

THE PERSECUTION OF THE INTELLECTUALS IN THE UYGHUR REGION: DISAPPEARED FOREVER?



Anti-Separatism Anti-Infiltration Rally at Xinjiang University, May 2017 © Xinjiang University Propaganda Department

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The Persecution of Intellectuals in China's Campaign of Uyghur Repression

Most commonly, people who had incurred the displeasure of the Party simply disappeared and were never heard of again.

George Orwell, 1984

The Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP) has identified 231 Uyghur intellectuals known to have disappeared, to have been taken into internment camps, or to have died in custody in China, from April 2017 through September 2018. Because of the secrecy surrounding the detention of a million or more people in camps, and the severe punishment meted out to anyone who contacts international media or other individuals overseas, this list likely represents a small proportion of those detained. Included in this report are brief profiles of 14 academics and students detained prior to April 2017 provide additional context. UHRP makes 18 recommendations for urgent action to address the grave human rights violations affecting Uyghur intellectuals.

Since the spring of 2017, the Chinese government has interned over a million Uyghurs in camps.¹ Credible reports describe deaths, torture, and systemic political indoctrination in these facilities. Another two million people, according to estimates, are forced to attend day and evening 'study sessions.'² More facilities are being built. No Uyghur is safe from the camps: farmers, store keepers, religious figures, artists, soccer players, local government workers, women, men, children, teenagers, the elderly are among the interned.

The government has specifically targeted Uyghur intellectuals as part of the campaign. Dozens of well-known professors and scholars have been suddenly taken away without charge or trial. The internment and imprisonment of Uyghur academics and students signals a perilous shift toward totalitarianism in East Turkestan (aka Xinjiang).

The Chinese Communist Party has a history of persecuting Uyghur intellectuals, including the unjust imprisonment of Uyghur historian Tohti Tunyaz in 2000 and poet Nurmemet Yasin in 2005, who reportedly died in custody in 2012,³ among many others. As Human Rights Watch points out, these prisoners of conscience are victims of an "official policy that criticism or minority expression in art and literature can be deemed a disguised form of secessionism, its author a criminal or even 'terrorist.'"⁴

The latest assault on intellectuals, however, represents a significant escalation of ethnic persecution, as even Uyghurs loyal to the state and party are now subject to absurd allegations such as harboring separatist tendencies and desiring the establishment of an Islamic caliphate.

The current totalitarian measures in East Turkestan's universities occur as the Chinese state moves to control intangible Uyghur cultural heritage, such as music, dance, literature, and history. The Chinese government seeks to frame Uyghur cultural and intellectual production as small parts of Chinese heritage, allowing them to take only narrow officially defined forms.⁵ As Georgetown University professor James Millward

has put it, “cultural cleansing is Beijing’s attempt to find a final solution to the Xinjiang problem.”⁶

This briefing profiles Uyghur academics and students interned and imprisoned since 2017. The cases illustrate the alarming scale and global nature of the crackdown, reaching hundreds of Uyghurs both in East Turkestan and overseas.

UHRP calls on the government of China to immediately release all scholars, writers, artists, and students arbitrarily detained and at risk of harsh mistreatment, including torture. UHRP urges governments and academic institutions around the world to vigorously press the Chinese government for information about the whereabouts and well-being of disappeared and detained academics and intellectuals. A full list of recommended actions is detailed below.

Crackdown on Uyghur Scholars Since 2017: Profiles

Rahile Dawut

Prominent Uyghur scholar Rahile Dawut is a leading expert on Uyghur folklore and traditions at Xinjiang University whose work the Chinese state had sponsored. She left Urumchi for Beijing in December 2017 and has not been heard from since.⁷



Rahile Dawut ©Center for World Indigenous Studies

Professor Rahile's colleagues around the world have mounted an international campaign for her release.⁸ The group Concerned Scholars of Xinjiang has called for the immediate release of Rahile Dawut and requests China to "allow her to either a) continue her position at Xinjiang University or b) assume a post outside of China."⁹ On August 13, 2018, the American Anthropological Association published a letter of concern addressed to U.S. Ambassador to China Terry Branstad and urged the "US Embassy in Beijing to do what you can to locate and offer protection to Dr. Dawut."¹⁰ In an article for the *London Review of Books* author Nick Holdstock called Rahile's disappearance "part of a strategy, long in gestation, to eradicate all forms of dissent in Xinjiang by either brainwashing or intimidation."¹¹

