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I.Letter from Secretary General

II.Letter from Under Secretary General

Esteemed delegates,

Welcome to FLZMUN!I'm Ecrin Ertürk and I'll be serving you as your Under Secretary General with my lovely chair Ayşe Sare.First of all I'd like to express my excitement and gratitude to be a part of this conference.Throughout these three days we will discuss,share our ideas and find solutions to assimilation on Uyghurs in Xinjiang .I chose this topic in order to raise awareness to this topic.Unfortunately Uyghurs' voices are not heard enough and they suffer from the assimilation through a long time. Uyghurs share deep-rooted historical, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural ties with other Turkic people.

So let us work together and help our brothers and sisters.Let's make their voice heard.I'm sure you will give amazing speeches and we will have a lot of fun time together.This study guide will help you to get information about our topic.But of course I strongly encourage you to conduct further research. If you have any questions about our committee,please don't hesitate to contact me via e-mail.My contact information is below.

ecrinert824@gmail.com

III.Introduction to the Committee

The Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM) is the Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. It was established in 1945 and later helped with the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. SOCHUM focuses on issues related to basic human rights that should be enjoyed by everyone worldwide. This includes the right to life, the freedom to express cultures, the right to participate in politics, protecting children's rights, and promoting social development. SOCHUM also deals with issues concerning special groups such as the elderly, people with disabilities, crime victims, and those affected by drugs. SOCHUM aims to create peaceful solutions to social, humanitarian, and cultural problems around the world. It studies human rights issues, listens to experts, and works with other UN agencies to create resolutions that influence practices in member states. SOCHUM also initiates studies that encourage recommendations for the promotion of international cooperation and fundamental freedoms for all.

IV.Introduction to the Agenda Item

1.The Defining Assimilation and Assimilation History in World

Assimilation, in anthropology and sociology, the process whereby individuals or groups of differing ethnic heritage are absorbed into the dominant culture of a society. The process of assimilating involves taking on the traits of the dominant culture to such a degree that the assimilating group becomes socially indistinguishable from other members of the society. As such, assimilation is the most extreme form of acculturation. Although assimilation may be compelled through force or undertaken voluntarily, it is rare for a minority group to replace its previous cultural practices completely; religion, food preferences, proxemics (e.g.,

the physical distance between people in a given social situation), and aesthetics are among the characteristics that tend to be most resistant to change. Assimilation does not denote “racial” or biological fusion, though such fusion may occur.

Assimilation refers to the process through which individuals and groups of differing heritages acquire the basic habits, attitudes, and mode of life of an embracing culture.

Stage	Description
Cultural or Behavioral Assimilation (Acculturation)	Adoption of the host society's language, dress, and daily customs
Structural or Large-Group Assimilation	Immigrant groups enter and become common in cliques, clubs, and institutions of the host society
Marital Assimilation (Amalgamation)	Large-scale intermarriage between the immigrant and host populations
Identificational Assimilation	Immigrants develop a sense of identity linked to the host society
Attitude Receptional Assimilation	Absence of prejudice, discrimination, and bias in the host society
Behavior Receptional Assimilation	Absence of discrimination in all areas of life
Civic Assimilation	Absence of value and power conflict

2.Addressing Cultural Assimilation and the Protection of Uyghur Identity and Human Rights in Xinjiang

Xinjiang is an autonomous region in northwestern China. Uyghurs and Han Chinese are the largest ethnic groups living there. Most Uyghurs are muslim and they speak Uyghur, a Turkic language. Their language, religion and traditions are important parts of their identity.

In Xinjiang, some Uyghur children cannot study in their own language and have to study mainly in Mandarin. Most Uyghurs are Muslim but some religious activities are restricted. The Chinese government sees some religious practices as signs of “extremism”. The UN is concerned about these issues because they may affect Uyghurs rights, language and culture.

Uyghurs face not only cultural and religious problems, but also human rights violations. For example, some Uyghurs are forced to work under very hard conditions. There are also reports of physical and psychological abuse in so-called “re-education camps”.

In this situation, the UN should not ignore the human rights violations happening in Xinjiang. It should organize campaigns and take action to help people live freely. People should be able to protect their own language and culture, and also practice their religion freely.

V.Cultural Assimilation and the Protection of Uyghur Rights

A.Historical Background

Since 2016, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has subjected Uyghurs and members of other predominantly Muslim ethnic minority groups in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) to genocide, state-imposed forced labor, and crimes against humanity. China officially recognizes 55 ethnic groups in addition to the Han majority. Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, and other mostly Muslim minority groups are subjected to abuse and discrimination in places like the XUAR and elsewhere in the country.

Uyghurs detained in camps and forced to work in factories must endure oppressive conditions. In one internment camp in Kashgar, Xinjiang, Uyghur detainees work as forced laborers to produce textiles. They receive little pay, are not allowed to leave, and have limited or no communication with family members. If family communication and visits are allowed, they are heavily monitored and can be cut short. When not working, the Uyghur workers

must learn Mandarin and undergo ideological indoctrination. However, these abuses are not just limited to the XUAR.

Beyond the XUAR, in the coastal Chinese province of Fujian, Uyghur workers at a factory in Quanzhou face similar abuses. They are made to live in separate dormitories from Han workers, surrounded by an iron gate and security cameras. Uyghurs often work longer hours than their Han co-workers. When finished for the day, the Uyghur workers are escorted back to their dormitories by provincial police officers from the XUAR – not Fujian. The local police say the roll call is to ensure no one is missing. However, Uyghur workers at this factory cannot exercise their free will to leave the premises. Even if they could leave, local police have confiscated their identification materials.

