

A city ruled by fear and silence: Urumchi, two years on



A Report by the Uyghur Human Rights Project

Table of Contents

<u>A city ruled by fear and silence: Urumchi, two years on</u>	2
<u>Detentions and a lack of due process</u>	5
<u>Seeking protection from the state</u>	10
<u>Inflaming tensions</u>	14
<u>Investigation needed into Chinese claims</u>	16
<u>The way forward</u>	20
<u>Transcript of arbitrary detention footage</u>	22

A city ruled by fear and silence: Urumchi, two years on

Two years after the regional capital of Urumchi was rocked by unprecedented unrest on July 5, 2009, the city remains tense, and reports¹ indicate that security has been stepped up in Urumchi and other cities in East Turkestan (also known as the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region) on the eve of the anniversary. Anniversaries of turbulent events are viewed as particularly sensitive in the People's Republic of China



©AFP - Getty Images.

(PRC). On the eve of the PRC's 60th National Day in October 2009, hundreds of soldiers patrolled the streets of Urumchi and other major cities in East Turkestan, while slogans promoting "ethnic unity" blanketed the streets.² Nearly two years later, "ethnic unity" still only exists in official propaganda, and a heavy police presence continues to ensure that Uyghur residents in Urumchi will remain quiet.

Violence that was perpetrated by Uyghurs, Chinese and Chinese security forces in July and September 2009 in Urumchi should be condemned. However, Chinese officials have aggressively portrayed the unrest in Urumchi solely as an episode of "smashing, looting and burning" carried out by Uyghur rioters³ who attacked Chinese residents of the city. Missing from Chinese official narratives have been accounts of a terrifying police crackdown on peaceful Uyghur demonstrators on July 5, resulting in an untold number of dead; the indiscriminate nature of detentions and forcible disappearances that were carried out beginning that evening; and the attacks that were carried out on members of the Uyghur community by Chinese residents of the city in July and September of 2009.

"Instead of working to ease ethnic tensions, the Chinese state incited Chinese residents of Urumchi to attack Uyghurs," said Uyghur American Association president Alim Seytoff. "Chinese officials responded to the unrest on July 5 in the only way they know how- with violence and bloodshed. They justified their actions by demonizing the Uyghur people."

Front cover photograph ©European Press Photo Agency.

¹ Radio Free Asia. (2011, June 24). *Security Tight in Xinjiang*. Retrieved from <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/security-06242011134728.html?searchterm=None>.

² 60 years after revolution, ethnic tension still plagues China. (2009, September 21). *McClatchy Newspapers*. Retrieved from <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2009/09/21/75765/60-years-after-revolution-ethnic.html>.

³ People in Xinjiang condemn violent crimes. (2009, July 7). *People's Daily*. Retrieved from <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90776/90882/6695058.html>.

Uyghurs who witnessed the events of July and September 2009 in Urumchi and who have fled to other countries have described to UHRP being extremely fearful of persecution, and have said they felt safe only when they were on board a flight headed out of China. However, many have been unable to feel safe even though they are now living abroad, and say they continue to fear for their friends and family who remain in East Turkestan.

In the wake of July 2009, international observers called on Chinese authorities to allow a comprehensive accounting of the events in Urumchi. Many, including Human Rights Watch, called for an independent investigation. Sophie Richardson, Asia advocacy director at Human Rights Watch, stated: “It is unclear what happened in Urumqi, but what is clear is that the government needs to allow an independent investigation if its version of events is to have any credibility in Xinjiang or internationally.”⁴ However, over the past two years, officials have refused to allow independent investigators to visit East Turkestan.

In line with accounts provided by the Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP) and Amnesty International in their reports on July 5, 2009 unrest in Urumchi, a [newly-released video](#) ([view transcript here](#)) graphically reveals the arbitrary, brutal nature of detentions of Uyghurs carried out by armed Chinese security forces in the wake of July 5. The video is consistent with the “sweeping house-to-house searches” described in the reports issued by UHRP and Amnesty, and shows military forces, People’s Armed Police and regular police carrying out detentions of Uyghurs in Urumchi. Witnesses to the arrests of Uyghurs indicate that the arrests were carried out in violation of Chinese and international law.

Witnesses to post-July 5 detentions told UHRP that security forces did not introduce themselves or explain the reasons for arrest, and they did not tell families of those arrested where they were being taken. In the new video, there is no indication that any of those arrested were given a reason for their arrest.

Since July 5, 2009, Chinese officials have spared no effort to silence and intimidate Uyghur voices, and have actively sought to suppress information that contradicts the official narrative about what happened that day. A communications blackout and harsh punishments for Uyghur webmasters and journalists aided official efforts to manage and control information emerging from the region.

The case of Uyghur journalist Gheyret Niyaz is emblematic of the suppression of Uyghur voices since July 5. Niyaz was sentenced to 15 years in prison in July 2010 for “endangering state security” by speaking to foreign journalists. He had publicly criticized the way in which officials had handled the July 5 unrest. His imprisonment shocked

⁴ Human Rights Watch. (2009, July 6). *China: Exercise Restraint in Xinjiang*. Retrieved from <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/07/06/china-exercise-restraint-xinjiang>.

many observers, as many Chinese scholars believed he had “promoted increasing mutual understanding between Uyghurs and Han”.⁵

Key government officials have actively worked to exacerbate tensions between Han Chinese and Uyghurs, in spite of “ethnic unity” propaganda. The official press applauded efforts of nationalist hackers posting inflammatory messages about Uyghur leader Rebiya Kadeer on overseas websites.⁶ [A second video](#) that recently emerged, produced by Agenfor Media and narrated in English, sheds light on the official promotion of ethnic discord in East Turkestan after July 5. In the video, Chinese security forces appear to be distributing weapons to Han Chinese residents of Urumchi.

This report seeks to provide background into the nature of post-July 5 detentions and criminal procedures in East Turkestan. It examines the ways in which Chinese officials have responded to Uyghur calls for protection from the state, and the state’s active inflammation of ethnic tensions. Finally, it calls for an independent investigation into Chinese claims, in the hopes that a comprehensive account may one day emerge regarding the events of July and September 2009 in Urumchi.



People’s Armed Police move through Kashgar in July 2009. ©Angel (photojournalist).

