



“They Sent Her to a Concentration Camp Because She Came to Turkey”

The Persecution of Uyghurs Based on their Turkic and Muslim Identity

UHRP

UYGHUR HUMAN RIGHTS PROJECT
ئۇيغۇر كىشىلىك ھوقۇق قۇرۇلۇشى



UYGHUR ARAŞTIRMA ENSTİTÜSÜ
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About the Uyghur Human Rights Project

The Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP) promotes the rights of the Uyghur people through research-based advocacy. We publish reports and analysis in English and Chinese to defend Uyghurs' civil, political, social, cultural, and economic rights according to international human rights standards.

About the Uyghur Research Institute

The Uyghur Research Institute (URI) is an independent, nonprofit think tank founded in April 2018 by a group of Uyghur academics and experts. Its mission is to conduct research to promote a free, open, democratic, and peaceful society. URI is legally registered in Canada and has its main office in Turkey.

Author

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I. Executive Summary

The human rights atrocities against Uyghurs at the hands of the Chinese government has generated outrage among people of conscience around the world. For Turks and Muslims in particular, who are connected to Uyghurs by ethnic and religious bonds, their suffering is a cause of particular concern.

In the past year, while the international community has been coping with the COVID-19 pandemic, the suffering of the Uyghurs has continued unabated. The entire Uyghur population is subject to unrelenting government surveillance. Over one million people have been sent to “re-education camps”—in reality, mass prisons where inmates are held in overcrowded and squalid conditions for indefinite periods of time on spurious charges. Those who have been released tell horrifying stories of brainwashing, beatings, torture, rape, and forced sterilization.

This report brings together firsthand testimony and investigative reporting on the situation in the Uyghur Region, particularly as it relates to Turkey. It draws on reporting in the Uyghur, Turkish, and international press, verified by interviews with Uyghurs and their families in Turkey. To further confirm the evidence related by these witnesses, this report examines leaked Chinese government documents that outline in chilling detail the treatment of the country’s Uyghur population. Finally, the report concludes with an examination of several high-profile Chinese and international companies that have ties to the persecution of Uyghurs and are active in Turkey.

Turkey has long provided a haven for Uyghur refugees and activists. Estimates of the size of the Uyghur population in Turkey range from 30,000 to 50,000 people, including people who have moved to Turkey to study at university, to conduct business, to marry and start families, or simply to flee the persecution they face in the Uyghur Region. Living in Istanbul and other smaller cities, Uyghurs have used the freedom Turkey provides to ask “Where is my family” and speak out in defense of their rights. Yet as China intensifies its crackdown, this community has come under increased threat. The Chinese government has sent agents to conduct

surveillance on Uyghurs in Turkey and regularly uses their family members as hostages to pressure them to stay silent or return home. Worse, Beijing has become ever more insistent in demanding the extradition of politically active Uyghurs to China, where they face arbitrary detention, disappearance, torture, forced renunciation of Islam, and forced labor, among other gross human rights violations.

Governments around the world have the responsibility to protect vulnerable refugees and uphold international human rights norms. The business sector, in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, also has the obligation to ensure that commercial activities respect core human rights. The report concludes with recommendations for both government and corporate actors to protect vulnerable Uyghur refugees and end complicity with the Chinese government's atrocity crimes.

II. Firsthand Testimony on Conditions in the Uyghur Region

Since the Uyghur Region came under the control of the current Chinese regime in 1949, the Uyghur population has faced a wide range of oppressive and discriminatory policies. But the scope and intensity of the government's persecution has increased dramatically over the past decade. China's Uyghur population, alongside Kazakh and Kyrgyz and other Turkic Muslim communities, now face an unprecedented level of systematic brutality that permeates all facets of their communal and individual existence.

Testimony from those who have experienced life in the Uyghur Region, as well as their relatives abroad, helps lay bare the nature of the system now in place, which this report will examine on a point-by-point basis.

- 1) **Surveillance:** The Chinese government has used a combination of high-tech and low-tech methods to ensure

every member of the Uyghur community is under constant surveillance. This campaign includes forcibly installing apps on Uyghurs’ cellphones to electronically eavesdrop on their conversations, collecting personal data at mandatory traffic stops, and assigning Chinese “relatives” to live in Uyghurs’ homes to personally monitor their daily life. The information from this surveillance is compiled in a database called the Integrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP),¹ which assesses each Uyghur’s “threat level.”

- 2) **Detention:** Chinese authorities uses these assessments to detain those whose thoughts, speech, or actions they deem suspicious or problematic. Uyghurs are regularly detained for showing signs of “inappropriate” religiosity, such as owning a Quran, greeting friends with the phrase “Blessed Friday,” or simply refusing to eat pork. Others are detained for their “ties” with Turkey, such as speaking to a relative in Ankara, changing planes in Istanbul, or simply owning a carpet with a “made in Turkey” label.
- 3) **Imprisonment and indoctrination:** Ultimately, these various offenses are merely a pretext for the mass imprisonment of the Uyghur Region’s Uyghurs. Currently over one million people are being held in an ever-expanding number of detention facilities. Called “education and training centers,” these facilities in fact served a more pernicious function. In them, Uyghurs are subjected to torture and political indoctrination for indefinite periods of time, all with the aim of crushing their spirits, beliefs, and collective identity.
- 4) **Silencing:** Finally, in order to hide the scale of this repression from the outside world, Chinese officials have systematically silenced Uyghurs from speaking out. On pain of further imprisonment, Uyghurs are forced to lie to visiting journalists, international committees, and even their own family members, praising their circumstances and denying that they face any persecution.

