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LONG-DELAYED UN REPORT: CHINA MAY HAVE COMMITTED CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY



EAST TURKISTAN PRESS AND MEDIA ASSOCIATION
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US SAYS CHINA MUST BE HELD TO 'ACCOUNT' ON UYGHUR 'GENOCIDE' AFTER UN REPORT



Blinken said the United States will hold the PRC to account and call on the PRC to release those unjustly detained.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Thursday that a long-awaited UN report reaffirmed the US view that China is committing “genocide” against the Uyghurs and called for Beijing to be held responsible.

Blinken said that the United States “welcomes” the “important” report, released minutes before UN human rights chief Michelle Bachelet -- who was strongly criticised by Washington for a recent visit to China -- left office.

“This report deepens and reaffirms our grave concern regarding the ongoing genocide and crimes against humanity that PRC government authorities are perpetrating against Uyghurs,” he said in a statement, referring to the People’s Republic of China.

“We will continue to hold the PRC to account and call on the PRC to release those unjustly detained, account for those disappeared, and allow independent investigators full and unhindered access to East Turkistan, Tibet and across the PRC,” he said.

The landmark UN report detailed a string of rights violations including torture and forced labour against Uyghurs and other mostly Muslim minorities, infuriating Beijing.

The report said China may have committed “crimes against humanity” but stopped short of calling its treatment of the Uyghurs “genocide,” an accusation made since early 2021 by the United States and since embraced by legislatures in several other Western nations.



GOODBYE, MS. BACHELET: THE UYGHURS WILL NOT MISS YOU

◆ **The UN High Commissioner of Human Rights will leave office on August 31, without seeking a second mandate. She failed spectacularly the first one.**

The Uyghur genocide is no longer unknown to the world. In the “Xinjiang Police Files” it was revealed that twelve percent of Uyghur adults were arrested in 2017 and 2018. In the light of several leaked documents about the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) crimes against humanity, the U.S and several other countries have declared that the CCP is committing genocide. However, the United Nations Human Rights Commission, whose mandate is “to protect and promote human rights for all,” following the attitude of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, remained mute all along even after the watershed evidence of the CCP committing crimes against humanity. Bachelet’s mandate ends on August 31, and she has announced she will not seek

to be appointed for a second term.

Michelle Bachelet’s highly anticipated visit to Uyghur homeland, East Turkistan (Ch. Xinjiang), left many disappointed and baffled. As an abuse victim herself, many thought that she would at least honor the mandate of her office and heed the early warning of this genocide. On the contrary, she went to East Turkistan and completely turned a blind eye to what was happening right under her nose. Coincidence? Not so much. Her ignorance towards this genocide and attitude of appeasing the perpetrator was not surprising given her background. Her father was a general who was arrested and died in prison during the Augusto Pinochet regime. She served as Minister of Health and Defense in a Socialist party.

She became the president of Chile in 2006, then was re-elected again in 2014. In 2018, she became the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres was one of the staunchest supporters of Bachelet's candidacy for the position of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Guterres himself is often criticized by human rights defenders for sweeping things under the ground. According to Human Rights Watch, Guterres remained unresponsive when former US President Donald Trump was accused of having "embraced authoritarian leaders and ignored human rights." He ignored the genocide committed by China, one of the UN's largest financial contributors. The Russian invasion of Ukraine did not bother him excessively either. Guterres faced a severe economic crisis in his second term as Socialist Prime Minister of Portugal. He is said to be sympathetic to Beijing because of China's financial support for Portugal during that crisis.

China's contribution to Portugal during the crisis may explain why Guterres supported Bachelet's candidacy and attitudes. The year 2018, when Bachelet took office, was also the period when China started to increase the violence in the Uyghur homeland. Bachelet ignored the Uyghur genocide during her entire tenure, however, while continuing to criticize Western countries, especially the United States, at every opportunity she got. Incidentally, the fact that the Western countries do not give due importance to the sub-units in an umbrella organization like the United Nations has opened up space for China and the friends of the Beijing government to abuse the system. Unfortunately, the time when President

Trump pulled the United States out of some international institutions, also coincided with Bachelet's appointment as UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Activities happening within the UN are reported directly or indirectly to China. Evidence has surfaced that, if there is any complaint against China, the information of the person making the complaint is sent to Beijing instead of investigating the complaint. The Chinese government, which has almost completely taken control of the world's largest international organization, puts pressure on its friends like Bachelet when it could not implement its agenda. Although Bachelet ignored the Uyghur genocide, independent researchers commissioned by the UN prepared a report on human rights violations in the Uyghur region. As High Commissioner, Bachelet had no power to intervene in the report. The Chinese government, which does not tolerate even the slightest criticism, continues to deny the Uyghur genocide and pressures Bachelet not to publish the report.

The visit of a former head of state, who lost her father in prison after a military coup, to examine human rights violations directly where they are occurring caused excitement and expectation, especially among non-governmental organizations. But Michelle Bachelet did the contrary of what many expected. She deeply



disappointed the international community and all those advocating for human rights.