⁵ Chinese Human Rights Defenders. (2010, July 30). *A Public Letter by Chinese Citizens Urging the Release of Uyghur Journalist Hailaite Niyazi*. Retrieved from <http://chrnet.org/2010/07/30/a-public-letter-by-chinese-citizens-urging-the-release-of-uyghur-journalist-hailaite-niyazi/>.

⁶ See, for instance, Hacker attacks website over Kadeer film, (2009, September 22), *China Daily*, available at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2009-09/22/content_8719448.htm.

Detentions and a lack of due process

Testimonies collected by human rights organizations, together with the recently-released video, reveal a lack of due process in the detentions of Uyghurs that were carried out in the days, weeks and months after July 5, 2009 in Urumchi. The Chinese government has refused to allow an independent inquiry into post-July 5 detentions and legal procedures, or into the events of July 5 themselves. Chinese officials have released figures regarding detentions and arrests connected with July 5 that are unclear and contradictory.⁷ In addition, Chinese authorities have acknowledged holding in custody people who had protested peacefully on July 5.⁸ The detention and sentencing of Uyghur bloggers and



Paramilitary police outside a mosque in Urumchi on July 13, 2009. ©Reuters.

journalists⁹ after July 5 attest to this fact, and have also shown how the Chinese government has sought to silence voices that contradict the official narrative about July 5.

UHRP's 2010 report on the July 5 unrest, [*Can Anyone Hear Us? Voices From the 2009 Unrest in Urumchi*](#), documents widespread arbitrary detentions and "forcible disappearances" of Uyghurs carried out in connection with the unrest. Urumchi residents interviewed by UHRP for its

2010 report gave accounts of sweeping searches of Uyghurs, especially men, in the neighborhoods of Urumchi in the days and weeks after July 5. Several Uyghurs interviewed for the 2010 report provided first- and second-hand accounts of having their heads covered while being detained, and of being severely tortured and beaten while in detention. Some interviewees gave accounts of Uyghur individuals who were detained after having witnessed and/or provided information to others about the use of force against Uyghur protestors on July 5.

⁷ Based on independent eyewitness accounts and international media reports, UHRP believes that the actual number of people arrested is much higher than the official figures, which exceeded 2,000 if totaled. A *Financial Times* report published on July 19, 2009 stated that more than 4,000 Uyghurs had been arrested up to that point, and that Urumchi's prisons were so full that detainees were being held in People's Liberation Army warehouses. (See Hille, K. (2009, July 19). Xinjiang widens crackdown on Uighurs. *Financial Times*, retrieved from <http://www.uhrp.org/articles/2530/1/Xinjiang-widens-crackdown-on-Uighurs-/index.html>.)

⁸ Congressional-Executive Commission on China. (2009, November 6). Xinjiang Authorities Continue Detentions, Announce Arrests Connected to July 5 Incident. Retrieved June 1, 2009 from <http://www.cecc.gov/pages/virtualAcad/index.phpd?showsingel=128326>.

⁹ For more information, see: <http://uhrp.org/articles/4041/1/Uyghur-American-Association-strongly-condemns-the-sentencing-of-three-Uyghur-webmasters-/index.html>.

Amnesty International's 2010 report on the July 5 unrest, [*Justice, Justice: The July 2009 protests in Xinjiang, China*](#), also documented the arbitrary nature of the detentions of Uyghurs carried out by armed Chinese security forces. Uyghurs interviewed by Amnesty stated that Uyghurs detained in connection with July 5 protests were loaded onto army trucks or buses before being taken away. Testimonies of Uyghurs that were obtained by Amnesty detailed sweeping house-to-house searches during which large numbers of people were arrested.

Human Rights Watch has also documented the disappearance of young Uyghur men and boys after July 5. [*We Are Afraid to Even Look for Them: Enforced Disappearances in the Wake of Xinjiang's Protests*](#), described both large-scale sweep operations in the Uyghur neighborhoods of Erdaoqiao and Saimachang in Urumchi and smaller, targeted raids that continued through at least mid-August, 2009. The report details the beatings of male Uyghurs of all ages during security sweeps and raids. It highlights the arbitrary nature of the detentions, stating that, in some cases, "the security forces simply went after every young man they could catch and packed them into their trucks by the dozens."¹⁰

While Human Rights Watch's report documents the enforced disappearances of 43 Uyghur men and teenage boys, the organization's Asia director stated:

*"The cases we documented are likely just the tip of the iceberg. The Chinese government says it respects the rule of law, but nothing could undermine this claim more than taking people from their homes or off the street and 'disappearing' them- leaving their families unsure whether they are dead or alive."*¹¹

New testimonies

New testimonies collected by UHRP from Uyghurs who were in Urumchi in the wake of July 5 further illustrate the widespread and arbitrary nature of arrests and detentions in the city. A former university student living in Norway interviewed by UHRP said that many of his female family members were detained after having participated in July 5 demonstrations. One of the relatives told him that several buses were parked at People's Square, a focal point of the demonstrations, ready to transport people who were arrested. The relative stated that there were too many people in the location where she was detained for anyone to be able to sleep, so that detainees were forced to remain standing. She and other relatives told the interviewee that during their detention, they witnessed detainees being shot and beaten.¹²

An 18-year-old living in Holland recounted being arrested on July 7, 2009. He stated that he had been present at the demonstrations on July 5, although he hadn't previously

¹⁰ Human Rights Watch. (2009, October 21). China: Detainees 'Disappeared' After Xinjiang Protests. Retrieved from <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/10/20/china-detainees-disappeared-after-xinjiang-protests>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Interview conducted by UHRP in March 2011.

known they were going to take place. He described being taken to the Shengli Lu police station, which he said was full of Uyghurs, some of whom were tied up, and most of whom were handcuffed. He was beaten and tortured, in addition to being questioned regarding what he had been doing on July 5. He was subsequently released on July 9, but he was told that he could be arrested again at any time, and he was required to report to the police every week.¹³

Another Uyghur living in Holland, who had been a student before fleeing China, told UHRP how Chinese security forces arrested him and three friends who were eating



Chinese security forces detain a Uyghur man in Kashgar in July 2009. ©Angel (photojournalist).

dinner in a restaurant in Urumchi about two weeks after July 5. He stated that armed police arrested them, tied their hands behind their back, and took them away. He recalled that his t-shirt was pulled over his head during the arrest, and he was subsequently harshly interrogated and beaten.¹⁴