The construction of these camps peaked in 2017, with millions of Uyghurs and other Turkic people detained under various pretexts. Surrounded by high walls, watchtowers, and armed guards, these camps resemble prisons more than educational facilities. Testimonies from survivors reveal a horrifying reality. While the Chinese government has admitted to the existence of these camps, it has not disclosed the number of detainees. However, in August 2018, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination stated that it had credible information suggesting over a million Uyghurs were being held in these camps. Survivors like Gulbahar Haitiwaji have recounted how detainees caught speaking Uyghur were punished by being confined to “tiger chairs” for up to 72 hours. Another survivor, Qelbinur Sidik, witnessed mass rapes and forced injections that interrupted menstrual cycles. Tursunay Ziyawudun, who spoke at the International Religious Freedom Summit, described living in constant fear, stating, “The sounds of screams and cries always filled the air; we feared our turn would come next.” Ziyawudun and other Uyghur women were subjected to systematic sexual abuse by camp guards. She vividly recalls, “Once, three Han police

officers, overseen by a man in a suit and mask, raped me and another young woman. Such brutalities were widespread; women sometimes returned close to death or never returned at all.” Another example is Miyessar Muhedamu, a Uyghur woman detained in March 2017 because she had studied Arabic in Egypt in her youth. Her husband, Sadirzhan Ayupov, and their three children have not seen her since.

1.Historical Overview of Uyghur Ethnicity

There are about 12 million Uyghurs, mostly Muslim, living in Xinjiang, which is officially known as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR).

Xinjiang lies in the north-west of China and is the country's largest region. Like Tibet, it is autonomous, meaning - in theory - it has some powers of self-governance. But in practice, both regions are subjected to major restrictions by the central government.
Xinjiang is a mostly desert region and produces about a fifth of the world's cotton. Human rights groups have voiced concerns that much of that cotton export is picked by forced labour, and in 2021 some Western brands removed Xinjiang cotton from their supply chains, leading to a backlash against the brands from Chinese celebrities and netizens.

In December 2020, research seen by the BBC showed that up to half a million people were being forced to pick cotton in Xinjiang. There is evidence that new factories have been built within the grounds of the re-education camps.

The region is also rich in oil and natural gas and because of its proximity to Central Asia and Europe is seen by Beijing as an important trade link.

In the early 20th Century, the Uyghurs briefly declared independence for the region but it was brought under the complete control of China's new Communist government in 1949.

The Uyghurs speak their own language, which is similar to Turkish, and see themselves as culturally and ethnically close to Central Asian nations. They make up less than half of the Xinjiang population.

Recent decades have seen a mass migration of Han Chinese (China's ethnic majority) into Xinjiang, allegedly orchestrated by the state to dilute the minority population there.

China has also been accused of **targeting Muslim religious figures** and banning religious practices in the region, as well as destroying mosques and tombs.

Uyghur activists say they fear that the group's culture is under threat of erasure.

B.International Legal Framewrok

1.Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is a milestone document in the history of human rights. Drafted by representatives with different legal and cultural backgrounds from all regions of the world, the Declaration was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948 (General Assembly resolution 217 A) as a common standard of achievements for all peoples and all nations. It sets out, for the first time, fundamental human rights to be universally protected and it has been translated into over 500

languages. The UDHR is widely recognized as having inspired, and paved the way for, the adoption of more than seventy human rights treaties, applied today on a permanent basis at global and regional levels (all containing references to it in their preambles).

Article 1: All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.
Article 3: Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.
Article 4: No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.
Article 15: 1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.

2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.
Article 18: Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

2.International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) is a key human rights treaty that protects fundamental freedoms and civil liberties, ensuring individuals' rights to life, freedom of speech, fair trials, privacy, and protection from torture, arbitrary detention, and discrimination. Adopted by the UN in 1966 and in force since 1976, it binds state parties to uphold these rights and allows individuals to seek redress for violations through national courts or, in some cases, the UN Human Rights Committee (HRC). The ICCPR also includes

provisions on non-discrimination, political participation, and the protection of vulnerable groups, reinforcing the universal principles of human dignity and justice.

PART II

Article 2

1. Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the present Covenant, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Article 7

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In particular, no one shall be subjected without his free consent to medical or scientific experimentation.

Article 19

1. Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference.

2. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.

3.International Convent on Economic,Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) is a multilateral

treaty adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 16 December 1966.The Covenant commits its parties to work toward the granting of economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR) to its citizens. This includes labour rights, the right to health, the right to education, and the right to an adequate standard of living. As of September 2018, the Covenant has 169 parties including St Helena. A further four countries, including the United States, have signed but not ratified the Covenant.The ICESCR (and its Optional Protocol) are part of the International Bill of Human Rights, along with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)The Covenant is monitored by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

PART I

Article 1

1. All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic,social and cultural development.

2.All peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic co-operation,based upon the principle of mutual benefit,and international law.In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.

5. The States Parties to the present Covenant, including those having responsibility for administration of Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories,shall promote to realization of the right of self-determination,and shall respect that right,in conformity with the provisions of the Character of United Nations.

PART III

Article 10

The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize that:

1. The widest possible protection and assistance should be accorded to the family, which is the natural and fundamental group unit of society, particularly for its establishment and while it is responsible for the care and education of dependent children. Marriage must be entered into with the free consent of the intending spouses.

2. Special protection should be accorded to mothers during a reasonable period before and after childbirth. During such periods working mothers should be accorded paid leave or leave with adequate social security benefits.

3. Special measures of protection and assistance should be taken on behalf of all children and young persons without any discrimination for reasons of parentage or other conditions. Children and young persons should be protected from economic and social exploitation. Their employment in work harmful to their morals or health or dangerous to life or likely to hamper their normal development should be punishable by law. States should also set age limits below which the paid employment of child labour should be prohibited and punishable by law

Article 11

1. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take

appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, recognizing to this effect the essential importance of international co-operation based on free consent.

