

## 43 COUNTRIES CALL ON CHINA TO RESPECT UYGHUR RIGHTS



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## 43 COUNTRIES INCLUDING TURKEY CALL ON CHINA TO RESPECT UYGHUR RIGHTS

Forty-three countries including Turkey on Thursday at the United Nations urged China to “ensure full respect for the rule of law” with regard to the Muslim Uyghur community in Xinjiang, where human rights violations remain “particularly” worrying.

**“We call on China to allow immediate, meaningful and unfettered access to Xinjiang for independent observers, including the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights and her office,” the countries said in a joint statement, read at the U.N. by France.**

“We are particularly concerned about the situation in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region,” the statement said, citing “credible” reports that “indicate the existence of a large network of ‘political reeducation’ camps where over a million people have been arbitrarily detained.”

The declaration, signed by the United States, European countries, Asian states and others, spoke of torture, cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment, forced sterilization, sexual and gender-based vi-





olence and forced separation of children, which it said “disproportionately continues to target Uyghurs and members of other minorities.”

China’s ambassador to the United Nations, Zhang Jun denounced what he termed the “lies” and “a plot to hurt China.” He quickly stepped in to reject “unfounded accusations.”

“Xinjiang enjoys development and the people are emancipating themselves every day and are proud of the progress made,” he said, supported by Cuba, which criticized any interference in China’s internal affairs.

**In 2019 and 2020, a similar declaration was made public in the same way by Britain and Germany. After garnering 23 backers two years ago, the declaration gained the support of 39 countries last year. They were joined this year by Turkey, Eswatini, Portugal and the Czech Republic, according to diplomats.**

On the other hand, Haiti dropped its backing for the declaration after its relations with China were complicated by Port-au-Prince recognizing Taiwan.

Switzerland also dropped its signature from the statement because, diplomatic sources said, it recently hosted a high-level meeting between the United States and China and decided to prioritize its role as facilitator between these two powers rather than signing the annual declaration calling for respect of human rights in Xinjiang.



According to diplomats, China is increasing pressure every year to dissuade U.N. members from signing the declarations, threatening not to renew peace missions in said countries or preventing others from building new embassies in China.

*By Daily Sabah With Afp*



## ‘SOME ARE JUST PSYCHOPATHS’: CHINESE DETECTIVE IN EXILE REVEALS EXTENT OF TORTURE AGAINST UYGHURS

(CNN)The raids started after midnight in Xinjiang.

Hundreds of police officers armed with rifles went house to house in Uyghur communities in the far western region of China, pulling people from their homes, handcuffing and hooding them, and threatening to shoot them if they resisted, a former Chinese police detective tells CNN.

“We took (them) all forcibly overnight,” he said. “If there were hundreds of people in one county in this area, then you had to arrest these hundreds of people.”

The ex-detective turned whistleblower asked to be identified only as Jiang, to protect his family members who remain in China.

In a three-hour interview with CNN, conducted in Europe where he is now in exile, Jiang revealed rare details on what

he described as a systematic campaign of torture against ethnic Uyghurs in the region’s detention camp system, claims China has denied for years.

“Kick them, beat them (until they’re) bruised and swollen,” Jiang said, recalling how he and his colleagues used to interrogate detainees in police detention centers. “Until they kneel on the floor crying.”

During his time in Xinjiang, Jiang said every new detainee was beaten during the interrogation process -- including men, women and children as young as 14.

**“Everyone uses different methods. Some even use a wrecking bar, or iron chains with locks.”**

*-Jiang, former Chinese detective*

The methods included shackling people to a metal or wooden “tiger chair” -- chairs designed to immobilize suspects -- hang-



ing people from the ceiling, sexual violence, electrocutions, and waterboarding. Inmates were often forced to stay awake for days, and denied food and water, he said.

“Everyone uses different methods. Some even use a wrecking bar, or iron chains with locks,” Jiang said. “Police would step on the suspect’s face and tell him to confess.”

The suspects were accused of terror offenses, said Jiang, but he believes that “none” of the hundreds of prisoners he was involved in arresting had committed a crime. “They are ordinary people,” he said.

The torture in police detention centers only stopped when the suspects confessed, Jiang said. Then they were usually transferred to another facility, like a prison or an internment camp manned by prison guards.

In order to help verify his testimony, Jiang showed CNN his police uniform, official documents, photographs, videos, and identification from his time in China, most of which can’t be published to protect his identity. CNN has submitted detailed questions to the Chinese government about his accusations, so far without a response.

CNN cannot independently confirm Ji-

ang’s claims, but multiple details of his recollections echo the experiences of two Uyghur victims CNN interviewed for this report. More than 50 former inmates of the camp system also provided testimony to Amnesty International for a 160-page report released in June, “Like We Were Enemies in a War’: China’s Mass Internment, Torture, and Persecution of Muslims in Xinjiang.”

**“The so-called genocide in Xinjiang is nothing but a rumor backed by ulterior motives and an outright lie.”**

*-Zhao Lijian, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman*

The US State Department estimates that up to 2 million Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities have been detained in internment camps in Xinjiang since 2017. China says the camps are vocational, aimed at combating terrorism and separatism, and has repeatedly denied accusations of human rights abuses in the region.

“I want to reiterate that the so-called genocide in Xinjiang is nothing but a rumor backed by ulterior motives and an outright lie,” said Zhao Lijian, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman, during a news conference in June.

On Wednesday, officials from the Xinjiang government even introduced a man at a news conference they said was a former detainee, who denied there was torture in the camps, calling such allegations “utter lies.” It was unclear if he was speaking under duress.

**Everyone needs to hit a target**

The first time Jiang was deployed to Xinjiang, he said he was eager to travel there to help defeat a terror threat he was told



could threaten his country. After more than 10 years in the police force, he was also keen for a promotion.

He said his boss had asked him to take the post, telling him that “separatist forces want to split the motherland. We must kill them all.”