¹ Ma, Alexandria, “China uses an intrusive surveillance app to track its Muslim minority, with technology that could be exported to the rest of the world. Here’s how it works.” *Business Insider*, May 1, 2019, <https://www.businessinsider.com/how-ijop-works-china-surveillance-app-for-muslim-uyghurs-2019-5>.

Sources and Methods: In the face of this concerted Chinese campaign to silence the Uyghur Region's victims, many people have been courageous enough to speak out. In early 2021, the Uyghur-run, Istanbul-based television station Istiqlal TV aired a series of interviews with individuals who had personally experienced these abuses in the Uyghur Region, including in the region's concentration camps. Their accounts of surveillance, detention, imprisonment, and indoctrination echo the accounts of those individuals who have appeared on other channels, who have been personally interviewed by the Uyghur Research Initiative, and who have spoken to the international media.

These are their stories.

Medine Nazimi: Medine is a Turkish citizen of Uyghur origin whose sister, Mevlüde, was detained by the Chinese government because she studied in Turkey. Medine has been seeking the Turkish government's support in trying to rescue her sister.

Cevlan Shirmemet: Cevlan is a Uyghur man who graduated from Istanbul Commercial University and has been living in Turkey for nine years. Cevlan's mother was detained and sentenced to five years in prison because she visited him in Turkey.

Nursimangul Abdureshid: Nursimangul is a Uyghur woman from Kashgar who moved to Turkey with her sister to study in 2013. In 2018, she learned that her parents and two brothers had disappeared and subsequently learned they had received prison sentences ranging from seven to 16 years.

Sayragul Sauytbay: Sayragul was born in 1977 in the Ili Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture. She taught Chinese in a concentration camp from November 2017 to March 2018 before fleeing the country. She has spoken widely about her experience in the subsequent years.

Qelbinur Sidik: Qelbinur, 51, worked as a teacher her entire life. Between February 2017 and September 2017, she taught Chinese in a Uyghur girls camp in Urumchi.

Dogan Erdogan: Dogan was born in Diyarbakir, Turkey, and lived in East Turkistan between 2013 and 2018. He met his wife, Gulnaz

Tursun, there, and they married in 2016. They planned to open a restaurant in the city of Ghulja, but he was subsequently forced to leave. His wife’s father and sister, as well as other family members are now in prison.

Zumrat Dawut: Born in Urumchi, Dawut worked in Pakistan, where she married her husband Imran Muhemmed in 2005. She was detained in a concentration camp from 31 March 2018 to 5 June 2018. In January 2019, she left for Pakistan and has not returned to the Uyghur homeland.

Surveillance

“Uyghurs mourning on Aidiladha”

Uyghurs mourning on Aidiladha, fourth year since my family disappeared, Nursimangul Abdureshid, personal essay, [Malaysiakini.com](https://www.malaysiakini.com), 19 July 2021:

I last heard from my family during Ramadan four years ago, in June 2017. I spoke to my father once during that holy month. I was surprised when he told me that he had just finished eating a meal, even though the sun had not set. Then I realized why. Fasting was banned by the Chinese government, and he knew that the police would be listening to our call. He needed them to hear that he was obeying the law.

“Chinese ‘Relatives’”

Chinese “Relatives,” Zumrat Dawut, Istiqlal TV’s “Patlayan Sukunet,” 8 January 2021:

They assign a Chinese relative not just to every family but to every member of the family. Even my five-year old daughter had a Chinese relative ... You aren’t to ask their identity or what they do or where they work. But you are to tell them everything about you and your family. All your thoughts and secrets—your troubles, for example. You must prepare their breakfast carefully. When you leave work and come home you must prepare their dinner and put it in front of them and then at night you must send a photo showing they were there while you slept.

It Can Be Difficult to Say No, Sayragul Sauytbay, Fedekarlar Channel's "From Death Camps to Battles of Freedom," 8 March 2021:

"It Can Be Difficult to Say No"

If the family doesn't do everything the Chinese relative wants, they can report the family and all the family members can be arrested ... If the Chinese relative wants the family's daughters, it can be difficult to say no. Of course, there are those that say no, but it puts every family member's life in danger.

That Also Counts, from Tahir Hamut Izgil's "How I Escaped China's War on Uyghurs," *Newlines Magazine*, 15 January 2021

"That Also Counts"

"Have you ever been to any of the 26 countries?" Güljan [A Uyghur woman working for the Chinese government] asked me ... "When we went to Europe with a tour group last year, we went through Turkey." I tried to make Turkey sound like an insignificant stop of our trip. Indeed, when we went on a 15-day tour to five European countries including Italy, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, and France, we had to spend one night in Istanbul and took a flight to Rome the next day because there were no direct flights from Ürümqi to Italy. And on our way back to Urumchi, we went from Paris to Istanbul and spent a couple of days in the Turkish city. We did not tour much in Istanbul but rather were given time for shopping since the Uyghur people were fond of Turkish goods. "It also counts," said Güljan, without looking up.