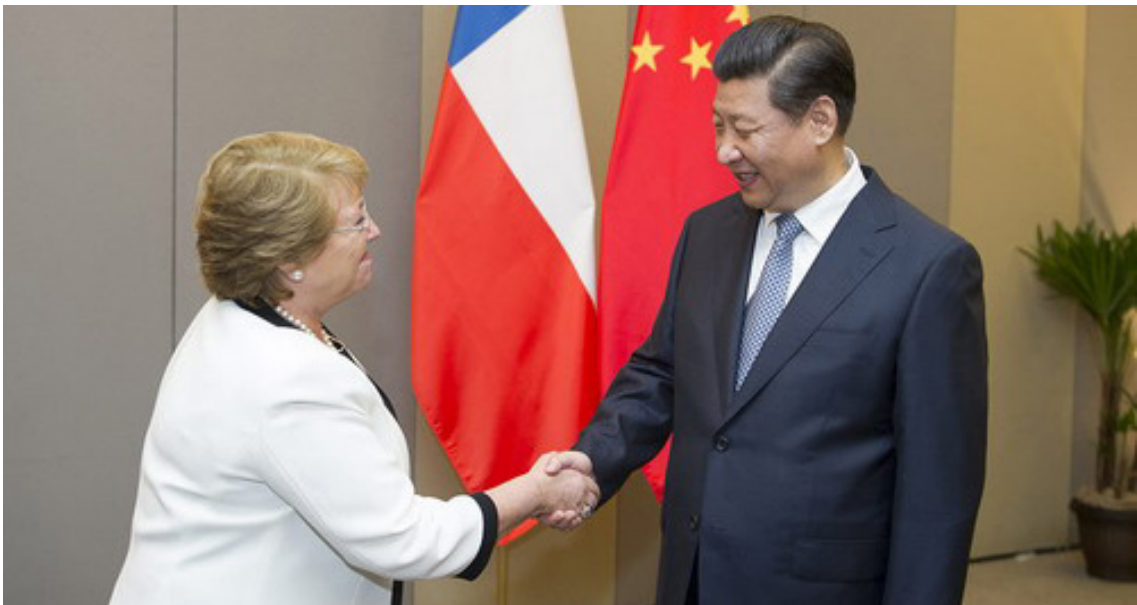
In the press conference after her visit to the Uyghur homeland, Bachelet emphasized that her visit to China was not an investigation but an opportunity to discuss human rights issues with senior officials and “pave the way” for continued talks. In other words, she continues to see China through a different lens: she praises China for its work on poverty, gender equality, and economic development. “In East Turkistan, I have raised questions and concerns about the application of counter-terrorism and de-radicalisation measures and their broad application—particularly their impact on the rights of Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim minorities,” her statement said.

Bachelet’s statements garnered significant reactions from both states and non-governmental organizations. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken expressed concern over China’s “efforts to restrict and manipulate” the visit of the UN’s top human rights official to East Turkistan.

The United Kingdom’s Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office also issued a statement noting that, “It is clear that the Chinese authorities did not provide the full, unfettered access to East Turkistan for UN High Commissioner for Human Rights that our international partners and we have long called for. China’s failure to grant such access only highlights their determination to hide the truth.”

Germany added its voice, expressed disappointment, and requested that Bachelet’s office publish a report on the situation in East Turkistan “as soon as possible.”

Bachelet did not hide her admiration for China in the days during her presidency of Chile. “The world is currently turning more than ever toward the Pacific, and we must look in this direction,” she said. She went on about her interest in learning Chinese, and said “the Confucius Institute is the main method of diffusing the Chinese culture and language in our country through courses, workshops, and cultural activities. I am thinking of



registering next year in March.”

Bachelet also supported China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which will expand its global hegemony. After the Belt and Road Forum attended by leaders from 28 countries in 2017, she stated that this was a milestone in affirming China’s stronger global position. She praised BRI as part of the open trade policy that Chile has been committed to for many years. In the same forum, Bachelet emphasized that Chile wants to be a bridge between two geographical areas through China’s economic program BRI.

The latest evidence of the systematic use of torture by the Chinese regime against Muslim Uyghurs came to light in May this year due to the “hacking” of police computers in East Turkistan. It revealed that the “transformation through education camps” story that Beijing told to the international community was a complete lie. According to the documents, Muslim Uyghurs in the camps face the heaviest punishments and are systematically tortured. The documents contained over five thousand photographs taken in 2018.

Guards with batons standing out alongside the Uyghurs were photographed in the camps. This disproved the lie that the camps are “vocational schools.” According to the internal correspondence of the Chinese police, armed officers must be present in all areas of the camps. In the watchtowers, there are machine guns and snipers. Those who try to escape are shot to death. When the Muslim Uyghurs in the camps are transferred to hospitals, they are blindfolded and handcuffed.

As I have mentioned in my book “Menace: China’s Colonization of the Islamic World & Uyghur Genocide,” representatives of the Chinese government have influence in many departments at the UN. Bachelet shined a bright light on the corrupt UN system and China’s reach through what she did while visiting the region where unspeakable atrocities are happening. She failed the UN mandate to protect those most vulnerable. Her legacy will be one of hunger for power and ignorance of genocide. In fact, with her close collaboration with the Chinese government, Bachelet made her office an accomplice in the Uyghur genocide.





TÜRKİYE'S STANCE ON UYGHURS ISSUE IS CLEAR, SINCERE, MORAL: ŞENTOP

“ Türkiye has ethnic, religious and cultural ties with the Uyghur Turks and its stance on this issue is clear, sincere and moral, Parliament Speaker Mustafa Şentop said Wednesday.

