioned by the PRC, regretted the “vituperative” attack on the Tribunal by the CCP, and its unwillingness to offer its own evidence. He said that the second four days would focus mainly on examining the structure of the PRC and lines of command within its ranks, and hear from fewer firsthand witnesses of the atrocities in the internment camps.

**Shortly before the proceedings the new Chinese ambassador to the UK, Ambassador Zheng Zeguang, made one last ditch attempt to halt the event by appealing to the British government. Urging ministers to step in, he begged them to “stop the organizers from continuing such malicious behavior and taking action on this,” but was told of the Tribunal’s non-governmental nature with no legal authority.**



Condemning Ambassador Zheng’s denial of the abuses in her homeland, Uyghur activist Rushan Abbas of Campaign For Uyghurs, whose sister’s three year extra-judicial 20-year incarceration would be commemorated over the weekend, lashed out in retaliation on her Twitter feed.



“Release my sister Dr Gulshan Abbas instead of lying in front of the whole world!” she raged. “With witnesses like us whose loved ones are missing in China’s concentration camps, no one will buy your cheap propaganda!”

*By Ruth Ingram*



## TWO SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS RETRACT ARTICLES INVOLVING CHINESE DNA RESEARCH

Two respected scientific journals have retracted two articles that relied on the DNA samples of Uyghurs in western China after questions were raised about whether the subjects had provided their full consent.

**The two studies were published in 2019 by the International Journal of Legal Medicine and Human Genetics, both owned by the academic publisher Springer Nature. They listed numerous authors, including Li Caixia, chief forensic scientist at China's Ministry of Public Security. The International Journal of Legal Medicine issued its retraction on Tuesday, and Human Genetics released its statement on Aug. 30.**

Both studies were at the center of a 2019 article by The New York Times that described how Chinese researchers had analyzed DNA samples from hundreds of Uyghurs for a

process called DNA phenotyping, which attempts to recreate a person's features, including face and height, by relying solely on DNA samples.

Retractions are rare in the academic world. Scientists say the withdrawal of the articles points to broader failures in consent procedures and the need for extra scrutiny involving vulnerable groups such as oppressed minorities. The Uyghurs, a mostly Muslim minority who live in the Xinjiang region, have been subject to mass incarceration in internment camps and live under heavy surveillance.

For years, several scientists have argued that it would be impossible to verify that members of the minority group had willingly given blood samples for research, especially when officials from the Chinese police were involved. Many Uyghurs told The Times that they had been called up en masse to give blood samples to the government under the guise of a free health check. They said they had no choice but to comply.



Both the International Journal of Legal Medicine and Human Genetics said there had been concerns over “ethics and consent procedures” after the articles were published.

In similarly worded language, the journals said they had “requested supporting documentation from the authors, including the application form submitted to the ethics committee and evidence of ethics approval.”

“The documents supplied by the authors contain insufficient information related to the scope of the study for us to remain confident that the protocols complied with our editorial policies or are in line with international ethical standards,” the journals wrote.

The notes published in the International Journal of Legal Medicine and Human Genetics said Dr. Li, the scientist at China’s Ministry of Public Security, disputed the retractions on behalf of the other authors. None of the authors responded to The Times for comment.

Yves Moreau, a professor of engineering at the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium who has spearheaded a yearslong campaign for the retraction of articles relying on Uyghur DNA, said he had contacted five academic journals to have such papers withdrawn. Four of them have been retracted so far, which Professor Moreau described as “just scratching the surface.”

He previously analyzed 529 studies from China that involved genetic research and found that, among those published between

2011 and 2018, about half had a co-author who was from the police, military or judiciary.

“These lines are very clear,” Professor Moreau said. “You can’t say: ‘I didn’t know, I didn’t realize and I have no influence.’”

In 2018, Dr. Li told Nature, the scientific journal, that the studies had been approved by the Institute of Forensic Science and that “all individuals provided written informed consent.”

“We are ordinary forensic scientists who carry out forensic research following the scientific research ethics norms,” she wrote.

