



Human Rights Now

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The Government of China Must Immediately End Its Campaign of Mass Detentions, Abuse, Forced Labor, and Destruction of Muslim Culture in Xinjiang

1. A Systematic, Comprehensive Campaign to Stamp out Turkic Muslim Culture in Xinjiang

Since May 2014, the government of China, under the direction of China's President Xi Jinping and Xinjiang Party Secretary Chen Quanguo, has waged a "Strike Hard Campaign against Violent Terrorism" which has used the pretext of fighting religious extremism to implement a vast program of serious human rights abuses against Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (UAR). This population includes 10 million Uyghurs, over a million Kazakhs, and hundreds of thousands of Tajiks, Kyrgyz, Uzbeks, Tatars, and others. The evidence indicates that the program is a comprehensive effort to destroy the religion, language, writings, history, and culture of Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang and force their assimilation with the majority Han population.¹

The effort is being accomplished through four highly abusive methods of total population control, each of which would constitute abuses of historic proportions by itself: vast numbers of long, arbitrary, abusive, and coercive detentions in reeducation camps; ever-present monitoring of the population by mass surveillance and mandatory homestays; repression and punishment of virtually all forms of cultural and religious expression; and a comprehensive system of forced labor. The evidence shows that gross and widespread abuses and human rights violations are being carried out against the population, including violations of the rights to freedom of religion, expression, association, and privacy and the prohibitions of torture, inhuman treatment, unfair trials, and discrimination. The severity, massive scale, and planned nature of the abuses may also qualify them as serious crimes against humanity.

2. A Vast Network of Coercive and Abusive Reeducation Detention Camps Focused on Assimilation

Central to the Strike Hard campaign is the meticulous planning and implementation of vast numbers of arbitrary, coercive, and abusive detentions and mass indoctrination. Under the "Transformation Through Education" program, public records and other evidence indicate that at least 1 to 3 million² Turkic Muslims are or have been coercively detained in Xinjiang in reeducation detention camps.³ Tens of thousands more are being arbitrarily detained in prisons⁴ and in criminal detention camps, where the most brutal incidents of torture have been reported.⁵ A government document has also reported nearly half a million Turkic Muslim children being placed in tightly guarded boarding schools, akin to orphanages, either when the parents are detained or by forcible separations from their parents whose visits are highly restricted.⁶ The schools have been given instructions to implement assimilation and indoctrination measures, and plans have been made to open one to two such schools in every one of Xinjiang's 800-plus townships by the end of 2020.⁷ The following paragraphs focus on the reeducation detention camps by surveying the overwhelming evidence that they are widespread and systematic, coercive, highly abusive, and fundamentally discriminatory. The reeducation camp detentions are reportedly currently winding down, although many "graduate" detainees are simply being moved into forced factory work (described further below) or prison.⁸

a) Widespread and Systematic

In addition to the vast number (1 to 3 million) of arbitrary reeducation detentions, leaked government documents and public statistics indicate that they are an intentional and comprehensive effort to erase and assimilate Turkic Muslim culture in Xinjiang household by household. Leaked documents quote Party Secretary Quanguo ordering officials under the program to “round up everyone who should be rounded up.”⁹ Local governments are instructed to ensure that at least one person of each Turkic Muslim household in Xinjiang be detained for reeducation for at least one to three months,¹⁰ and statistics—such as an average of 15% of all mid-aged adults being detained throughout Xinjiang, in some counties up to 28%¹¹—suggest that great efforts have been taken to achieve that target.¹² Detainees’ ages in published reports range from 13 to 84.¹³ Government documents and other evidence list or indicate criteria for detentions that include innocuous activities such as stopping smoking, abstaining from alcohol, opposing pornography, attending a funeral, observing a holiday, praying regularly, growing a beard, getting a passport, international travel or phone calls, not speaking Chinese, using WhatsApp, having one’s watch set to Xinjiang time instead of Beijing time (2,500 km away), storing food, buying a tent or ropes,¹⁴ and having too many children (which was the most common reason for detention in one county’s detention records).¹⁵ Such criteria have no rational connection to extremism, indicate racial and religious discrimination, and cast a vast and arbitrary net applicable to millions of people. To give a sense of the staggering scale of the detentions, in a one-month period in 2018 alone, Hotan prefecture’s reeducation detention camp requested over 194,000 Chinese language practice books and 11,310 pairs of shoes in a public government requisition order, and it is estimated by satellite photos and other evidence that there are at least 1,300 to 1,400 such camps.¹⁶

b) Coercive

The government of China states that the detentions are voluntary and for vocational education, but substantial evidence, including the government’s own manuals and records for the camps, leave no doubt that the detentions are coercive and arbitrary. A Kazakh detainee, detained as a Chinese teacher, repeated the typical report that, following numerous interrogations, her detention began with officials arriving in a vehicle, placing a black sack over her head, driving her to a detention camp, and forcing her to sign a form accepting the camp rules and promising not to talk about them.¹⁷ She reported that:

I was very much afraid to sign... It said there that if I did not fulfill my task, or if I did not obey the rules, I would get the death penalty... I signed because I had no choice, and then I received a uniform and was taken to a tiny bedroom with a concrete bed and a thin plastic mattress. There were five cameras on the ceiling – one in each corner and another one in the middle...