Dr. Rachel Harris, lecturer at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, told *University World News*: "There is a very clear pattern that Uighur academics who have been researching Uighur culture, and those with international contacts have been targeted...[Rahile] has a very strong network of colleagues abroad. Universities in America invited her as a visiting scholar, she published internationally. If she had been

another ethnicity in China, had she been Han Chinese, all this would have been extremely positive. But because she was Uighur, she was regarded as a threat.”¹²

Abdukerim Rahman, Azat Sultan, Gheyretjan Osman, and Arslan Abdulla

Four of Rahile Dawut’s colleagues at Xinjiang University are also reported as being held in internment camps. Abdukerim Rahman, Azat Sultan and Gheyretjan Osman are literature professors and Arslan Abdulla is a language professor. Abdukerim is in his 80s and Arslan in his 70s. Officials at Xinjiang University neither confirmed nor denied details of the academics’ detention.¹³ In a report dated September 24, 2018, Radio Free Asia (RFA) described how Azat Sultan had been investigated for being a “two-faced” academic, a term applied to office holders who pay lip service to party ideology.¹⁴



Azat Sultan ©Radio Free Asia



Abdukerim Rahman (L) Arslan Abdulla (R) ©Radio Free Asia

In detailed profile of Abdukerim Rahman, Amy Anderson wrote: “it was hard to see the logic behind Rahman’s criminalization since his teaching and research had little to do with religion...he had been accepted and celebrated by the Chinese party-state for over 50 years. How could a man could be celebrated until the age of 77 and then suddenly charged as a ‘two-faced’ person out of nowhere? Where is his second ‘face’?”¹⁵

Erkin Omer, Muhter Abdughopur, Qurban Osman, and Gulnar Obul



Erkin Omer ©Radio Free Asia

Four administrators and academics from Kashgar University have been removed from their posts for exhibiting “two-faced” tendencies. The names of Kashgar University’s president Erkin Omer, vice president Muhter Abdughopur, and professors Qurban Osman and Gulnar Obul have been deleted from the institution’s website. Sources in Kashgar told reporters they were unsure if the four individuals were at home or detained in internment camps.¹⁶



Gulnar Obul ©Radio Free Asia

Abdulqadir Jalaleddin



Abdulqadir Jalaleddin @Radio Free Asia

Police raided the home of Abdulqadir Jalaleddin, a professor, philosopher, and poet based at Xinjiang Normal University, in January 2018.¹⁷ To date no formal charges have been made against Professor Abdulqadir and it is believed he is interned in a political indoctrination camp.¹⁸ In a May 20, 2018 letter addressed to Chinese President Xi Jinping, the Committee of Concerned Scientists wrote: “We are deeply concerned for the physical well-being of Abdulqadir Jalaleddin, as the use of incommunicado detention often results in torture or ill-treatment of prisoners.”¹⁹

Halmurat Ghopur, Tashpolat Tiyp, Satar Sawut, and Yalqun Rozi



Halmurat Ghopur ©Radio Free Asia

Halmurat Ghopur, president of the Xinjiang Food and Drug Administration’s Department of Inspection and Supervision and former president of Xinjiang Medical University Hospital, has been detained in an undisclosed location since November 2017. In January 2018, a Uyghur exile based in Norway suggested that his detention may have

been triggered by messages Halmurat had received via a messaging app from a student currently overseas. Halmurat “had kept some of their correspondence on his phone without deleting it.”²⁰ Halmurat is an internationally recognized scientist whose work has been honored by the Chinese government.

In a follow-up article published on September 28, 2018, RFA noted that police alleged the messages contained “nationalistic tendencies.” The article added that Halmurat had been handed a two-year suspended death sentence and authorities claimed he “planned to create an independent country according to his own wishes and become its leader... During the past 33 years he had this hidden intention.”