If You Say *Assalam Alaikum*, Zumrat Dawut, Istiqlal TV's "Patlayan Sukunet," 8 January 2021

They put an app on all Uyghur phones that could control for certain words. The moment you carelessly said, "*Salam aleykum*," the police would come from one of the stations set up every 300 meters and ask, "What did you say on your phone?" And we would start to think, "What could I have mistakenly said?" And the police would ask again, "What did you say while speaking? When a call came from your family just a minute ago, what word did you use at

"If You Say *Assalam Alaikum*"

the beginning when you answered?” “Yes, I said, ‘*Assalam alaikum*,’” we’d say. “From now on, don’t use that word. If you use it again we’ll send you straight to an education center,” the police would tell us. For that reason, we Uyghurs stopped saying, ‘*Assalam alaikum*.’ Now we have started saying, “How are you?” like the Chinese.

Detention

“The Chinese Government Took My Sister”

The Chinese Government Took My Sister, Medine Nazimi. [BNC Media](#), 6 January 2021:

The Chinese government took my sister into a concentration camp at the end of 2017. She was let out in May of 2019. Then in June, she was arrested again and accused of separatism because she had lived and studied in Turkey. I haven’t been able to contact her since then. I have contacted our Foreign Ministry about this, and I have contacted our Ambassador in Beijing, but so far I haven’t received any encouraging news. I am addressing our President, our Foreign Minister, and our Ambassador. Me and my sister are citizens of this country. My innocent sister, like other mothers, has the right to live happily with her children. I’m imploring you: do whatever you can to pull my sister out of those concentration camps and bring her back to our country, so she can live happily here.

“To Seize the Money of Businessmen and the Wealthy”

To Seize the Money of Businessmen and the Wealthy, Sayragul Sauytbay, Fedekarlar Channel’s “From Death Camps to Battles of Freedom,” 8 March 2021:

Whoever is religious is accused of something. Whoever loves their people or is prominent among their people is accused of something else. To seize the money of businessmen and the wealthy, they are falsely accused. Those who used to smoke or drink and quit were arrested—“Why did you quit? You must have started praying.” In the camp, I worked at, there was a girl who in the ninth grade had sent a friend a picture with “Blessed Friday [Cuma mubarek]” written on it. Years later, she

finished college and she was sent to the camp because of she had that on her phone in ninth grade.

Is There a Quran in Your House? Zumrat Dawut, Istiqlal TV's "Patlayan Sukunet," 8 January 2021:

They closed the gates of the complex we lived in. After they said, "Today there is a comprehensive search," we understood why. Police in black uniforms, whose faces we couldn't make out, came with dogs. First they closed the complex's gates. Three hundred to four hundred police came in at the same time. It was a terrifying scene. If you looked out from your window, they would shine a flashlight at you and yell, "Turn off your lights." They entered every house with a dog, and the dogs would sniff and find the Qurans and prayer rugs. Is there a Quran or hadith in your house? The police would take you out by the neck. Because they had prayer outfit or a prayer rug in their house, countless Uyghurs were arrested. Everyone who prayed was arrested.

"Is There a Quran in Your House?"

Her Crime Was Writing Down a Poem, Dogan Erdogan, URI Interview, 18 March 2021:

My father-in-law Tursunjan Amet is a well-known poet and composer among Uyghurs. Many of his poems were turned into songs by famous Uyghur singers. His crime, according to the Chinese government, was his poem, which he recited in a poem contest in 2002. The government accused him of being separatist because of that poem and he was sentenced to 12 years in prison. My sister-in-law's crime was writing down that poem on paper. She was sentenced to three years in prison. Besides my father-in-law and sister-in-law, my wife's two uncles (both about 70 years old) and several of her cousins were detained in concentration camps. One uncle was detained because he had beard and another one was because he had been to Kyrgyzstan for business. In total, seven were detained. Two are still in prison, one is still detained, and four were released.

"Her Crime Was Writing Down a Poem"

"You Downloaded WhatsApp"

You Downloaded WhatsApp, Zumrat Dawut, Istiqlal TV's "Patlayan Sukunet," 8 January 2021:

Fifteen to twenty days later the mass arrests started. What happened? You download WhatsApp. You downloaded Facebook to your phone. You have a Turkish flag on your phone. You downloaded verses of the Quran. There's this person's phone number. It says, "Allahu Akbar" or "Inshallah" somewhere.

"What Education?"

What Education? Cevlan Şirmehmet, BNC Media's "My Mother Is In a Chinese Dungeon," 6 January 2021

My mother, Suriye Tursun, is 56 years old. She's worked for the Chinese government for 30 years as an accountant in the Ministry of Trade and Industry. She speaks fluent Chinese. She knows the Chinese laws. But the Chinese regime sent her to a concentration camp because she came to Turkey to visit me, to visit my school. They said they were going to "educate" her. What kind of "education" are they going to give her? A woman who speaks fluent Chinese, who went to graduate school, who is about to retire? What do they mean "educate?"

Detention & Indoctrination

"Then Let God Rescue You"

Then Let God Rescue You, Zumrat Dawut, Istiqlal TV's "Patlayan Sukunet," 8 January 2021:

When you enter the corridor, that painful sight is hard to stand because there you see 60- or 70-year-old grandmothers and young girls, all in handcuffs, and two police officers with each of them. They brought me an outfit and told me to change into it. "Where can I change?" I asked. "Right here," they said. "And what about these two police?" I said. "What about them?" they said. "How can I change in front of these men?" I said. "Be quiet. This isn't your house," the police said. "If you aren't quiet, these police will tear off the clothes you're wearing," they said. The cell they took me to was a pitch black room, too foul

smelling for a person to bear. Pitch black. The people in the cell before me had running rashes. Their hands and feet were covered in sores. They were being sprayed with some kind of liquid medicine. “Face forward,” they said, and everyone faced forward. “Face backward,” they said, and everyone faced backward. The poor things. They were spraying medicine directly on their clothes. The poor women were crying and jumping in pain.