Jiang said he was deployed “three or four” times from his usual post in mainland China to work in several areas of Xinjiang during the height of China’s “Strike Hard” anti-terror campaign.

Launched in 2014, the “Strike Hard” campaign promoted a mass detention program of the region’s ethnic minorities, who could be sent to a prison or an internment camp for simply “wearing a veil,” growing “a long beard,” or having too many children.

Jiang showed CNN one document with an official directive issued by Beijing in 2015, calling on other provinces of China to join the fight against terrorism in the country “to convey the spirit of General Secretary Xi Jinping’s important instructions when listening to the report on counter-terrorism work.”

Jiang was told that 150,000 police assistants were recruited from provinces around mainland China under a scheme called “Aid Xinjiang,” a program that encouraged mainland provinces to provide help to areas of Xinjiang, including public

security resources. The temporary postings were financially rewarding -- Jiang said he received double his normal salary and other benefits during his deployment.

But quickly, Jiang became disillusioned with his new job -- and the purpose of the crackdown.

“I was surprised when I went for the first time,” Jiang said. “There were security checks everywhere. Many restaurants and places are closed. Society was very intense.”

During the routine overnight operations, Jiang said they would be given lists of names of people to round up, as part of orders to meet official quotas on the numbers of Uyghurs to detain.

“It’s all planned, and it has a system,” Jiang said. “Everyone needs to hit a target.”

If anyone resisted arrest, the police officers would “hold the gun against his head and say do not move. If you move, you will be killed.”

He said teams of police officers would also search people’s houses and download the data from their computers and phones.

Another tactic was to use the area’s neighborhood committee to call the local population together for a meeting with the village chief, before detaining them en masse.



Describing the time as a “combat period,” Jiang said officials treated Xinjiang like a war zone, and police officers were told that Uyghurs were enemies of the state.

He said it was common knowledge among police officers that 900,000 Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities were detained in the region in a single year.

Jiang said if he had resisted the process, he would have been arrested, too.

## 6 Some are just psychopaths

Inside the police detention centers, the main goal was to extract a confession from detainees, with sexual torture being one of the tactics, Jiang said.

“If you want people to confess, you use the electric baton with two sharp tips on top,” Jiang said. “We would tie two electrical wires on the tips and set the wires on their genitals while the person is tied up.”

**“Some people see this as a job, some are just psychopaths.”**

*-Jiang, former Chinese detective*

He admitted he often had to play “bad cop” during interrogations but said he avoided the worst of the violence, unlike some of his colleagues.

“Some people see this as a job, some are just psychopaths,” he said.

One “very common measure” of torture and dehumanization was for guards to order prisoners to rape and abuse the new male inmates, Jiang said.

Abduweli Ayup, a 48-year-old Uyghur scholar from Xinjiang, said he was detained on August 19, 2013, when police picked him up at the Uyghur kindergarten he had opened to teach young chil-

dren their native language. They then drove him to his nearby house, which he said was surrounded by police carrying rifles.

On his first night in a police detention center in the city of Kashgar, Ayup says he was gang-raped by more than a dozen Chinese inmates, who had been directed to do this by “three or four” prison guards who also witnessed the assault.

“The prison guards, they asked me to take off my underwear” before telling him to bend over, he said. “Don’t do this, I cried. Please don’t do this.”



He said he passed out during the attack and woke up surrounded by his own vomit and urine.

“I saw the flies, just like flying around me,” Ayup said. “I found that the flies are better than me. Because no one can torture them, and no one can rape them.”

“I saw that those guys (were) laughing at me, and (saying) he’s so weak,” he said. “I heard those words.” He says the humiliation continued the next day, when the prison guards asked him, “Did you have a good time?”

He said he was transferred from the police detention center to an internment camp, and was eventually released on November 20, 2014, after being forced to confess to a crime of “illegal fundraising.”

His time in detention came before the wider crackdown in the region, but it re-

flects some of the alleged tactics used to suppress the ethnic minority population which Uyghur people had complained about for years.

CNN is awaiting response from the Chinese government about Ayup's testimony.

Now living in Norway, Ayup is still teaching and also writing Uyghur language books for children, to try to keep his culture alive. But he says the trauma of his torture will stay with him forever.

"It's the scar in my heart," he said. "I will never forget."

## 6 They hung us up and beat us

Omir Bekali, who now lives in the Netherlands, is also struggling with the long-term legacy of his experiences within the camp system.

"The agony and the suffering we had (in the camp) will never vanish, will never leave our mind," Bekali, 45, told CNN.

Bekali was born in Xinjiang to a Uyghur mother and a Kazakh father, and he moved to Kazakhstan where he got citizenship in 2006. During a business trip to Xinjiang, he said he was detained on March 26, 2017, then a week later he was interrogated and tortured for four days and nights in the basement of a police station in Karamay City.

## 66They hung us up and beat us on the thigh, on the hips with wooden torches, with iron whips.99

-Omir Bekali, former Xinjiang detainee

"They put me in a tiger chair," Bekali said. "They hung us up and beat us on the thigh, on the hips with wooden torches, with iron whips."



He said police tried to force him to confess to supporting terrorism, and he spent the following eight months in a series of internment camps.

"When they put the chains on my legs the first time, I understood immediately I am coming to hell," Bekali said. He said heavy chains were attached to prisoners' hands and feet, forcing them to stay bent over, even when they were sleeping.

He said he lost around half his body weight during his time there, saying he "looked like a skeleton" when he emerged.

"I survived from this psychological torture because I am a religious person," Bekali said. "I would never have survived this without my faith. My faith for life, my passion for freedom kept me alive."

During his time in the camps, Bekali said two people that he knew died there. He also says his mother, sister and brother were interned in the camps, and he was told his father Bakri Ibrayim died while detained in Xinjiang on September 18, 2018.

Xinjiang government officials responded to CNN's questions about Bekali during the Wednesday news conference, when they confirmed he had been detained for eight months on suspected terror offenses. But officials said his claims of torture and his family's detention were "total rumors and slander." His father died of liver



cancer, they said, and his family is “currently leading a normal life.”