Article 13

1. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to education. They agree that education shall be directed to the fail development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and- shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. They further agree that education shall enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups, and further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

C.Uyghurs' Fundamental Rights

1.Self-determination Right

The right to self-determination is the right of peoples to freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development. Self-determination appears in Article 1 of the UN Charter and in Article 1 common to the the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Self-determination is a right to independence: the international aspect of the right addresses the freedom of peoples from outside interference to exercise self-government and pursue their development. Self-determination is a fundamental human right: the domestic aspect of the right is concerned with the relation between a people and its government. Self-determination is recognized as an inalienable right giving rise to obligations in which the international community shares a common legal interest. Today, self-determination serves as an organizing principle for the international community of States. This book provides scholars and practitioners with a comprehensive resource on the

right to self-determination in international law. The book is organized in three parts, respectively addressing the sources, content, and practice of the right to self-determination in international law.

2.Mother Tongue Freedom

Authorities in northwest China's Xinjiang region have issued a directive completely banning the use of the Uyghur language at all education levels up to and including secondary school, according to official sources, and those found in violation of the order will face "severe punishment."

The new ban marks one of the strongest measures yet from Beijing aimed at assimilating ethnic Uyghurs, who complain of pervasive ethnic discrimination, religious repression, and cultural suppression by the China's ruling Communist Party in Xinjiang.

In late June, the Education Department in Xinjiang's Hotan (in Chinese, Hetian) prefecture issued a five-point directive outlawing the use of Uyghur at schools in favor of Mandarin Chinese "in order to strengthen elementary and middle/high school bilingual education."

Under the directive—a copy of which was obtained by RFA's Uyghur Service—schools must "insist on fully popularizing the national common language and writing system according to law, and add the education of ethnic language under the bilingual education basic principle."

Beginning in the fall semester this year, Mandarin Chinese "must be resolutely and fully implemented" for the three years of preschool, and "promoted" from the first years of elementary and middle school "in order to realize the full coverage of the common language and writing system education."

The directive instructs schools to "resolutely correct the flawed method of providing Uyghur language training to Chinese language teachers" and "prohibit the use of Uyghur language, writing, signs and pictures in the educational system and on campuses."

Additionally, the order bans the use of Uyghur language in “collective activities, public activities and management work of the education system.”

Any school or individual that fails to enforce the new policy, that “plays politics, pretends to implement, or acts one way and does another,” will be designated “two-faced” and “severely punished,” it said, using a term regularly applied by the government to Uyghurs who do not willingly follow such directives.

D.The Consequences of Cultural Assimilation

1.Language and Cultural Preservation

Uyghur is spoken by over 15 million people and represents one of the most historically significant Turkic languages, with a long tradition and a rich body of poetry, folklore, and storytelling. This makes it an essential language for students studying the region’s cultures and histories. June 15 marks Uyghur Language Day, which Uyghurs celebrate not only as a cultural event, but as a call to action, to ensure our language is not wiped out from the face of the earth. In light of China’s genocidal campaign to erase Uyghur identity, we know that preserving a language is preserving a people.Below text is Omer Kanat’s, one of the people that suffered through assimilation of China,explains how China covers the prohibition of speaking in Uyghur:

“I left East Turkestan when I was just 9 years old. Fleeing political persecution in China, my family settled in Afghanistan. Like many displaced families, we faced the pressure to assimilate, to prioritize “practical” languages – Dari, Pashto, English. But my father made a rule: at home, we spoke only Uyghur. At school I learned everything else, but within the walls of our home, Uyghur was the language of family, and of memory. My parents’

dedication meant that I was able to immerse myself in our literature, philosophy, and history. Eventually, I became senior editor at Radio Free Asia's Uyghur Service, despite spending no time in any classroom studying my native language. That's the power of one generation refusing to let their language die.

But today, in our homeland, the Chinese government is doing everything possible to stop the Uyghur language from being passed down to the next generation. In East Turkestan, so-called "bilingual education" means children are taught in Chinese, not Uyghur. In state-run boarding schools, Uyghur children are forbidden from speaking their language or even using their own names. In short order, the children have lost the Uyghur language entirely, and this is no accident. This is linguistic erasure, a cultural genocide.

When we lose a language, we lose a culture. Chinese authorities have dismissed the Uyghur language as "out of step with the 21st century." China has ended the use of Uyghur as a language of instruction, closed libraries, and brutally persecuted editors and publishers."

The mentioned language rights in the senate of United States:

SEC. 7. REQUIREMENT FOR UYGHUR LANGUAGE TRAINING.

(a) UYGHUR LANGUAGE TRAINING AND STAFFING.—The Secretary of State shall take such steps as may be necessary to ensure that—

(1) Uyghur language training is available to Foreign Service officers as appropriate; and

(2) every effort is made to ensure that at least one Uyghur-speaking member of the Foreign Service (as such term is defined by section 103 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3903)) is assigned to each United States diplomatic or consular post in China.

(b) REPORT.—No later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for 2 years, the Foreign Service Institute shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate a report that outlines all the steps taken to implement subsection (a).[1]

2.Family Separation and Effects on Uyghur Children

China's mass internment system not only targets Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims directly detained but also inflicts devastating consequences on their families, particularly children. When parents are sent to camps, their children are frequently removed and placed in state-run orphanages or boarding schools—even when grandparents or relatives are willing to care for them. Reports indicate there is no transparent legal framework defining consent, authority, or procedures for such removals, leaving families without recourse to challenge these decisions (HRW, 2019). Uyghurs living abroad face additional barriers, as Chinese authorities routinely deny information about their children's whereabouts and pressure parents to return to the region under threat of detention or torture. The confiscation of passports and restrictions on travel further entrench these forced separations, often making reunification impossible.