A 26-year-old Uyghur living in Norway described being arrested at his home on July 7, together with two male acquaintances. He stated that police did not let him or his companions speak before pushing them into a car and driving to a prison in Kaziwan, on the outskirts of Urumchi. During the week that he was in

prison, no one in his family was informed about what had happened to him. He said police continued to beat him and repeatedly ask the same questions, until he became dizzy. Police eventually told him that his two acquaintances had joined an “illegal protest”, referring to the July 5 demonstration, and that he had hidden the two men. He told UHRP that his family used connections and bribes to find out where he was and obtain his release from detention, without which he would have been charged with a crime and imprisoned.¹⁵

Many other Uyghurs interviewed by UHRP who were in Urumchi in July 2009 but who have since fled the country spoke of witnessing or hearing about mass detentions and house-to-house searches, and of learning of the detentions of family members and friends who were sometimes later sentenced to lengthy prison terms. Accounts given by some

¹³ Interview conducted by UHRP in March 2011.

¹⁴ Interview conducted by UHRP in March 2011.

¹⁵ Interview conducted by UHRP in March 2011.

interviewees revealed Chinese officials' failure to adhere to due process of law. For instance, a former medical student now living in Sweden said that her 25-year-old brother had been in prison for five months before officials told her family about his prison sentence, in contravention of Chinese law, which states that family members must be informed in writing within five days of a convicted individual's imprisonment.¹⁶ The interviewee said officials had sentenced her brother, who had taken part in July 5 demonstrations, for participating in demonstrations against the Chinese government.¹⁷ An 18-year-old interviewee in Sweden said that his father had been taken away by police after July 5, but since his initial detention, the family had been given no information regarding his whereabouts, physical condition or any charges filed against him.¹⁸

Official documents reveal a lack of transparency in trials

The absence of due process has plagued trials and other criminal procedures carried out in connection with the July 5 unrest. Two official documents obtained by UHRP from the Procuratorate of Bayingolin Mongol Autonomous Prefecture in East Turkestan regarding the cases of 10 Uyghur individuals highlight the lack of transparency inherent in post-July 5 trials and detentions.

According to the first document, 10 Uyghurs were tried in a closed trial on April 15, 2010 for crimes allegedly committed on July 5, 2009 in the city of Urumchi. They were given sentences ranging from four years in prison to the death sentence with a two-year reprieve. A second document obtained by UHRP lays out an appeal to the XUAR¹⁹ Supreme People's Court by one of the defendants, 15-year-old Alimjan Musajan, who claims in his appeal to have been tortured into confessing guilt.

According to the appeal document, Musajan, who maintains his innocence, was sentenced to 11 years in prison and has begun serving his sentence. In the document, Musajan states that he was convicted of charges related to alleged attacks on three men in their twenties in July 2009 in Urumchi, when he was 14 years old. Musajan outlines a flawed legal process in which he states that the Urumchi Municipal People's Procuratorate turned his case back to the Urumchi Municipal Public Security Bureau three times due to lack of evidence. He asserts that he was declared not guilty at one point and released to Ili Prefecture, in the northwestern part of East Turkestan. He also states that he was not given the opportunity to defend himself in court. In addition, he states that it is unclear whether he has been convicted of "intentional homicide" or intentional battery.

According to Chinese law, criminal defendants have the right to appeal to a higher people's court if they do not accept the judgment and ruling of their first trial, and this appeal will not increase their punishment.

¹⁶ See Article 20 of China's Prison Law, available at <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4c32023b2.pdf>.

¹⁷ Interview conducted by UHRP in March 2011.

¹⁸ Interview conducted by UHRP in March 2011.

¹⁹ Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.



Chinese security forces detain Uyghurs in Kashgar in July 2009. ©Angel (photojournalist).

According to the first court document obtained by UHRP, Ms. Menzire Bakaji was convicted of intentional homicide for allegedly inciting a murder and was given the death penalty with a two-year reprieve. Although Ms. Bakaji herself, according to the court document, was not accused of having perpetrated any violence, she was given a heavier sentence than co-defendants whom the court said she incited to kill a woman. She was not alleged to be among the group beating the woman, and was accused of stating that the woman had not died, using only one word in the Uyghur language. Her trial and suspended death sentence were based entirely on this allegation and this single word.

At least two other Uyghur women have been given a death sentence or suspended death sentence since the July 2009 Urumchi unrest. Nineteen-year-old Uyghur student Pezilet Ekber was

sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve following a closed trial in April 2010 on charges of involvement in violence in Urumchi, but court officials have not revealed what charges she was convicted of. Government authorities have also refused to reveal any other details of criminal procedures implemented in Ekber's case, and have intimidated her family members into silence about what they know. Another Uyghur woman was executed in early 2010.

Seeking protection from the state

On July 5, 2009, peaceful Uyghur protestors took to the streets of Urumchi looking for protection from the Chinese state against discrimination, marginalization and fears for the security of Uyghur people in China.

Using online social networks, Uyghurs in Urumchi called for the demonstration for Sunday, July 5 after a deadly attack on Uyghur migrant workers took place at a toy factory in the city of Shaoguan in Guangdong Province.

On the night of June 25, 2009, large numbers of Han Chinese descended upon the dormitories of Uyghur workers at the Xuri Toy Factory with violent intent. A rumor had quickly circulated through Shaoguan alleging the rape of a Han Chinese woman by Uyghur men working at the factory. The allegations later proved to be false, but the ferocity of the attack exposed a seam of hostility towards Uyghurs in Chinese society.

Chinese official media reported two Uyghur deaths as a result of the attack in Shaoguan²⁰. Reports from non-official sources contradicted the narrative that emerged from the Chinese media. Most notably, a report in the Guardian presents evidence from a Han Chinese participant in the violence, who claimed he helped to kill seven or eight Uyghurs. The interviewee added, “When I see the news and they say only two people died, I am so angry. That must be wrong. How can they not be dead? I saw their heads bleeding²¹.” In the immediate aftermath of the attack, the slow response from the police in investigating the attack compounded the feeling among Uyghurs that the state did not possess the will to protect the interests of their community.