As for the other inmates, she added that:

[t]heir hands and feet were shackled all day, except when they had to write. Even in sleep they were shackled, and they were required to sleep on their right side – anyone who turned over was punished... There were police who supervised everything everywhere.¹⁸

Another ex-detainee in another camp described being shackled in the same way and being told that “there’s a Xinjiang-wide order that all Uyghurs and Kazaks would have their feet shackled and their hands chained together.”¹⁹ The camps were given official manuals, which have been leaked, that state they “must never allow escapes” and give instructions to prevent escapes, such as using cameras and prison-like measures.²⁰ Over 2016-2017, the government advertised over 85,000 openings for police officers for the region of Xinjiang, compared to around 6,000 per year on average for the previous 10 years.²¹ One camp had 60 armed police guards with four armored patrol vehicles stationed.²² In Qira county, 31% of the entire county’s police force was tasked with guarding detainees.²³ A 2018 procurement request documents Hotan officials ordering 2,768 police batons, 550 electric cattle prods,

1,367 pairs of handcuffs, and 2,792 cans of pepper spray for the camps.²⁴ Other reeducation detention camp orders were for razor wire, phone tapping equipment, infrared monitoring devices, police uniforms, riot shields, helmets, tear gas, net guns, stun guns, electrified batons, billy clubs, spears, handcuffs, spiked clubs known as “wolf’s teeth”, and “tiger chairs” to restrain interrogation subjects.²⁵

Detainees are not free to leave the camps, even over years of detention.²⁶ An official manual for the camps orders that detentions should last at least one year.²⁷ Sentences range in three tiers from a few months to 15 years, with no trial or after transparently unfair trials, sometimes split among reeducation camps, prisons, and forced labor camps.²⁸ The manual also institutes a point system where small infractions such as smiling or yawning can accumulate to add a year to the term.²⁹ If detainees refuse to comply or cannot properly perform, they are punished with solitary confinement, 24-hour food deprivation, and other punishments including reported torture; and if they cannot perform at the end of their term, their detentions will be extended another year or longer.³⁰ Numerous former detainees expressed the desire to commit suicide as their only escape.³¹ Even when detainees finish their terms, they are often sent to prison or forced labor in factories where the reeducation and assimilation efforts continue as described below.³²

c) *Highly Abusive*

Despite rhetoric about the goal of “ending terrorism and extremism”, the methods and conditions of the training have no rational connection to that goal, and they are often serious abuses which are never justifiable. In interviews, formerly detained persons in different camps have given repeated and consistent reports of regular beatings, torture, rape, sexual assault, sexual humiliation, forced abortions, sterilization, arbitrary and long solitary confinements, electrocutions, injections with unknown substances, non-consensual surgery, and other serious abuses in the camps.³³ A detainee described “black rooms” where torture occurs in camps with the same details that other ex-detainees in other camps reported being subjected to:

Some prisoners were hung on the wall and beaten with electrified truncheons. There were prisoners who were made to sit on a chair of nails. I saw people return from that room covered in blood. Some came back without fingernails.³⁴

In another case she reports that guards took 200 inmates outside and ordered one woman to confess her sins:

She stood before us and declared that she had been a bad person, but now that she had learned Chinese she had become a better person. When she was done speaking, the policemen ordered her to disrobe and simply raped her one after the other, in front of everyone. While they were raping her they checked to see how we were reacting.³⁵

The camps are grossly overcrowded, with 30 to 60 people being packed into small cells requiring sleeping in turns; and they are unsafe, with one former detainee reporting personally witnessing nine deaths in one camp due to dangerous conditions and a lack of medical care, and five other deaths were described in two other reports, which gave the same details of camps’ treatment of the bodies.³⁶ Activists are currently expressing grave concerns about novel coronavirus spreading in the camps without an ability to contain or treat it.³⁷ It was also reported that persons found breaking quarantine rules are detained in the same camps.³⁸

d) *Discriminatory*

In contrast to the stated purposes, leaked official documents and interviews with former detainees indicate that the actual purpose of the camps is to eradicate the religion and culture of detainees and coercively assimilate them to the majority Han Chinese culture.³⁹ Detainees are forced to take intensive Mandarin classes, memorize Confucian texts, praise the Communist Party and recite its