In May 2020, the U.S. government put Dr. Li’s Institute of Forensic Science on a blacklist that restricts its access to U.S. technology. The United States said the institute was “complicit in human rights violations and abuses committed in China’s campaign of repression, mass arbitrary detention, forced labor and high-technology surveillance” against Muslim minorities in Xinjiang.

Springer Nature previously retracted a 2019 article that looked at the DNA samples of China’s male ethnic minorities, including Uyghurs. Three of the authors belonged to the criminal department of the police in Karamay, a city in Xinjiang. In 2019, the U.S. government had put the Karamay police, along with other police departments, on a blacklist for rights abuses in the region.

According to that note, also published in the International Journal of Legal Medicine, the article had been retracted by one of the authors over ethics concerns. “The corresponding author informed the publisher that contrary to the ethics statement in the article, the study was undertaken without the approval of their institutional ethics committee,” it said.

*By Sui-Lee-Wee*



# AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY SAYS CHINESE UYGHUR STUDY BREACHED ETHICS CODE



**SYDNEY, Sept 15 (Reuters)**

**An Australian university said on Wednesday that it has asked journal publisher Wiley Online Library to retract a research study conducted by a former faculty member that helps Chinese facial recognition software better identify ethnic Uyghurs.**



Curtin University said that the study published by the academic Wanquan Liu and co-authors at Chinese universities in 2018 was conducted without its knowledge and had breached its ethics code.

“Ethics approval should have been sought by the academic,” the university said in a statement to Reuters in response to a request for comment on the outcome of its internal investigation into the matter.

Liu did not immediately respond to an email request for comment.

Wiley said it had previously launched an investigation which resulted in a publisher’s note and an expression of concern to readers in September 2020 about the data contained in the study.

“We take every concern seriously and are reviewing the matter again taking into account the new information provided by Curtin University,” Wiley said in a statement to Reuters.

Liu and his co-authors said they had collected a dataset of facial images by recruiting hundreds of students of Uyghur, Tibetan

and Korean ethnicity from the Dalian Minzu University in China.

The study, funded by the Chinese government, said “face recognition has great application potential in border control, customs check, and public security”.

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation’s Four Corners programme first reported in 2019 on concerns that the Uyghur subjects had not given consent.

Liu worked at Curtin in Western Australia for two decades, funded by an Australian Research Council grant, but left to take up a new post at Sun Yat-sen University in Shenzhen in May, according to biographical details published on the Chinese university’s website.

The incident is the latest in a spate of controversies involving Chinese ethnic profiling research on Uyghurs, a mostly Muslim minority group under heavy surveillance by authorities in the western Chinese region of Xinjiang.

China denies all accusations of mistreatment or discrimination in Xinjiang.

Another publisher, Springer Nature, has retracted two articles involving Uyghurs on ethics grounds in the past two weeks.

A Curtin University spokesperson told Reuters in an emailed statement the research had been undertaken by Liu informally, without the support of a contract or formal documentation, though the published study acknowledges him as working in Curtin’s computer studies department.

Australia’s universities have come under government scrutiny for foreign interference through international research collaboration. The Australian Research Council said in March that security agencies had increased vetting of projects funded by its grants at the country’s universities.

*By Kirsty Needham*







## CHINA'S XINJIANG CRACKDOWN REAPS MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN ASSETS FOR THE STATE

Courts sell off property and company shares once belonging to jailed Uyghur business owners.

KORLA, China—Chinese authorities have seized and sold at auction tens of millions of dollars in assets owned by jailed Uyghur business owners amid a broad government campaign to assimilate ethnic minorities in the country's northwest Xinjiang region.

**Since 2019, Xinjiang courts have put at least 150 assets—ranging from home appliances to real estate and company shares—belonging to at least 21 people and valued at a total \$84.8 million up for auction on e-commerce sites.**

The listings were compiled by the Uyghur Human Rights Project, an advocacy group partially funded by the U.S. government, and were corroborated by The Wall Street Journal, which reviewed court documents and corporate records. The Xinjiang government didn't respond to a request for comment.