There was a 68-year-old woman. This mother had wanted to go on the hajj, and in order to get travel permission, she had been in touch with a few people who lived in Saudi Arabia. And for that reason, she was sent to the camp. She said, “If only I wasn’t so hungry, my pain wouldn’t be as bad.” So I gave her my food. As soon as I gave it to her, someone came into the cell and threw themselves on me. It was my second day in the camp. They pushed me to the ground and beat me so much. I can’t describe the violence of the blows. “Oh God, they are beating poor Muslims like us,” I cried. “‘God,’ you say? Alright, call him,” the guards replied. “Let’s see Allah help you. If God is strong, then let him rescue you from beneath me. That’s why we’re doing this to you. You deserve it.” And as they said this, they beat me harder.

Teachers would sit outside the barbed wire and give us lessons, as if we would hurt the teachers. We were handcuffed during the lessons. The ground was like ice, and we shivered relentlessly as we sat. “You Uyghurs were not originally Muslims. Islam is an infectious virus that reached you later from Arabia...” Every day when the class would end, they would yell at us, “Does Allah exist?” They wanted to make us say there is no God, and we would be forced to say, “No.” Then right after, they would ask, “Does Xi Jinping exist?” And all of us together (saying God forgive us) would answer, “Yes, Xi Jinping exists, and we see the kindness he shows us.”

Otherwise, Nothing, Qelbinur Sidik, Istiklal TV’s “Events and Analysis,” 18 January 2021:

■ **“Otherwise, Nothing”**

On 1 September 2017, I was assigned to give Chinese classes in the girls’ camp built in Tumu. The camp had been made from a six-story building with no balconies. To enter the camp, we had to pass through three big doors. In the camp I went to, there were so many imprisoned girls that a person would think there were no Uyghur girls left on the streets. The girls would be given an injection to stop their menstruation. The police would assault the girls in the camp. They’d call the girls “flies in the palms of our hands” and say, “If we want, we can beat you up and down and kill you.” While in class, one girl called me saying, “Kalbinur, my teacher,” but suddenly a loud voice came through the speakers saying, “Don’t speak Uyghur.”

In the camp the food was one small piece of steamed bread (bun) and one plate of soup. And that would only be given at night to those who learned their Chinese lessons and could sing communist songs. Otherwise, nothing. Sterilization surgery and intra-uterine contraceptive surgery were widely performed. Last year, before I left the country, I was forced to undergo this surgery, even though I am 50 years old and do not want to have children.

“They Inserted This Thing”

They Inserted This Thing, Tursunay Ziyawudun, from Ben Mauk’s “Inside Xinjiang’s Prison State,” *The New Yorker*, 26 February 2021:

Tursunay Ziyawudun, a Uyghur nurse who spent around ten months in a camp in Kunes, told me that many of the women she was detained with underwent forced I.U.D. insertions and sterilizations. “Irrespective of their marital status, they inserted this thing,” she said. “Only those who were sick or had problems with reproductive organs were exempt.”

“There Is Still A Problem With Your Thinking”

There Is Still A Problem With Your Thinking, Sayragul Sauytbay, Fedekarlar Channel’s “From Death Camps to Battles of Freedom,” 8 March 2021:

One day they told me I would be a Chinese teacher in the concentration camps. They wanted me to sign a short confidentiality agreement. “If you violate this agreement,

you're finished," they warned me. In the camp, everyone had their hands and feet manacled. They were shaving everyone's head, men and women alike. When I saw these people who were so skinny, who had lost hope in the world, I couldn't believe my eyes. We couldn't speak with them at all outside of class. We didn't have permission to laugh or smile. There were five cameras in every room. The corridors were full of cameras. People lived in front of the cameras for 24 hours a day. Their tiniest movements were captured.

One day they gathered over a hundred people in one of the camp's big rooms, and they brought in a young girl. They made the girl admit to a crime she hadn't committed and the girl, weeping, offered her confession. Later, in front of everyone, the girl was subjected to serial rape. Those people who couldn't bear to watch and turned their heads were told, "You still haven't changed. You still haven't rejected yourselves. There is still a problem with your thinking. Your thoughts still have not changed." And they were sent for punishment.

Silencing

It Was a Staged Theatre in the Mosque, Zumrat Dawut, Istiqlal TV's "Patlayan Sukunet," 8 January 2021:

We were staying in my father's house when 12 or 13 people from the police, the mayor's office, and security services came into the building. "Our reason for coming here," they began, "is that tomorrow outside inspectors will come and your mosque is considered one of the big ones ... We called the cleaners and they cleaned the mosque. Tomorrow you will say your prayers five times in the mosque. Say all your prayers in the mosque because we don't know what time they will come." My father said to them, "You sometimes say pray, and you sometimes say don't pray." They put an envelope in front of my father. "Tomorrow when the foreigners come to the mosque, you as one who knows how

"It Was a Staged Theatre in the Mosque"

to speak well will say to them, ‘We have 24-hour hot water. We can perform our ablutions with ease. The state never tells us not to pray, our mosque is open 24 hours a day, the state provides all amenities and assistance to our mosque.’ You should tell the foreigners all this,” they said, giving my father pages of notes. My father said to one of them, “This had better not be another trap.” They told my father not to worry and said “for one *namaz*, we left 20 yuan, for five *namaz*, 100 yuan. If tomorrow you’re in the mosque, your work will be done.” And they left 100 yuan and departed.