songs and chants, and take part in daily indoctrination in Chinese Communist Party and anti-Muslim propaganda. They must also regularly self-criticize their culture and religion and disavow Islamic beliefs, and they are harshly punished for expressing their religion or culture. Lessons include that Islamic greetings are prohibited; signs cannot use Uyghur or Kazakh writing; Kazakh or Uyghur cannot be spoken in public; their language schools are banned; communication with 26 countries is prohibited; third generation identity cards cannot list ethnicity; online minority chat groups are prohibited; intermarriage between Han and Kazakhs is rewarded with 90,000 RMB (\$13,000 USD) and the ability to apply for large loans; and that 50% of any Muslim Turkic property sold will go to the state.⁴⁰ Uyghur activists have also alleged discriminatory food shortages among Uyghur families during the coronavirus lockdowns due to the failure of the government to deliver food to them while they cannot leave home.⁴¹ One telling detail indicating the true purpose of the camps is multiple and consistent reports of camp administrators' fixation on hygiene and the "backwardness" of Muslim Turkic culture through instructions to grown adults on how to take a bath, get a haircut and shave, change and wash their clothes, stand up straight, and other demeaning instruction.⁴² One woman reported that as she lost consciousness while strapped in a chair and being electrocuted for punishment, white foam coming from her mouth, "The last word I heard them saying is that you being an Uighur is a crime."⁴³ Such lessons and statements betray the deep prejudice and discrimination against Turkic Muslims at the foundation of the government's campaign.

3. Mass Public Surveillance

The population of Xinjiang, and Turkic Muslims in particular, have also been subject to virtually constant, universal, and disproportionate electronic surveillance and monitoring, in addition to direct surveillance by local officials, informants, and mandatory homestays. Data is centralized in the "Integrated Joint Operations Platform" big data system.⁴⁴ Among many other abuses, officials implement predictive policing, using algorithms to score Muslims on the basis of their features and behavior meticulously documented in spreadsheets—such as whether they have a beard, abstain from alcohol, have too many children, or pray—and detaining anyone whose scores or the scores of family members fall below their arbitrary and discriminatory standards.⁴⁵ A leaked 137-page spreadsheet of monitoring data of and recommendations for 311 Muslims before, during, and after their detention in five reeducation camps in Karakax county ("Karakax list"), and also covering over 1,800 of their relatives and neighbors, shows the minute details that officials track, flag, and review for detention, including how often persons attend religious activities, how many times a day they pray, what videos they downloaded, their WeChat messages, the dates they did not shave, whether they learned religion from family or elsewhere, etc.⁴⁶ Some names are flagged with "heavy religious environment" and labeled "untrustworthy"; one man is marked "trustworthy" after he shaved his beard and began drinking alcohol after a year abstaining.⁴⁷

Surveillance is conducted under a multi-level grid management system dividing cities and villages into squares of about 500 people.⁴⁸ Each square has a police station monitoring residents, controlling their movement, regularly scanning their ID cards, taking their photographs and fingerprints, and searching their cell phones. In cities, facial-recognition cameras and phone scanners are on virtually every block, linking faces, phone numbers, license plates, social media, age, ethnicity, and other data in databases. Data released by Chinese police listed the installation of 18,464 surveillance cameras in an area of 3,640 residence complexes in the Xinjiang capital of Urumqi.⁴⁹ To indicate the scale of surveillance, in just four days, four cameras and two phone scanners installed near an apartment complex in a town in central China were reported to have identified 67,000 phones and taken 23,000 photos from which 8,700 people were identified.⁵⁰ "Convenience" police checkpoints are found about every 100 yards in many buildings and streets, which require ID card scans to pass, control and record

all public movement, and often restrict Turkic Muslim movements while the Han Chinese population passes relatively unrestricted.⁵¹

The Chinese government also aggressively monitors, interrogates, recruits as informants, and threatens Turkic Muslims living abroad through social media, phone calls, and China's embassies and consulates.⁵² The government also collects and stores residents' biometric data by a mandatory public "physical" program, and it is developing technology such as DNA-recognition methods and the ability to reconstruct faces from DNA.⁵³ All of these systems are connected to a central data system that scores everyone and ensures that behavior and data anywhere is immediately available to local police to detain persons anywhere else. Notably, Japanese companies Sony and Sharp supplied parts to a US-blacklisted Chinese surveillance company.⁵⁴