The Uyghur group said it recorded seizures that were clearly linked to court cases involving charges related to terrorism and extremism. It also included cases of people identified by Chinese state media as extremists, or whose families reported they had been accused of such activities.

Western scholars and rights groups say Chinese authorities level these types of charges as a pretext to implement policies targeting minorities in Xinjiang more broadly. China

says it is fighting terrorism and separatism. Uyghur activists say Beijing is intent on destroying Uyghurs' culture and ethnic identity.

In recent years, China's government has clamped down on the predominantly Muslim and Turkic-speaking Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in Xinjiang, razing mosques and other religious sites and confining hundreds of thousands of people in a network of internment camps.

The auction entries also shed light on what Uyghurs say is another aspect of China's campaign: the dismantling of companies and personal wealth belonging to Uyghur business leaders.

One of the properties put up for auction was a four-story building in the western city of Kashgar, adjacent to the city's most important landmark, the nearly 600-year-old Id Kah Mosque. The building was owned by a wealthy Uyghur exporter named Abdujelil Helil.

Once praised by the Xinjiang government as an "excellent builder of socialism with Chinese characteristics," Mr. Helil was arrested in 2017 and charged with financing terrorist activities. The next year he was sentenced to 14 years in prison and stripped of \$11 million in personal assets.

In October 2020, a man named Chen Chuhong won the bidding for Mr. Helil's building near the mosque, acquiring it for \$8.3 million.

Mr. Helil appealed and his case was heard earlier this year, his family said.

The building was auctioned off on Alibaba Group Holding Ltd.'s Taobao e-commerce site. Alibaba didn't respond to requests for comment.



**Some auction entries identified by the Uyghur Human Rights Project described group arrests tied to allegations of "helping terrorist activities" without elaborating, such as one involving 16 people, including two septuagenarians and an 81-year-old.**

"This is probably just the tip of the iceberg," said Nicole Morgret, project manager at the Uyghur Human Rights Project.

As in the U.S., Chinese law enables authorities to confiscate and sell assets for certain civil disputes and criminal charges.

Before the crackdown, Uyghur business owners often served as a bridge between the government and their communities, with some scholars arguing that they helped mitigate socioeconomic disparities between the Han Chinese majority and ethnic minorities, which have long fueled interethnic tensions.

Now, Uyghur activists argue, they have become targets. A Wall Street Journal analysis of corporate records of companies in Hotan city—home to several prominent Uyghur real-estate developers—indicates that orders by municipal authorities to freeze Uyghur entrepreneurs' assets increased sharply in

2018, about a year after Xinjiang authorities began interning local Muslim minorities en masse.

In 2017, one Uyghur business owner had company shares frozen following orders from a local court. The next year, the number jumped to 22, accounting for more than half of all individuals and firms who had shares frozen due to criminal or civil cases in Hotan city since 2013.

The auction records also shed light on the unraveling of Uyghur business legacies like that of the Hemdul family, who owned a number of properties in Korla, a central Xinjiang city, including twin towers that overlooked a river running through the city, according to Omerjan Hemdul, a 31-year-old Uyghur businessman now living in Turkey.

Mr. Hemdul's two brothers, Ruzi and Me-met, oversaw the family's businesses until both were detained in 2017. Mr. Hemdul said he hasn't heard from either since. In 2019 and 2020, a local Xinjiang court listed sev-



eral of Ruzi Hemdul's properties for auction. One was an apartment unit in Urumqi. Another was a restaurant in Korla, which was listed at \$1.6 million but didn't win any bids. The brick-faced restaurant had been adorned with traditional Uyghur art and chandeliers, according to photos included in its auction entry.

Also listed for auction was Ruzi Hemdul's 40.5% stake in the real-estate company that built the two towers in Korla, which was sold for \$300,000.

In September, a Journal reporter visited Ruzi Hemdul's long-closed restaurant in Korla, with its name erased from the building's facade. The two towers were unoccupied and fenced off by green barriers, though construction of the exterior appeared to have been completed.

