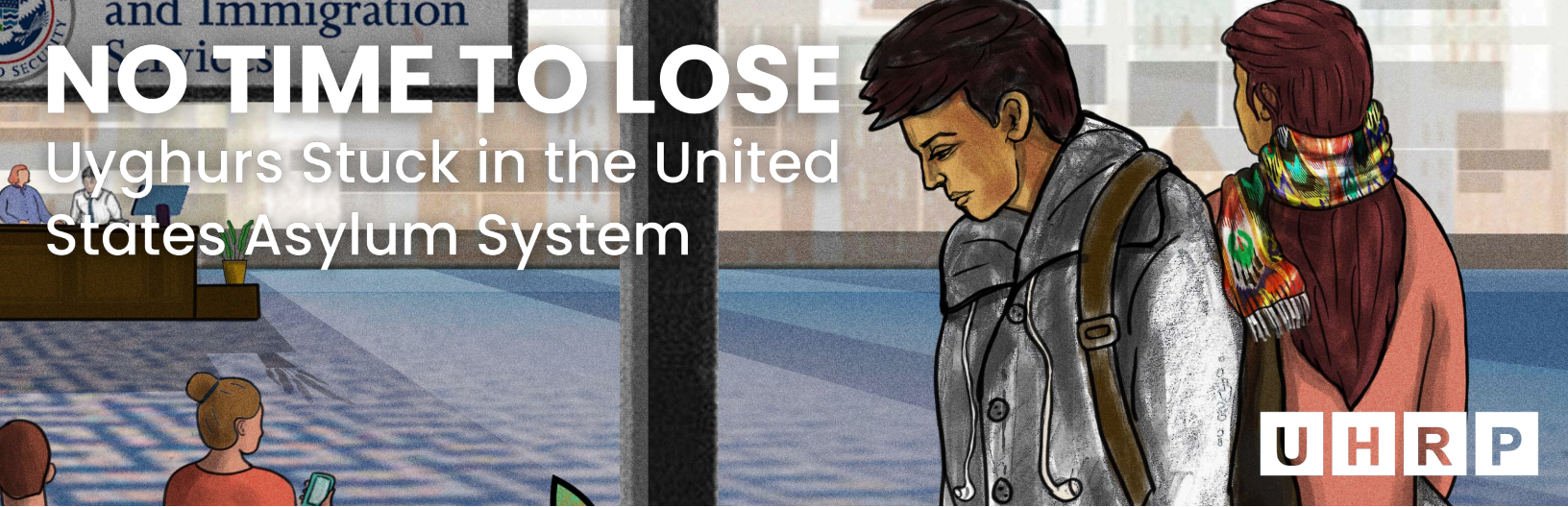


NO TIME TO LOSE

Uyghurs Stuck in the United States Asylum System



No Time to Lose: Uyghurs Stuck in the United States Asylum System highlights the plight of Uyghur asylum seekers in the U.S. suffering long delays in the asylum process. Uyghur asylum seekers stuck in the U.S. system have no time to lose. Under intense pressure from China’s transnational repression, and experiencing deep trauma as secondary survivors of an ongoing genocide, Uyghurs are anxious to be assured of safe haven in the United States.

Key Takeaways

- There are currently 500 to 1,000 Uyghurs caught up in the U.S. asylum system, with some having waited upwards of eight years for resolutions to their cases;
- Asylum seekers are experiencing significant stress on multiple fronts, including on their physical and mental health, as well as financial strains as a result of limited incomes;
- Separation from family in East Turkistan amounts to an additional source of stress and anxiety, which leads to feelings of re-traumatization and survivor’s guilt;
- Uyghurs waiting for adjudication of their asylum claims have fled persecution in East Turkistan, which escalated in 2016 to atrocities that constitute genocide and crimes against humanity;
- The updated guidelines for the “last in, first-out” procedure for processing asylum applications has significantly delayed many Uyghur asylum cases;

Recommendations

- **Congress** should direct USCIS to implement procedures to allow for priority processing of asylum-seekers who are victims and survivors of genocides and atrocity crimes recognized by a U.S. policy determination;
- **Members of Congress** should continue to highlight the urgency of funding to address USCIS asylum-processing backlogs;
- **The White House Office of Management and Budget** should propose a USCIS budget with necessary resources for resolving the asylum backlog, and Congress should appropriate the necessary funds;
- **The State Department** should provide leadership on the issue of providing safe refuge with counterparts in other countries where asylum cases may also be hampered by inadequate documentation;
- **Charities and humanitarian organizations** should establish partnerships with Uyghur community organizations in the U.S. to offer additional assistance in dealing with the application process, work permit applications, and other needs arising from long-delayed asylum decisions

Full report:
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