Şentop held a videoconference meeting with Li Zhanshu, chairperson of the NPC's governing Standing Committee. In the meeting, Şentop pointed out that the People's Republic of China has a special place within the scope of the Asia Anew Initiative.

He stated that they wanted to further strengthen bilateral relations by establishing a regular dialogue between the parliaments and increasing mutual visits, and added: “We need to make our bilateral trade with China a more balanced and sustainable structure. We want China's investments in Türkiye to increase.”

“We believe that a new and just world is

possible, where international law prevails, peace and justice are established, and prosperity is inclusive for all countries and peoples. I'm glad to hear that we agree on this. In order for the relations between the two countries to go further, we should work on the mutual development of parliamentary relations,” Şentop said, emphasizing that cooperation in projects carried out in various fields will add depth to economic relations.

During the meeting, Şentop underlined that the Uyghur issue is important for Türkiye.

“We have ethnic, religious and cultural ties with the Uyghur Turks. Türkiye's stance on this issue is clear, sincere and

moral. We cannot have an understanding of instrumentalizing our related communities living in the territory of other countries to interfere in the internal affairs of the countries in question. We see these people as a bridge between their countries and our country, as an opportunity to develop cooperation and relations, and we continue our policies this way. We wish our compatriots to be able to live in peace, tranquility and prosperity in the country they live in, in a climate where they have rights and freedoms on the basis of human rights, and to contribute to the countries they live in as respected citizens of their country.”

During the meeting, which took place in line with the request of the Chinese side, cooperation and economic relations

between Türkiye and China in projects carried out in various fields were discussed.

The contribution of inter-parliamentary cooperation to the relations between the two countries was emphasized. It was stated that due to the joint will of the heads of states, Türkiye-China relations had gained momentum in recent years.

The President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev met with his Russian colleague Vladimir Putin in Sochi on 19 August. The short readouts from the meeting didn't mention Kazakh arms trade among the issues discussed.

BY DAILY SABAH

ISTANBUL AUG 24, 2022





CHINESE AMBASSADOR 'UNABLE TO UTTER THE TRUTH' AFTER HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSE DENIAL

┌ A Uyghur New Zealander whose brother has been imprisoned in East Turkistan for years has responded with dismay to the Chinese ambassador's denial of documented human rights abuse.

China's ambassador to New Zealand, Wang Xiaolong, in an interview broadcast by TVNZ's Q+A on the weekend, instead suggested the country had "protected its people well, including their religious rights".

The Chinese Communist Party has for years denied credible evidence it has systematically abused the Uyghur – a Muslim minority in East Turkistan – through surveillance, mass incarceration and forced labour. New Zealand's Parliament has declared "severe human rights abuses" are occurring and the

Government routinely expresses its concern about the abuse in diplomatic statements directed at China.

Wang similarly denied his embassy had intimidated and failed to assist a Uyghur New Zealander, Rizwangul NurMuhammad, who has been unable to contact her detained brother in East Turkistan.

NurMuhammad has since August 2019 received intimidatory phone calls purporting to be from the Chinese embassy.

"Let me tell you in very clear and

unmistakable terms. None of those things, that has been claimed, has actually happened, because none of my staff has made any calls to any one of these people, about anything,” Wang said.

“If there’s a request for help, if we are approached, we’ll deal with that.”

Chinese Ambassador to New Zealand Wang Xiaolong speaks to the China Business Summit in Auckland earlier in the year.

NurMuhammad, in an interview, said it was not surprising to hear the ambassador clearly deny the abuse occurring in East Turkistan.

“Uyghur families have been destroyed ... there is no single Uyghur family that is not impacted – my family is just one example.

“The Chinese ambassador or other high-level officials, they are literally speaking based on what the Chinese government has been providing for them to say. Little they know about the local situation or unable to utter the truth.”

NurMuhammad said Chinese authorities constantly monitored Uyghur and arrested and detained them for matters such as wearing a beard or scarf, or suggesting a person stop smoking or drinking alcohol.

Her brother, Mewlan , was seemingly detained for taking a trip to Turkey in 2014.

“They deny, but what’s happening, what we are experiencing, and speaking up for, is true.

“I have not heard my brother’s voice or seen him since 2017 January. He was arbitrarily detained and imprisoned.”

She said she continued to at times receive

intimidating phone calls claiming to be Chinese officials, telling her the embassy had documents she needed to collect. The embassy told her the calls were fraudulent.

“I am a New Zealander and my basic right of having normal conversation with my family has been disrupted.

“I request that the embassy facilitate my brother and I have video call. This is not hard for them to do if they are willing to help two siblings meet online once in five-and-a-half years.”

Wang also said a United Nations expert’s finding that forced labour was taking place in East Turkistan was “baseless” and “smear tactics”. China was committed to “stamping out” forced labour, he said.

A report published last week by the United Nations Human Rights Council’s special rapporteur on slavery said it was “reasonable to conclude” that ethnic minorities including the Uyghur were subject to forced labour in East Turkistan.

Uyghur Solidarity Aotearoa NZ spokesperson Sam Vincent said the ambassador had presented a “gross mischaracterisation” of the UN report.

“When it came to him saying that the Chinese government is committed to stamping out forced labour in China, nothing could be further from the truth. That is an outright lie,” Vincent said.

“Forced labour is such a massive component of what they’re doing to the Uyghur people.”