## 6 I am guilty

From his new home in Europe, former detective Jiang struggles to sleep for more than a couple of hours at a time. The enduring suffering of those who went through the camp system plays on his mind; he feels like he’s close to a breakdown.

“I am now numb,” Jiang said. “I used to arrest so many people.”

Former inmate Ayup also struggles to sleep at night, as he suffers with nightmares of his time in detention, and is unable to escape the constant feeling he is being watched. But he said he still forgives the prison guards who tortured him.

“I don’t hate (them),” Ayup said. “Because all of them, they’re a victim of that system.”

“They sentence themselves there,” he added. “They are criminals; they are a part of this criminal system.”



Jiang said even before his time in Xinjiang, he had become “disappointed” with the Chinese Communist Party due to increasing levels of corruption.

“They were pretending to serve the people, but they were a bunch of people who wanted to achieve a dictatorship,” he said. In fleeing China and exposing his experience there, he said he wanted to “stand on the side of the people.”

Now, Jiang knows he can never return to China -- “they’ll beat me half to death,” he said.

“I’d be arrested. There would be a lot of problems. Defection, treason, leaking government secrets, subversion. (I’d get) them all,” he said.

“The fact that I speak for Uyghurs (means I) could be charged for participating in a terrorist group. I could be charged for everything imaginable.”

When asked what he would do if he came face-to-face with one of his former victims, he said he would be “scared” and would “leave immediately.”

“I am guilty, and I’d hope that a situation like this won’t happen to them again,” Jiang said. “I’d hope for their forgiveness, but it’d be too difficult for people who suffered from torture like that.”

“How do I face these people?” he added. “Even if you’re just a soldier, you’re still responsible for what happened. You need to execute orders, but so many people did this thing together. We’re responsible for this.”

*By Rebecca Wright, Ivan Watson, Zahid Mahmood and Tom Booth*



## THOUSANDS PROTEST IN PARIS AGAINST CHINA'S RIGHTS VIOLATION IN XINJIANG

PARIS: More than 2000 people gathered in Paris and demonstrated against the ongoing rights violations of Uyghurs in Xinjiang by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

The protest was organised by multiple Uyghur organisations including the World Uyghur Congress and the Uyghur Institute of Europe. The protest saw the participation of hundreds of Uyghur youth who had travelled from various European countries as well as public figures like Raphael Glucksmann, Member of European Parliament (MEP) and French actress Lucie Lucas.

The protestors marched from Bastille square to place de la Republique shouting slogans 'genocide in progress' and 'Save the Uyghurs' and carrying banners and East Turkestan flags. During the speeches, a call was made to the international community to cancel all agreements between the European Union and China as well as boycott the Beijing Winter Olympics 2022.

Further, many speakers denounced the complicity of multinational fashion companies like Zara, Hugo Boss and Uniqlo, who continued to buy products produced by forced Uyghur labour.

Earlier, the same day, the NGO 'SumofUs'

in association with the World Uyghur Congress, held a protest outside the flagship Zara store in Paris's Champs-Élysées, against the brand's sourcing material from China that used Uyghur labour. This protest, timed to coincide with the Paris Fashion Week, was intended to draw the attention of other fashion brands to stop sourcing commodities from Xinjiang.

Assal Khamraeva -Aubert, the World Uyghur Congress's representative in France and co-organiser of the event called on the French government to consider halting imports of products from Xinjiang that were produced using forced Uyghur labour. She added that the WUC hoped that apart from the international community recognising the Uyghur genocide, which would be a 'symbolic victory' it was also important to have an impact at the "economic level".

Ibrahim Bechrouri, campaign manager of "SumOfUs" warned that similar protests would be organised in other European capitals including in Spain.

Some of the protestors specified the demands made by the movement, in particular, "the cancellation of the treaties signed between the European Union and China but also the cancellation of the Olympic Games in Beijing 2022", due to the "massacre" of Uyghurs.



## EXPOSING THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT'S OPPRESSION OF XINJIANG'S UYGHURS

In China's distant northwest city of Ürümqi, capital of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, the Political and Legal Affairs Commission sends 'micro clues' to neighbourhood committees and the police when someone does something irregular. That might be having an unexpected visitor at home, driving a car that belongs to someone else, receiving an overseas phone call, or using a file-sharing app.

The committee is a powerful organ of the Chinese Communist Party that oversees the 'political and legal affairs system', which includes the police, the procuratorate or Prosecutor General's Office which controls the investigation and prosecution systems, the courts, the justice department and other security organs.

Elsewhere in China, the committee is typically a coordinating body without oper-

ational capabilities, but in Xinjiang it has prompted millions of investigations at the grassroots level. Between July 2016 and June 2017, it flagged 1,869,310 Uyghurs and other citizens in Xinjiang for using the Zappya file-sharing app.

**“China's leader, Xi Jinping, has dubbed the political and legal affairs system the party's 'knife handle' and insists that it must be firmly in the hands of the CCP and the masses.**

How this vast system of coercive state control works is examined in a new project from ASPI's International Cyber Policy Centre, *The architecture of repression: unpacking Xinjiang's governance.*



Analysing thousands of pages of leaked police files, ASPI researchers have gained rare insights into the methods used by the CCP to oppress Uyghurs and other indigenous communities in Xinjiang.

The project includes an interactive organisational chart, profiling over 170 offices that have participated in Xinjiang's governance in the past seven years. Within the chart, guided tours can take the viewer through five key sets of Xinjiang's repressive policies: mass internment, forced labour, mass at-home surveillance, coercive birth control and ubiquitous propaganda.

An 82-page research report draws on previously unpublished material from thousands of Chinese-language sources, including police records and budget documents obtained by scraping Chinese government websites.