RFA reporters discovered Halmurat’s sentencing through a state-produced film that also included information on “four other high-ranking Uyghur intellectuals who were sentenced to punishments of either death or life in prison.”²¹ One of the four included former president of Xinjiang University Tashpolat Tiyp. Tashpolat was sentenced to death with two-year reprieve on “separatism” charges. In write-up of the case advocacy group China Change noted Professor Tashpolat “was born in 1958, a scientist in geoscience and remote sensing, and enjoyed a special allowance for experts by the State Council. He was dismissed in March 31, 2017, and that probably was also the time when he was arrested.”²²



Tashpolat Tiyp ©Radio Free Asia

The remaining two Uyghur intellectuals seen on the film were named by RFA in an October 10, 2018 article. Former director of the Xinjiang Education Supervision Bureau Satar Sawut was handed a two-year suspended death penalty and writer Yalqun Rozi received a life sentence for “inciting separatism.”²³

Religious scholars Muhammad Salih Hajim and Abdulnehed Mehsum

On January 29, 2018, the UHRP received confirmation from relatives of Muhammad Salih Hajim regarding his death in an internment camp. The prominent Koranic scholar and Uyghur religious leader was 82-years old. The exact circumstances of his death are unknown, but he was taken into custody toward the end of 2017, along with his daughter, Nezire Muhammad Salih and other relatives.²⁴



Muhammad Salih Hajim ©Radio Free Asia

Family friends also disclosed how almost all of Muhammad Salih Hajim's family has been interned in one of China's political indoctrination camps or harassed by police. Nezire's husband Adil Tuniyaz, a well-known poet, has been charged along with his wife of "promoting terrorism and religious extremism." Three of the couple's children have been placed into state orphanages. A second daughter of Muhammad Salih Hajim, Asiye Mehmet, a Chinese language lecturer at Xinjiang University, has also been detained.²⁵ Scholars at Risk highlighted Muhammad Salih Hajim's death and urged Chinese "state authorities to clarify the circumstances of the scholar's death, and otherwise ensure a prompt, independent, and transparent investigation, and release his body to family."²⁶



Abdulnehed Mehsum ©World Uyghur Congress

Abdulnehed Mehsum, 88, died while being held in an internment camp in Hotan prefecture in November 2017, though his death was not reported until May 27, 2018. Abdulnehed was a noted religious scholar.²⁷ The cases of Muhammad Salih Hajim and Abdulnehed Mehsum were raised by the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe at the European Parliament in an October 2, 2018 motion for a resolution.²⁸

Other Academics, Writers, and Intellectuals

Qutluq Almas, a former lecturer at Xinjiang University now in exile in the United States, has reported that “at least 56 Uyghur lecturers and researchers from Xinjiang University are currently held in re-education camps.”²⁹ Dr. Nijat Sopi, a lecturer since 2002 at Yili Normal University was removed from his position and interned in a camp along with an undisclosed number of his colleagues in January.³⁰

Aziz Isa, secretary of the Uyghur PEN Centre has compiled the following list of Uyghur academics and intellectuals held in internment camps and sentenced to imprisonment before and after 2017.³¹ Because of the secrecy surrounding the detention of a million or more people in camps, and the severe punishment meted out to anyone who contacts international media of individuals overseas, the PEN list likely represents a small proportion of those detained.³²

Xinjiang University Academics:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| • Rahile Dawut | • Abdukerim Rahman |
| • Tashpolat Tiyp | • Gheyretjan Osman |
| • Arslan Abdulla | • Zulpiqar Barat Ozbash |
| • Azat Sultan | • Nebijan Hebibulla |

Xinjiang University, Department of Computer Science Academics:

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| • Dilmurat Turun | • Erkin Imirbaqi |
| • Batur Eysa | • Nurbiye |
| • Rahim Rehmulla | |

Xinjiang Normal University Academics:

- | | |
|------------------------|------------|
| • Abdubesar Shukri | • Ababekri |
| • Abduqadir Jalaleddin | • Nureli |
| • Yunus Ebeydulla | |

Xinjiang Medical University Academics:

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| • Halmurat Ghopur | • Abbas Eset |
|-------------------|--------------|

Xinjiang Academy of Social Science Academics:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| • Abdurazaq Sayim | • Kurash Tahir |
|-------------------|----------------|

Kashgar University Academics:

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| • Gulnar Obul | • Muhter Abdughopur |
| • Erkin Omer | • Qurban Osman |

- Erkin Oghuz
- Matrehim Haji

- Enwer Qadir
- Enwer Ismayil

Academics at Other Institutions:

- Nijat Sopi
- Ablet Abdures

- Memet Jume
- Jelil Hajim

Writers and Poets:

- Yalqun Rozi
- Abdulla Abdurehim³³
- Adil Tunyaz
- Tunyaz Osman³⁴
- Abbas Muniyaz

- Perhat Tursun³⁵
- Tahir Talip
- Ilham Tahir
- Niyaz Imin
- Sayramiye

Bloggers and Writers Online:

- Omerjan Hesén Bozqir³⁶
- Tursunjan Hezim³⁷
- Ekber Eset³⁸
- Tursunjan Muhammed Marshal³⁹

- Adil Rishit⁴⁰
- Qasimjan Osman Ghazi
- Qeyser Abdukerim
- Nijat Azat⁴¹

Artists:

- Ablajan Awut Ayup⁴²
- Abdurehim Heyit⁴³
- Mahire Yusuf

On September 28, 2018, RFA reported the suicide of Qeyser Qeyum, the editor-in-chief of Literature Translation magazine, published under the Xinjiang Association of Literature and Art. Qeyser jumped out of the eighth floor of his office building out of fear he would be interned in a political indoctrination camp. Ilham Weli, deputy editor-in-chief at the *Xinjiang Daily*, was arrested in July 2018 while “directors Memtimin Obul and Juret Haji, and Mirkamil Ablimit, the head of the subsidiary *Xinjiang Farmer’s Daily*, were denounced during a public meeting at the newspaper’s offices and taken away by police in early August.” Although no charges were specified in the RFA report on the incidents, Chinese authorities had accused the individuals of publishing “two-faced” articles. A former colleague of the four men told RFA: “I don’t see how they could possibly have said or written something critical of Beijing, although it is likely that some articles they were responsible for contained something that—while not anti-government—the authorities didn’t like.”⁴⁴ The Committee to Protect Journalists issued an alert on behalf of the four men on September 7, 2018.⁴⁵ Abdurahman Abey, former director and Communist Party deputy secretary of the Xinjiang People’s Publishing House, was arrested in July 2018 on charges of “separatism and religious extremism activities.”⁴⁶



Kurban Mamaut © Bahram Kurban Sintash

On October 8, 2018, Bahram Kurban Sintash, a U.S. citizen, described the internment of his father Kurban Mamut in a political indoctrination camp. Kurban held a number of senior posts in the media, including Editor-in-Chief at *Xinjiang Civilization*, from 1985 to 2011. Bahram wrote: “There is no justifiable reason for the XUAR and the Chinese government to detain my father.”⁴⁷ Leading press freedom monitors have unequivocally condemned China’s record on censorship and harassment of journalists. China ranks 176th worst for press freedom out of 180 states in Reporters Without Borders’ 2018 World Press Freedom Index. Freedom House’s Freedom of the Press 2017 report placed China in the “Not Free” category. Freedom House also placed China in the “Not Free” category for its Freedom on the Net 2017 report. In its 2017 prison census, the Committee to Protect Journalists documented 41 journalists imprisoned in China (of them 14 are Uyghur).⁴⁸

Uyghur Students

In May 2017, reports described how Chinese authorities had ordered the return of Uyghurs students overseas by May 20. The order is known to have included students resident in Egypt, Turkey, France, Australia, and the United States. Students who spoke to journalists explained how Chinese officials had threatened their families with jail terms if they did not return home. Students who had already returned before the order were also arrested and held in internment camps.⁴⁹

Uyghur students in Egypt were a group of interest to China. By early July 2017, Egyptian intelligence and security assisted in the detention of up to 200 Uyghurs. Many of the Uyghurs were students of Arabic and Islamic theology at Cairo’s Al-Azhar University. One Uyghur student told RFA: “Anyone deported back to China will definitely be jailed.” Despite calls to the university for protection, 80 students were detained in a sweep on July 12, 2017.⁵⁰ Egyptian authorities began deporting Uyghurs to China in July 2017. As reported by *The New York Times*, 12 Uyghurs were forcibly returned on July 6, 2017 and another 22 Uyghurs’ deportations were pending at that time.⁵¹

According to a representative of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization “some 90 percent of the estimated 7,000 - 8,000 Uyghurs living in Egypt had returned to China.”⁵² Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International raised the case of the Uyghur students in Egypt in press releases. Sarah Leah Whitson, Middle East director at Human Rights Watch, stated: “Uyghurs living in Egypt should be free from fear of arbitrary arrest and deportation to a country where they risk persecution and torture.”⁵³