Omerjan Hemdul doesn't know what allegations were leveled against his brothers. He said he believes the Chinese government targets rich Uyghurs by accusing them of sponsoring terrorism. Donations to mosques in Korla and a project to build a hospital in Turkey could have also made his brothers a target, he said. "They catch wealthy people so that they can retake their wealth," he said.

The Korla city government didn't respond to a request for comment.

*By Eva Xiao and Jonathan Cheng*





## XINJIANG GENOCIDE CONFERENCE AIMS TO UP PRESSURE ON CHINA

London (AP) -- Leading scholars and lawyers are joining politicians and human rights groups in Britain Wednesday for the first large-scale conference to discuss the Chinese government's alleged genocide against the Uyghur ethnic group in the northwest Xinjiang region.

**“The three-day conference at Newcastle University brings together dozens of speakers, including senior British judges and lawmakers, and is the first to gather so many experts on Xinjiang and genocide. It is the latest move aiming to hold China accountable for alleged rights abuses against the Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim and Turkic minorities.”**

Speakers will cover evidence of alleged atrocities targeting the Uyghurs, including forced labor, forced birth control and religious suppression, and discuss ways to compel international action to stop the alleged abuse.

“We want it to not just be a scholarly affair — we are gathering all these people to combine their expertise and influence to up the ante, to increase pressure on China, to think of ways to bring an end to the harm on the Uyghur people,” said organizer Jo Smith Finley, an academic specializing in Uyghur studies.

“This is a major humanitarian disaster which is increasingly urgent,” she added. “Is this genocide or cultural genocide, or crimes against humanity, and how can we prosecute that? We are really trying to refocus on what can we do to make this stop.”

Academic Adrian Zenz, whose research on forced sterilizations among Uyghur women drew widespread attention to the issue, will present official documents backing claims that Beijing wants to forcibly reduce the Uyghur population, Finley said.

Researchers say an estimated 1 million people or more — most of them Uyghurs — have been confined in vast re-education camps in Xinjiang in recent years. Chinese authorities have been accused of imposing forced labor, systematic forced birth control and torture,

erasing the Uyghurs' cultural and religious identity, and separating children from incarcerated parents.

Chinese officials have rejected the genocide and rights abuse allegations as groundless and characterized the camps as vocational training centers to teach Chinese language, job skills and the law to support economic development and combat radicalism. China saw a wave of Xinjiang-related terror attacks through 2016.

Xu Guixiang, a Xinjiang spokesperson, denied the allegations at a news conference in Beijing this week. He said the government's policies had curbed militant attacks and restored stability to the region.

“They say more than 1 million people have been locked up in Xinjiang, but in fact most of the graduates of the training and education centers have gotten stable jobs and lead happy lives,” Xu said.

The U.S. government and parliaments in Britain, Belgium, the Netherlands and Can-



ada have declared that Beijing's policies against the Uyghurs amount to genocide and crimes against humanity. The United States have blocked imports of cotton and tomatoes from Xinjiang and companies linked to forced labor in the region, and the European Union and Britain have also imposed sanctions on Communist Party officials.

Despite such moves and a growing body of evidence documenting abuses, critics say there has not been enough international political or legal action. It is unclear if the economic sanctions would compel Beijing or Chinese companies to change their ways. China has also retaliated by imposing sanctions on Western individuals and institutions, and called for boycotts against leading retailers such as Nike and H&M after they expressed concerns about forced labor in Xinjiang.

Finley, the conference organizer, was one of several British individuals slapped with Chinese sanctions and banned from visiting China earlier this year for her work.

One of the main goals of the conference is to consider whether diplomatic actions — such as a diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing — can be effective in pursuing Chinese accountability.

“There's a lot we can do in terms of shaming,” Finley said.

The conference runs until Friday and will be livestreamed online.

*The Associated Press*





## GERMAN COMPANIES ACCUSED OF PROFITING FROM FORCED UYGHUR MUSLIM LABOUR IN CHINA

Several German companies have been accused of “profiting” from the forced labour of Uyghur Muslims in China.

