

GENOCIDE TOURS

International Travel Companies in East Turkistan

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Genocide Tours: International Travel Companies in East Turkistan highlights the troubling industry of organized travel to the Uyghur region despite ongoing crimes against humanity and genocide, and calls on these companies to immediately end their tours. The briefing is the first on a series on the tourism industry in East Turkistan.

Key Takeaways

- Prominent international travel companies are currently **offering guided tours to East Turkistan amidst genocide and crimes against humanity**;
- Sites in Kashgar, Turpan, Ürümchi, and other destinations on tour itineraries are **connected to genocide and crimes against humanity** through repression of religious belief and expression, destruction of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, as well as large-scale racial profiling, surveillance, internment and imprisonment of Uyghurs and other Turkic peoples;
- Travel companies **repeat and reinforce Chinese government narratives** of an “exotic” people for the purpose of tourist consumption;
- **Many of these tours provide perverse and problematic “experiences” for visitors**, like visits to Uyghur homes, which families are not in a position to refuse, given an environment of securitization and state control. This constitutes a gross violation of privacy and perpetuates the surveillance programs that have been carried out in Uyghur homes;
- By bringing tourists to East Turkistan, these **travel companies are implicitly supporting the normalization of genocidal Chinese government policies** intended to destroy the Uyghur identity, and reinforce the complete denial of the Uyghur people to define “Uyghurness.”

Recommendations

- For international travel companies to **cease all tours in East Turkistan**; conduct thorough due diligence checks before offering tours; declare all local partners in tour literature; and **commit to the highest of international human rights standards for the travel industry**, the Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics, and adhere to its articles through an annual review of operations;
- For travel company trade associations to **review membership policies** and environmental, social, and governance guidelines; and to revise these policies to **include an end to offering travel to areas that are experiencing crimes against humanity and genocide**, or where the local population is actively harmed.

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