The attack in Shaoguan rapidly became an emblem of Uyghur disillusionment with their status in modern China. Weary of stereotyped representations of Uyghurs as criminals, frustration at a lack of economic opportunity, increasing marginalization of their culture, and a sense of vulnerability to unpunished violent attacks, Uyghurs in Urumchi organized the July 5 protest. The intent of the demonstration was to march on and gather at People’s Square in Urumchi to seek a meeting with the leadership of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and to express Uyghur frustration with current conditions. In a clear message to the Chinese authorities that the demonstration was focused on social justice rather than on separatism, Uyghur protestors carried the flag of the People’s Republic of China.

As reported by the Uyghur Human Rights Project²² and Amnesty International²³ in interviews with Uyghur eyewitnesses to the events on July 5, heavy handed policing

²⁰ Peace reigns at toy factory in Shaoguan where brawl killed two. (2009, July 7). *China Daily*. Retrieved from http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/cndy/2009-07/07/content_8385191.htm.

²¹ Watts, J. (2009, July 10). Old suspicions magnified mistrust into ethnic riots in Urumqi. *Guardian (UK)*. Retrieved from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jul/10/china-riots-ughurs-han-urumqi>.

²² Uyghur Human Rights Project. (2010). *Can Anyone Hear Us? Voices From The 2009 Unrest in Urumchi*. Retrieved from <http://uhrp.org/articles/3931/1/Can-Anyone-Hear-Us-Voices-From-The-2009-Unrest-In-Urumchi-/index.html>.

²³ Amnesty International. (2010). *“Justice, justice”: The July 2009 protests in Xinjiang, China*. Retrieved from <http://www.amnesty.org/en/news-and-updates/report/new-testimonies-reinforce-call-china-investigate-xinjiang-riots-2010-07-02>.

characterized the initial responses of Chinese security forces deployed to People's Square. Both the Uyghur Human Rights Project and Amnesty International went on to report eyewitness accounts of Chinese security forces using live fire on demonstrators. The reports that Chinese authorities responded to calls for greater protection from the state with more violence only fed the notion that the rule of law applied unequally in the People's Republic of China. The aftermath of July 5, with documented security sweeps of Uyghur neighborhoods²⁴, arbitrary detentions²⁵, forced disappearances²⁶, torture in detention²⁷, trials lacking in due process²⁸ and swift executions²⁹, has only served to further alienate Uyghurs from a stake in their communities and region.

The use of CCTV cameras in identifying Uyghur participants in July 5 protests has been widespread. Uyghurs interviewed by the Uyghur Human Rights Project in the last year told researchers that police had targeted them for investigation solely on the basis of their

being captured on camera at the protests on July 5³⁰. The use of CCTV proved such a useful tool in identifying protest suspects that police in Urumchi installed 40,000 CCTV cameras across the city, according to reports in July 2010³¹. Uyghurs feel that they have been unfairly targeted by CCTV evidence, as a corresponding number of detentions has not been witnessed in Urumchi's Han Chinese community following attacks on Uyghurs and Uyghur owned businesses on July 6 and 7, 2009, as well as in Han Chinese on Uyghur violence in September 2009.



Surveillance cameras near a mosque in Urumchi.
©Agence France-Presse.

The Uyghur Human Rights Project has reported that on these two occasions, Uyghurs suffered widespread beatings and fatalities. Uyghur interviewees who have spoken to UHRP in the past year have said that they witnessed Chinese security forces stand by as the beatings of Uyghurs by Han Chinese civilians occurred³².

²⁴ Human Rights Watch. (2009). *We Are Afraid to Even Look for Them*. Retrieved from <http://www.hrw.org/en/reports/2009/10/22/we-are-afraid-even-look-them-0>.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Radio Free Asia. (2009, September 19). *Standoff Over Death in Custody*. Retrieved from <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/death-incustody-09192009144227.html>.

²⁸ Human Rights Watch. (2009, Oct. 15). *China: Xinjiang Trials Deny Justice: Proceedings Fail Minimum Fair Trial Standards*. Retrieved June 1, 2010 from <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/10/15/china-xinjiang-trials-deny-justice>.

²⁹ Lauder, S. (2009, November 11). *Amnesty fears more Xinjiang executions*. *ABC News (Australia)*. Retrieved from <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2009/11/11/2739034.htm?section=world>.

³⁰ Interviews conducted by UHRP in March 2011.

³¹ China installs 40,000 security cameras in Urumqi. (2010, July 2). *Associated Press*. Retrieved from <http://chinaelectionsblog.net/?p=7732>.

³² Interviews conducted by UHRP in March 2011.

As stated by Gardner Bovingdon in his book *The Uyghurs: Strangers in Their Own Land*, widespread, popular grievances over repressive conditions and Chinese policies in East Turkestan have provided the backdrop for Uyghur protests that have taken place in recent decades, even when protests have been sparked by a single event, such as the death of a Uyghur individual in police custody. Pent-up anger extending far behind these individual incidents has compelled marchers to protest against nuclear weapons testing, Han migration, family planning policies, and other issues. The July 2009 unrest is no exception and, as stated, was sparked by the deaths of Uyghur factory workers in Guangdong Province, but was also propelled by grievances over unemployment, social discrimination, and a lack of political and decision-making power in the region on issues related to the Uyghur community.

By repressing dissent in the wake of the July 2009 unrest, Chinese authorities have merely deprived Uyghurs of the ability to voice their grievances, and this repression has conversely exacerbated Uyghur concerns, increasing the likelihood of future popular disturbances.

Bovingdon provides statistics that show a decreasing number of public protests in East Turkestan, at the same time as inequalities among Han and Uyghur in the region remain and instances of protest and violence increase in China proper. This trend has taken place against the backdrop of uncorroborated Chinese government claims that it suffers from the threat of Uyghur terrorism that further demonizes the Uyghur population in the eyes of Chinese people and the outside world.

Government authorities both in East Turkestan and Beijing responded to the unrest of July 2009 with propaganda blaming “overseas hostile forces”, “terrorists” and “splittists” for allegedly instigating the unrest. Following the July 5, 2009 unrest in Urumchi, regional government officials said that violence had been “instigated and directed from abroad, and carried out by outlaws in the country”. Regional chairman Nur Bekri asserted in a televised speech on July 6, 2009 that the “three forces of terrorism, separatism and extremism” had sought to create chaos in the region³³. This pattern of official behavior has repeated itself a number of times in recent history, including during the 2008 unrest in Lhasa, Tibet. In March 2008, official Chinese media stated that the “Dalai clique” had “organized, premeditated and masterminded” riots in Lhasa³⁴.