Yasinjan ©Radio Free Asia

Upon their return to China, Uyghur students from Egypt have been forced to undergo ‘reeducation’ in internment camps or been sentenced to prison terms, including Hebibulla Tohti, a Uyghur scholar of theology whose studies in Egypt were sanctioned by China’s state-run Islamic Association;⁵⁴ Hezritieli Memet a 12-year-old boy whose parents voluntarily returned from China in February 2017; and 17 Uyghurs from Yopurgha county.⁵⁵ Two Uyghur students, Abdusalam Mamat and Yasinjan, who voluntarily returned from their studies in Egypt to Korla, reportedly died in 2017.⁵⁶

Following a closed-door trial, Buzainap Adbureshit was sentenced to seven years’ imprisonment. The charges made against her and her current location remain unknown. Buzainap was among the Uyghur students in Egypt.⁵⁷ However, she was arrested after her return to East Turkestan from the United States, where she was visiting her father-in-law.



Buzainap Adbureshit

Six students returned from Turkey to Bortala between January and April 2017 were convicted of undisclosed charges and handed sentences of between five and twelve years. The six individuals are Kawser, Mewlan, Jawlan, Mudeser, Suriya, and Gulshan.

Student Gulgine Tashmemet returned to Ghulja from Malaysia after completing her studies out of concern for her family with whom she had lost contact. Since her return, her current whereabouts are unknown and she is believed to be in an internment camp.⁵⁸ Gulgine's case has been highlighted by Scholars at Risk, which expressed alarm "over the arbitrary detention and possible disappearance of a student as part of sweeping measures by state authorities to restrict the right to academic freedom and freedom of religion and association — rights that are expressly protected under international human rights instruments including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights."⁵⁹



Gulgine Tashmemet @Radio Free Asia

Uyghur Intellectuals Imprisoned Prior to 2017: Profiles

Ilham Tohti

Ilham Tohti, a noted Uyghur academic, was a popular economics professor at the Central Nationalities University in Beijing. He also ran the Uighurbiz website, a forum in Mandarin Chinese to discuss economic, social and cultural issues facing the Uyghur people in China. On September 23, 2014, he was handed a life sentence after a trial that fell far below international standards.⁶⁰ The White House, then-U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, and the European Union condemned the sentencing.⁶¹ At the sixty-ninth session of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention held between April 22 and May 1, 2014, a panel of five human rights experts ruled that Ilham Tohti's deprivation of liberty since January 15, 2014 was an arbitrary detention, in violation of international human rights law.⁶²

Perhat Halmurat, Shohret Nijat, Mutellip Imin, Abduqeyyum, Atikem Rozi, Akbar Imin, and Luo Yuwei

Seven of Ilham Tohti's students were given prison sentences of up to eight years in December 2014.⁶³ Perhat Halmurat, Shohret Nijat, Mutellip Imin, Abduqeyyum Ablimit, Atikem Rozi, Akbar Imin and Luo Yuwei (an ethnic Yi) worked as volunteers on Professor Tohti's website, Uighurbiz.



Mutellip Imin

Atikem was detained on January 17, 2014; she was then 22 years old. Rozi had been previously detained in February 2013 after writing online about difficulties with an application for a passport. Her application was denied three times between 2010 and 2012, allegedly on political grounds, despite absence of any political record.⁶⁴

Mutellip was detained in Lop County, Hotan Prefecture on January 15, 2014; he was then 25 years old. He was previously detained in 2013 and was connected to his international studies. Mutellip was detained as he was traveling to Turkey to complete the second year of his master's degree at Istanbul University. After his detention, he described the experience in a widely circulated blog post.⁶⁵ Held in three hotels for 79 consecutive days, he was questioned about his work for Uighurbiz, and required to hand over passwords to his phone, computer and social media accounts.