4. Mandatory Homestays, Home Surveillance, and Associated Abuses

Not stopping at surveillance in public areas, authorities also operate compulsory home surveillance programs in which public officials directly visit and stay in the homes of Xinjiang residents. This includes a "*Fanghuiju*" ("Visit, Benefit, and Unite the People") program since 2014 and a "Pair Up and Become Family" (sometimes called "Becoming Family") program since October 2016, which in December 2017 was expanded to mobilize 1.1 million prefectural-level officials to conduct homestays.⁵⁵ These latter officials, who are mostly male and euphemistically called "relatives", conduct homestays primarily in the countryside and among Muslim residents, and in some prefectures among every family.⁵⁶ They spend from five days every two months to up to 14 days a month living in homes to surveil,⁵⁷ interrogate, report on "problems" such as cleanliness and religious behavior,⁵⁸ and instruct Muslims in propaganda.⁵⁹ They visit at any time unannounced, and eat, work, and sleep with the families, including in the same bed with family members.⁶⁰ One Uyghur activist in exile has stated that the " 'Pair Up and Become Family' campaign represents the 'total annihilation of the safety, security and well-being of family members,' and ... has 'turned Uyghurs' homes into prisons from which there is no escape.' "⁶¹

5. Allegations of Mass Rape and Forced Marriages Inside and Outside the Homestay Program

There have also been allegations of widespread and organized mass rape and forced marriages of Turkic women by male Han Chinese officials through the "Becoming Family" program. If verified, forced marriages would be another instrument by the state of forced assimilation of Turkic Muslims to the Han Chinese culture. Sources who have "overseen the forced stayovers" report that male Han Chinese "relatives" under the program "regularly sleep in the same beds as the wives of men detained in the region's internment camps."⁶² A Chinese township official acknowledges that the practice is official policy and appears to link the program to the possibility of marriages or relationships developing between homestay officials and family members, stating that his staff "try to help them to make proper [sleeping] arrangements" in homestays, that local officials promote the practice of homestay officials sleeping together with family members to "promote ethnic unity", that "it is now considered normal for females to sleep on the same platform with their paired male 'relatives' ", and that improbably the homestay officials "talk to [family members] about life, during which time they develop feelings for one another."⁶³ A Uyghur women has reported seeing a prevalence of marriages between homestay "Becoming Family" officials and Uyghur women,⁶⁴ and the Uyghur activist Rushan Abbas alleges that the program institutes "mass rape" and forced marriages which families cannot refuse, as well as creates widespread pregnancies and forced abortions.⁶⁵

Regarding the allegation of widespread forced marriages generally in Xinjiang (not only in the homestay program), Han Chinese are offered significant money, housing, and jobs by the state to marry Turkic Muslims,⁶⁶ and there has also been a steep rise in media and groups promoting interethnic marriages, such as Han-Uyghur “dating services”, and the promotion of “social organizations” and “local neighbor watch cadres” to—as a Han interethnic-marriage promoter describes it—“get the support of both parents”, meaning both sets of parents, in Han-Uyghur marriages.⁶⁷ In interviews Uyghur women and families state that dating and marriage proposals by Han Chinese occur under threats to Uyghur women and their families for refusals, leading to widespread fears of such proposals and programs.⁶⁸ When asked if refusing an invitation to date a Han Chinese under an organized activity would result in being sent to “study”, a common euphemism for detention in a reeducation detention camp, a Uyghur woman answered “Maybe even worse than ‘study’.”⁶⁹

6. Destruction of Cultural Property and Restrictions on Expressions of Religion and Culture

The government has also severely restricted expressions of Islam and Uyghur and other Turkic cultures including, according to satellite photos, public documents, and interviews, widespread destruction of mosques, shrines, graveyards, and the historical districts of cities; the substitution of Uyghur and other Turkic language instruction with Mandarin instruction in schools; an order for the Koran and other religious texts to be censored or edited to reflect socialist values; forcing Muslim families to drink alcohol and eat non-halal foods during compulsory homestays; arbitrary detentions of Uyghur intellectuals; de facto restrictions of Uyghur-language books (that are not translations) and religious displays such as veils, prayer, and beards; and other extreme measures to eradicate the culture and memory of the Uyghur and other Turkic peoples in Xinjiang.⁷⁰

7. Forced Labor

In addition to the above abusive programs, Chinese authorities have also forced between hundreds of thousands to over a million ex-detainees and the poor in Xinjiang to be detained in work camps and work in factories against their will as part of massive and organized forced labor under the “Industrial Xinjiang Aid” (*chanye yuan jiang*) program, according to leaked government records, interviews with workers and locals, official notices, state media, and other evidence.⁷¹ The forced labor program is similar to the traditional “Reeducation Through Labor” (*laojiao*) forced labor program, which has long been criticized for its exploitation and abuses of workers. While the government has stated that the *laojiao* program ended in 2013 (when the reeducation detention camp program began), the Industrial Xinjiang Aid program appears to continue the forced labor program in the context of the reeducation program.⁷² It was also reported that as lockdowns began shutting down factories throughout China due to novel coronavirus, hundreds of Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims were still being sent to work in these areas, putting their lives directly at risk to keep the factories running.⁷³