By blaming social unrest on “East Turkestan terrorist forces” supported by “hostile foreign forces”, Chinese officials circumvent the need to investigate the failures of government policies, and also shore up their argument that brute force is needed to maintain order. Mass protests by ethnic Mongolians in May 2011, sparked by the death of a Mongolian herder, represent the continuing inability of China’s political system to effectively address the real problems facing the indigenous peoples living in the historically disputed areas of East Turkestan, Tibet and Southern Mongolia (also known as Inner Mongolia). Instances of social unrest outside of historically disputed areas are rarely characterized as having been organized overseas or of being terrorist in nature. The

³³ See video of Bekri’s speech here (in Chinese): <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6mwufgjRdRs>.

³⁴ Wounded Lhasa residents recall horror after riot instigated by Dalai clique. (2008, March 16). *Xinhua*. Retrieved from http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2008-03/16/content_7801706.htm.

methods used to respond to riots in Guangdong Province in July 2011, which included widespread detentions but not accusations of overseas instigation or terrorism, are illustrative of the Chinese state's dichotomous approach to social unrest.

Inflaming tensions

The failure to provide state protection by officials of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and the repression of Uyghurs by Chinese security forces during the unrest in East Turkestan in the summer of 2009 was accompanied by an active inflaming of tensions in the region by these very same agents of the state. In addition to provocative



Xinjiang Party Secretary Wang Lequan speaks on state television on July 7, 2009. ©Xinhua.

remarks made by Chinese state officials, video footage circulated on the Internet in the past year appears to demonstrate that Chinese security forces distributed weapons to Han Chinese civilians.

In its 2010 report on the July 2009 unrest, the Uyghur Human Rights Project discussed the experiences of Uyghurs in Urumchi on July 6 and 7. Eyewitnesses told Uyghur Human Rights Project researchers that they had witnessed beatings of Uyghurs by Han Chinese, sometimes to death, and the use of live fire. In interviews conducted this year, Uyghurs described how Han

Chinese mobs roamed Uyghur neighborhoods seeking Uyghurs to attack³⁵.

At a period when tensions between the Han Chinese and Uyghur communities had reached fever pitch, Urumchi Communist Party Secretary Li Zhi was filmed chanting to a crowd of Han Chinese civilians, “Down with Rebiya! Down with Rebiya!” through a megaphone³⁶. According to Times of London reporter Jane Macartney, the mob of people was armed with sticks. After a call for them to disperse, they continued down People’s Road and were not disarmed or forcibly prevented from entering a predominately Uyghur run bazaar. After Li Zhi’s speech, Macartney reported a person in the mob as saying, “Rebiya Kadeer is Osama”.

Senior leaders in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region also made remarks that did not recognize the illegality of the self-appointed “justice” in which some Han Chinese residents in Urumchi were involved on July 6 and 7. In the wake of the July 2009 unrest, then Xinjiang Party Secretary Wang Lequan made a nine-minute speech on television that called for calm, but stopped short of condemning acts of violence on Uyghurs. In a message to the Han Chinese who had undertaken acts of violence, he said, “Comrades, to start with, such action is fundamentally not necessary... Our dictatorial force is fully able to knock out the evildoers, so there is no need to take such action.” The view that Han Chinese mobs were in effect carrying out actions that were not needed because the

³⁵ Interviews conducted by UHRP in March 2011.

³⁶ See video: <http://www.vimeo.com/16243553> and Fresh chaos erupts in Urumqi. (2009, July 7). Xinhua. Retrieved from http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-07/07/content_11666941.htm.

capacity of the security forces was sufficient communicates a negative message to Uyghurs in Urumchi. Violence from both Han Chinese and Uyghur communities should have been unequivocally condemned.

A striking piece of evidence that has emerged in the past year has been video footage of what appears to be Chinese security forces handing weapons to Han Chinese civilians³⁷. In the video, at 0:53 to 0:59, it appears as if a stick is being handed by someone in uniform to an unidentified other. The surrounding crowd appears to be comprised of Han Chinese civilians, who cheer when the stick is handed over. Although the video does not indicate how widespread such distributions of weapons were, interviews with Uyghur eyewitnesses of July 6 and 7 corroborate the practice.

“I was at home on July 7 looking out of my window onto the street below. I saw a police car come to our street. They had three boxes of sticks which were handed out to Chinese people³⁸.”

“With my own eyes I saw the beatings. There were Chinese with sticks shouting ‘kill them’. I saw Chinese police give them their sticks and then stand by as they beat Uyghurs³⁹.”



An armed member of the Chinese security forces stands by as Han Chinese residents of Urumchi roam the streets on July 7, some with makeshift weapons. ©Boston Globe, highlighting by Uyghur American Association.

³⁷ See video: <http://www.vimeo.com/16243553>.

³⁸ Interview conducted by UHRP in March 2011.

³⁹ Interview conducted by UHRP in March 2011.

Investigation needed into Chinese claims

Criminal procedures carried out in connection with July 5, 2009 unrest, including detentions, formal arrests, and trials, have not been subject to civil scrutiny. Much news of sentences related to the unrest has emerged in a piecemeal fashion, and not from official news reports. A communications blackout⁴⁰ in East Turkestan that effectively shut down the region's Internet for 10 months and harsh punishment for Uyghur webmasters and journalists formed part of Chinese authorities' strategy to manage and control information coming out of the region after July 5, 2009. The CCP's monopoly on information extends to its refusal to welcome international bodies to assess its performance or to investigate rights conditions, particularly in the aftermath of unrest. An official with the CCP Central Committee, when asked by a German reporter why China would not invite international figures to investigate the March 2008 unrest in Lhasa, indicated that this would constitute interference in China's "internal affairs", which China would never allow.⁴¹

As discussed above, authorities have consistently failed to provide information about the detention and trials of Uyghurs, and the punishments handed down to Uyghur defendants. Those who have dared to seek information about their detained or "disappeared" family members have been turned away, and have even faced the threat of retaliation for their inquiries. Chinese press and civil society lack the capacity to push for accountability in China's criminal and judicial system.