He said the Government should ban the import of products produced in East Turkistan, unless there was sufficient

proof the products were “tainted” by forced labour, as the United States had done.

“That would create a really strong statement, and it would have quite an effect because there would be lots of products that wouldn’t be able to come in as a result ... Cotton, solar panels, tomato

products.”

He said the Government also needed to ensure its modern slavery legislation, still being developed, strongly required New Zealand companies to ensure imported products weren’t produced by forced labour.

Thomas Manch



CHINA GIVES UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR \$200,000

Instead of acknowledging the Uyghurs’ human rights issues, she supported the Chinese propaganda and has been silent on the atrocities of other dictatorships.

In May of 2022, United Nations Special Rapporteur Alena Douhan, a professor at Belarus National University, who is in charge of fact-finding and reporting under the United Nations Human Rights Council, received money from several dictatorships, including \$200,000 from China.

UN Watch, a United Nations monitoring

group, reported Douhan’s acceptance of money, including the payment from China, pointing out that it raises fundamental ethical questions.

Surprisingly, there is nothing surprising about this case. It stems from the structural collusion deriving from the very nature of the UN organization. Let us take a step-by-step look.

It all started when Iran objected to the sanctions imposed by the United States and other countries over concern for Teheran's alleged nuclear development, claiming they were unfair.

On September 26, 2014, the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) by a majority vote adopted a resolution condemning the unilateral sanctions on the basis of human rights violations. In article 22 of the resolution, the UNHRC also decided to establish a special rapporteur to conduct a fact-finding mission.

Sanctioning Bad Behavior

The resolution was promoted and supported by 32 countries, including China, Russia, Cuba, and Venezuela. Fourteen countries opposed it, including Japan, the United States, Britain, Germany, France, and Italy. Two countries abstained.

To confirm what some readers may have missed, perhaps because for a moment

common sense intervened, what was adopted was not a resolution sanctioning human rights violations, but a resolution condemning those sanctions.

In other words, the Human Rights Council was led by non-democratic countries to adopt a resolution that tries to block human rights sanctions imposed by the United States and other like-minded nations outside the framework of the United Nations. Their resolution was a blatant effort to impose a mechanism requiring that any sanctions a member country tries to impose, such as those against Iran, must be approved by a majority of the Human Rights Council.

Their Own Special Rapporteur

Douhan, the Special Rapporteur in question, was appointed in March 2020, as a result. She is a paid scholar of Belarusian dictator President Lukashenko, an ally of Vladimir Putin who supported Russia's invasion of Ukraine.



Douhan has been an energetic participant in “field research” in dictatorships, making the most of her United Nations visa. In this capacity, she has been consistently critical of sanctions imposed by liberal countries against Iran, Syria, Venezuela, Cuba, Russia, Zimbabwe, and others, saying that these sanctions only worsen the local economies and cause suffering to their people.

On the other hand, she has been silent on the atrocities of dictatorships. In China, where the forced labor of Uyghurs has been an issue, she has claimed in symposiums that there was no repression of Uyghurs.

Instead of acknowledging the human rights issues, she supported the Chinese propaganda, arguing that what was really occurring was vocational training that contributed to the development of East Turkistan.

In a true perversion, Ms Douhan was deemed “fit and proper” for purposes of the Human Rights Council resolution. The issue of money transfers from China and other countries that came to light this time was considered only incidental misconduct.

Above all, it is the very existence of the UN Human Rights Council, which passed the “Resolution Condemning Human Rights Sanctions” which must be severely questioned, along with that of the United Nations itself, which must be severely questioned.

An ‘International Smear Factory’ of Injustice

Contrary to its name, the UN Human Rights Council has become an international smear factory, where nations violating human rights collude to keep each other’s wrongdoings in the dark. This is not a gradual transformation; it has been so from the beginning.



There is an unwritten rule that the UNHRC, many of whose 47 member countries have serious human rights violations, does not take up issues involving member states.

The seats are allocated by the UN General Assembly based on regional groupings: 13 for Africa, 13 for Asia and the Pacific, 6 for Eastern Europe, 8 for Latin America, 8 for Western Europe, and 7 for the rest of the world. The term of office is 3 years.

If one wonders whether it would be possible to change the allocation or tighten the eligibility requirements, the answer would be no. This is not possible.

The framework is decided by the UN General Assembly, which is dominated by countries that do not want their human rights issues to be touched. In other words, the Human Rights Council is structurally difficult to reform.

Withdrawing from the ‘Hypocrisy and Corruption’

For these reasons, the US administration of President Donald Trump decided to withdraw the United States from the Council and suspend the payment of contributions.

The Asahi Shimbun wrote in an editorial at the time, saying: “The US, which has portrayed itself as an advocate of human rights, continues to take down its own signboard” and “The Human Rights Council is an organization of 47 member states selected by the UN General Assembly to monitor human rights around the world.” But the Asahi editorial’s assertion is so far removed from reality that it is nothing short of laughable.

At the time, US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley said that the United States had taken the initiative to withdraw from the UNHRC to refrain from giving it any more legitimacy. It is “full of hypocrisy and corruption” and “a front for countries with horrific records on human rights,” she said.

Haley explicitly expressed her disgust that the United Nations is nothing more than “a place where many stand up and applaud the boring speech performances of dictators who condemn the United States and Israel.”

Of course, the Human Rights Council also has exceptional achievements, including the establishment of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea (report submitted in 2014).