UN independent experts have raised grave concern over these policies, highlighting that thousands of Uyghur children—especially those whose parents are detained or in exile—are placed into state-controlled boarding schools, preschools, or orphanages (UN, 2023). These institutions operate almost exclusively in Mandarin and enforce strict bans on the use of the Uyghur language and expression of religious or cultural identity. Many children are misclassified as "orphans" despite having living parents or extended family. Such measures serve a broader state policy of forced assimilation, accelerating the erasure of Uyghur and Turkic Muslim identities and amounting to genocide (CUS, 2025).

[1] https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/2766/text

Real Life Survivors

Bota Kussaiyn

For months, relatives of the missing kept their anguish to themselves. They hoped the loss of contact with loved ones back home would be temporary. They feared making things worse if they sought outside help, since the Chinese government views contact with relatives living abroad as suspect, and, in some cases, grounds for detention in “re-education camps”. Now, with no clear end in sight for their torment, more and more are willing to speak up.

Bota Kussaiyn, an ethnic Kazakh student studying at Moscow State University, last spoke with her father, Kussaiyn Sagymbai, over WeChat in November 2017. Originally from the XUAR, their family had re-settled in Kazakhstan in 2013.

Bota’s father had returned to China in late 2017 to visit a doctor, but the authorities confiscated his passport after he arrived in the XUAR. Bota subsequently learnt from relatives there that her father had been sent to a “re-education camp”.

Her relatives in the XUAR were so afraid that further contact might put them under suspicion that they stopped communicating with her after that.



Relatives told Bota Kussaiyn that her father has been sent to "re-education camp"(Photo by Amnesty)

Bota told Amnesty: "My father is an ordinary citizen. We were a happy family before he was detained. We laughed together. We can't laugh any more, and we can't sleep at night. We live in fear every day. It has done great harm to my mother. We don't know where he is. We don't even know if he's still alive. I want to see my father again."

3.Violence Against Uyghur Women

China's persecution of Uyghur and other Turkic women in East Turkistan is marked by systemic gender-based violence, including forced sterilization, coerced birth control, sexual

violence, and state-orchestrated marriages. These practices not only inflict profound harm on individual women but also serve as tools of demographic engineering and cultural erasure, forming a central component of China's genocidal campaign.

Forced Sterilization and Birth Prevention

Between 2015 and 2018, two majority-Uyghur prefectures experienced an 84% drop in birth rates, driven by coercive measures such as forced IUD insertions, abortions, and sterilizations, often carried out without consent. Researcher Adrian Zenz found that by 2019, up to 80% of women of childbearing age in rural southern Uyghur areas had been targeted for intrusive birth-prevention surgeries. Survivor testimony describes repeated forced IUD implantations and sterilizations that caused lasting physical and psychological trauma.

Forced and Coerced Interethnic Marriage

Alongside reproductive control, Beijing promotes interethnic marriages between Uyghur women and Han men as a deliberate assimilation strategy. Incentive schemes offer financial rewards, jobs, healthcare, and education opportunities to Uyghur women who marry Han men, while refusal can lead to threats of internment or persecution of family members. Survivor accounts detail coercion, manipulation, and sudden disappearances following rejection of such marriages.

The World Uyghur Congress (WUC) recently raised alarm in a press release over a wave of testimonies on Douyin (Chinese TikTok) where Uyghur women describe being coerced into marriages with Han men, often facilitated by third-party companies. These accounts reveal deception, pressure, and punitive measures against those who resist. The policy has been institutionalized since at least 2014, with state propaganda glorifying such unions as "ethnic harmony" (UHRP, 2022). A shocking 2022 video advertisement even called for "100 Uyghur

brides" to urgently marry Han men, framing it as a duty to the Party and state. Meanwhile, programs like "Becoming Family" embed Han officials in Uyghur households, creating opportunities for harassment, sexual assault, and coerced marriages under state sanction.

Reports by the Uyghur Human Rights Project (2022) and survivor testimonies confirm that forced intermarriage is not only gender-based violence but also a genocidal tool, designed to dilute Uyghur identity through demographic assimilation. Together with forced sterilization and birth prevention, these measures illustrate how the Chinese state weaponizes women's bodies in its genocidal campaign.

E.Human Rights Concerns in Xinjiang

1.Current Situation in Xinjiang

a)Internment Camps

Since the global exposure of the mass internment of Uyghurs and other Turkic in 2018-2019, there has been a visible shift in the Chinese government's approach to detention infrastructure in East Turkistan. While most of the infamous re-education internment camps appear to have been closed since late 2019, this does not signify an end to mass detention (USHMM; Thum, R. 2025). Available data and satellite imagery suggest that many detainees were either transferred to:

- Formal prisons with long-term sentences,
- Kanshousuo (detention centers),
- Or in some cases, subjected to forced labour or released under continued surveillance. (Zenz, A, 2024).

Between 2019 and 2022, satellite imagery shows that several former internment camp complexes in the Uyghur Region were either demolished or converted into *kanshousuo*, while prison and

detention infrastructure continued to expand. Importantly, there are no credible reports of large-scale prisoner releases, underscoring that the dismantling of some camps does not signify an end to arbitrary detention. A recent UHRP analysis of official figures highlights the scale of repression: Uyghurs, Turkic, and other non-Han peoples in the region comprise 34 percent of China's total prison population despite accounting for only 1 percent of the overall national population. With an estimated incarceration rate of 2,234 per 100,000 residents, the Uyghur Region now records the highest prison rate in the world—figures that refer solely to formal imprisonment under the Ministry of Justice and exclude the unknown numbers still held in camps and other forms of extrajudicial detention (UHRP, 2025).



b)Real Life Experiences

Qelbinur Sidik:

"I was forced to teach in a camp. There were about 7,000 men there — with 13 to 14 in a cell. They slept on the floor. They didn't take a shower at all in the six months I was teaching

there. There were specific time slots to go to the toilet. For food, they had steamed bread and soup.

