



# FADING TIES

## Uyghur Family Separation as a Tool of Transnational Repression

February 2026 | By Dr. Henryk Szadziewski

*Fading Ties: Uyghur Family Separation as a Tool of Transnational Repression* documents how the Chinese government uses family separation, communication shutdowns, and travel restrictions as tools of transnational repression, systematically isolating Uyghur families across borders and inflicting long-term psychological, social, and cultural harm on the diaspora.

### Key Takeaways

- The Chinese government employs family separation and enforced isolation as deliberate strategies to suppress international advocacy and impose psychological pressure on the Uyghur diaspora.
- The Chinese government has systematically disrupted communication between Uyghur diaspora members and their families in East Turkistan through surveillance, coercion, and intimidation, resulting in prolonged disconnection for a decade or longer in some cases.
- The emotional and psychological toll includes unresolved grief, intergenerational trauma, and isolation from cultural expression.
- Chinese state-enforced restrictions on travel for Uyghurs in China and Uyghur diaspora members further obstruct family reunification.

### Recommendations

- **Advocate for family reunification:** Governments and international bodies should use diplomatic and humanitarian channels to facilitate communication and reunification of Uyghur families.
- **Protect Uyghurs fleeing persecution:** Prioritize processing, protection, and safe resettlement for Uyghurs escaping repression in China.
- **Monitor transnational repression:** Governments, NGOs, and international bodies should systematically track interference with communication, travel, and diaspora freedoms.
- **Support diaspora wellbeing and culture:** Fund programs addressing psychological trauma, cultural preservation, and intergenerational connection.
- **Engage UN Special Procedures:** The UN Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy should press China to end surveillance and coercive monitoring of cross-border communications.

Full report  
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