However, this effort also received no cooperation from totalitarian China, which borders North Korea. Beijing’s lack of cooperation prevented an adequate investigation into the actual situation on the ground, which the report specifically noted was “highly regrettable.”

An Honest Look at Dysfunctional UN Programs

There have been many aspects of the United Nations’ activities and programs that one could not help but be suspicious of from the beginning. But the situation has worsened.

Is it possible to reform the United Nations in any way under the current framework? According to former US Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton, the only way is to change the system for operating funds from a “quota system” to a “voluntary contribution system.”

In other words, currently contributions are allocated according to economic

strength (Gross Domestic Product (GDP)). This should be replaced with a system in which each country voluntarily decides to “contribute funds only to functional projects and seek results commensurate with their costs,” Bolton says. He calls for countries to be allowed to withdraw from dysfunctional projects at their own discretion.

This means that the UN would also be put to a market test. Member countries could withdraw funds from projects that they deem to be of no value. If they find that an entity other than the UN is more efficient, they could reallocate funds to that entity. There would be no reason to give preferential treatment to the United Nations.

No Chance for a Permanent UNSC Seat

In Japan, there has been a strong “UN-first” mentality that places special

emphasis on this abnormal organization over which China and Russia have veto power. But this is nothing but a “United Nations illusion.”

The UN is only one of many multilateral forums. Rather, as much weight as possible should be placed on collective organizations composed of advanced liberal democracies, such as the G7 (Group of Seven). Here, China and Russia are not even allowed to participate, let alone veto.

Japan’s “UN-firsters” are still hoping for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council. They have wasted considerable taxpayer money on international lobbying. However, common sense suggests that there is no possibility of realizing their goal.

The permanent members of the UN Security Council are listed in the UN Charter. If Japan were to join the Council, the Charter would have to be amended.



Amendments must be “adopted by a two-thirds majority of the members of the General Assembly” and then “ratified by two-thirds of the member states, including all permanent members of the Security Council” (Article 108).

Cruelty of Lip Service

Even if Japan were to break through the first hurdle of a two-thirds majority in the General Assembly, it will never be able to become a permanent member of the Security Council unless China and Russia complete the ratification process domestically.

Even if the United States government was

to get down on its knees and beg China and Russia (which in itself is out of the question), it also couldn't be ratified in the United States. That would require a two-thirds majority supporting the measure in the Senate. No matter which way you turn, Japan is stuck in a quagmire.

So when US President Biden visited Japan the other day and reiterated his support for Japan's bid to become a permanent member of the Security Council, it was nothing more than lip service.

By Emma Farge

UYGHUR RIGHTS GROUPS FILE CRIMINAL CASE IN ARGENTINA AGAINST CHINA



The action could spur an investigation of whether China's policies against Uyghurs in East Turkistan constitute genocide. Lawyers acting on behalf of two Uyghur rights groups filed a criminal case in an Argentine court on Wednesday alleging that China is committing genocide and crimes against humanity through its repressive policies targeting Muslims in East Turkistan.



The Justice Abroad law firm, on behalf of the Germany-based World Uyghur Congress (WUC) and the Washington, D.C.-based Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP), submitted the official criminal complaint to a Buenos Aires court under universal jurisdiction provisions set out in Argentina's Constitution. The provisions allow the country's criminal courts to investigate and try international crimes, such as genocide, torture and crimes against humanity wherever they occur in the world and render judgments.



Omer Kanat, executive director of the Uyghur Human Rights Project; Dolkun Isa, president of the World Uyghur Congress; and Michael Polak, director of Justice Abroad, stand outside the courthouse in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where they submitted a criminal case against China for allegedly committing genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghurs in East Turkistan, Aug. 17, 2022. Photo courtesy of Justice Abroad

The provisions allow the country’s criminal courts to investigate and try international crimes, such as genocide, torture and crimes against humanity wherever they occur in the world and render judgments.

“The criminal complaint has real and symbolic significance,” Dolkun Isa of WUC said Thursday at a news conference. “While the heads of state may enjoy immunity from any questioning and criminal liability while in office, they can be held accountable after holding office. They can even be arrested during international travels for their crimes.”

Rights groups, the international media, and witnesses and

survivors have put forward credible testimony and evidence that Chinese authorities have been committing genocide and crimes against humanity against the Uyghurs and other Turkic minorities in East Turkistan since 2017 when they began arbitrarily detaining people in a vast network of “re-education” camps in prisons despite no evidence they had committed crimes.

China claimed the facilities were “vocational training centers” meant to prevent religious extremism and radicalism and later said they had been closed. It is believed that authorities have held up to 1.8 million Uyghurs and others

accused of harboring “strong religious” and “politically incorrect” views in the camps. There is also evidence that some of the detainees were subjected to forced labor, torture, sexual assault, and forced sterilizations and abortions.

Though the United States and the legislatures of several Western countries have deemed China’s mistreatment of the mostly Muslim Uyghurs and other Turkic minorities in the East Turkistan as genocide and crimes against humanity, the repression has continued.

“This is a historical moment for the Uyghur people and their pursuit of justice for the most horrendous international crimes being committed against them by the Chinese authorities,” international law barrister Michael Polak said in a statement issued on Wednesday.