They had handcuffs and chains on their feet. To get out of the cell, they had to crawl on the floor because the door couldn't open widely since it was chained to the wall. They had to crawl to class and during break. They were regularly taken to interrogation sessions and we could clearly hear them being tortured. The four types of tools of torture were electric batons, electric helmet, electric gloves, and the tiger chair.

I was then transferred to a women's center. There were almost 10,000 women inside. Ninety percent of them were between ages 17-40. All the women had shaved heads. They wore a gray uniform, an orange vest, and an assigned number embroidered on it.

They were regularly raped by the police during interrogations. The police put electric batons in their intimate parts. Every Monday, the women received mysterious injections and medication. Afterward, they no longer menstruated and couldn't breastfeed.

Women living outside the camps also suffered. They are forced to go to health centers to get sterilized. I, too, was forcibly sterilized.

The Chinese government placed one Chinese official in the houses of women outside the camps. This official is called "your twin" or "your relative." Women are often raped, in their own houses, by these officials. The Chinese government has a "policy of five" for this: Eat together. Sightsee together. Sleep together. Cook together. Learn together."

Gulbahar Haitiwaji

“I was born in East Turkestan. My husband went to France in 2002. I joined him in 2006, with our two daughters. In 2016, I was lured to go back to China, where I was locked up for almost three years. I could clearly witness the Chinese government’s ongoing genocide.

They first confiscated my passport. They forced me to sign accusations of causing “public disorders.” They put chains on my feet and put me in a cell.

The conditions were terrible inside the camps. There were cameras everywhere. Every single move was watched by the police. The women inside were aged between 17-70 years old, all innocent. We had chains on our feet, and we were forbidden to speak. There were between 30-40 people in a cell.

We were all assigned numbers. I was No. 9.

Before every interrogation session, they put our arms behind our backs and put handcuffs on our wrists. They put a black bag on our heads and placed us on a tiger chair.

We had 11 hours of classes every day. We had to learn the Chinese language, Chinese law, and Chinese history. Every week, we had to learn one new “red” song. On Fridays, we had tests.

Before class and before meals, we had to first thank three main entities: the Chinese government, the Chinese Communist Party, and Xi Jinping. After class and after meals, we had to thank those three entities again.

We received vaccinations, twice a year. After these vaccines, we no longer received our normal periods.

In 2018, I was transferred to a bigger and newly constructed center because the old camp was overcrowded. When I found out how much investment the Chinese government was putting into all this construction, I realized that this project of China's is not a short-term one..

When I could finally call my family in France for the first time, I was trained for days beforehand by policemen who dictated what I could or couldn't say. During the call, six policemen watched me the entire time. If my family members asked me a question that the police hadn't prepared for me ahead of time, they would write down the answers on a notebook for me to say."

c)Religious Pressure

Since 2017, Chinese authorities in East Turkistan have damaged or destroyed nearly two-thirds of the region's mosques, with about half demolished outright, according to the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI). Religious leaders have been particularly targeted: the Uyghur Human Rights Project has documented the enforced disappearance, detention, or imprisonment of at least 1,046 Turkic religious figures since 2014. In addition, new religious regulations that came into effect on February 1, 2024, further tighten restrictions on Uyghur Muslims' religious practices. Human Rights Watch notes that these rules deepen Beijing's campaign of "Sinicizing" religion—forcing it to conform to Chinese Communist Party (CCP) ideology and Han cultural norms—by requiring religious institutions to promote "socialist core values," adopt Chinese-style architecture, and reinterpret religious teachings in line with state ideology, while also imposing strict controls on religious education (HRW, 2024).

On February 27, 2026 the Uyghur Service of Radio Free Asia (RFA) reported that police authorities had arrested six Uyghurs across several villages in Hotan Prefecture—including Bulaq

Chorgey, Bash Chapal, Dul Tugman, and Korgan—for allegedly “secretly fasting” during the holy month of Ramadan.

A police officer in Lop Township, Lop County, confirmed to RFA that five of the individuals—each over the age of 70—were later released after receiving warnings and political “lectures.” However, a 30-year-old Uyghur man remains in police custody and is reportedly facing criminal charges for fasting.

The officer further confirmed that surveillance measures are intensified during Ramadan. According to his account, authorities begin patrols at 6:00 a.m. Beijing time (4:00 a.m. local time in Hotan), significantly earlier than during other months.

According to the Uyghur News Network, authorities in Kashgar and Aksu prefectures in East Turkistan are rounding up Uyghur villagers for compulsory labour during Ramadan to discourage fasting. RFA spoke to a village official who said that residents were taken for labour each morning for about two hours to repair roads, bridges and irrigation ditches.

On March 6, 2026, Radio Free Asia also reported that the Chinese authorities were planning to destroy the ancient Beytulla Mosque, in Ghulja, a historical religious site.

d)Re-education Camps

Inside a Detention Camp

The authorities label the camps as centres for “transformation-through-education” but most people refer to them simply as “re-education camps”. Those sent to such camps are not put on trial, have no access to lawyers or right to challenge the decision. Individuals could be left to languish in detention for months, as it is the authorities who decide when an individual has been “transformed”.

Kairat Samarkan was sent to a detention camp in October 2017, after he returned to the XUAR following a short visit to neighbouring Kazakhstan.