Despite the lack of transparency and accountability in China's criminal and judicial system, reports in the western media have frequently cited China's official tolls regarding July 5 casualty figures in Urumchi. As recently as June 2011⁴², reports have parroted the official death toll of "197 people, mostly Han" killed in Urumchi, and have failed to mention the widely available assertions of violence against Uyghurs or accounts which cast doubt on official casualty figures.

International media reports frequently refer to the events of July 2009 as the "Uyghur riots"⁴³ or the "Urumchi riots"⁴⁴. However, this characterization of the unrest in Urumchi has primarily been based on information from the Chinese government that has not been

⁴⁰ China's Xinjiang 'isolated' by email, phone blocks. (2009, October 23). *Agence France-Press*. Retrieved from <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jDByyshZ0Foc4Oir2dwLSfBmpj4A>.

⁴¹ Official: the Chinese people never allow other countries to interfere with internal affairs. (2009, October 17). *Xinhua*. Retrieved from <http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/6785850.html>.

⁴² Kazakh deports Uighur to China, rights groups cry foul. (2011, June 7). *Reuters*. Retrieved from <http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/kazakh-deports-uighur-to-china-rights-groups-cry-foul>.

⁴³ See in general: Lloyd Parry, R. (2009, July 6). Uyghur riots sparked by fears that separatist dream is dying. *The Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/asia/article6649318.ece> and Hennock, M. (2009, July 7). Bad Press: The Uighur riots in western China are teaching the government how to spin. *Newsweek*. Retrieved from <http://www.newsweek.com/2009/07/06/bad-press.html>.

⁴⁴ Moore, M. (2009, July 8). Urumqi riots signal dark days ahead. *Daily Telegraph*. Retrieved from <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/malcolmmoore/100002509/urumqi-riots-signal-dark-days-ahead/> and Chinese president skips G8 after Urumqi riots. (2009, July 8). *Reuters*. Retrieved from http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2009/7/8/worldupdates/2009-07-08T054305Z_01_NOOTR_RTRMDNC_0_-408811-2&sec=Worldupdates.

sufficiently contested. The research conducted by UHRP and Amnesty International indicates that the July 2009 unrest cannot be viewed solely as an outbreak of ethnic and civil unrest that was committed by Uyghurs against Han Chinese in Urumchi. The accounts collected by UHRP and Amnesty International of deadly force used by Chinese security forces against Uyghur demonstrators, together with widely reported accounts of violence committed by Han Chinese civilians against Uyghur residents of Urumchi, necessitate a broader understanding of the unrest in the city.

The video reportage⁴⁵ of a veteran BBC journalist and his crew are emblematic of the degree to which the Chinese government has been able to manage Western media representations of Uyghur unrest. Although the BBC reporter acknowledges being followed by Chinese security personnel wherever he went in Urumchi, he asserts that he and his foreign television crew were able to “secretly” interview a Uyghur woman who agrees with the official death toll for July 5 and states that around 10 Uyghurs were killed in revenge attacks. However, Uyghurs interviewed by foreign reporters have been known to “disappear” after providing information that is not in line with the government portrayal of the situation in East Turkestan, as happened with Dilkex Tiliwaldi⁴⁶ in the city of Ghulja in 2004 after a PBS Frontline journalist interviewed him about government repression of Uyghurs.

In some cases, Chinese security forces detained foreign reporters in East Turkestan in July 2009 and sent them away from the region.⁴⁷ Hong Kong journalists were reportedly beaten by paramilitary police during unrest in Urumchi in September 2009.⁴⁸

The case of Ershidin Israel

The May 2011 deportation of Uyghur refugee Ershidin Israel⁴⁹ from Kazakhstan to China took place after Chinese authorities pressured the Kazakh government and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and presented them with unverified assertions regarding Israel’s participation in terrorist activity. Israel fled to Kazakhstan from China in September 2009 after providing information to Radio Free Asia (RFA) about the death of Uyghur Shohret Tursun in police custody. Tursun was beaten to death in September 2009 while in detention for his alleged involvement in the July 2009 unrest in Urumchi. Israel was offered resettlement in Sweden after the UNHCR granted him mandate refugee status in March 2010, but Kazakh authorities refused to issue the

⁴⁵ Inside Chinese conflict city. (2009, October 5). *BBC*. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/8291904.stm>.

⁴⁶ Interview with Serene Fang: Secret Meetings and an Unexpected Arrest. (January 2005). *Frontline World*. Retrieved from <http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/china401/fang2.html>.

⁴⁷ Committee to Protect Journalists. (2009, July 13). *Xinjiang reporters detained; Beijing commentator missing*. Retrieved from <http://www.cpj.org/2009/07/journalists-detained-in-xinjiang-commentator-missi.php>.

⁴⁸ Foreign Correspondents’ Club of China. (2009, September 5). *FCCC Condemns Beating Of Journalists In Urumqi*. Retrieved from <http://www.fccchina.org/2009/09/05/fccc-condemns-beating-of-journalists-in-urumqi/>.

⁴⁹ Uyghur Human Rights Project (2011, June 8). *The world must demand accountability for deported Uyghur refugee Ershidin Israel*. Retrieved from <http://uhrp.org/articles/5096/1/The-world-must-demand-accountability-for-deported-Uyghur-refugee-Ershidin-Israel-/index.html>.

documents necessary for Israel to exit the country, and subsequently placed him in police custody.

According to the Kazakh Foreign Ministry, Israel was handed over to Chinese custody on May 30, 2011 at the request of Interpol.⁵⁰ Kazakh Foreign Ministry officials asserted that Israel had confessed to taking part in a terrorist act in East Turkestan, leading Kazakhstan's migration commission to turn down his request to obtain refugee status. Similarly, the UNHCR confirmed to the media on June 6, 2011 that it had withdrawn Israel's refugee status, "in light of new information that has become available."⁵¹

Israel was deported just two weeks prior to the Jubilee Summit held by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Astana, Kazakhstan, marking the tenth anniversary of the organization. On the eve of the summit, following Israel's deportation to China, Hu Jintao inked more than a billion dollars worth of trade deals and loans with Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

Kazakhstan's allegations against Israel were based on unsubstantiated accusations from China, which were only levied after Israel released details of the death of Shohret Tursun to RFA. And the UNHCR's refusal to disclose the reason behind its decision to withdraw Israel's refugee status necessitates questions into its decision-making process, particularly in light of China's record of torturing and executing repatriated Uyghur refugees.⁵²

UN Special Rapporteur on Torture Manfred Nowak spoke about the prevalence of torture to extract confessions in the Chinese justice system following his visit to China in 2005.⁵³ He stated that "The criminal justice system is focused on admission of culpability, and the role of obtaining confessions continues to be central to successful prosecutions."