However, the “Industrial Xinjiang Aid” program is also an integral part of the wider re-education program as well (called “vocational training” by the government). There is a direct pipeline of persons being sent from reeducation detention camps to forced labor factory work camps,⁷⁴ even as the coronavirus lockdowns continue as mentioned above, and the forced labor program shares many abuses with the reeducation camp program. Factories can participate by opening satellite factories inside Xinjiang employing Turkic Muslim workers (as at least 4400 companies have done); factories in other parts of China can employ Turkic Muslim workers; and they must all provide mandatory indoctrination classes at night as part of the program.⁷⁵

a) *Pipeline from Reeducation Detention Camps to Forced Labor Factory Work Camps*

Official reports track the movement of Turkic Muslims from reeducation detention camps to forced labor factory work camps. This has been confirmed by an informed source who also stated the persons were threatened with further detention if they refused the work assignment.⁷⁶ The government actively promotes the forced labor of former detainees by offering subsidies to companies employing them (5,000 RMB [77,000 JPY/\$705 USD] for each detainee who works over three years) to attract business to Xinjiang, with much greater awards for transfers to factories outside Xinjiang.⁷⁷ One official advertisement advertised up to 1,000 ethnic minority workers available for factory work, with an arrival date around two weeks and starting from 100 workers, with listed advantages being “quasi-military management”, no loss of personnel, and that factory managers can apply for Xinjiang police to be stationed at the factory 24 hours a day.⁷⁸

A Moyu county 2019 work report stated that “For every batch [of workers] that is trained, a batch of employment will be arranged and a batch will be transferred. Those employed need to receive thorough ideological education and remain in their jobs.”⁷⁹ Counties reported that among persons sent to forced labor camps, between 10% to 50% were sent to work outside of Xinjiang.⁸⁰ An Australian Strategic Policy Institute report (“ASPI Report”) cited official records and other evidence of at least 27 Chinese factories employing Turkic Muslim labor forcibly working in or transferred from Xinjiang since 2017 claiming to supply at least 83 well-known brands.⁸¹ To give two examples, Haoyuanpeng Clothing Manufacturing Co. Ltd (HYP) transferred from Xinjiang to its Anhui factory 63 workers, which were listed as “graduates” of a “vocational school” reeducation camp, with plans to transfer 500 more,⁸² and Qingdao Taekwang Shoes Co. Ltd employed 600 Turkic Muslim workers, all of which were subjected to reeducation classes.⁸³ The aforementioned governmental Karakax list also reports reeducation camp detainees being transferred into forced factory work camps, recommending that one former detainee “remain in a factory in the re-education camps” after recording that he “poses a certain level of danger to society.”⁸⁴

b) *Evidence of Forced Labor, Abuses, and Discrimination*

The ASPI Report documented evidence that the transferred Xinjiang labor is forced and that their conditions are prison-like, including: inward-facing barbed wire fences, watchtowers, guard stations, stationed police, movement restrictions, bans on returning home for holidays, segregated work, monitored transits, transits in segregated trains, “military-style management”, restrictions on religious practice, threats of detention in reeducation camps or prison for refusals, similar threats to family members for refusals, and special “integration” offices in the factories.⁸⁵

One worker, who said she was sent from a reeducation detention camp to work in a factory against her will, reported to her sister that “660 people are brought in shackled and handcuffed.... They have no choice, they will end up in jail, if they say something.... Tell them it has been two years, [and I have] not been released.”⁸⁶ Another reported that “There were police when you enter and leave the factory, they will check our phones and conduct body search”, and that not only former detainees are forced to work, but also unemployed people and farmers who are given the choice to work in factories or being sent to detention camps.⁸⁷

Turkic Muslim workers are also tracked and surveilled as well as their families, which carries the threat of family punishment for disobedience.⁸⁸ A government document describes a database recording medical, ideological, and employment details of each Turkic Muslim worker,⁸⁹ and one Uyghur person forced into work said police search their rooms and phones for religious content, the punishment for which is being sent back to a reeducation camp for 3 to 5 years.⁹⁰ As mentioned above, hundreds of Turkic Muslims are also continuing to be sent and forced to work in factories despite lockdowns to protect lives during the novel coronavirus crisis.