Kairat told Amnesty that he was hooded, made to wear shackles on his arms and legs and was forced to stand in a fixed position for 12 hours when first detained. There were nearly 6,000 people held in the same camp, where they were forced to sing political songs and study speeches of the Chinese Communist Party. They could not talk to each other and were forced to chant "Long live Xi Jinping" before meals. Kairat told Amnesty that his treatment drove him to attempt suicide just before his release.

Those who resist or fail to show enough progress face punishments ranging from verbal abuse to food deprivation, solitary confinement, beatings and use of restraints and stress positions. There have been reports of deaths inside the facilities, including suicides of those unable to bear the mistreatment.

The authorities justify the extreme measures as necessary to prevent religious "extremism" and "terrorist activities", and to ensure "ethnic unity" and national security. While states do have the right and responsibility to prevent violent attacks, the measures deployed must be necessary and proportionate and as narrow and targeted as possible to address a specific threat. There is no plausible justification for mass detentions of members of a particular ethnic group or religion of the type witnessed in the XUAR.

"So-called 're-education camps' are places of brainwashing, torture and punishment that hark back to the darkest hours of the Mao-era, when anyone suspected of not being loyal enough to the state or the Chinese Communist Party could end up in China's notorious labour camps. Members of predominantly Muslim ethnic minority groups are living in permanent fear for themselves and for their detained relatives," said Nicholas Bequelin, Amnesty International's East Asia Director.

2.Reports of Arbitrary Detention and Forced Labour

In February 2024, the International Labor Organization (ILO) issued updated guidance on state-imposed forced labor, which it refers to forms of forced labor imposed by state authorities, agents acting on behalf of state authorities, and organizations with authority similar to the state. (2)

Different forms of state-imposed forced labor utilized by the CCP in the XUAR include prison labor, the "Vocational Skills Education and Training Centers" or reeducation centers, and transfers of non-detained rural "surplus" laborers into factory work, known as Poverty Alleviation Through Labor Transfer. (3) (4) Poverty Alleviation Through Labor Transfer involves local government agencies in the XUAR working directly with companies to relocate people from rural communities to industrial areas for employment, both inside the XUAR and throughout China. (3) The CCP gives subsidies to companies moving to the XUAR and for employing Muslim-minority workers. (5) These practices heighten demand for members of Muslim and ethnic minority groups that the government wants placed in work assignments where they can be controlled and watched, receive Mandarin-Chinese language training, and undergo political indoctrination. (5) Once at a work placement, workers are usually subjected to constant surveillance and isolation. Given the vast surveillance state in the XUAR and the threat of detention, individuals have little choice but to endure these unspeakable labor and human rights abuses. (6) The Poverty Alleviation Through Labor Transfer program has continued to expand and is now Xinjiang's primary coercive labor system, with labor transfers occurring more than 3 million times in 2022.

The Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC) is a central entity used by the CCP to implement its system of forced labor, forced cultural assimilation, and society-wide control and coercion in the XUAR. The XPCC functions as a regional government, a paramilitary

organization, a bureau of prisons, and one of the world's largest state-run corporate enterprises. (8) The XPCC operates corporations in energy, mining, chemicals, oil and gas extraction, logistics, apparel, electronics, wine, food processing, insurance, tourism, and many other sectors. The goods produced by the XPCC reach far into global supply chains, and XPCC construction projects operate not only in the XUAR but throughout China and around the world. (5) In response to serious human and labor rights abuses committed by the XPCC against ethnic minorities, the United States government issued sanctions against the group and members of its leadership in 2020.

Goods from China have been included on the *List of Goods Produced by Child Labor of Forced Labor* since 2009. The Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) added five goods produced by forced labor by Muslim minorities in China to the 2020 edition of the List. These goods include gloves, hair products, textiles, thread/yarn, and tomato products. In 2021, ILAB added an additional good, polysilicon, produced by forced labor by Muslim minorities in China.

In 2024 edition of the List of Goods, ILAB added six more goods produced with forced labor by Muslim minorities in China. These goods include caustic soda, metallurgical grade silicon, polyvinyl chloride, aluminum, jujubes, and squid. Additionally, ILAB has added goods that are manufactured with input products made with forced labor in the XUAR, including Chinese auto parts that contain aluminum produced with forced labor, and Chinese thread/yarn, textiles, and garments that contain cotton produced with forced labor. Finally, ILAB has identified cotton garments produced in Vietnam as a downstream good that contains cotton produced with forced labor in China, which takes place primarily in the XUAR.[2]

[2] https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/against-their-will-the-situation-in-xinjiang

VI.Global Statistics and Human Rights Assessments

Since 2017, China has operated a vast network of concentration camps and prisons in East Turkistan, where between 1 and 1.8 million Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims have been arbitrarily detained, subjected to torture, indoctrination, and forced labour. Despite the partial dismantling of some camps, at least 500,000 Uyghurs remain in high-security facilities as of 2025, while millions more are coerced into state-run forced labor programs (USHMM; Thum, R. 2025). Research and UN findings confirm that these abuses—including torture, sexual violence, forced sterilization, and family separation—continue and may amount to crimes against humanity (OHCHR, 2022), with countries including the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Belgium, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, France, and Sweden recognizing them as genocide.[3]

VII.Notable Non-Governmental Organisations(NGOs)

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) plays a pivotal role in addressing the needs of refugees and displaced persons worldwide. Established in 1950, UNHCR is mandated to protect the rights of refugees and ensure their well-being through various programs and initiatives. The organization provides critical support in areas such as shelter, education, healthcare, and livelihood opportunities.