The allegation was made by the Berlin-based NGO, The European Centre for Constitutional and Human Rights (ECCHR).

High-profile brands including clothing chains Hugo Boss and C&A, and the discount chains Lidl, Aldi Nord and Aldi Sud were named in the complaint.

**The ECCHR said that the companies have been complicit “directly or indirectly” in the forced labour of members of the Muslim Uyghur minority in China’s Xinjiang province.**

The association said the brands were guilty of “alleged complicity in crimes against humanity”. The companies have denied the claims.

Several western countries have accused China of detaining Uyghur Muslims in vast labour camps in the west of the country.

The United States claims that Beijing is carrying out genocide against Uyghur and other Turks in Xinjiang, where experts estimate that more than a million people are imprisoned.

Beijing rejects the term genocide and has described the camps as vocational training centres.

But Uyghur say they are being forced to abandon their religious traditions and are im-



prisoned while working for textile factories that supply multinational companies.

**In its complaint, the ECCHR says that by maintaining business with the region, German companies are “aiding and abetting these crimes,” even if there was no tangible evidence of forced labour.**

“These five cases are just one example of a much larger and more systemic problem,” Miriam Saage-Maass, director of the ECCHR told AFP.

C&A said in a statement that it did not “tolerate forced labour in [its] supply chain”.

Aldi meanwhile stated that it had established “binding standards for all business partners” to prevent these issues.

Hugo Boss also said in a statement that it had “asked suppliers several months ago to find out and confirm that the production of goods in the supply chain is carried out in accor-



dance with human rights” and added that it gave “absolute priority” to the matter.

Lidl meanwhile condemned the practices in question and told AFP that the NGO’s complaint was based on “old supplier lists”.

In April, a similar complaint against four multinational clothing companies was filed in France by the anti-corruption group Sherpa.

*By AFP*





## HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS CALL ON BROADCASTERS TO CANCEL PLANNED COVERAGE OF BEIJING OLYMPICS

A coalition of human rights groups is urging major broadcasters across the world, including NBC, to cancel plans to cover the 2022 Olympics in Beijing over reported human rights abuses in China.

In a joint letter to NBC Chief Operating Officer Jeff Shell and executives at other networks, the groups said outlets “are at serious risk of being complicit in China’s plan to ‘sport wash’ the severe and worsening human rights abuses and embolden the actions of the Chinese authorities.”

By broadcasting Beijing 2022, media outlets will “legitimize these abuses and promote what is being widely described as the ‘Genocide Games,’ “ the groups claimed in their letter, which was first obtained by The Associated Press.

**“ NBC Universal did not immediately respond to a request for comment. In 2014, NBC inked a deal to pay \$7.75 billion for the rights to the Olympics through 2032.**

China’s foreign ministry has repeatedly denied accusations of oppression of ethnic minorities and other human rights abuses.

“Genocide must be a red line that cannot be crossed, no matter the cost,” the groups wrote in their letter.

Lhadon Tethong, co-chair of the International Tibet Network, called out broadcasters like Canada’s CBC, Britain’s BBC and ARD in Germany as media outlets that receive public money and should not cover the Games.

“It is unconscionable that NBC, CBC and other broadcasters plan to help Chinese leaders project a rosy image of an ‘Olympic Games as usual’ while they are carrying out genocide against the Uyghurs, and engaging in a massive campaign of repression against Tibetans and so many others,” Tethong told the AP.

The Beijing Games are slated to begin in February.

*By Dominick Mastrangelo*





## US MUSLIM GROUPS BOYCOTT HILTON OVER UYGHUR MOSQUE HOTEL PROJECT

**A group of more than 40 Muslim civil rights organizations in the United States boycotted Hilton Hotels on Thursday over what it says are plans to build a hotel on the site of a bulldozed Uyghur mosque in China.**

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) and other organizations held a news conference Thursday outside the Capital Hilton in Washington announcing the boycott campaign. Speaking at a news conference in Virginia CAIR said that attempts to negotiate with the hotel group to cancel the building plans had gone “to no avail.”

