

# **UYGHUR HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AMOUNTING TO GENOCIDE**

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## Section 1: Overview

Since the first construction of the concentration camps in 2014, the international community has watched and waited, sifting through the Chinese Communist Party's rapidly changing narratives concerning the use of these facilities. First, the denial of their existence, followed by acknowledgement of the facilities which were labeled as "vocational training centres". When local government purchase orders showed the mass quantities of pepper spray, handcuffs, and materials not common to a school that had been acquired, the Chinese regime continued to deny human rights abuses. Three sets of leaked documents attest to Xi Jinping's vision for using the "organs of dictatorship" against Uyghurs and showing them "absolutely no mercy" (Ramzy and Buckley 2019). Additionally, it was the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region's newly appointed Communist Party Secretary Chen Quanguo's heavy-handed tactics that resulted in ordering security forces to "round up everyone who needs to be rounded up" into involuntary camps for "concentrated education and training" (Zenz 2020). The 403 pages of leaked documents provide an unprecedented, inside view of the Chinese Communist Party's racially targeted and brutal attitude towards the Uyghur people, visibly manifested in the millions of innocent people herded like livestock into China's concentration camps.

While these ruthless and vicious policies were conceived and orchestrated by top-level officials in the Chinese government, Xi Jinping's ability to conceal and mislead the international community about the nature of the camps has been reiterated in how the Chinese Communist Party misled the international community about the deadly virus, which is resultantly costing hundreds of thousands of lives today. The three sets of leaked official texts collaborate the information that journalists and researchers have discovered over the past two to three years. Those documents should be acknowledged as also having been directly linked to the publicly distributed messages of the Chinese Communist Party, as expressed best perhaps by one Chinese official, who stated that "Uyghurs don't have human rights". Based on the capacity of camp facilities as viewed from satellite imagery, the number of Uyghurs reported missing by relatives, and information from the leaked documents, the number of Uyghurs and other Turkic peoples imprisoned in the camps is estimated to number as high as 3 million.

As China has come under increased scrutiny due to their actions to delay releasing information about Covid19, and to continue to suppress information regarding the number of cases, current developments in Chinese foreign policy strategies not to deny, but rather to simply refuse any

sort of accountability for these actions, have been widely observed. The Chinese government has chosen to demand that other nations decline from “interfering” in what China defines as its domestic affairs, and has met any actions from other nations to pursue accountability with retaliatory actions, i.e. the detainment of Canadian citizens without cause. As has been shown via continually mounting evidence, these atrocities are not simply confined to China’s domestic affairs, rather, many international corporations are complicit in using Uyghur slave labor from China’s concentration camps. As millions of Uyghurs, Kazakhs, and other Turkic peoples began to disappear in 2017, Canada and the international community have been devastatingly slow to respond.

## **Section 2: Historical, Political, and Economic Context**

The Uyghur homeland is referred to by many in diaspora as East Turkistan, its historical and geographical name. After Beijing’s occupation, the official name as given by the Chinese government, the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, gives clues to the root of many problems in the area. “XinJiang” in Chinese means “new territory”, a name which is inaccurate and insulting to the Uyghurs who have called this land home for thousands of years. Since the region was annexed by the Chinese Communist Party in 1949, the population demographics of the Uyghurs have shifted significantly due to the calculated efforts of the Chinese regime to move Han Chinese settlers into the region. In 2009, the Urumchi Riots, as the Chinese State called them, were revealed by Uyghurs who survived the attacks to be massacres of peaceful protestors who were, yet again, denied the opportunity to address injustices, discrimination, or greivences of any sort. In a situation that resembled the Tiananmen Square massacre, the Chinese officials moved to twist the narrative and successfully painted an entire ethnic group as terrorists, deliberately stoking that fear amongst the Chinese public via state-run media outlets. China has declared its actions a “war on terror”, but even taking into account the terrorist incidents and the number of individuals involved in said occurrences, the response of the government is disproportionate and clearly the result of other more sinister agendas.

Since Xi JinPing’s ascension as Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, the situation for Uyghurs has deteriorated rapidly to the point of being declared a genocide by multiple Uyghur and Human Rights groups.