UNHCR's funding comes from a mix of voluntary contributions from governments, intergovernmental organizations, and private donors, making it one of the largest sources of funding for refugee-related projects globally. For NGOs seeking to collaborate with UNHCR

[3] https://www.uyghurcongress.org/en/current-issues/

or access its funding opportunities, understanding the organization's priorities is essential. UNHCR often focuses on specific themes such as protection, resilience-building, and durable solutions for refugees.Organizations can enhance their chances of securing funding by aligning their project proposals with UNHCR's strategic objectives. Additionally, NGOs should be prepared to demonstrate their capacity to implement projects effectively and provide measurable outcomes that contribute to the overall mission of UNHCR. Engaging with UNHCR through partnerships or joint initiatives can also open doors to additional resources and expertise.

European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)

The European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) is an essential funding source for humanitarian projects within Europe and beyond. ECHO provides financial assistance to organizations responding to crises caused by natural disasters or conflicts, including those affecting refugees and migrants. The agency prioritizes projects that address immediate humanitarian needs while also promoting resilience among affected populations.

For NGOs seeking ECHO funding, it is important to align project proposals with the agency's strategic priorities. ECHO emphasizes the importance of coordination among humanitarian actors; therefore, proposals that demonstrate collaboration with other organizations or stakeholders are likely to be viewed favorably. Additionally, NGOs should focus on providing clear evidence of how their projects will contribute to improving the lives of refugees and migrants in a sustainable manner.

Engaging with ECHO's network of partners can also provide valuable insights into best practices and emerging trends in humanitarian aid.

International Support for Uyghurs(ISU)

International Support for Uyghurs (ISU) is a non-for-profit organization based in Montreal, Canada. ISU is dedicated to supporting the Uyghurs and other Turkic people oppressed and persecuted by the Chinese Communist Party in East Turkistan through advocacy projects and grassroots initiatives. ISU works to magnify the voices of the East Turkistan diaspora members in Canada and around the world.Since the East Turkistan takeover in 1949, the Chinese Communist Party has been much more oppressive towards the Uyghurs than any other Chinese regime in history. Especially in the last few decades, the peoples of East Turkistan have been facing increasingly widespread and deep racism and islamophobia as a Muslim ethnic group. The Chinese state has been systematically marginalizing Uyghur and other Turkic languages, cultures and identities in order to assimilate them into the Chinese state.

The Elie Wiesel Foundation

The Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity has awarded grants amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars to three Uyghur groups dedicated to Uyghur rights advocacy and education amid ongoing repression against the mostly Muslim ethnic group by Chinese authorities.The Germany-based World Uyghur Congress and U.S.-based Uyghur Human Rights Project were selected as grantees for planning to host a conference of Uyghur allies and activists later this year in New York to discuss the international response to the persecution of Uyghurs, which the U.S. government and other Western parliaments have

labeled a genocide.They will hold the event along with Jewish World Watch, another grantee.The third Uyghur organization selected as a grantee is Ana Care and Education, a nonprofit based in Virginia, in the United States, that provides programs for Uyghur families living in the diaspora to preserve their language, history and culture.The grantees were selected “based on their commitment to advocating for the Uyghur community, who are being unlawfully detained by the Chinese government in an effort to create a single-ethnic state,” the nonprofit organization said in a statement issued on Monday.Grants totaling US$550,000 were awarded to the activist organizations as well as to four other nonprofits for educational fellowships, though the specific amounts for each were not given.The grant-making initiative, launched in October 2022, supports organizations whose efforts are grounded by the values of Elie Wiesel, a writer, educator, political activist and Holocaust survivor who died in 2016.Wiesel and his wife, Marion, set up the foundation after he received the 1986 Nobel Prize for Peace.

VIII.Case Studies

Sayid Abdull

A Uyghur activist and human rights advocate, Abdull will graduate from the Mid-Career Master in Public Administration Program from Harvard Kennedy School this month. He’s a Gleitsman Leadership Fellow as well as a Cheng Fellow at the Center for Public Leadership where he has been developing My Uyghur Origin, a project that shares testimonies of Uyghur refugees to raise awareness of the Uyghur genocide.

Sayid Abdull’s parents faced persecution as Uyghurs, a predominantly Muslim ethnic minority group from East Turkistan, a vast region of deserts and mountains now known as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and occupied by the Chinese government.

They fled to neighboring Kyrgyzstan, where Abdull was born and spent his childhood. He was drawn to activism from an early age, creating Kids Helping Kids, an organization that provided programming for children with disabilities, and volunteering with youth civic leadership organizations.Abdull came to the United States as a refugee when he was 15 years old with just $30 in his pocket, settling with a host family in Tucson, Arizona where he quickly got involved with human rights and refugee causes.“As the world found out about the Chinese government’s labor and education camps for Uyghurs—where women are forcibly sterilized, where Uyghur children are removed from their homes and taken to state-run schools to be stripped of their culture, where our religion is prohibited—I felt called to speak about these issues.”

News began to surface about the Chinese government’s treatment of Uyghurs. In his 2018 statement, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein wrote: “My Office continues to receive urgent appeals regarding arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, ill-treatment and discrimination, emanating from human rights defenders, lawyers, legislators, booksellers, and members of communities such as Tibetans and Uyghurs.”

As a Uyghur, Abdull felt compelled to channel his interest in activism toward learning more about Uyghur issues. He sought to raise awareness of what was happening to Uyghurs in China, including to his own family members still in the region.While working as a product marketing manager at Google, Abdul was named to Forbes’ annual 30 Under 30 list in the Marketing & Advertising category.“I believe there are two things that can really change the world for the better: policymaking and storytelling.”

Abdull learned the art of storytelling in his role at Google, but he wanted to come to HKS to better understand policymaking. As a refugee, he realized he benefitted from policies

enacted by policymakers, and he sought to learn how to protect and enhance those policies for future waves of refugees.