“The mantra ‘never again’ or ‘nunca mas’ has been repeated for many years yet we have a genocide and crimes against humanity being committed against a religious and ethnic group in 2022 in an attempt to rob the Uyghurs of their rich culture and identity,” said Polak, who is the director of U.K.-based Justice Abroad and chairman of Lawyers for Uyghur Rights.

Domestic courts are filling a void created by the failure of the United Nations Security Council, due to vetoes by China and Russia, to establish international tribunals to investigate such crimes, Polak said.

Polak and Argentine lawyers Gabriel Cavallo and Juan Nieto, who have experience using Argentina’s courts to deliver justice for the victims of international crimes, are representing WUC and UHRP.

‘Nowhere to hide’

A judge will now be selected to review the criminal complaint along with submissions from the public prosecutor to determine whether to open a case.

If a case is opened and an investigation begins, WUC and UHRP must submit evidence demonstrating genocide, crimes against humanity and torture have occurred against Uyghurs and other Turkic groups in East Turkistan. With such evidence, the judge can indict defendants, issue arrest warrants and send the case to trial.

“Our case demonstrates that there is nowhere to hide for regimes responsible for atrocity crimes,” Omer Kanat, executive director of UHRP, said in a statement.

If international courts such as the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court are unable or unwilling to examine evidence of the crimes, then national courts must begin to bring cases against China, he said.

Dolkun Isa of the World Uyghur Congress said in a statement that the submission of the criminal complaint in Argentina is “a crucial step towards the long-overdue justice for the Uyghur people, and the holding to account of those responsible.

“For years, Uyghurs have been looking to the international legal justice mechanisms to make a determination on the genocide being committed, but so far these have failed us,” he said in the statement. “This criminal complaint would be a historic occasion for Uyghurs to have their voices heard within a formal domestic court.”

In December 2021, a Uyghur Tribunal, led by British jurist Geoffrey Nice, issued a nonbinding verdict that China had committed genocide and crimes against

humanity against the Uyghurs after hearing evidence from internment camp survivors and experts on the region.

Days after the Dec. 9 decision, WUC and UHRP said they were preparing to submit a criminal complaint to an Argentine court

with international jurisdiction, laying out alleged crimes committed against Uyghurs and other Turkic minorities in East Turkistan, according to an earlier RFA report.

2022.08.17, RFA



UN report says treatment of Uyghurs in East Turkistan may be modern form of slavery

Uyghur rights groups say the document validates allegations of abuse in the region.

Minorities in East Turkistan are forced to work against their will and face physical and sexual violence and “other inhuman or degrading treatment” in what may constitute a modern form of slavery, a report released on Tuesday by a United Nations office said.

In the 20-page report, Tomoya Obokata, the United Nations special rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, said that Uyghur, Kazakh and other ethnic minorities were being used as forced labor in sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing.

Members of these groups are detained and subject to work placements under state-mandated vocational skills education and training system and a poverty alleviation program that places surplus rural workers

in sectors short of employees.

Similar measures exist in neighboring Tibet, where an extensive labor transfer program has shifted Tibetan farmers, herders and other rural workers into low-skilled and low-paid jobs, according to the report, which was published for the U.N. Human Rights Council's 51st session that runs Sept. 12-Oct. 7.

"While these programs may create employment opportunities for minorities and enhance their incomes, as claimed by the government, the special rapporteur considers that indicators of forced labor pointing to the involuntary nature of work rendered by affected communities have been present in many cases," the report says in reference to East Turkistan.

The report adds that workers endure "excessive surveillance, abusive living and working conditions, restriction of movement through internment, threats, physical and/or sexual violence and other inhuman or degrading treatment."

It said in some instances the conditions the workers face "may amount to enslavement as a crime against humanity, meriting a further independent analysis."

The Chinese government has held an estimated 1.8 million Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities in a vast network of "re-education" camps that Beijing says is meant to prevent religious extremism and terrorism in the region. Forced or compulsory labor has been a key part of the systematic repression of the groups.

Obokata's report comes as Uyghur activist groups await the issuance of an overdue report on rights abuses in East Turkistan by U.N. human rights chief Michelle Bachelet, who originally informed the Human Rights Council in September 2021

that her office was close to completing its assessment of allegations of rights violations in the region. Three months later, a spokesperson said the report would be issued in a matter of weeks, but it was not.

In July, Bachelet's office said the report was still being worked on and would be released before she leaves office later this month.

Bachelet angered Uyghur activist groups after she visited China, including East Turkistan, in late May, repeating China's assertion that the internment camps, referred to by Beijing as vocational training centers, had all been closed. The groups denounced the trip as a propaganda opportunity that allowed China to whitewash its crimes against humanity and genocide against the Uyghurs.

The U.S. and the legislatures of several Western countries have declared that China's repression in East Turkistan constitutes genocide and crime against humanity.

"The release of the U.N. report on contemporary forms of slavery is highly significant at a time when China is doing everything in its power to suppress the publication of the Uyghur report by the office of the U.N. High Commissioner Bachelet," Dolkun Isa, president of the World Uyghur Congress (WUC), told RFA.

The findings of Obokata's report that forced labor, and even slavery, exists in East Turkistan demonstrates "the crimes China is committing against Uyghurs," he said.

Washington, D.C.-based Campaign for Uyghurs (CFU) said the report was an "extremely important and comprehensive

assessment.”