Since mass Uyghur internment was first reported in 2017, a rich body of literature has documented the ongoing human rights abuses in Xinjiang. However, there is little knowledge of the government processes or actual perpetrators of these now well-known atrocities, and only a small number of entities or individuals have been identified for their involvement.

This project exposes these activities, and those responsible, to further public scrutiny.

Amid international debates about wheth-

er recent events in Xinjiang constitute genocide, and while Chinese officials are actively scrubbing relevant evidence and seeking to silence those who speak out, it is important to carry out a timely and detailed investigation into Xinjiang's governance now.

The report highlights, as an example, the treatment of Anayit Abliz, then 18, who was caught using a file-sharing app in 2017. He was interned in a re-education camp and eventually 'sentenced' by his neighbourhood committee, a nominally service-oriented voluntary organisation responsible for local party control, to three years in prison.

While he was detained, officials from the committee visited his family members six times in a single week, scrutinising their behaviour and observing whether they were emotionally stable.

**“ Our report is the first English-language report to analyse Xinjiang's 'Trinity' mechanism, which grants the neighbourhood committees extraordinary powers to police the movements and emotions of residents, subjecting many to 'management and control' orders akin to house arrest.**

The crackdown against the Uyghurs has a striking resemblance to Mao-era mass political campaigns.

Even though Xi had declared such campaigns to be costly and burdensome, the party-state is using them in Xinjiang, and



elsewhere. In addition to mass internment and coercive labour assignments, Xinjiang residents are compelled to participate in acts of political theatre, such as show trials, public denunciation sessions, loyalty pledges, sermon-like ‘propaganda lectures’ and chants for Xi’s good health.

They are mobilised to attack shadowy enemies hiding among them, the so-called ‘three evil forces’ and ‘two-faced people’.

The report highlights the whole-of government and whole-of society approach to Xinjiang’s crackdown, naming an astounding number of offices and officials involved in its repressive policies. They include obscure agencies such as the Forestry Bureau, which looked after Kashgar City’s re-education camps’ accounts for a year.

Three Xinjiang county party secretaries are profiled, including Yao Ning, who was a visiting fellow at Harvard University and now sits atop a chain of command overseeing nine newly built or expanded detention facilities in southern Xinjiang. Erken Tuniyaz, who was appointed Xinjiang’s new acting governor on 30 September, also spent time at Harvard as a visiting fellow.

Highly destructive mass political campaigns are not artefacts of a bygone era. Rather, they are occurring at a time when Chinese society is more closely connect-

ed with the world than ever. Consequently, through long and complicated supply chains, liberal democracies have found themselves consuming (often unknowingly) the outputs of China’s mass political campaigns, such as products made with forced labour. Pursued along racial and religious lines, Xinjiang’s campaign against the Uyghurs has also led to accusations of genocide.



**“ Since the spring of 2017, it has been widely accepted that between several hundred thousand and a million Uyghurs and other indigenous people in Xinjiang have been rounded up and interned in what Chinese authorities call ‘vocational education and training centres’. Yet these re-education camps are only the most visible components of a vast architecture of repression in the region.**

*Vicky Xiuzhong Xu, James Leibold and Daria Impiombato*



## 4TH EAST TURKISTAN NATIONAL UNITY COUNCIL - FINAL DECLARATION - BOSNIA HERZEGOVINA

At a time when the changing world order and the rivalry between the great powers escalated in the international political arena, the 13th World East Turkistan Brotherhood Meeting and the 4th East Turkistan National Unity Council were held in Sarajevo between October 8-10, 2021.

The Council, which aims to take a position in and act according to the changing world situation and to prepare an effective action plan for the East Turkistan case for the next year as the East Turkistan diaspora under the Chinese occupation, was completed with the participation of political leaders, religious scholars, intellectuals, researchers, and various NGO representatives from all over the world.

The 13th Brotherhood Meeting and the 4th National Unity Council held in Bosnia and Herzegovina have historical significance. As the victims of communism and the oppressed people of East Turkistan, who have been subjected to the Chinese persecution for 72 years, we shared the same fate as the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who gained their freedom after long years of struggle and giving





many martyrs, established their independent state under the leadership of crusader, commander (deceased) Ali Izzet Begovic, and set an example for the nations striving for freedom.

The 13th Brotherhood Meeting and the opening ceremony of the 4th National Unity Council, which started on the morning of October 9, were attended by more than 120 East Turkistan organization representatives from nearly 15 states, as well as important personalities, opinion leaders, representatives, and diplomats from Europe, the USA, and the Balkans. The Council was held in 8 Sessions in total until the night of October 10. On this occasion, contacts were established with those interested in the East Turkistan issue, and plans were made for future actions.



## The issues discussed in the 4th National Unity Council

1. Comparison of the state-building pro-

cess in Bosnia-Herzegovina and East Turkistan struggle

2. The East Turkistan Struggle in the Changing World Order and the last point reached

3. Western Countries' China Policy - Threats and Opportunities

4. The Chinese Policy of the Islamic World - Threats and Opportunities

5. The situation in Afghanistan and Central Asia and the East Turkistan case

6. Possible scenarios for China's future position and change process

7. The evolution of the East Turkistan case from organization to state level



8. The next steps to be taken in the East Turkistan case.

## The highlights of the 4th National Unity Council

1. Exposing the cheats and threats of China in the political system, culture, social values, and international relations, which are completely against universal values and humanity, and to warn the world community.

2. Cooperation against China with human rights organizations, Islamic movements, and individuals from all walks of life oper-



ating in Western countries.

3. Developing the organizational system of East Turkistan organizations, accelerating professionalization, and strengthening specialized staff.

4. To gain the support of the Turkic and Islamic world regarding East Turkistan and to warn the Islamic world against the Chinese threat.

5. Establishing cooperation based on protecting the main principles of the East Turkistan cause and acting together against the common enemy of humanity; Developing cooperation with various organizations and strengthening the working mechanism, regardless of differences of opinion.