After Xi Jinping came to power in 2013, the Chinese Communist government implemented brutal persecution in East Turkistan. As a result, policies such as “punishment on the spot” are applied to Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other Turkic people. Under these new policies, any armed forces can shoot to kill if they feel that individuals aren’t following their orders. There have been news reports that a Uyghur teenager was shot to death by traffic police when he ran a red light on his motorcycle. Special forces and armed police can raid Uyghur homes at any time, and search and arrest as they wish. From the building of the first concentration camps, under the strike-hard campaign against the Uyghurs in 2014, China’s public response and carefully crafted narratives have shifted so rapidly from one to the next that the mere reviewal of the constant contradictions is damning in and of itself. When Chen Quanguo was brought to East Turkistan from his post in Tibet in August 2016, he began his ruthless cultural and ethnic subjugations by arresting members of the Uyghur textbook compiling committee and abolished Uyghur textbooks. Yalqun Rozi is a well-known scholar and writer who worked in the editorial board for the Uyghur Textbook Department of the Xinjiang Education Ministry. In October 2016, as the first victims of the current atrocities, Yalqun Rozi and others were taken for investigation relating to “ideological problems” in the literature textbooks. These were published before the government changed its regulations and Yalqun Rozi and others’ work per the education ministry’s request and approval, became their crimes. In January 2018, he was sentenced to 15 years in prison for doing his work under the supervision of the education ministry.

Famous or well-known Uyghurs in the public eye, and those with a voice, have been silenced for the purpose of completely eliminating anyone who might produce, extend or defend Uyghur ideology and values. Uyghur elites, philanthropists, successful business people, intellectuals, professors, writers, journalists, doctors, academics, actors, entertainers, and athletes are the main targets. There have been thousands of Uyghur intellectuals imprisoned or forcibly disappeared since April 2017, yet, the Chinese government is continuing to claim that the camps are for vocational training. The case of Dr. Gulshan Abbas, a retired medical doctor from Urumchi, also demonstrates that the individuals detained do not meet the profile of “extremists” that the Chinese regime is painting detainees as. A peaceful person, non-political, who speaks fluent Mandarin Chinese, she disappeared six days after her sister, Uyghur activist Rushan Abbas, spoke publicly on a panel regarding the atrocities against Uyghurs. Dr. Abbas’s disappearance is believed by her sister to be a clear retaliatory action (Hoshur 2020) by the Chinese government to silence criticism not just in the Uyghur homeland, but also abroad.

Children have also become a pivotal target of China's genocidal policies and experiments in social engineering. The Chinese government is eradicating Uyghur ethnic identity by targeting the younger generation, with news outlets reporting that over 500,000 Uyghur children are taken away, held hostage in Chinese government-run orphanages, where they are indoctrinated, forced to abandon their Uyghur identity and swear loyalty to the Chinese Communist Party, while effectively being forced to recognize Xi Jinping as god.

From denial of the existence of the camps to the label given them as schools, to the present tactic of deflecting and decrying the West's "interference" in what China considers its "domestic affairs", it is immediately recognizable that the truth of the reality of the situation of the Uyghurs is that these atrocities are not merely affairs of the People's Republic of China. Rather, they become of principal concern to the international community as regards global complicity in these crimes against humanity.

The Uyghurs' economy is completely destroyed. Three million in the concentration camps and millions more are enslaved, forced to work in production to benefit China's economic aggression. Uyghurs homes and land are being reallocated to Han Chinese settlers and also being vacated to serve the purpose of the Belt and Road Initiative. In addition, revelations of Western companies' complicity in slave labor do mandate that the issues be addressed by the international community.

### **Section 3: Why there is increased attention on the current escalation of this genocide**

As the international community has begun to rightfully question China's reliability as an international partner, and as scrutiny has increased while the Chinese economy has been momentarily crippled by Covid19, China has used the time opportunely to address two issues at once. First, by the forced migration of Uyghur slaves into factories across China, the Chinese government has been able to reap the benefits of having factory workers to jumpstart the economy while most Chinese citizens were staying at home to avoid infection. It has also made it more difficult for the evidence of slave labor in the supply chains of many Western brands to be discovered or tracked.

In the past, China's record of intentionally stoking up nationalism and international conflicts when Party officials may face harsher criticism domestically have been revealed as consistent. As Chinese citizens examined the Party's response to the pandemic, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Li Jian Zhao lashed out (Westcott and Jiang 2020) to blame the virus on the United States, an unfounded claim that was never officially revoked. Chinese officials have continued to make threatening remarks and to exhibit aggressive behaviors towards many of China's neighbors, in recent days retreating slightly from this rhetoric to reiterate the need for friendly relations with India and the United States in particular, this coming as China again comes under increasing scrutiny from the international community due to aggressive behaviors. What can be gathered from this is that the Chinese regime has consistently behaved in a way that indicates it is not interested in diplomacy. As such, when examining the situation of the genocidal actions of the Chinese regime towards Uyghurs, responses and methods of evaluation should also reflect understanding of this.