They say to us, “Don’t show your concerns. Be happy in your social media posts.” We don’t have the luxury of not appearing happy. Even the people in the camps are told, when meeting with their families, “If you show the pain you’ve suffered on your face just once, you won’t have a chance to see your families again, and they will be thrown in jail.” When inspection committees came from other places they sent the police and those who work for the mayor to go dance in the Main Market in Urumchi.

“Her Words Did Not Match Her Appearance”

Her Words Did Not Match Her Appearance, Meryam Sultan. From Hannah Lucinda Smith’s “China arrests Uyghur families to lure exiles back for ‘re-education,’” *The Times*, 30 July 2020:

A video call from Meryem Sultan’s mother, Aygul, on a balmy July night last year should have been a relief. But her mother, a Uyghur, looked worn and sunken-eyed, bearing all the signs of her two-year internment in one of China’s “re-education” camps. Not only that, her words did not match her appearance. “I used to have deep wrinkles which I could not disguise with make-up, now I don’t have any wrinkles even without any make-up because I am happy,” she told her daughter. “From a young age I was nurtured in a healthy way by the party and government, therefore I trust the party and government. And if you come back, I will be happier.”

Everything is Normal and Beautiful Here, Dogan Erdogan, URI Interview, 18 March 2021:

I lost all my contact with my Uyghur relatives except my wife and daughter. I can contact my wife and my daughter via WeChat but just to say small things like “How are you? Are you well?” We cannot speak about the general situation in Ghulja or East Turkistan ... When I speak with her, she says everything is normal and beautiful there. But I know she is forced to say that. She can’t even ask them where her father is.

**“Everything is
Normal and Beautiful
Here”**

III. Leaked Chinese Government Documents

The accounts of those who have experienced oppression firsthand in the Uyghur Region are all the more disturbing when read against leaked Chinese government documents, which reveal that this suffering is both widespread and carefully orchestrated.

One cache of documents, the “Xinjiang Papers,” provides evidence of the Chinese government’s careful planning behind its current campaign against Uyghurs.² Among other things, the documents detail a private speech given by now-President Xi Jinping in April 2014 when he called for an all-out struggle employing the “organs of dictatorship” and demonstrating “absolutely no mercy.”³ The documents also provide elaborate instructions for Communist party officials to reassure people asking about jailed family members. This include warnings that their own behavior could impact their relatives’ chances for release and urging them to be thankful for their relatives’ detention.

² Bethany Allen-Ebrahimian, “Exposed: China’s Operating Manuals for Mass Internment and Arrest by Algorithm,” International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, November 24, 2019, <https://www.icij.org/investigations/china-cables/exposed-chinas-operating-manuals-for-mass-internment-and-arrest-by-algorithm/>.

³ Lily Kuo, “‘Show no mercy’: leaked documents reveal details of China’s Xinjiang detentions,” The Guardian, November 17, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/nov/17/show-no-mercy-leaked-documents-reveal-details-of-chinas-mass-xinjiang-detentions>.

“They Sent Her to a Concentration Camp Because She Came to Turkey”

A second cache of documents, the “China Cables,” provide particular insight into the use of imprisoned Uyghurs as forced labor in factories connected to the Chinese government.⁴ Under euphemisms such as “poverty reduction,” “employment services,” and “follow-up help and education,” Uyghurs who have survived extended stays in detention camps are sent to work sites where they produce textiles and other consumer goods for three to six months under the watchful eyes of authorities.

[illegible]

Screenshot of the first page of the Qaraqash Document (redacted). Source: UHRP.

Finally, a more recent leak, known as the Qaraqash document, demonstrates the systematic and intrusive surveillance of Uyghurs throughout the Uyghur Region and the spurious grounds on which Uyghurs are sent to detention centers.⁵ The Qaraqash Document is a Chinese-language spreadsheet whose cells contain detailed information about the families, social relations, and religious behavior of a group of 311 detainees from the county of Qaraqash.

⁴ Allen-Ebrahimian, “Exposed: China’s Operating Manuals for Mass Internment and Arrest by Algorithm.”

⁵ Uyghur Human Rights Project, "'Ideological Transformation': Records of Mass Detention from Qaraqash, Hotan," February 2020, https://docs.uhrp.org/pdf/UHRP_QaraqashDocument.pdf.

In Chinese, it is titled “Internees related to ‘unreturned’ persons,” since it focuses on individuals “related to at least one person who is outside [of China].