Allegations of labor and human rights abuses among Turkic Muslim workers working in forced labor factories include allegations of demands for excessive overtime (e.g., 100 hours overtime a month), payment less than Han counterparts, movement restrictions, other labor violations, abuses stemming from the mandatory reeducation classes, assimilation efforts, and religious practice restrictions.⁹¹ Aside from the clear economic goals of expanding exports by an underpaid coerced workforce,⁹² the Industrial Xinjiang Aid forced labor program continues the assimilation efforts of the reeducation camps, except run by companies.⁹³ As with the reeducation camps, the forced labor program's basis in discrimination is made evident by the vocal pride employers and government officials take in altering Uyghur workers' beliefs and practices, indicated by statements that they are being made into "modern" citizens who are "more physically attractive" and "take daily showers."⁹⁴

c) Japanese Companies Linked to the Forced Labor Program

As mentioned above, the ASPI Report links 27 Chinese factories participating in the forced labor program to at least 83 well-known brands through their supply chains. Among these 83 brands, 11 Japanese companies were listed: Hitachi, Japan Display Inc., Mitsubishi, Mitsumi, Nintendo, Panasonic, Sharp, Sony, TDK, Toshiba, and Uniqlo. Panasonic was the only Japanese company listed in ASPI's report as responding to the claim, stating that it did not have a contractual relationship with forced labor suppliers but did not rule out links to the forced labor factories in its supply chains.⁹⁵ The Business and Human Rights Resource Center has collected responses from some of the 83 brands to the report, but responses by Japanese companies were not among the collection if they were made.⁹⁶

Two Japanese companies, Muji and Uniqlo, were also linked to Xinjiang cotton production, which may suggest a link to forced labor in their supply chain.⁹⁷ While the forced labor factories operate in multiple sectors, a major sector is cotton processing. Eighty-four percent of cotton in China was produced in Xinjiang in 2018, and Chinese cotton made up 22% of the global market in 2018-2019, much of it processed into yarn, textiles, apparel, and footwear in Chinese factories, including ones employing forced labor.⁹⁸ Because of the complexity and opaqueness of modern supply chains, any global company sourcing cotton from China, such as Uniqlo and Muji, has likely bought the products of this forced labor. The response of both companies has been insufficient given the massive scale of the problem:

- **Muji.** Muji released a document about preventing forced labor, saying it was "aware that the risk of modern slavery and human trafficking exists within our own operations and in the supply chain.... We are committed to eliminating and preventing such risk as much as possible...."
- **Uniqlo.** In a statement... Uniqlo said that it "sources cotton from a number of locations around the world, including Australia, the US and China." "Uniqlo does not have any production partners located in the Xinjiang area.... Our China-based manufacturing partners source cotton from multiple cotton-producing areas around the country."⁹⁹

Given the explicit links made by ASPI between forced labor factories and Japanese companies and the high likelihood of global companies buying textile products from China produced by forced labor, what is called for is not silence or words that deny, minimize, or excuse a connection to forced labor or list internal measures that cannot be verified. Rather the situation calls for stringent due diligence investigations of companies' supply chains to ensure no products of forced labor are present, in partnership with civil society experts to ensure their accuracy and effectiveness, and public release of the results to ensure transparency and verification. If links to forced labor in their supply chains are identified, the companies should take measures consistent with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights to ensure their supply chains are free of forced labor.

8. An Outcry Against China's Campaign in Xinjiang throughout the International Community

As the increasingly shocking revelations of the gross abuses and widespread violations against Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang by the Chinese government have been made public, the outcry throughout the international community has grown in its condemnation. Below is a number of important statements by state and UN officials.

- The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) expressed its alarm about the detentions, unfair trials, surveillance, and reports of torture and ill-treatment of Uyghurs and other minorities in its review of China's 14th to 17th combined reports in August 2018.¹⁰⁰ It recommends that the government of China end its practices, immediately release those arbitrarily detained, investigate and hold accountable those responsible for its profiling policies, and give victims effective remedies including compensation and assurances of non-repetition.
- The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, acknowledged these disturbing reports and requested China give OHCHR access to investigate in a September 2018 statement.¹⁰¹
- Six UN Special Procedures sent a joint letter to the government of China in November 2018, the special rapporteurs for minorities, freedom of religion, freedom of expression, and human rights and terrorism, and the vice chairs for the working groups on arbitrary detention and forced disappearances.¹⁰² The letter notes that the goal of the reeducation camps to homogenize society is illegitimate and that their coercive nature made them effectively detention camps. The experts found that the rules establishing the camps criminalize the legitimate exercise of basic rights, are based on overbroad definitions of extremist behavior, and violate China's obligations under international human rights law.
- Twenty-two states submitted a joint letter to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in July 2019 calling on China to end its mass detention program.¹⁰³
- The UK Permanent Representative to the UN read a joint statement on behalf of 23 states at a CERD dialog meeting in October 2019 calling on the Chinese government to urgently implement CERD's recommendations.¹⁰⁴

9. Human Rights Now Calls on the Government of China to Respect its International Obligations and End its Grossly Abusive Campaign against Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang

Human Rights Now shares in the shock and alarm of the international community at the scale and severity of abuses and violations being committed by the government of China against its Turkic Muslim populations in its comprehensive effort to eradicate their religion and culture within its borders. The campaign includes dozens of categories of serious, widespread, and systematic abuses deeply integrated into the social fabric of Xinjiang and involving numbers in the millions of people, including arbitrary and abusive detentions, constant monitoring, terrorizing, brainwashing, forced labor, and other serious abuses. The crisis requires a comprehensive response proportional to the scale of abuses. Below are some of the most important imperatives and recommendations we offer.