“Today, we are announcing a global boycott campaign against Hilton,” Nihad Awad executive director of CAIR said. “You and I have the choice to choose where to go on your travel or to do business meetings or to hold

events, weddings or banquets,” he added, emphasizing that the plan for construction violates human rights and destroys Uyghur culture and faith.







## PROMINENT CAMPAIGNER FOR UYGHUR RIGHTS IN XINJIANG BARRED FROM KAZAKHSTAN

Dual US and Russian national Gene Bunin has documented the plight of Muslim minorities in China’s western regions

A prominent campaigner who has documented the plight of Muslim minorities in China’s Xinjiang region says he has been barred from entering neighbouring Kazakhstan.

**Gene Bunin, a dual US and Russian national, is best known as the founder of the Xinjiang Victims Database, which contains entries for nearly 25,000 people incarcerated, detained or unaccounted for in Xinjiang.**

The United States says that Beijing is carrying out a genocide against Uyghurs and other mostly Muslim Turkic people in Xinjiang, where experts estimate more than a million people are incarcerated in camps and jails.

Central Asian Kazakhstan is one of several former Soviet states that have appeared to toe Beijing’s line on Xinjiang. Thousands of Kazakhs have family ties to Xinjiang, where Kazakhs are the second-largest Turkic group after the Uyghurs.

Bunin showed Agence France-Presse a copy of a document confirming that he had been barred from entering the country. He said he had received the document upon arrival to Kazakhstan’s largest city, Almaty, on Sunday, after a flight from Kyrgyzstan.





Officials did not provide a reason for deporting him from a country where he lived for around two years before leaving in 2020, Bunin said.

Bunin, 36, wrote: “Congratulations, Kazakhstan, on your path down to authoritarian hell.”

Bunin, who was also barred from entering Uzbekistan last year, has in the past worked with several foreign media organisations, including AFP.

**Bunin said he was "99.9% sure" the deportation was connected to his work on Xinjiang, and added that Kazakh authorities had been "consistently 'cleaning up' Xinjiang activism" by detaining and hassling local campaigners.**

Kazakhstan’s security committee, which oversees the border service responsible for the deportation order, did not respond to requests for comment.

A foreign ministry spokesperson told AFP that he had no knowledge of the case.

Kazakhstan, Central Asia’s richest economy, has billed itself as the “buckle” in China’s trillion-dollar belt and road initiative and relies on China as a market for its oil and gas exports.

China has denied Washington’s genocide accusations and refers to its camp-like facilities in Xinjiang as vocational training centres.

*By Agence France-Presse*



## FBI SAYS CHINESE AUTHORITIES ARE HACKING US-BASED UYGHURS

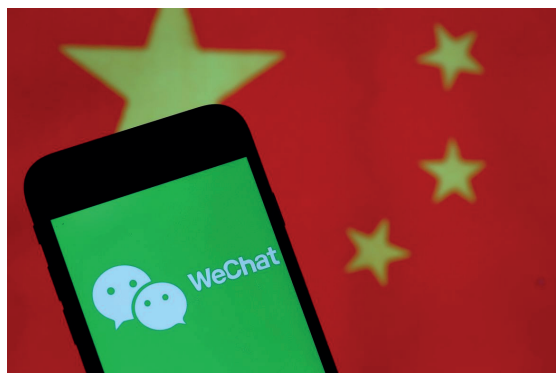
The FBI has warned that the Chinese government is using both in-person and digital techniques to intimidate, silence and harass U.S.-based Uyghur Muslims.

**The Chinese government has long been accused of human rights abuses over its treatment of the Uyghur population and other mostly Muslim ethnic groups in China's Xinjiang region. More than a million Uyghurs have been detained in internment camps, according to a United Nations human rights committee, and many other Uyghurs have been targeted and hacked by state-backed cyberattacks. China has repeatedly denied the claims.**

In recent months, the Chinese government has become increasingly aggressive in its efforts to shut down foreign critics, including those based in the United States and other Western democracies. These efforts have now caught the attention of the FBI.