“We have been telling the world for years that China uses Uyghur slavery as an essential tool and enabling China’s economy and making the ongoing Uyghur genocide a profitable venture,” Rushan Abbas, CFU’s executive director, said in a statement.

“It’s a relief to see the United Nations finally recognize the extent to which these atrocities are taking place,” she said. “Now tangible actions are needed to hold the CCP [Chinese Communist Party] accountable for these crimes based on these recent findings.”

Adrian Zenz, a researcher at the Washington, D.C.-based Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation and expert on East Turkistan, called the report “a strong statement” in which the rapporteur expressed that there is “reasonable evidence to conclude that

forced labor is taking place in the East Turkistan and then a similar program existing in Tibet.”

“And then he says in some cases the situation may amount to enslavement as a crime against humanity,” he told RFA. “That’s the strongest form. This is quite a sort of a formal assessment at a very high level.”

Zenz noted that Obokata’s report comes nearly four days after China ratified two International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions on forced labor, one of which is designed to counter state-sponsored forced labor, forbidding its use for political aims and economic development.

The other convention prohibits the use of forced labor in all forms and requires state parties to make forced labor practices punishable as a penal offense.

Translated by RFA Uyghur. Written in English by Roseanne Gerin.





UYGHUR AUSTRALIAN SADAM ABDUSALAM OPENS UP ABOUT FREEING WIFE AND CHILD FROM CHINA'S XINJIANG AND WELCOMING NEW BABY

HAS "CENTRAL ROLE" IN GENOCIDE

Sadam can't wait for the moment his new baby takes his first steps.

It was something the Adelaide man missed the first time around — when his first-born son Lutfi started walking, it was thousands of kilometres away, in East Turkistan.

For years, Beijing's policies against Uyghur Muslims kept Sadam, who migrated to Australia in 2009 and became a citizen in 2013, separated from his wife Nadila and the young child he had never met.

But he's now making up for lost time.

Sadam first shared his story with Four Corners, which brought a new focus to the plight of Uyghurs in Australia.

He was finally reunited with his wife Nadila and Lutfi in Australia in December

2020.

Since then, Nadila has started learning English, Lutfi has started school, and the couple has welcomed a new baby boy.

They named him Latif, meaning "kind".

"Whatever I've been going through ... what China did to me, God has given me a second chance to have that time again," he says.

"I missed every [moment] of Lutfi's three-and-a-half years. But now I've got a little baby."

The birth of his second son in October was bittersweet for Sadam. It's a constant reminder of what he missed. He watched Lutfi grow up on a screen and in snapshots.

But he is embracing fatherhood now — he loves being Lutfi's "favourite friend", and even the sleep deprivation and nappy

changes are a gift.

Sadam remembers how nervous he felt the first time Lutfi went to preschool — his son couldn't speak English and he worried he might be bullied.

“But straight away he got lots of friends, even without the language,” he says.

“That's the good thing about kids, they don't discriminate against each other by their colour or their religion.

“That makes me happy. Now time is flying. He's already almost five, he's growing up so fast.”

Overcoming East Turkistan trauma

But it has been far from easy — he and Nadila had to re-learn how to be partners, and Sadam had to adjust to being a dad

in person.

For the first few days, Lutfi called him “uncle” instead of “dad”.

The couple met online in mid-2015 through a friend while Nadila was living in China and Sadam was in Australia.

He was smitten and flew to meet her in China, where they became engaged and later celebrated a religious wedding in Urumqi, the capital of East Turkistan.

They were living for a short time in Turkey when Nadila became pregnant with Lutfi.

She travelled back to China to give birth with her family nearby, while Sadam rented a home in Australia and filled it with furniture and toys for the baby.





That was in 2017, right as China's crackdown on Uyghurs and Muslim minorities was gathering force.

The timing of their temporary goodbyes "could not have been worse".

Chinese authorities had begun detaining more than 1 million Uyghurs in what Beijing describes as "vocational training centres", which it says are necessary to combat "terrorism and extremism".

But human rights groups and researchers have condemned Beijing's actions as arbitrary detention, forced labour and oppression of religious and ethnic minorities.

The US has labelled it genocide.

United Nations Human Rights chief Michelle Bachelet is under pressure to release a report on the treatment of the Uyghurs after a controversial visit to East Turkistan, but Beijing has urged her to

bury the findings.

Nadila and her new baby couldn't leave China. Her passport had been confiscated by police.

Sadam's visa application to China, so he could be in Urumqi for Lutfi's birth, was rejected twice without a reason being given.

The ripple effects of the trauma from their long separation, and what Nadila endured in East Turkistan, are still being felt.

Even though the young family now feels safe in Australia, painful memories have resurfaced.

Sadam recalls driving home after eating dinner out one night and being pulled over for a random breath test.

In the passenger seat next to him, Nadila was shaking.

"I asked her, 'What's going on,

what happened?’ She’s like, ‘Every time I see the police with the uniform, or hear the police car siren, I’m just shaking, scared’,” he says.

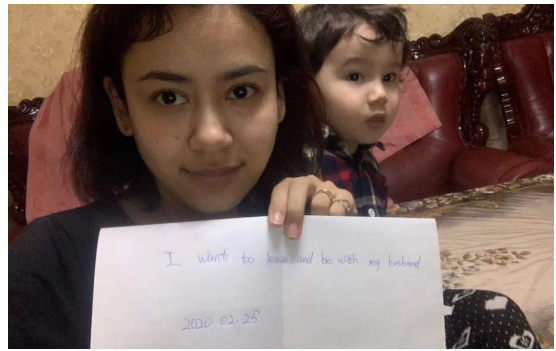
“She felt like they came for her. So that was really breaking my heart.”