6. To create a spirit of mutual trust, understanding, support, and protection between the Organizations despite all the factors that hinder the cooperation between the organizations.

7. Turkish and Islamic countries - Carrying out public diplomacy in Central Asia and the Balkans, strengthening the East Turkistan cause in the international arena, and increasing lobbying activities in various languages.

8. To pay attention to the upbringing and education of the young generation and to strive to provide all kinds of opportunities that are important for the development of

qualified youth on behalf of the East Turkistan case.

9. To always emphasize that the independence of East Turkistan is our indispensable principle and to try to make the world community accept that East Turkistan is the occupied Land.

### **The proposals and suggestions were given by the representatives and participants of the 13th World East Turkistan Brotherhood Meeting and the 4th East Turkistan National Unity Council**

1. To come together with the countries and institutions that support China and to invite them to put pressure on China regarding East Turkistan by making use of their diplomatic relations with China.

2. To use effectively the opportunities arising from the conflicts between China and the great powers.

3. To learn from the lives of scholars, politicians, and leaders who played a major role in the history of East Turkistan and the struggle for independence.

4. Activating and giving importance to the role of female strugglers in the East Turkistan case.

5. To understand the strategic importance of the East Turkistan issue for the





powers rivaling China and to take steps accordingly.

6. Developing new plans and strategies for the Islamic world.

7. An in-depth study of trade and all kinds of agreements between China and the Islamic world.

8. To strengthen scientific studies, lobby activities, and civil diplomacy in Arab countries.

9. To promote the East Turkistan case in the native language of the countries through books, magazines, and other media in order to strengthen relations with the Balkans and Central Asian countries and to increase the understanding of the people of this region about East Turkistan cause.

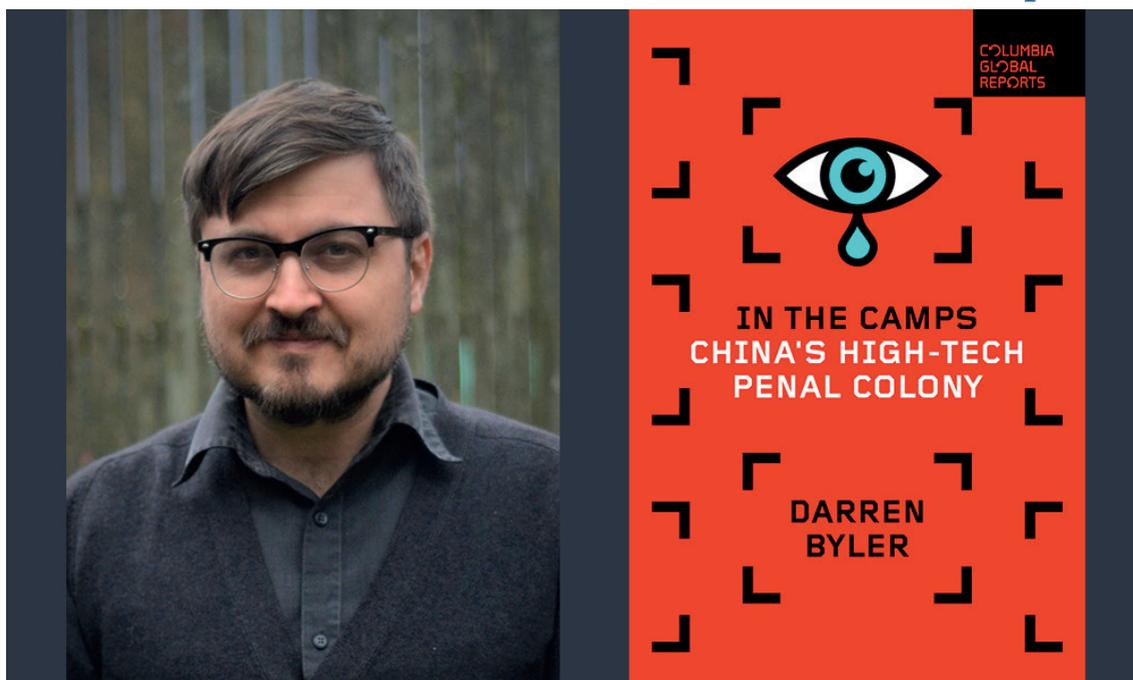
10. Proper analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of East Turkistan organizations and seeing different organizations as having complementary functions.

11. Strengthening cooperation among the

people of East Turkistan and increasing Lobbying in Uzbek, Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Russian languages in Central Asia.

It was emphasized that as the East Turkistan Educational Movement, which hosted the 13th World East Turkistan Brotherhood Meeting and the 4th East Turkistan National Unity Council, hard work will be carried out on the implementation of the decision taken, the proposal presented, and the recommendations.

In addition, the 13th World East Turkistan Brotherhood Meeting and the 4th East Turkistan National Unity Council were successfully completed after the prayer on October 10, 2021.



## DARREN BYLER ON LIFE IN XINJIANG, 'CHINA'S HIGH-TECH PENAL COLONY'

“The mass surveillance and internment project in Xinjiang should be viewed as a major test of Chinese capacities to conduct a sophisticated invasion, occupation, and transformation of spaces that were at the margins of Chinese control.”

Since reports of mass detentions first emerged in 2017, the Xinjiang region of western China has become nearly synonymous with detainment camps. But while the camps were the most galling example of Beijing’s crackdown on Uyghurs, an ethnic group native to Xinjiang, they were only part of a larger system of surveillance, made possible by cutting-edge technologies in the hands of an authoritarian government.

In his new book “In the Camps,” Darren Byler, an assistant professor in the School for International Studies at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, British Columbia, draws on interviews with both detainees and those who worked in the camps, as well as vast troves of government documents, to paint a detailed picture of life in Xinjiang since 2017.

In this interview with The Diplomat’s

Shannon Tiezzi, Byler — who has researched Xinjiang and the Uyghurs for over a decade — explains the reality of life in “China high-tech penal colony,” where surveillance is everywhere, and the camps are a constant reminder of what awaits anyone who checks the wrong box in an invisible algorithm.