The most striking feature of the Qaraqash document is the series of official justifications given for the detention and re-education of the individuals in question. This document also confirms the role of state-appointed “Chinese relatives” in marking family members for imprisonment. Entry 221, for example, shows an individual who was detained because her Chinese sibling reported that she was “wearing a headscarf.” The following list is merely a representative sample of some of the reasons given for detention:

- “From May 10 to September 2016, he visited Saudi Arabia for 128 days. Upon returning, he stayed long-term in Qaraqash county. He poses a threat and we recommend he continue his reeducation.” (Entry 2)
- “Visited sensitive countries four times to do business.” (Entry 80)
- “Applied for passport.” (Entry 114)
- “Went abroad for pilgrimage three times.” (Entry 202)
- “Family member of runaway person (abroad).” (Entry 207)

Analysis of all 311 cases in the Qaraqash document shows that detention for such trivial offenses was the rule. As the chart below demonstrates, Chinese officials were particularly vigilant in targeting Uyghur men and women who violated the government’s strict birth policy. So-called violations could include having more than the allowed number of children, having more than one child within a three-year period, or giving birth to a child after providing the government with a false abortion certificate.

Offense	Total Detainees
Birth policy violations	115
Wore veil/wife wore veil/had beard	33

Applied for passport (and didn’t leave the country)	25
Reason related to religious practice	23
International travel	20
Related to prisoner	12
Movements within China	8
Possessed or watched illegal media	5
Related to someone outside of the country	4
Overseas communication	2

IV. Corporate Accountability

A number of international and Chinese companies have profited from the suffering of the Uyghurs in the Uyghur Region. This report provides a few notable examples. The companies include clothing retailers who have used cotton and other materials processed by unwilling Uyghur workers sent from detention camps to Chinese factories. In addition, a number of prominent Chinese telecommunications and electronics firms have helped produce the equipment the Chinese authorities have used to monitor and ultimately detain Uyghurs. A growing number of governments around the world are implementing policies to address corporate complicity in the Uyghur genocide.⁶

⁶ Uyghur Human Rights Project, “International Responses to the Uyghur Crisis,” August 16, 2021, <https://uhrp.org/responses/>.

Implicated International Companies Active in Turkey

Nike

The prominent global brand Nike officially operates in Turkey as Nike Retail TK Perakende Ticaret Limited Şirketi.⁷ Its headquarters is based in Istanbul with 220 employees. The Turkey distributor of Nike accessories is Sportive.⁸

In a report titled “Uyghurs for Sale,” the Australian Strategic Policy Institute describes a Chinese factory, Taekwang Shoe Manufacturing, that makes shoes for Nike and “is equipped with watchtowers, barbed-wire fences and police guard boxes.”⁹ Moreover, the report notes that “Uyghur workers, unlike their Han counterparts, are reportedly unable to go home for holidays.” As of January 2020, there were roughly 600 workers from Xinjiang at the factory, the majority of whom were Uyghur women. After making shoes all day, these workers “attend a night school where they study Mandarin, sing the Chinese national anthem and receive ‘vocational training’ and ‘patriotic education.’”

Zara (Inditex)

Inditex is the parent company of the well-known clothing chain Zara. Turkey hosts the most Inditex stores in Asia and Africa.¹⁰ Inditex also has 1,459 factories and 175 suppliers in Turkey.¹¹ Its manufacturers include Tamteks, which also supplies H&M and

⁷ “Şirket Bilgileri,” Nike Turkey website, accessed April 15, 2021, <https://www.nike.com/tr/help/a/sirket-bilgileri>.

⁸ “Hakkimizda,” Sportive website, accessed April 15, 2021, <https://www.sportive.com.tr/hakkimizda/>.

⁹ Vicky Xiuzhong Xu, Danielle Cave, James Leibold, Kelsey Munro, and Nathan Ruser, “Uyghurs for Sale,” Australian Strategic Policy Institute, March 1, 2020, <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/uyghurs-sale>.

¹⁰ “Inditex Group’s number of stores in Asia and Africa in 2020, by country,” Statista, November 30, 2020, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/268829/number-of-stores-of-the-inditex-group-in-asia-and-africa-by-country/>.

¹¹ Full list of Inditex’s suppliers and offices in Turkey can be found here: <https://www.inditex.com/about-us/inditex-around-the-world#country/TR>.

Tommy Hilfiger.¹² Intidex’s online partner in Turkey is Trendyol, owned by the Chinese company Alibaba.¹³

In March 2021, human rights groups gave Zara a #ForcedLabourFashion Coward Award for reversing its pledge to eliminate goods made with Uyghur forced labor in its supply chain. In 2020, Zara/Inditex had publicly announced on its website that it would not use cotton produced in the Uyghur Region because of the high risk of forced labor in the cotton and textile industry.¹⁴ In March 2021, Zara, like other clothing brands that made similar declarations, immediately came under political and financial pressure from the Chinese government. At this point, instead of standing by its pledge, Zara quietly removed it from the company’s website.

Implicated Chinese Companies Active in Turkey

Huawei Turkey

Over the past decade, the Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei has been an eager partner in the Chinese government’s efforts to surveil and control Uyghurs in the Uyghur Region.¹⁵ Indeed, Huawei executives have repeatedly boasted of their role in these efforts. In 2018, for example, a Chinese government website in Urumchi featured a quote from a Huawei executive declaring, “Together with the Public Security Bureau, Huawei will unlock a new era of smart policing and help build a safer, smarter society.”¹⁶

¹² “References,” Tamteks company website, accessed April 15, 2021, <http://tamteks.com/references/>.

¹³ Tolga Yanık, “Trendyol, Inditex’in Türkiye’deki online partneri oldu,” *Anadolu Ajansı*, September 12, 2019, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/sirkethaberleri/hizmet/trendyol-inditexin-turkiyedeki-online-partneri-oldu/654689>.