To the government of China:

- Immediately close all reeducation detention camps and programs in or outside Xinjiang and release all individuals.
- Immediately end the "Strike Hard Campaign against Violent Terrorism" program in Xinjiang, as well as all compulsory programs such as the "*fanghuiju*", "Becoming Family", forced labor under "Industrial Xinjiang Aid" or any other program, and other programs designed to surveil, detain, abuse, or control the Turkic Muslim population in Xinjiang.
- Ensure that Turkic Muslims have equal access to food aid, medical treatment, and other measures designed to address the impact of the novel coronavirus crisis, and ensure that they are not forced to work in risky lockdown areas.

- Provide independent international human rights monitors, including as requested by the OHCHR and UN Special Procedures, with full and unlimited access to Xinjiang UAR.
- End restrictions on Turkic Muslims' rights to freedom of religion, expression, assembly, association, culture, and other fundamental rights.
- Investigate all allegations of abusive practices under the “Strike Hard Campaign against Violent Terrorism” and forced labor programs and prosecute all responsible officials, from high-level organizers to low-level personnel, company personnel, and any other persons responsible for violations.
- Investigate allegations of mass rape and forced marriages of Turkic Muslim women by Han Chinese officials and citizens, and take measures to ensure that rape and forced marriages do not occur.
- Drop the charges or release Turkic Muslims arbitrarily imprisoned under the pretext of terrorism or extremism with no supporting evidence, and ensure all trials adhere to international fair trial standards.
- End mass surveillance and data-gathering and storage techniques that disproportionately invade privacy without a legitimate cause, including the Joint Operations Platform's big data program and the collection of biometric data not proportional to meeting a legitimate government objective, and destroy any existing records already taken.
- Return passports confiscated from Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang and end future arbitrary confiscations.
- Provide victims of arbitrary detention and abuses under the Strike Hard Campaign and forced labor program with effective remedies including compensation, treatment, and assurances of non-repetition.
- Abolish laws and policies at all levels of government that provide legal grounds for any of the above abuses and violations.

To the international community of states:

- Apply pressure urging the government of China to end its Strike Hard Campaign and forced labor program, including through private diplomacy, public statements in international fora, and the application of sanctions and other forms of pressure against the government of China and responsible officials and companies.
- Do not forcibly return Turkic Muslims to China without investigating their risk of persecution; offer broad and expedited amnesty to them as applicable; and investigate and offer protection to them from threats by the Chinese government in your respective territory.
- Support the creation of UN special procedures and other mechanisms to investigate and document the human rights crisis in Xinjiang and facilitate international accountability for violations.
- Pass measures requiring or facilitating companies doing business in China to end any business directly contributing to the Strike Hard Campaign and forced labor program (such as by selling surveillance or data technology to Chinese companies) and to conduct due diligence investigations of their Chinese business connections to ensure that no products of forced labor enter their supply chains, the results of which should be made public for verification.

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⁷⁸ “1000 Ethnic Minorities Awaiting Online Booking”, <https://archive.fo/fYIV4> (in Chinese), cited in Xu, et al, *id.*

⁷⁹ Work report of the People’s government of Moyu county in 2019 (*2019 Nián mò yù xiàn rénmin zhèngfǔ gōngzuò bàogào*), Moyu county government Network (*Mò yù xiàn zhèngfǔ wǎng*), 12 Nov. 2019, <https://web.archive.org/save/http://m.ahmhxc.com/gongzuobaogao/16526.html> (in Chinese), cited in Xu, et al, *id.*

⁸⁰ “Strengthening patriotism education and building a bridge of national unity”, *China Ethnic Religion Net*, 7 Nov. 2019, <http://archive.ph/M0CKg> (in Chinese), cited in Xu, et al, *id.* (“A Laixi government committee press release stated that 9,800 Uyghur workers were transferred to Qingdao Taekwang Shoes in ‘more than 60 batches’ since 2007.”)

⁸¹ Xu, et al, *above*, note 8, <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/uyghurs-sale>.

⁸² “Guangdong’s aid to Xinjiang actively promotes the transfer of labour from the aided places to other provinces of China”, Voice of Guangdong Aid, 23 June 2018, <http://archive.ph/70yK7> (in Chinese), cited in Xu, et al, *id.*

⁸³ Xu, et al, *id.*

⁸⁴ Yang & Petersmann, *above*, note 13, <https://www.dw.com/en/exclusive-chinas-systematic-tracking-arrests-of-uyghurs-exposed-in-new-xinjiang-leak/a-52397824>.

⁸⁵ Xu, et al, *above*, note 8, <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/uyghurs-sale>.