Sadam, who has penned his story in a new book, *Freeing My Family*, didn’t know the full extent of what Nadila faced in East Turkistan.

That was partly because authorities in China had ordered her to cut contact with her Australian-citizen husband. They could only communicate in fleeting messages.

The first time she was detained, it was for four days. Her parents waited outside the police station with Lutfi, a baby at the time, and would bring him to her to be breastfed.

Chinese authorities accused her of being



a terrorist. Sadam and his lawyer, Michael Bradley, felt the urgency to get her and Lutfi out.

“At the time, it was very real,” Mr Bradley says.

“We really did fear that there was high risk that she was just going to be disappeared, and separated from Lutfi.

“There was a lot of evidence that that was happening to a lot of families, and kids were being effectively orphaned and adopted out when their parents were being taken.”

In the book Sadam doesn’t sugar-coat



his experience — he describes domestic violence in Uyghur families in China, getting into fights, being underpaid when he migrated to Australia, his struggles with drug addiction, and — especially during his battle to free Nadila — his spiralling mental health and thoughts of suicide.

He also revealed he made a “catastrophic series of choices” — chief among them was an illegal sham marriage in Australia in 2015, before he met Nadila.

He agreed to that marriage in return for a large payment from a woman who was seeking residency in Australia.

He didn’t tell Nadila, and the decision would come to haunt him — it was the reason he had a religious ceremony with Nadila, rather than a legal one.

It damaged his credibility and further complicated his efforts to bring Nadila and Lutfi to Australia.

He eventually reported the sham marriage to the authorities in Australia and the courts issued him a divorce order in 2018.

His first attempts to prove Lutfi was his son and obtain Australian citizenship for him (so that Australian authorities could have consular access and lobby for the toddler to leave East Turkistan) were rejected by the Department of Home Affairs.

But he and Mr Bradley, who worked on the case pro bono and co-authored the book, challenged the Immigration Minister’s decision in court and eventually won the case.

Community’s collective grief

Sadam’s family is whole again, but for hundreds of Uyghurs in Australia, that is not the case.

“I’m the only lucky one. Maybe there are a few lucky ones in Australia. But there’s another thousand people missing their loved ones. Like my friend Almas, his wife



is still in the prison for five-and-a-half years now,” Sadam says.

“I’m really grateful my wife and my son are here, but at the same time, I’m a bit sad for the rest of the Uyghur community.

“They want that simple life as well. All they want is to bring their family members to be with them.”

The latest census found there were more than 1,600 Uyghurs in Australia, an increase of more than 50 per cent compared to the previous census.

Uyghur community members estimate that number to be higher, at around 2,500 or 3,000 people.

They say the majority have a relative stuck in East Turkistan, and they are in constant fear for their safety.

Nurgul Sawut, a Uyghur community leader in Canberra, says seven families who have a relative in East Turkistan with permanent residency in Australia have

been trying for years to get them out.

“They kind of fell through, between a political battle between two countries, between Australia and China,” she says.

“Basically families are falling apart and divided into pieces for quite a long time.

“The whole community in Australia is going through quite extensive grief ... not just a family’s grief or one person’s grief — it’s a collective grief.”

Since July of 2017, 61 Uyghur people in Australia have been granted humanitarian visas.

Five Uyghur people travelled to Australia on offshore humanitarian visas in 2017, but none have arrived since then.

“The Australian Government remains deeply concerned about credible reports of severe human rights violations against Uyghurs and other minorities in East Turkistan,” the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade said in a statement.



“DFAT is providing consular assistance to a small number of Australians in East Turkistan. Owing to our privacy obligations, we are unable to provide further details.”

Mr Bradley says he successfully helped get a second family, whose situation was similar to Sadam’s, out of East Turkistan, and he is still working on a third case.

Many Uyghurs have come to him asking for help, but in most cases, there wasn’t much Australia could do because their relatives in East Turkistan aren’t Australian citizens.

“Regrettably, the situation of those people is pretty hopeless,” he says.

“It is a terrible situation. It’s one of the worst mass-scale acts of repression of a minority in modern history. In some ways, it’s unprecedented.”

Mr Bradley says while the process was long, frustrating and often dispiriting for

Sadam, a lot of diplomatic manoeuvring had to run its course behind the scenes.

“Full marks to Marise Payne in particular for the personal interest she took, and DFAT in particular did a wonderful job,” Mr Bradley says.

Sadam says he was spurred on by Nadila’s strength, and the couple is grateful to everyone who helped them, including lawyers, refugee advocates, journalists and human rights groups.

“Everyone who has helped me kept me alive,” he says.

The process of writing the book — which, he says, is a romance story at heart — was a way for him to forgive himself.

“Before Nadila came, I was focusing on my mistake, my shame, my guilt, a lot. And actually I forgot how strong I am.”

By Erin Handley





**While most murderers in human history have tried to hide their crimes with reasons and excuses, China does not, as Xi Jinping flaunts his crimes and the genocide of Uyghur Muslims during his recent visit to East Turkistan.
#Stand4Uyghurs**

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What is happening in East Turkistan?

What is true and what is false?

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

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