¹⁴ Marc Bain, “Under pressure in China, Zara deleted a statement about Xinjiang,” *Quartz*, March 25, 2021, <https://qz.com/1988896/under-pressure-in-china-zara-deleted-a-statement-about-xinjiang/>.

¹⁵ Danielle Cave, Fergus Ryan, and Vicky Xiuzhong Xu, “Mapping More of China’s tech giants: AI and surveillance,” Australian Strategic Policy Institute, November 28, 2019, <https://www.aspi.org.au/report/mapping-more-chinas-tech-giants>.

¹⁶ Williams, Oscar, “The issue ministers are avoiding when it comes to Huawei: The debate over the Chinese tech giant largely ignores its participation in human rights abuses,” *The New Statesman*, January 23, 2020, <https://www.newstatesman.com/world/2020/01/issue-ministers-are-avoiding-when-it-comes-huawei>.

Huawei has also cited projects in the Uyghur Region like the “Modular Data Center for the Public Security Bureau of Aksu Prefecture” as “success cases” in its corporate literature. Indeed, as reported by the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, these examples are just a small part of Huawei’s profitable work in the region, which also includes an agreement with the Xinjiang regional government to “jointly develop cloud computing and big data” technology, and build “the police surveillance systems in Karamay and Kashgar prefectures.”

Huawei has more than 1,400 employees in Turkey and contracts with all operators for 4.5G services.¹⁷ Its main distributor is Penta Teknoloji, and its products are sold on all mainstream sites including Alibaba-owned Trendyol.¹⁸ The company reportedly plans to start local production of mobile phones in Turkey.¹⁹ Huawei’s largest R&D center outside of China is in Istanbul. It invested 520 million TL in the center since 2010 and says the center contributed \$260 million to the local economy. The center hired 200 engineers in 2020, reaching 690 researchers.²⁰ Huawei operates a training program in Turkey (and ten other countries). Besides its sessions in its Istanbul location, Huawei Akademi runs joint IP certificate programs with Turk Telekom, Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi, and İstanbul Üniversitesi.²¹ Last year, it partnered with 11 Turkish universities for its ICT Academy program.²² Huawei also patrons a computer science lab at İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi called HAINA.²³

¹⁷ Sefa Şengül, “Huawei’den Türkiye’de yatırım kararlılığı,” *Anadolu Ajansı*, January 29, 2020, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/ekonomi/huaweiden-turkiyede-yatirim-kararligi/1717563>.

¹⁸ “Huawei Hakkında,” Penta website, accessed April 15, 2021, <https://www.penta.com.tr/markalar/huawei/huawei-hakkinda/>.

¹⁹ “Huawei’nin Türkiye planı ortaya çıktı! Fiyatlar yüzde 30 düşecek,” *Haber 7*, April 3, 2021, <https://ekonomi.haber7.com/ekonomi/haber/3084391-huaweinin-turkiye-plani-ortaya-cikti-fiyatlar-yuzde-30-dusecek>.

²⁰ “Huawei Türkiye Ar-Ge Merkezi’ne 10 yılda 520 milyon TL yatırım yapıldı,” *Anadolu Ajansı*, February 2, 2021, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/ekonomi/huawei-turkiye-ar-ge-merkezine-10-yilda-520-milyon-tl-yatirim-yapildi/2131055>.

²¹ “Huawei Akademi,” Huawei Turkey website, accessed April 15, 2021, <https://www.huawei.com/tr/corporate-information/academie-turkey>.

²² “Corporate Information,” Huawei Turkey website, accessed April 15, 2021, <https://www.huawei.com/tr/corporate-information>.

²³ *Huawei Yetkili Bilgi ve Ağ Akademisi Laboratuvarı* (HAINA); Suzan Çiçek and Hasan Yaman, “Huawei Yetkili Bilgi ve Ağ Akademisi Laboratuvarı Mühendislik Fakültesi’nde Hizmete

Dahua Teknoloji and Hikvision Turkey A.Ş.

Dahua and Hikvision have also signed multi-million-dollar contracts²⁴ with the Chinese government to build the surveillance systems that monitor the Uyghur population.²⁵ Dahua and Hikvision cameras capture real-time footage of Uyghurs on the streets, in the courtyards of mosques, and in the hallways and cells of the region’s many detention centers.

Hikvision has a research partnership with the Xinjiang People’s Armed police and markets “Uyghur analytics.” Its systems provide “real-time Uyghur warnings” to the police, according to an analysis of the company’s technical documents.²⁶ Dahua similarly has developed software to track and monitor Uyghurs, using facial-recognition tools that the company claims can analyze surveillance images for the presence of Uyghurs.²⁷

The video surveillance company Dahua has a much smaller presence in Turkey than Huawei, although it reportedly has 36 offices in the country.²⁸ Dahua’s local sales director in Turkey is Hüseyin Topuz. Dahua’s main distributors are Okisan, Altera, Netus, and Rivo.²⁹ A variety of the company’s products are sold on the popular sites hepsiburada.com and Trendyol.³⁰ Hikvision,

Girdi,” İstanbul Üniversitesi-Cerrahpaşa Kurumsal İletişim Direktörlüğü, December 18, 2018, <https://www.istanbulc.edu.tr/tr/haber/huawei-yetkili-bilgi-ve-ag-akademisi-laboratuvari-muhendislik-fakultesinde-hizme-56006B0044007300570038006900590066006B0077003100>.