One of the common themes in your interviews is that people didn’t believe the crackdown would impact them — the sense that “I’m safe because I’m Kazakh, not Uyghur” or “because I’m not religious” or “because I’m well-educated and speak fluent Chinese.” Their confidence, it turns out, was tragically misguided. Given the lived reality in Xinjiang today, do you think there are still members of Turkic ethnic groups who have that sense of safety?

**Among the most insulated minority state officials and security personnel there may be some feelings of safety. Since they have taken an active role in the mass internment campaign, and they themselves have not yet been targeted, they may feel as though they are “safe” in some ways. But they also know quite clearly what lines they cannot cross, because they have seen what happens to people who don’t fervently support the campaign or resist it even in minor ways. So yes, some people may view themselves as safe, but not as invincible.**

Other Turkic people, particularly those whose families are not within the state apparatus, have actively sought out forms of protection. In my interviews for the book, Kazakhs and Uyghurs told me about peo-

ple in their communities who had divorced their husbands after they were detained and strove to marry others who were politically protected. Others in their communities publicly denounced friends and relatives as a way of showing their loyalty to the state project. Over time this protection-seeking appears to have increased.

A Han resident of the region who recently visited their family in Northern Xinjiang told me that it was relatively common for young Turkic people in urban settings to embrace a more assimilated way of life since the campaign had begun. For many this means doing things like going to Han restaurants, speaking and writing only in Chinese, and dressing in ways that appear cosmopolitan. For some, particularly young women, there is an increased prevalence of interethnic romantic or economic relationships, something that my interviewee said was widely viewed as a form of protection.

Similarly, most Han I’ve spoken to are convinced that they, too, are not impacted by what’s happening in Xinjiang. Those detained must be guilty, the thinking goes. But China’s surveillance network is not limited to Xinjiang. Are there any signs or indications that this sort of high-tech predictive policing — up to the detaining of “pre-criminals” — is being deployed in other parts of China?

The parameters of the surveillance and detention system in Xinjiang are largely unique to that region. Most of the people who were assessed as “untrustworthy” and sent to detention facilities for “training” were deemed guilty of terrorism or religious extremism crimes that were “not serious” or were “not malicious.” So they were quite specific to enforcement of China’s sweeping counter-terrorism



laws, which apply pretty specifically to religious minorities in China — namely Uyghurs, occasionally Tibetans and other groups, such as the Falun Gong. So this type of population-level assessments and detentions of regular individuals is unlikely in most of China. That said, throughout the country such tools have been used, or could be used, to target and assess community leaders who are deemed troublemakers.

The digital forensics tools that are used to scan smartphones throughout Xinjiang — often called “counterterrorism swords” — have been bought by border agencies in places like international airports across the country. Domestic police departments in ethnic minority areas in Ningxia, Sichuan, Yunnan, and elsewhere have also purchased them. These assessment tools are plugged into phones using a USB cable and scan through the phone’s hard drive looking for more than 50,000 markers or patterns of illegal activity. This indicates to me that in border situations and criminal investigations, tools that were developed and battle tested in Xinjiang have been added to the repertoire of tools used by state security elsewhere in the country.

Over 500 cities and municipalities across China have developed smart city systems that use forms of biometric surveillance.

In most other contexts, these tools are used to enforce traffic laws and facilitate economic infrastructure. In some cases, they support social credit assessment pilot programs and grassroots policing. But so far it appears as though disfavored populations like the Uyghurs and Tibetans are the most dramatically affected by such systems — with the police being alerted to their presence in communities across the nation. Most protected citizens, it appears, are less affected in their daily life.

**China cracks down on any number of groups that embrace an identity outside of what the state defines as acceptably “Chinese” — Tibetans, for example, or Christians. Why did the government adopt such extreme methods in Xinjiang in particular?**

The Uyghurs, like the Tibetans, live in their own ancestral homeland, speak their own language, and are ethno-racially distinct from the Han population. These ties to sacred land, the knowledge system that is carried by their language, and their ethno-racial difference together mean that they carry claims to autonomy or collective self-determination that are difficult for the Chinese state to capture. As place-based peoples at the periphery of the native lands of the Han people, Uyghurs and Tibetans (like Mongols, Kazakhs, and others) occupy a position that is similar to those of other Indigenous peoples in Asia.

However, in distinction from the Tibetans, Uyghurs are also a much larger group (around 12 million people), their region possesses a greater amount of natural resources (coal, oil, natural gas) and arable land, and they are positioned on a core

node of China’s Belt and Road Initiative. Perhaps most importantly, Uyghurs are a Turkic Muslim group with great affinities with the people of Central Asia and Turkey.

Initially, when the state authorities began to relabel Uyghur non-violent and violent protests as terrorism in the early 2000s, there did not appear to be much credible evidence of political Islam as a motivating factor. In the mid-2010s as Uyghurs became more tightly linked with the broader Muslim world through the arrival of smartphones and internet, several isolated and unconnected suicide attacks carried out by a small number of Uyghurs did appear to meet international definitions of what constitutes terrorism. And it appears that some state authorities and Han settlers really did begin to believe their own fears of a rising Uyghur insurgency. I was living in the region at the time and would hear often from Han interviewees about these perceived threats of “extremism.” Despite the fact that only a several hundred people were involved in such attacks, they felt as though the entire population was suspect.

Some Han people, though, particularly those who understood the history of Xinjiang, knew that the issue at stake was not simply that Uyghurs were “prone to terrorism,” but that Uyghurs were expe-

riencing systematic discrimination and dispossession coupled with pervasive state violence in the form of police brutality, surveillance, and control throughout all aspects of life. Many Uyghurs I interviewed at that time complained about the lack of freedom and opportunity available to them, but the vast majority I spoke with were not interested in violent resistance. They hoped simply to find a better life for themselves and their autonomous community within the Chinese system.