#### **Section 4: Process of Escalation**

As a result of years of work on the part of activists to expose human rights violations against Uyghurs in many corporations' supply chains, a few of these named companies took action to make statements, deny, or in some cases, initiate changes. Nike's supplier has dismissed Uyghur workers from their factory out of concern over these human rights violations. Adidas vowed to investigate and take appropriate actions. The United States has taken concrete action to sanction certain CCP officials, and in addition, legislation has been initiated to eliminate slavery in supply chains. However, little action beyond inquiries and statements has been taken by the Canadian government to address Canada's role in putting a stop to the atrocities. With the case of Meng Wanzhou throwing additional complications into this process, however, her case is likewise indicative of how the Chinese government refuses to accept responsibility and rather seeks retaliatory action, i.e. the case of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor.

#### **Section 5: Rapid Increase in Human Rights Violations and Response**

At this point, concerns over escalating further aggression from the Chinese government should be minimal. At this unique point in time, China has managed to create tension with most of the major world powers, and even its allies may be reluctant to interfere when the United States, Canada, the UK, Australia, and others get involved. It should, however, be considered wise to anticipate the Chinese government's next moves. As Chinese officials had predicted additional

scrutiny on human rights in the wake of the pandemic, it acted quickly to move Uyghurs into factories across China. We must prepare strategic responses to what the next steps may be, and should unequivocally pursue unrestricted access to the region as well as requirements to dismantle the police state created by the intense surveillance and harassment of minorities, as well as requiring the immediate initiation of freedom of information.

A recent report by Dr. Adrian Zenz received a lot of attention for its groundbreaking analysis of the Chinese regime's brutal interference in the reproductive rights of Uyghur women. Using information from Chinese government documents and data, it was revealed that the methods used and plummeting birth rate could meet one of the conditions of genocide as laid out by the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide.

Campaign for Uyghurs also compiled a report that described the recent events taking place in East Turkistan and how they have met the definition of genocide listed in the the United Nations convention signed in 1948. This combined with witness accounts and the recent seizure of thirteen tons of human hair by the United States Customs and Border Patrol have served as a punch in the gut to the international community; one final wake-up call after years of ignoring these building atrocities.

According to the United Nations convention on genocide, the destruction of a part of the group as a victim, not all of it, is sufficient to meet the criteria of committing this crime. At that point, when the targeted group has been determined, it is necessary to consider both the qualities and quantities. Qualitatively, the elimination of the majority of the group, that is, the comparison between already targeted number and the number of survivors is considered as a benchmark. If a reasonable rate is achieved, this will be considered sufficient to qualify as a genocide. The quality refers to the type of people targeted; group leaders, prominent individuals and important figures. The majority of the people targeted and sent to camps in East Turkistan are poets, professors, academics, writers and leading figures. Meaning, the list of acts which constitute genocide in the convention are done 'in whole or in part' in East Turkistan (Campaign for Uyghurs 2020).

Camp detainees who were released as foreign citizens or who were the spouses of foreign citizens testified to the horrors that they witnessed in the camps. Perhaps just as telling as these

are the enormous number of Uyghurs who cannot testify. It is estimated that every single Uyghur in diaspora has at least one missing family member or friend (World Uyghur Congress 2019). In addition, those who don't openly speak to the issue have not come forward to deny atrocities, while many have been intimidated into silence by the Chinese government. Uyghurs in diaspora number from 1 to 1.6 million.

Women have been especially victimized by the Chinese regime's actions. They have been forcibly sterilized, had IUD devices forcibly inserted, and have been given unknown injections that stop them from menstruating and make them mentally sluggish. Women have testified to witnessing gang rapes of women in the camps. Outside the camps, women also face unspeakably restrictive choices. Under China's double relative program, Communist Party cadres are moved into Uyghur homes to supervise them. For women whose husbands are in the camps, this exposes them to sexual abuse. Women are also being forced into marriages with Han Chinese men, another clear indicator of the Chinese regime's colonialistic goals of eliminating the Uyghur bloodline. These crimes amount to government-sponsored mass rape. When we add these testimonies to the data revealing an 89% drop in the birth rate in the two largest prefectures between 2015 and 2018 (Zenz 2020), it is clear what is happening to the Uyghurs is beyond dire.