Kathy Polias, who had worked on Israel's case for the World Uyghur Congress (WUC), told RFA that the UNHCR had been aware of conflicting versions of Israel's background that had been provided by the Kazakh government.⁵⁴ Polias said that Kazakh officials told the UNHCR that Israel was a Chinese spy but informed the European Union that he was a terrorist.

⁵⁰ Kazakh deports Uighur to China, rights groups cry foul. (2011, June 7). *Reuters*. Retrieved from <http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/kazakhstan-deports-uyghur-to-china-rights-groups-cry-foul>.

⁵¹ Radio Free Asia. (2011, June 6). *UNHCR Refuses to Shed Light*. Retrieved from <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/refugees-06062011190817.html>.

⁵² See Amnesty International. (March 2004). *Amnesty International Concerns regarding Uighurs in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR), China*. Retrieved from http://www.amnesty.ca/Refugee/Concerns_Uighur.php.

⁵³ Special Rapporteur on Torture Highlights Challenges at End of Visit to China. (2005, Dec. 2). United Nations. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/view01/677C1943FAA14D67C12570CB0034966D?opendocument>.

⁵⁴ Radio Free Asia. (2011, June 8). *Kazakhstan Made Conflicting Accusations*. Retrieved from <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/uyghur/accusations-06082011171512.html>.

Many observers, including Sean Roberts⁵⁵ and Human Rights Watch⁵⁶, have argued convincingly that claims regarding terrorism have been used to deflect international criticism of egregious human rights abuses in East Turkestan. Chinese government authorities consistently fail to provide corroborating evidence for terror claims made against Uyghur individuals, and evidence that is cited is not made available for public scrutiny.

Human rights organizations issued a chorus of condemnation following the [December 2009 deportation of 20 Uyghur asylum seekers](#) from Cambodia to China. A year and a half later, in contrast to Chinese officials' assurances to deal with their cases in a transparent fashion, no information has been made public about their whereabouts, conditions, or legal statuses.

The 20 Uyghurs, including one woman and two infants, were deported on December 19, 2009, after having been arbitrarily labeled "criminals" by the Chinese government and just prior to a top Chinese official's visit to Cambodia that clinched a US\$1.2 billion bilateral economic aid agreement. The Uyghurs had been in the process of applying for UNHCR refugee status in Phnom Penh. All except one of the Uyghurs who were deported had fled to Cambodia amidst the post-July 5 crackdown on Uyghurs.

⁵⁵ *Exploring the Nature of Uighur Nationalism: Freedom Fighters or Terrorists?*, 111th Cong. (2009). (testimony of Sean R. Roberts, Ph.D.). Retrieved from <http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/111/rob061609.pdf>.

⁵⁶ Human Rights Watch. (2005). *Devastating Blows*. Retrieved from <http://www.hrw.org/en/node/11799/section/5>.

The way forward

A group of Uyghur women gathered on the streets of Urumchi on July 7, 2009 to ask Chinese security forces what had happened to their husbands, fathers and brothers. Without the actions of these women, the international community may not have known about the mass detentions and forcible disappearances that were taking place in the city,



Uyghur woman Tursun Gul confronts security forces in Urumchi on July 7, 2009. ©Reuters.

since the Chinese government had used intimidation, detention and even beatings in an attempt to manage the actions of foreign reporters who had come to Urumchi.

Video footage and Uyghur accounts that have come to light in the two years since July 5, 2009 have also demonstrated that the Chinese government's version of events is not credible. And while Chinese officials continue to fend

off calls for an open inquiry into what happened in Urumchi, Uyghurs have suffered ever more repressive measures on their language, religion, cultural practices, movement, and economic opportunities. Restrictions on Uyghurs' freedom of speech, including restrictions on Uyghur bloggers and journalists, have meant that this repression has continued with impunity. Uyghurs who express an opinion that is not in line with government policy face imprisonment. This is not constructive to the resolution of issues in East Turkestan.

UHRP urges Chinese judicial authorities to conduct trials and other criminal procedures in a fair and transparent manner, as stipulated by both Chinese and international law. In particular, UHRP urges Chinese authorities to fully investigate claims of torture and lack of due process such as those outlined in the appeal of Alimjan Musajan. UHRP calls on Chinese authorities to make public the total number of individuals detained and/or formally arrested in the wake of July 5, 2009, and to fully publicize information about all individuals charged with crimes related to July 5.

Chinese officials must also take active steps to acknowledge that there are serious problems in the ethnic relations between Han Chinese and Uyghurs. The state should create a space for interethnic dialogue, and facilitate a process through which both Uyghurs and Han Chinese may express their legitimate grievances.

It is also vital that the international community press for a future for Uyghurs that is free of repression. As news of violations of Uyghur human rights increasingly emerges,

international observers have a responsibility to acknowledge the deterioration of conditions in East Turkestan. The future of Uyghurs in East Turkestan depends on a critical review of Chinese responses to developments in the region. If this is not undertaken, it is ever more likely that China will solidify its non-democratic approach to handling Uyghur issues.

Transcript of arbitrary detention footage from China's Central Television Station July 2009

UHRP prepared the following translation of the Chinese-language [video showing arbitrary detentions of Uyghurs](#) taking place in Urumchi after July 5, 2009. The translated transcript was prepared to the best of UHRP's ability, but some words in the video could not be ascertained with 100% clarity. Italicized portions of the transcript describe the images seen in the video footage.