The state authorities I’ve spoken with and state documents I reviewed talk about the mass surveillance and internment system as a long-term strategy to produce “permanent stability” in the region and take care of the “Xinjiang problem” once and for all. There are many economic and political factors that contributed to the calculus of the campaign, but in general I think the mass surveillance and internment project in Xinjiang should be viewed as a major test of Chinese capacities to conduct a sophisticated invasion, occupation, and transformation of spaces that were at the margins of Chinese control. The lessons they have learned and technologies they have developed in Xinjiang will likely be adapted to a range of security and tactical situations as China takes a greater role on the world’s stage. This is not to say that I anticipate “new Xinjiangs” emerging elsewhere on China’s frontiers, but that the Xinjiang experience will likely inform decision making and technology deployment.

The title of the book is “In the Camps,” but you show that the oppression is prevalent outside the camps as well. The surveillance net extends into every facet of life: facial scans at mosque doors, tracking apps on smartphones, police checkpoints that use facial recognition software. As





you put it: “In a general sense, state authorities and private manufactures now control significant aspects of everyday Muslim life.” Is this level of control sustainable over the long term? Will there be a generation of Uyghurs, 20 years from now, for whom that degree of surveillance is just internalized as normal?

The control I refer to is contingent on political will and economic factors. It costs a great deal of money to build and maintain these systems. State documents show that the China has invested as much as \$100 billion to build the camps and related material and digital infrastructure. They have also hired around 60,000 low level police to work as grid workers in addition to tens of thousands of additional officers. Maintaining a security workforce of 100,000 in addition to the maintenance and updating of software and hardware systems will require significant spending going forward. While some of these costs may be recouped through assigned labor schemes, land and asset seizures, and increased access to natural resources and post-campaign tourism, it is likely that it will be quite some time before the systems pay for themselves in concrete terms. Already, in northern Xinjiang in particular there is some evidence that checkpoints are no longer being used due to malfunctioning equipment and a combination of a lack of urgency and funding.

The lack of political will to maintain the

intensity of the system is likely also at least partially a result of increasing international pressure. Regional and national state authorities have largely moved from a phase of active mass detainment to formal mass incarceration and job assignments in securitized factories. Since 2017 over 533,000 individuals have been formally prosecuted in Xinjiang.

**State authorities are also actively attempting to erase both material and digital evidence of the camp system — hiding former detainees in prisons and factories and pretending as though nothing has happened. Part of the retraction of some forms of obvious surveillance equipment in urban spaces open to international travelers appears to be an effort to hide obvious elements of control.**

Despite this retraction of some visible forms of control, the general technologies of biometric assessment — face and voice recognition — and dataveillance — scanning digital histories — are now highly finetuned. The base datasets that technology companies and police work from are expansive and highly symmetrical. In internal police documents obtained by The Intercept, I saw over and over again that the probability readings of facial imagery were at 95 percent or higher. This means that individuals registered in Xinjiang can really be tracked and made searchable in real-time. Likewise most individuals have had their smartphone scanned no fewer than 10 times over the course of a year.

So that is to say that the next generation of Uyghurs will grow up with an awareness that their movement and digital



speech are being tracked and that they can always be deemed untrustworthy. The system is really the first settler colonial process of dispossession — taking the land and labor of a colonized people — that has been attempted in a fully digitized environment. My sense is that the psychological trauma of this system of unrelenting and intimate domination will likely be felt over generations.

Another key theme in your book is the complicity of U.S. tech firms in China's crimes against humanity. In fact, the Chinese tech companies involved learned from facial recognition and surveillance tools in the United States, either through observation or direct partnerships. As a broader global debate about the ethics of cutting-edge technology unfolds, what lessons can we take from Xinjiang to prevent the next "high-tech penal colony" from taking shape?

The technologies used in Xinjiang are largely the same as technologies used in border contexts in North America. When a traveler goes through a border crossing here, they often have their face or irises scanned and matched to the image on their passport. If their digital file raises an alarm, their smartphone may be taken from them and scanned using a digital

forensics tool. The difference in Xinjiang is that these technologies have been generalized across the entire region — so it is as though Uyghur citizens are crossing half a dozen or more international borders every day. Likewise, since the entire population of Muslims, 15 million people, have been deemed potentially untrustworthy their phones are scanned on a regular basis by the police and their employers.

The dataset I examined for The Intercept was built using open-source Oracle software. The surveillance companies that built the facial recognition capacities of the system have multiple former and active links to Microsoft, as well as academic institutions, journals, and conferences in the North America and Europe. Indeed, many of the technologists who designed this software worked for companies like Adobe before joining surveillance firms, and have now gone back to Adobe since their companies have been placed on no-trade lists in the United States.

**My point here is not to say that technologists who work for Chinese surveillance firms are doing something unusual; on the contrary, their work is quite similar to tech development elsewhere in the computer vision industry. Chinese technologists I have spoken to view their work as following nearly exactly the same ethical standards as U.S. based firms, which actively assist the U.S. military and police.**

Writing this book forced me to think about the relationship between automated surveillance technology and state power. Currently there is very little regulation, other than existing privacy laws and citizen protections, concerning this relationship. This means that the only means of penalizing companies for abusing privacy is through consumer and worker advocacy. At the same time, the benefits that companies accrue from working with state security are enormous. Not only do they receive state capital to develop new technologies, but they are also able to access enormous data sets that allow them to finetune algorithms. In the absence of robust and finetuned regulation and penalties regarding surveillance, the protection of vulnerable populations like the Uyghurs — and also undocumented populations in the United States — falls to the good will of technologists and their shareholders.

“In the Camps” shows that within policing and camp systems, pervasive automated technologies have the effect of further normalizing immense cruelty. Because the technology systems are taken to produce a kind of truth when it comes to crime prediction, and because this truth cannot be questioned due to the black box effects of advanced technologies, the banality of unthinking bureaucratized procedures increases in exponential ways. Ultimately, reversing automated crimes against humanity will require a rethinking of technology design and penalties for harmful design.