Children are another group that is suffering unimaginable trauma. Harking back to the days of Mao's Cultural Revolution, many children have been asked to report on their family and their religious activities at school, serving as innocent informers. With more and more Uyghurs disappearing into the concentration camps and factories across the country, it is estimated that 500,000 children have now been taken into state-run orphanages. Videos have emerged from these facilities, revealing that children are speaking Mandarin, and many have been reported to have denounced their parents as traitors. Some Uyghur refugees who are forcibly separated from their families in China have even identified their children to be located in these orphanages via videos on social media. As the children undergo forcible cultural assimilation, many of the scenes in these orphanages seem reminiscent of North Korean propaganda, but even so it is difficult to grasp the sinister reality. In short, children are kidnapped for experiments in social engineering. Many videos have also emerged on Chinese social media of Uyghur children being beaten.



Chinese officials have stated that there is a need to “sacrifice a generation” in order to promote peace and stability (Cha 2020). This rhetoric begs the question of which group of people the government is pursuing peace for. The ideology of sacrificing a generation is not something that has historically ever successfully played out.

## **Section 6: Policy Recommendations**

Having laid out above the atrocities as confirmed by Chinese government data and witness testimonies, and the malicious intent with which these are carried out towards the Uyghur people, it is the recommendation of Campaign For Uyghurs that the actions of the Chinese regime be recognized as active genocide. The Chinese Communist Party systematically continues to pressure and torture Uyghurs to force them to assimilate and concurrently destroy them. The Beijing Administration breached the "Prevention of Genocide" contract which they had signed and approved in front of the international community. As such, the Chairman of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping and all Communist Party leaders are responsible and accountable for these crimes. Specifically, it is the recommendation of Campaign for Uyghurs that the Canadian Parliament take the following actions:

- 1) Implement policies and amendments in support of the following goals:
  - a) The Canadian government should move to establish a diplomatic mission or consulate in Urumchi.
  - b) The Canadian government should accept Uyghur refugees and allocate financial support for Uyghurs fleeing the Chinese Communist Regime.
  - c) Parliament should enact legislation requiring the immediate closure of Confucius Institutes, rebranded as “Ministry of Education Centres for Language Education and Cooperation”, which are funded by the Chinese Communist Party and served as their soft power to spread ideologies and false narratives.
  - d) The Canadian government should adjust verbiage to accurately reflect the nature of the situation, i.e. using terminology to label these crimes as genocide

- e) Legislation should be enacted to require that Canadian companies develop corporate policies to ensure no Uyghur slave labor in their supply chains. The Canadian government should also require that Canadian corporations conduct corporate education sessions in partnership with governmental or non-governmental organizations in order to develop responsible corporate environments that are equipped to recognize and address potential complicity in genocidal crimes.
- f) Canada should enact legislation similar to that of the U.S. Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act, and implement Magnitsky sanctions against Chinese government officials.
- g) The Canadian government must take steps to ensure compliance with Canadian law by Chinese diplomats and Chinese citizens in Canada, thereby also taking steps to protect Uyghurs in Canada from harassment by Chinese government officials.
- h) Canadian officials should decline to participate in the 2022 Olympics to be held in Beijing, and should enact regulations to prevent Canadian corporations from sponsoring the games.

2) As concerns Canada's relationship to the U.N. and influence therein, the Canadian government should also exert pressure on the United Nations to:

- a) immediately strip China of its participatory status on the U.N. Human Rights Council Panel and require immediate, unfiltered access to the entire region of East Turkistan in order to perform independent, unescorted investigations of the concentration camps and factories suspected of using Uyghur forced labor.
- b) The advanced technology surveillance system established by the Chinese Communist regime in East Turkistan should be abolished and complicit technology firms should be sanctioned as in violation of human rights.

- c) The abduction of Uyghur children, implementation of Han Chinese immigration into East Turkistan and intrusion into Uyghur homes should cease.
- d) The United Nations must formally recognize the present events as genocide.
- e) The United Nations should likewise recognize East Turkistan as an occupied territory.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the Canadian government should facilitate an environment in which Canadian citizens are made aware of the atrocities carried out by China, and should work to ensure protection from the Chinese government's propaganda and infiltration. It should also leverage its influence to petition international bodies for action. Particular attention must be paid to the halting of business practices that have made it possible to bypass accountability for the presence of Uyghur slave labor in supply chains. Canada must take action to provide an environment of freedom for the Uyghur people to practice religion, pursue livelihoods, meet needs, and enjoy their own language and culture.

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**About Campaign for Uyghurs**

Campaign for Uyghurs is a Washington D.C.-based non-governmental organization that works to promote and advocate for the human rights and democratic freedoms for the Uyghurs and other Turkic people in East Turkistan (referred to in China as “Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region”). It mobilizes individuals and the international community and builds bridges to take action on behalf of and to raise public awareness of the Uyghur issue with a special focus on Uyghur women and youth, and to activate persons and entities to work together to stop the systematic human rights abuses against the people of East Turkistan.