²⁴ Rollet, Charles, “Dahua and Hikvision Win Over \$1 Billion In Government-Backed Projects In Xinjiang,” IPVIM, April 23, 2018, <https://ipvm.com/reports/xinjiang-dahua-hikvision>.

²⁵ Cave, Ryan, and Xu, “Mapping more of China’s tech giants.”

²⁶ IPVIM, “Dahua Provides ‘Uyghur Warnings’ To China Police,” February 9, 2021, <https://ipvm.com/reports/dahua-uyghur-warning>.

²⁷ Asher-Shapiro, Avi, “Chinese tech patents tools that can detect, track Uighurs,” January 13, 2021. Thompson Reuters Foundation, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-tech-uyghurs/chinese-tech-patents-tools-that-can-detect-track-uyghurs-idUSKBN29I300>.

²⁸ Dahua Turkey website: <https://dahua-tr.com/>; “Dahua Türkiye Yeni Ofisini Açtı,” *Güvenlik Online*, accessed April 15, 2021, <https://www.guvenlikonline.com/haber/319/dahua-turkiye-yeni-ofisini-acti.html>.

²⁹ “Okisan’ın Organizasyonu ile “Dahua Türkiye 2016” Semineri,” *Güvenlik Teknolojileri*, November 20, 2015, <https://guvenlik.teknolojileri.net/okisanin-organizasyonu-ile-dahua-turkiye-2016-semineri-2/>; Okisan website: <https://www.okisan.com/>; Altera website: <http://dahua.alerta.com.tr/index.php/iletisim/>; Netus website: <https://www.netusguvenlik.com/urun-etiketi/dahua-distributor/>.

³⁰ Search results for Dahua on Hepsiburada.com: <https://www.hepsiburada.com/dahua/guvenlik-sistemleri-c-161719>; Search results for Dahua on Trendyol.com: <https://www.trendyol.com/dahua-x-b111221>.

another video surveillance company, has offices in Istanbul and Izmir, and its sales director in Turkey is Erbil Çorbacı.³¹ Hikvision's website lists four distributors in Turkey: Ekingen Elektronik Koyuncu Elektronik, Oncu Guvenlik Sistemleri, and Tesan İletişim.³²

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

Evidence from many sources conclusively documents the serious human rights violations committed against Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, and other Turkic peoples of East Turkistan. This report focuses on two primary sources: the firsthand testimony of Uyghur victims of the atrocities and their family members and leaked Chinese government documents. Combined with other documentation available from other credible sources,³³ it is clear that human rights crimes are being committed on a massive scale. Governments, civil society, and the business sector have a duty to respond.

Governments must protect vulnerable refugees, uphold international human rights norms, and promote the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The cooperation of Chinese companies in the atrocities committed by the Xinjiang government requires urgent attention.

Corporate accountability is of vital importance in upholding international human rights standards. The business sector in Turkey must end any benefits or profits from partnerships with the Chinese companies that facilitate the Chinese government's ongoing human rights atrocities. At a minimum, Turkish business partners of

³¹ "Kamera Güvenlik Sistemlerinde Türkiye Ne Seviyede? Bu Alanda Yeni Teknoloji Trendleri Neler?" *Haberler.com*, December 17, 2016, <https://www.haberler.com/kamera-guvenlik-sistemleri-inde-turkiye-ne-seviyede-9071076-haberi/>.

³² Hikvision's distributors list: <https://www.hikvision.com/en/Partners/channel-partners/find-a-distributor/>.

³³ See, for example: Uyghur Research Institute, "Genocide in East Turkistan," October 2020, <https://www.uysi.org/en/?p=774>.

complicit Chinese companies must apply the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights³⁴ to their operations, and end ties to companies tainted by profits from human rights abuses against Uyghurs in East Turkistan. UHRP and URI urge Turkish government agencies, independent analysts, and human rights advocates to apply heightened scrutiny to these business ties.

The Government of Turkey and all governments should:

- Provide safe refuge, residency, and citizenship status for Uyghurs currently residing outside China. Governments must not subject Uyghurs to refoulement to China, where they are at extremely high risk of arbitrary detention, disappearance, torture, and other human rights abuses. In addition, countries must not extradite Uyghurs to third countries where they are at risk of refoulement to China.
- Facilitate domestic and international humanitarian organizations to provide resettlement assistance for all Uyghurs who are currently living outside China. States should request all necessary assistance from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Migration Organization, as well as charitable refugee-assistance organizations.
- Adopt economic and diplomatic policies to uphold international human rights standards, including sanctions on the officials and companies implementing and facilitating gross human rights violations against Uyghurs. This response should include travel bans, asset freezes on individuals, and a prohibition on commercial dealings with the private companies facilitating ethno-religious surveillance and punishment.

Companies should:

- Ensure that they do not purchase goods or raw materials made under the Chinese government’s forced-labor

³⁴ United Nations, Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Business/Intro_Guiding_PrinciplesBusinessHR.pdf.

programs for Uyghurs and other Turkic peoples, and adopt the necessary policies throughout their supply chains.

- Pledge to eradicate Uyghur forced labor from their global supply chains by signing the “[Call to Action](#)” of the Coalition to End Forced Labour in the Uyghur Region.
- End business relationships with Chinese surveillance companies complicit in the surveillance and atrocity crimes in the Uyghur homeland, as well as transnational harassment and repression of Uyghurs.
- Examine all business relationships with the Chinese companies in light of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.



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