Abdull focused on developing My Uyghur Origin as a Cheng Fellow in the New World Social Innovation Fellows Program, an accelerator program that supports students working on social innovation projects. His work centered on three areas: collecting testimonies of Uyghur people; using media to share those testimonies; and advocating for policies that benefit the Uyghur people. To date, Abdull has collected the testimonies of more than 90 Uyghurs, written a short film script, raised more than $100,000, and advocated for the Uyghur Policy Act, which passed the House in February 2024 in a 414–6 vote.

His family members' testimonies were among his favorite to collect.

"One of the testimonies that was beautiful to capture was my dad's story," Abdull says. "He told me the importance of staying true to my faith, my culture, and to never forget my roots. It's mind blowing to think he never went to school and never learned how to read, yet here I am graduating from Harvard Kennedy School."

"I want to focus on cultural preservation, not just stories of genocide. I want people to know that Uyghurs have a rich culture, language, traditions, and cuisine, and I want to make sure that our culture is not forgotten because it is currently under attack. And I want to empower other Uyghurs to not be ashamed of their backgrounds."

Abdull hopes to register My Uyghur Origin as an official 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and wants to partner with museums to curate exhibitions that introduce Uyghur culture to the United States. He will also continue working to produce his short film, *Echoes of Silence*, which tells the story of two Uyghur men holding onto their faith while imprisoned in a labor camp.

Abdull was recently named a Humanity in Action Democracy Fellow. The fellowship brings together leaders devoted to projects supporting democratic values. Through the fellowship, Abdull will continue raising awareness of the Uyghur genocide.[4]

Gulnisa Nazorova

Gulnisa Nazarova is an ethnic Uyghur who was born in Kyrgyzstan, grew up and graduated from high school in Uzbekistan, obtained bachelor's and master's degrees in Russia, and received her PhD in Kazakhstan; however, she considers Xinjiang (The Uyghur Autonomous Region in China) her homeland since both of her parents were born in that region and moved to Soviet Central Asia in the 1950s. Gulnisa Nazarova was invited to teach intensive Uyghur at Indiana University in 2005 for the IU Summer Language Workshop. Due to the success of that course, the Department of Central Eurasian Studies (CEUS) invited her to continue teaching the Uyghur language during the academic year, in addition to employing her as a curriculum materials developer at the Center for Languages of the Central Asian Region (CeLCAR). Besides teaching the Introductory, Intermediate, and Advanced levels of Uyghur, she occasionally teaches a cultural course entitled "Central Asia: Cultures and Customs" as a part of the CEUS Department's expanding undergraduate curriculum. In 2015 Gulnisa Nazarova received the Trustees Teaching Award in the At-Large NTT Faculty competition. Nazarova came to IU in 2005 to teach a summer course through the Summer Language Workshop. What began as a temporary position soon became full-time, helping IU become a pioneer in teaching Uyghur in the United States.One of the main challenges in teaching Uyghur was the lack of interactive learning materials. To address this gap, Nazarova developed two major textbooks published by Georgetown University Press. *An Elementary Uyghur Textbook* was released in 2013, followed by *An Intermediate Uyghur*

[4] https://www.hks.harvard.edu/more/student-life/student-stories/preserving-and-celebrating-uyghur-culture

Textbook in 2016. Nazarova is currently developing an advanced-level textbook and completing a comprehensive instructional sequence for learners.week

Since 2021, Nazarova has served as director of the Hamilton Lugar School's Center for Languages of the Central Asian Region(CeLCAR). CeLCAR produces learning materials in several Central Asian languages, including Uzbek, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Mongolian, and Tibetan. With support from the Department of Education's Title VI program, the Hamilton Lugar School has been instrumental in advancing the development of CeLCAR's publications. The CEUS department has also played an important role by providing subject-matter experts in these languages.

Beyond academic classes, the Uyghur language program hosts conversation hours and organizes cooking classes. The program also holds special events, such as Uyghur Week at Indiana University, to celebrate the language and traditions and to welcome prominent Uyghur writers, poets, and scholars. These initiatives are especially meaningful considering the current situation in the Uyghur homeland, which calls for greater global awareness.

Uyghur is one of many less commonly taught languages offered at the Hamilton Lugar School as part of its mission to fuse international affairs with language and area studies. Nazarova shared a Turkic saying which highlights how language learning deepens perspective. "One language is one person, two languages are two people," she said. She encourages students to follow their curiosity and study unfamiliar languages.[5]

[5] https://news.iu.edu/hamiltonlugar/live/news/49280-uyghur-studiestwodecades-oflanguage

IX.Questions to be Addressed

-How can self-determination right can be implemented to curriculums world-wide?

-How can the diplomatic dialogues between the oppressors and the oppressed be achieved to ensure mother-tongue preservation and education?

-What other educational spaces can be found in the conventional educational domain to teach Uyghur culture&language&heritage?

-Why are women's reproductive rights being targeted initially by oppressors? What sorts of methodologies should be considered to prevent this conscious targeting?

-Where can individual survivors of assimilation meet or organize in the diaspora?What digital hubs can be generated to platform their voice?

-How to protect Uyghur people from being forced to join “internment/re-education” camps?

-How to secure religious practices of Uyghurs?What can be done in order to do this?

-How to protect children from any kind of torture ,physical and mental abuse?

X.Must Watch

New evidence of China moving Uighur minority workers in order to uproot communiti…

What’s happening with China’s Uighurs? | Start Here

The Uyghurs: The Genocide the World Forgot

The Uyghur woman fighting to keep her culture alive - BBC News

How China Targets Muslims for 'Re-Education' Camps — and Spies on Their Families

Life Inside China's 'Re-Education' Camps

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