1. *A Chinese policeman stepping on the head of a half-naked and blinded folded young Uyghur male on the ground, banging his head on the ground with loud sound and tying him at the same time. (00:02 – 00:07)*
2. I am from the Central Television Station. (00:07-00:09)
3. From the Central Television Station? (00:10)
4. Where are you from? (00:11 – 00:12)
5. From the Central Television Station. (00:12)
6. Ok. (00:13)
7. Did you ask them about the situation? (00:22 – 00:24)
8. Just came back from a meeting (00:36 – 00:39)
9. Ask about the situation. (00:40)
10. Head down. (00:41 – 00:42)
11. We saw around 100 people there near construction from the watchtower. (00:42 – 00:50)
12. Get up. Get up. (1:23 – 1:25)
13. People on the rooftop. (1:26 – 2:28)
14. Get back. (1:30)
15. Yang Jun. Yang Jun. You take the responsibility. (1:38 – 1:41)
16. Are you here to interview? (1:44 – 1:45)
17. Yes. (1:46)
18. Here to interview? (1:47 – 1:48)
19. Did you hear me? (1:50 – 1:51)
20. Heads down. Heads down. (1:52)

21. Kneel down. (2:04)
22. Kneel down. (2:12 – 2:13)
23. Blindfold him. (2:14)
24. Kneel down. Kneel down. Kneel down. (2:38 – 2: 48)
25. Go. Go. (2:49 – 2:50)
26. Where are you from? (2:53 – 2:54)
27. From the Central Television Station. (3:10 – 3:11)
28. I came with the soldiers. I have the tag here. (3:12 – 3:15)
29. This way. (3:16 – 3:18)
30. Get down. Get down. (3:22 – 3:28)
31. Belts. Belts. (3:34)
32. Get the belts. (3:37 – 3:38)
33. Still people upstairs? (3:48 – 3:49)
34. Where ... ? (3:55)
35. From the Central Television Station. (3:55 – 3:56)
36. Come out quickly and put your hands on your head. (3:58 – 4:00)
37. You get in. Get in. Get in. (4:00 – 4:03)
38. Put your hands on your head. (4:04)
39. Put your hands on your head. (4:05)
40. Baby crying in the background. (4:07 – 4:09)
41. *(Difficult to understand because of noise and heavy accent 4:10 – 4:45)*
42. You go home. Go home. (4:46 – 4:48)
43. Got them. Got them at the front gate. (4:51 – 4:53)
44. What was smashed? (4:58 – 4:59)
45. Go. Go. (5:41 – 5:42)
46. On the other side. (5:50)
47. How do we get in? (5:51 - 5:52)

48. Turn around. (5:53)
49. No door. No door. (5:57 – 5:58)
50. Come. Come. Come. (6:07)
51. Step forward. (6:11)
52. Step forward. (6:13)
53. Dangerous. Dangerous. (6:19 – 6:20)
54. Dangerous. Back off. You are obstructing our work. (6:23 – 6:26)
55. Kneel down. Kneel down. Kneel down. Kneel down. (6:28 – 6:32)
56. Don't move. Don't move. Kneel down. (6:33 – 6:35)
57. *Door closed to the CCTV reporter filming the beating.* (6:37 – 6:40)
58. Don't hit. Don't hit. (6:41 – 6:43)
59. Beat him. (6:43)
60. *A Chinese man with a huge stick hit a blindfolded Uyghur as soldiers were taking him away.* (6:45)
61. Don't hit. Don't hit. (6:46)
62. *Another Chinese individual hit a blindfolded Uyghur as soldiers were pushing him away.* (7:03)
63. Don't hit. Don't hit. (7:04 – 7:05)
64. *Another Chinese man hit a blindfolded Uyghur as soldiers were pushing him away.* (7:15)
65. I am gonna beat the shit out of you. (7:37 – 7:38)
66. Don't hit. Did you hear me? (7:39 – 7:40)
67. Get out of the way. Get out of the way. (7:41 – 7:42)
68. Back off. Back off. (7:44 – 7:47)
69. *More than a dozen half-naked young and blindfolded Uyghur males lying face down.* (8:08 – 8:14)
70. *Han Chinese residents, some armed with sticks, are grumbling.* (8:15 – 8:24)

CCTV Reporter:

1. Some time ago, here happened ... nearby in the surrounding areas. (8:24 – 8:25)
 2. This is Urumchi City. (8:30 – 8:31)
 3. *Footage fast-forwarded while reporter is talking.* (8:33 – 8:46)
 4. This is the Nixiawan Road in Urumchi. Some time ago a riot involving several hundred people took place. Security officers from the Public Security Bureaus and the People's Police arrested some people in the people's homes. (8:47 – 8:53)
 5. This is the Nixiawan Road in Urumchi. Some time ago ... (8:54 – 8:57)
 6. This is the Nixiawan Road in Urumchi. Some time ago a riot involving several hundred people took place. Security officers from the Public Security Bureaus and the People's Police arrested criminals hiding in the people's homes. (8:58 – 9:06)
 7. This is the Nixiawan Road in Urumchi. Some time ago a riot involving several hundred people took place. Security officers from the Public Security Bureaus and the People's Police ... (9:14 – 9:21)
 8. This is ... (9:23)
 9. This is Hohhot's, oh, not Hohhot's. (9:27 – 9:30)
 10. This is the Nixiawan Road in Urumchi. Some time ago a riot involving several hundred people took place. (9:30 – 9:35)
 11. This is. This is the Nixiawan Road in Urumchi. Some time ago a riot involving several hundred people took place. Security officers from the Public Security Bureaus and the People's Armed Police arrested criminals hiding in the people's homes on site. (9:39 – 9:49)
- Chinese special police forces line up. Speaking on radio not clear.* (9:50 – 10:20)

The Uyghur American Association (UAA) works to promote the preservation and flourishing of a rich, humanistic and diverse Uyghur culture, and to support the right of the Uyghur people to use peaceful, democratic means to determine their own political future in East Turkestan.



The UAA launched the UHRP in 2004 to promote improved human rights conditions for Uyghurs and other indigenous groups in East Turkestan, on the premise that the assurance of basic human rights will facilitate the realization of the community’s democratic aspirations.

UHRP also works to raise the profile of the Uyghur people and the plight of all “minority” peoples in East Turkestan by:

Researching, writing and publishing news stories and longer reports covering a broad range human rights issues involving civil and political rights, through to social cultural and economic rights;

Preparing briefings – either written or in person – for journalists, academics, diplomats and politicians on the human rights situation faced by the Uyghur people and others in East Turkestan.

The Uyghur American Association 1420 K Street, N.W., Suite 350 Washington, D.C., 20005 Tel: (202) 478-1920; Fax: (202) 478-1910 www.uyghuramerican.org info@uyghuramerican.org	The Uyghur Human Rights Project 1420 K Street, N.W., Suite 350 Washington, D.C., 20005 Tel: (202) 478-1920; Fax: (202) 478-1910 www.uhrp.org info@uhrp.org
--	--