⁸⁶ McNeill, *above*, note 77, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-07-15/uyghur-forced-labour-xinjiang-china/11298750>.

⁸⁷ McNeill, *id.*

⁸⁸ “Hotan Prefecture’s innovative mechanism promotes labour transfer employment” (*Hétián dìqū chuàngxīn jīzhì zhù tuī láodònglì zhuānyì jùnyè*), Xinhua News, 23 May 2017, <http://archive.ph/NVeNq> (in Chinese), cited in Xu, et al, *id.*

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⁹⁰ Ye Ling, *above*, note 76, <https://bitterwinter.org/uyghurs-subjected-to-forced-labor/>, cited in Xu, et al, *id.*

⁹¹ Xu, et al, *id.*

⁹² Lehr & Bechrakis, *above*, note 71, <https://www.csis.org/analysis/connecting-dots-xinjiang-forced-labor-forced-assimilation-and-western-supply-chains>.

⁹³ Lehr & Bechrakis, *id.*; Handley & Xiao, *above*, note 71, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-11-01/muji-uniqlo-flaunt-xinjiang-cotton-despite-uyghur-human-rights/11645612> (“Adrian Zenz, an expert on forced labour in Xinjiang, told a US commission looking into China that his ‘shocking’ findings revealed a ‘perverse combination of coercive training and labour, intergeneration separation, and complete control over family units’”); McNeill, *above*, note 77, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-07-15/uyghur-forced-labour-xinjiang-china/11298750> (“‘Those who are in the camps are supposed to get jobs, permanent factory jobs. The reason is that in these jobs the government can control them,’ [Zenz] said. ‘They can’t take off on Friday to go to the mosque, they also can’t fast, they cannot do basic religious practise. It’s about total ideological control and it means that the party is going to control everything’ ‘The way that you re-engineer and change an ethnic group, an ethnic society is if you break up their core units,’ he said. ‘You break up the family unit by making the parents work full-time in different places. That’s also how you inhibit what’s called intergenerational transmission of culture and religion. Meaning the parent’s ability to pass on the cultural and the spiritual heritage to the next generation. If you can control that, then you basically have control over the entire next generation of these ethnic groups.’”).

⁹⁴ Xu, et al, *above*, note 8, <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/uyghurs-sale>.

⁹⁵ Xu, et al, *id.*

⁹⁶ Business and Human Rights Resource Center, “China: 83 major brands implicated in report on forced labour of ethnic minorities from Xinjiang assigned to factories across provinces; Includes company responses”, last accessed 30 Apr. 2020, <https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/china-83-major-brands-implicated-in-report-on-forced-labour-of-ethnic-minorities-from-xinjiang-assigned-to-factories-across-provinces-includes-company-responses> (company responses are listed below the top article).

⁹⁷ Handley & Xiao, *above*, note 71, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-11-01/muji-uniqlo-flaunt-xinjiang-cotton-despite-uyghur-human-rights/11645612>; Nicolaci da Costa, “Xinjiang cotton sparks concern over ‘forced labour’ claims”, BBC, 13 Nov. 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-50312010> (“‘Uniqlo does not have any production partners located in the Xinjiang region. Moreover, Uniqlo production partners must commit to

our strict company code of conduct. To the best of our knowledge, this means our cotton comes only from ethical sources,' the spokesperson told the BBC."); Putz, "Cotton and Corporate Responsibility: Fighting Forced Labor in Xinjiang and Uzbekistan", *The Diplomat*, 14 Nov. 2019, <https://thediplomat.com/2019/11/cotton-and-corporate-responsibility-fighting-forced-labor-in-xinjiang-and-uzbekistan/> ("Japanese retailers Muji and Uniqlo have come under criticism recently for sourcing cotton from Xinjiang, where the Chinese government has reportedly interned more than a million Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities, including Kazakhs and Kyrgyz.")

⁹⁸ Nicolaci da Costa, *id.*

⁹⁹ Handley & Xiao, *above*, note 71, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-11-01/muji-uniqlo-flaunt-xinjiang-cotton-despite-uyghur-human-rights/11645612>. ("Experts maintain that the issue is so pervasive in Xinjiang that it is nearly impossible to disentangle untainted sources from supply chains.")

¹⁰⁰ CERD, "Concluding observations on the combined fourteenth to seventeenth periodic reports of China (including Hong Kong, China and Macao, China)", CERD/C/CHN/CO/14-17, 20 Aug. 2018, https://www.ishr.ch/sites/default/files/article/files/cerd_c_chn_co_14-17_32237_e.pdf.

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¹⁰² Cumming-Bruce, "U.N. Rights Officials Criticize China Over Muslim Internments", *NYTimes*, 13 Nov. 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/13/world/asia/un-china-xinjiang-muslim-internments.html>.

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