In an unclassified bulletin, the FBI warned that officials are using transnational repression — a term that refers to foreign government transgression of national borders through physical and digital means to intimidate or silence members of diaspora and exile communities — in an attempt to compel compliance from U.S.-based Uyghurs and other Chinese refugees and dissidents, including Tibetans, Falun Gong members and Taiwan and Hong Kong activists.

“Threatened consequences for non-compliance routinely include detainment of a



U.S.-based person’s family or friends in China, seizure of China-based assets, sustained digital and in-person harassment, Chinese government attempts to force repatriation, computer hacking and digital attacks, and false representation online,” the FBI bulletin warns.

The bulletin was reported by video surveillance news site IPVM.

The FBI highlighted four instances of U.S.-based individuals facing harassment. In one case from June, the Chinese government imprisoned dozens of family members of six U.S.-based Uyghur journalists in retaliation for their continued reporting on China and its repression of Uyghurs for the U.S. govern-

ment-funded news service Radio Free Asia. The bulletin said that between 2019 and March 2021, Chinese officials used WeChat to call and text a U.S.-based Uyghur to discourage her from publicly discussing Uyghur mistreatment. Members of this person’s family were later detained in Xinjiang detention camps.

“The Chinese government continues to conduct this activity, even as the U.S. government has sanctioned Chinese officials and increased public and diplomatic messaging to counter China’s human rights and democratic abuses in Xinjiang over the past year,” the FBI states. “This transnational repression activity violates US laws and individual rights.”

**The FBI has urged U.S. law enforcement personnel, as well as members of the public, to report any suspected incidents of Chinese government harassment.**

*By Carly Page*





## LITHUANIA SAYS THROW AWAY CHINESE PHONES DUE TO CENSORSHIP CONCERNS

VILNIUS, Sept 21 (Reuters) - Lithuania's Defense Ministry recommended that consumers avoid buying Chinese mobile phones and advised people to throw away the ones they have now after a government report found the devices had built-in censorship capabilities.

**Flagship phones sold in Europe by China's smartphone giant Xiaomi Corp (1810.HK) have a built-in ability to detect and censor terms such as "Free Tibet", "Long live Taiwan independence" or "democracy movement", Lithuania's state-run cybersecurity body said on Tuesday.**

The capability in Xiaomi's Mi 10T 5G phone software had been turned off for the "European Union region", but can be turned on remotely at any time, the Defence Ministry's National Cyber Security Centre said in the report.

"Our recommendation is to not buy new Chinese phones, and to get rid of those already purchased as fast as reasonably possible," Defence Deputy Minister Margiris Abukevicius told reporters in introducing the report.

Xiaomi did not respond to a Reuters query for comment.

Relations between Lithuania and China have soured recently. China demanded last month that Lithuania withdraw its ambassador in Beijing and said it would recall its envoy to Vilnius after Taiwan announced that its mis-



sion in Lithuania would be called the Taiwanese Representative Office. [read more](#)

Taiwanese missions in Europe and the United States use the name of the city Taipei, avoiding a reference to the island itself, which China claims as its own territory.

**U.S. President Joe Biden's national security adviser Jake Sullivan spoke to Lithuania's prime minister Ingrida Simonyte last week and stressed support for her country in the face of pressure from China.**



The National Cyber Centre's report also said the Xiaomi phone was sending encrypted phone usage data to a server in Singapore. A security flaw was also found in the P40 5G phone by China's Huawei (HWT.UL) but none was found in the phone of another Chinese maker, OnePlus, it said.

Huawei's representative in the Baltics told the BNS news wire its phones do not send user's data externally.

The report said the list of terms which could be censored by the Xiaomi phone's system apps, including the default internet browser, currently includes 449 terms in Chinese and is continuously updated.

"This is important not only to Lithuania but to all countries which use Xiaomi equipment," the Centre said in the report.

*By Andrius Sytas*





**Since the occupation of East Turkistan, the Chinese Communist regime has been constantly intensified its state terrorism policy in these 72 years and committing genocide against the people of East Turkistan at the moment.**

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