*By Shannon Tiezzi*





## SENATORS SEEK DETAILS FROM U.S. ELECTRONICS FIRM ON UYGHUR LABOR

WASHINGTON, Oct 20 (Reuters) - A group of Democratic and Republican U.S. senators wrote to remote-control maker Universal Electronics Inc (UEI.O) on Wednesday about concerns the Arizona-based company could be implicated in the mistreatment of Uyghur Muslims in China's Xinjiang region.

**“The letter cited a Reuters report earlier this month that Universal (UEI) struck a deal with authorities in Xinjiang to transport hundreds of Uyghur workers to its plant in the southern Chinese city of Qinzhou. There, workers live in segregated dormitories, are continuously surveilled by police, and are made to participate in government “education activities,” Reuters reported.**

“We believe these conditions bear obvious signs of forced labor,” said Demo-

cratic Senators Bob Menendez and Jeff Merkley and Republican Senator Marco Rubio in the letter to UEI Chief Executive Paul Arling.

Menendez chairs the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Rubio and Merkley are members of the panel.

“We are especially troubled that Universal Electronics appears to have done little to investigate or remedy the situation,” the letter added.

UEI had told Reuters the company employs 365 Uyghur workers at the Qinzhou



plant. It said it treated them the same as other workers in China and did not regard any employees as forced labor.

UEI said on Wednesday it had ended its relationship with the staffing company that hired the workers, and said it looked forward to working with the three senators on the questions raised in the letter.

“UEI made the decision last week to end its relationship with the staffing agency that hired these workers based on feedback on how to best secure its supply chain and in light of ongoing regulatory and legislative changes globally,” a company spokesperson said in an emailed statement.

The Nasdaq-listed firm, which has sold its equipment and software to Sony, Samsung, LG, Microsoft and other companies, also it does not conduct independent due diligence on where and how its workers are trained in Xinjiang. It said the arrangement is vetted by a third-party agent, which it declined to name, working with the Xinjiang government.

In the letter to Arling, the U.S. senators cited State Department findings that Chi-

nese authorities use threats of physical violence, forcible drug intake, physical and sexual abuse, and torture to force detainees to work in adjacent or off-site factories or worksites.

The letter asked UEI to provide, no later than Nov. 5, information including the text of its 2019 agreement with the Xinjiang government regarding Uyghur laborers, the number of Uyghurs employed in China and documentation to support the company’s assertion that none of its labor is forced.

The senators also asked for details of employee training programs related to forced labor and human trafficking, records of audits of facilities in China, and the content of any disclosure to shareholders about the use of transferred Uyghur laborers.

*By Patricia Zengerle*





## PROTEST DISRUPTS BEIJING GAMES TORCH-LIGHTING CEREMONY

ANCIENT OLYMPIA, Greece, Oct 18 (Reuters) - Human rights activists unfurled a banner reading “No Genocide Games”, waved a Tibetan flag and called for a boycott of the Beijing 2022 Winter Olympics during the torch-lighting ceremony on Monday.

Two women and a man sneaked past a tight police cordon and entered the archaeological site of the ancient Greek

stadium and temple where the Olympic flame is traditionally lit and which had been sealed off for days.

They held up a Tibetan flag seconds after the torch was lit by an actress playing the role of high priestess at the Temple of Hera a few metres away.

The three protesters shouted for a boycott of the Games in Beijing, as invited officials, including Greek President Katerina Sakellaropoulou and International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach, looked on.

The ceremony itself was not interrupted, as had been the case for the 2008 Beijing Summer Games, and the activists, who did not reach the actual stadium or temple, were quickly led away by police.





Greece's Olympic Committee (HOC), in charge of organising the event, said it was disappointed the ceremony had been used for political purposes. The IOC, when asked for a comment, referred to the HOC statement.

“The lighting of the Olympic flame represents 3000 years of Greek history and a commitment to peace and dialogue,” the HOC said.

“While the HOC respects individual rights to freedom of expression, it is disappointing that this traditional cultural event has been used by a few individuals for other purposes.”

**The Chinese capital will become the first city to host both the Winter and Summer Games when it stages the Feb. 4-20 event but protests and calls for boycotts over the country's human rights record have marred the run-up.**

## ACROPOLIS MONUMENT

Four other activists were detained by police outside the stadium an hour before the ceremony and taken to the local station. They have not been charged. Two more were arrested in Athens on Sunday after protesting at the Acropolis monument.

Activists are planning more protests and a news conference on Tuesday when the flame will be officially handed over to Beijing Games organisers in Athens.

“The Olympic Games cannot address all the challenges in our world,” Bach said in his address inside the ancient stadium prior to the protest.

“But they set an example for a world where everyone respects the same rules and one another. They inspire us to solve problems in friendship and solidarity.”

Rights groups and U.S. lawmakers have called on the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to postpone the Games and relocate the event unless China ends what the United States deems ongoing genocide against Uyghurs and other Muslim minority groups.

Chinese authorities have been accused of facilitating forced labour by detaining around a million Uyghurs and other primarily Muslim minorities in camps since 2016.

China denies wrongdoing, saying it has set up vocational training centres to combat extremism.

It was the second time, after the Beijing 2008 Games, that the torch lighting ceremony was disrupted by protests by human rights activists, who had stormed that ceremony and repeatedly disrupted the international torch relay that followed.

“Under the robust leadership of the Chinese government... we can and will deliver a streamlined, safe and splendid Olympic Games to the world,” Beijing Games vice president Yu Zaiqing said.

*By Karolos Grohmann*



The Olympic flame was lit, but the world became darker.

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**What is happening in East Turkistan?**

**What is true and what is false?**

**The “ISTIQLAL” journal uses reliable sources, evidence and witnesses to reveal China’s crimes against humanity and shine a light on the oppression in East Turkistan as well as exposing China’s fake news propaganda.**

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