Gulmire Imin

One of the many Uyghurs punished by Chinese authorities for voicing opinions online after the July 5 unrest is Gulmire Imin, a 32-year-old woman who was invited to become an administrator for the website Salkin after having published a number of poems on various Uyghur websites. Imin was arrested on July 14, 2009, but her family did not receive any official documents regarding her detention. On April 1, 2010, she was sentenced to life in prison. Imin was sentenced on the same day as her closed trial.⁶⁶



Gulmire Imin ©USCIRF

In March 2012, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention rendered the opinion that Gulmire Imin's detention is arbitrary.⁶⁷ Regarding Imin's case, the Working Group found China in contravention of articles 8, 9, 10 and 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In December 2012, Human Rights Watch awarded Gulmire Imin the Hellman/Hammett prize for her efforts to promote freedom of expression.⁶⁸

Other Cases of Concern

- Gheyret Niyaz, journalist, sentenced in July 2010 to 15 years imprisonment for “Endangering State Security”⁶⁹
- Memetjan Abdulla, journalist, disappeared since May 2010 and believed to be serving a life sentence for distributing “separatist ideas.”⁷⁰
- Abdurazaq Sayim, member of the Xinjiang Social Sciences Academy’s Party Committee since 2003, arrested in 2010 and sentenced to life in prison.⁷¹
- Ablimit Ghoja’ Abdulla, writer, arrested in 2014 and sentenced to 6 years in prison.⁷²
- Yalkun Isa, 56, professor of mathematics, Aksu Education Institute, believed to be in detention.⁷³

Recommendations

China

1. Close all internment camps and without condition immediately release all Uyghur academics and students interned or imprisoned in the recent crackdown.
2. Restore all Uyghur academics removed from their posts, interned or imprisoned to their university positions.
3. Adopt the standards detailed in the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel taking note of the provisions protecting academic freedom in Section VI: Rights and freedoms of higher-education teaching personnel.
4. Abide by Article 52 of the Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law and Article 35 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, which guarantees freedom of speech.
5. Ratify the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights and implement the provisions protecting freedom of speech contained in Article 19.
6. Meet the standards outlined in Article 2.5 of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities and end the practice of punishing Uyghurs for having overseas connections.

Concerned Governments and the International Community

7. Utilize China's November 2018 Universal Periodic Review to question the Chinese government about the arbitrary internment and imprisonment of Uyghur academics and students. Member states should ask for the immediate release of Uyghur internees and for respect for academic freedom in Chinese universities.
8. Send observers, particularly the Special Rapporteurs on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression and on minority issues to East Turkestan, with unfettered access to internment camps and Uyghur academic communities to impartially conduct an assessment of China's compliance to its international obligations.
9. Conduct due diligence regarding government-funded academic exchanges, conferences, and international visits by higher-education officials from China, to ensure that these programs are not complicit in endorsing policies and actions that constitute grave violations of the human rights of Uyghurs.
10. Issue diplomatic démarches to the Chinese government condemning the secret, arbitrary detention of Uyghur scholars and students who have studied in the issuing government's country, and seeking information about their whereabouts and well-being.
11. Issue public travel warnings for institutions and individuals planning visits to China for educational exchanges, or other education-related business, regarding the grave risk of arbitrary detention incurred by any Uyghur or member of other persecuted religious and ethnic groups, whether living in Xinjiang or in any place in China, who have contact with foreigners in any form.

12. Issue policy statements alerting suppliers of goods and services to educational institutions and all other state entities in Xinjiang, regarding existing national policies prohibiting assistance to institutions complicit in grave human rights violations.
13. Issue policy guidance to national immigration and asylum authorities regarding the serious risk of detention, torture, and death in custody incurred by Uyghur students and scholars involuntarily returned to China.
14. Provide government funding and encourage private funding of the educational expenses of Uyghur international students who cannot continue self-funding their studies due to the unjust detention of their relatives in China.
15. Provide fellowships for Uyghur scholars who cannot return home due to the grave risk of detention, torture and death in custody.

Academics Based Overseas

16. Consider joining the Xinjiang Initiative (xinjianginitiative.org) and pledge to raise the issue of Uyghur human rights at public events.
17. Urge institutions that have hosted Uyghur academics as international guests in the past to seek information about the whereabouts and well-being of these scholars and their families.
18. Academic publishers should seek information about the whereabouts and well-being of Uyghur scholars who have published articles in their journals.

Endnotes

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The Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP) was founded by the Uyghur American Association (UAA) in 2004 with a supporting grant from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED). UHRP's mission is to promote human rights and democracy for the Uyghur people. In 2016, UHRP became an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit, tax-exempt organization.

UHRP works to raise the profile of the Uyghur people by:

Researching, writing and publishing commentary and reports in English and Chinese 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 legislators on the human rights situation faced by the Uyghur people.

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